# An Analytical Report on "Sphinx of the Cycle" and its Strategic Impact

## I. Strategic Overview: A Tale of Two Sphinges

### Executive Summary

The release of the "Sphinx" card, "Sphinx of the Cycle," in the *Doom of Dimensions* (DOOD) booster set has generated significant interest regarding its impact on the "Sphinx" archetype. This analysis concludes that "Sphinx of the Cycle" is a powerful, modern, and multifaceted engine piece. However, a critical distinction must be made: this card offers **no synergistic value** to the traditional, "Pyramid of Light"-based "Sphinx" archetype.

Instead, "Sphinx of the Cycle" is a potent, standalone engine designed to support **Flip-based control strategies**. Its role is not to modernize the classic "Theinen the Great Sphinx" strategy but to serve as a high-value utility card in decks that strategically manipulate monster battle positions, with its most competitively viable home being the **"Prediction Princess"** archetype.

This report will first deconstruct the card's mechanics, then illustrate its complete lack of synergy with the classic "Pyramid of Light" deck, and finally provide an exhaustive analysis of its true role, play lines, and impact on the end boards of the Flip-centric decks it is designed to empower.

### A Deliberate Re-Contextualization

The query regarding "Sphinx" support rests on the logical assumption that a card named "Sphinx" would support the legacy monsters "Andro Sphinx," "Sphinx Teleia," and "Theinen the Great Sphinx". The data reveals this assumption to be incorrect, and the card's design deliberately targets a different strategy.

This divergence is immediately evident in the cards' fundamental stats. The classic "Sphinx" monsters are all **LIGHT Attribute** and **Beast-Type**. "Sphinx of the Cycle," conversely, is an **EARTH Attribute** and **Rock-Type** monster. This lack of shared Type or Attribute is a clear indication of a different design philosophy.

Furthermore, the classic "Sphinx" strategy is a famously convoluted beatdown strategy focused on the Continuous Trap "Pyramid of Light" to summon high-ATK monsters and eventually summon "Theinen the Great Sphinx" through their simultaneous destruction. This strategy has no mechanics related to changing battle positions.

The entire effect text of "Sphinx of the Cycle" revolves around changing battle positions and setting "Book of Moon" or "Book of Taiyou". This mechanic *is*, however, a hallmark of other, unrelated "sphinx" monsters like "Guardian Sphinx," which is also an EARTH/Rock monster. "Sphinx of the Cycle" is not support for the "Pyramid of Light" *archetype*; it is modern support for the *conceptual playstyle* of Rock-based "sphinx" monsters and Flip-effect decks in general.

## II. Card Profile and Engine Deconstruction: "Sphinx of the Cycle"

The card text of "Sphinx of the Cycle" reveals three distinct effects that form a self-contained engine. Each effect is hard-limited to "once per turn."

### The "Book" Engine (Effect 1)

During your Main Phase: You can Set 1 "Book of Taiyou" and/or 1 "Book of Moon" from your Deck or GY.

This is the card's primary value-generating effect and its main role as an engine. On its own, this effect provides:

1. **Consistency:** It searches two of the game's most iconic position-changing Spells.
2. **Offense:** "Book of Taiyou" allows you to immediately activate the effects of your face-down Flip monsters.
3. **Defense:** "Book of Moon" serves as a powerful, versatile piece of interruption, capable of stopping attacks, breaking Synchro/Xyz/Link plays, or forcing a monster's effect to resolve without a target.

Crucially, this effect can Set these cards *from the Graveyard*. This provides immense recursion and resilience, establishing a "soft loop" where a used "Book of Moon" is not a spent resource but a target to be Set again on the following turn. This also provides synergy with strategies that mill cards from the deck.

### The Extender (The Summon)

If a monster's battle position is changed (except during the Damage Step): You can banish 1 Spell from your GY; Special Summon this card from your GY (if it was there when the battle position was changed) or hand (even if not).

This effect serves two purposes: "brick" mitigation and recursion. As "Sphinx of the Cycle" is a Level 8 monster, drawing it would normally be a liability. This effect allows it to be Special Summoned from the hand without a Tribute, triggered by the very "Book of Moon" or "Book of Taiyou" it provides.

Its true power, however, lies in its ability to summon itself from the Graveyard. This turns "Sphinx of the Cycle" into a persistent, recurring threat. The cost, banishing one Spell from the GY, is negligible in the decks that play it, such as "Prediction Princess," which naturally fills the Graveyard with Ritual Spells or other utility Spells. A single copy in the Graveyard can become a recurring 3000 DEF wall that the opponent must banish to permanently remove.

### The Interruption (The Control)

Once per turn, if another monster's battle position is changed (except during the Damage Step): You can target 1 card on the field; return it to the hand.

This is the deck's primary *payoff* for its own engine. It provides a "soft" once-per-turn (SOPT) bounce effect, a powerful piece of non-destruction, non-targeting (the *trigger* is non-targeting) removal that functions as a "Compulsory Evacuation Device" on legs.

This effect is the card's main function on an established board, providing renewable, targeted interruption. Its versatility is notable, as it can bounce *any* card on the field, including problematic monsters or back-row. As noted by some players, the card's "main control effect is triggered by monsters changing battle position," cementing its role as a control piece.

## III. Impact Analysis Part 1: The Traditional "Pyramid of Light" Strategy

### Defining the Baseline

The user query concerns the "Sphinx strategy," which is historically defined by the *Yu-Gi-Oh! The Movie* promo cards: "Andro Sphinx" (LIGHT/Beast/Level 10, 3000 ATK), "Sphinx Teleia" (LIGHT/Beast/Level 10, 2500 ATK), "Theinen the Great Sphinx" (LIGHT/Beast/Level 10, 3500 ATK), and the trap "Pyramid of Light".

### The Mechanics of Failure

This archetype's "win condition" is to use "Pyramid of Light" to Special Summon "Andro Sphinx" and "Sphinx Teleia," then have both destroyed *at the same time* to Special Summon "Theinen the Great Sphinx" from the hand or Deck. This strategy is infamously weak, inconsistent, and vulnerable.

An analysis of "Sphinx of the Cycle" reveals a complete and total lack of synergy with this strategy.

1. **Attribute and Type Mismatch:** As established, the new card is EARTH/Rock, while the classic monsters are LIGHT/Beast. There is no shared support.
2. **Mechanical Antagonism:** "Sphinx of the Cycle" revolves around *flipping monsters*. The "Pyramid of Light" monsters have *no Flip effects* and want to be face-up to attack.
3. **Detrimental Interaction:** The most damning point is the "summoning sickness" clause on both "Andro Sphinx" and "Sphinx Teleia": "This card cannot attack during the turn that it is Normal Summoned or Special Summoned". If a player were to use "Book of Moon" (Set by "Sphinx of the Cycle") on their own "Andro Sphinx" and then flip it up again (e.g., with "Book of Taiyou"), the "cannot attack" clause would be *re-applied*, effectively neutralizing the deck's entire beatdown strategy.

"Sphinx of the Cycle" is not only *not helpful* to the classic deck; its core mechanics are *actively detrimental* to it.

### Conclusion for Traditional "Sphinx" Decks

* **Impact on Play Style:** None.
* **Impact on Play Lines:** None. It does not facilitate the summoning of "Theinen" or make "Pyramid of Light" more viable.
* **Impact on End Boards:** None.
* **Recommended Ratio (for this deck):** **0 (Not played at all).**

## IV. Impact Analysis Part 2: The True Home - Flip Control and "Prediction Princess"

"Sphinx of the Cycle" was designed for the *other* "Sphinx" strategy: the conceptual one based on Flip effects and position-changing, exemplified by "Guardian Sphinx" and modernized by the "Prediction Princess" archetype.

### The Conceptual "Guardian Sphinx" Loop

The card's design is perfectly synergistic with "Guardian Sphinx," an EARTH/Rock monster that can flip itself face-down to return all of the opponent's monsters to the hand. "Sphinx of the Cycle" provides the missing piece for this card.

A simple, "old-school" loop would be:

1. Have "Sphinx of the Cycle" on the field. Activate its effect to Set "Book of Taiyou".
2. Summon "Guardian Sphinx."
3. Activate "Guardian Sphinx's" effect, flipping it face-down.
4. Activate "Book of Taiyou," flipping "Guardian Sphinx" face-up.
5. This change in battle position triggers the effect of "Sphinx of the Cycle" to bounce one card on the field.

This interaction resets "Guardian Sphinx's" powerful board-wipe effect *and* provides targeted removal simultaneously.

### The Competitive Home: "Prediction Princess"

The "Prediction Princess" archetype is a Ritual/Flip strategy. Its primary boss monster, "Prediction Princess Tarotrei," has a Quick Effect to flip one monster on the field face-down and another face-up. This is used to trigger powerful Flip-effect floodgates, such as:

* **"Deus X-Krawler":** A one-sided "Skill Drain" for the opponent.
* **"Guard Dog":** Prevents all Special Summons.
* **"Pot of The Forbidden":** A versatile 4-in-1 effect.

"Sphinx of the Cycle," which appears in OCG "Prediction Princess" deck lists, serves as a powerful utility engine that solves many of the deck's inherent weaknesses.

1. **Role: Consistency and Utility:** It provides "Book of Moon" and "Book of Taiyou" on demand. This gives the deck new ways to trigger its Flip monsters without relying solely on "Tarotrei," while also providing a defensive "Book of Moon" to protect "Tarotrei" from targeted effects.
2. **Role: Extension and Recursion:** Its Special Summon effect (Effect 2) makes it a free, 3000 DEF body that can be summoned *during the opponent's turn* when "Tarotrei" uses her effect.
3. **Role: Interruption:** Its bounce effect (Effect 1) adds a crucial, renewable piece of interaction to a deck that can otherwise be passive and reliant *only* on its floodgate.

The symbiosis between "Sphinx of the Cycle" and "Prediction Princess Tarotrei" is what elevates the deck. "Tarotrei's" Quick Effect to change a monster's battle position *is the exact trigger* "Sphinx of the Cycle" needs for both its Special Summon and its bounce effect. This transforms "Tarotrei's" effect from a simple setup tool into a multifaceted interruption that also summons a 3000 DEF body and bounces a card.

## V. Analysis of New Play Lines and End Boards

"Sphinx of the Cycle" fundamentally alters the play style and end boards of the "Prediction Princess" deck, shifting it from a "passive stun" strategy to an "active control" strategy.

### Impact on End Boards

* **Before DOOD:** A "Prediction Princess" end board was typically "Prediction Princess Tarotrei" plus one or two Set Flip monsters. This board is *passive*; it waits for the opponent to act before revealing its floodgate, and its only interruption *is* that floodgate.
* **After DOOD:** The end board becomes "Tarotrei" + Set Flip monster(s) + "Sphinx of the Cycle" (in GY or on field) + Set "Book" Spells. This is an *active, multi-interruption* board that possesses:
  1. The initial floodgate (e.g., "Deus X-Krawler").
  2. A renewable, targeted bounce (from "Sphinx of the Fycle").
  3. A defensive flip-down (the Set "Book of Moon").
  4. A free 3000 DEF body (the recurring "Sphinx of the Cycle").

### New Play Lines (The "Sphinx" Engine in "Prediction Princess")

The most potent play lines involve using "Sphinx of the Cycle" as a recursive threat from the Graveyard, ideally sent there by a "Dogmatika Maximus" or "Extra-Foolish Burial".

**Play Line: Opponent's Turn Interruption Loop**

1. **Your Turn:** Establish your board, ending on "Prediction Princess Tarotrei" and a Set Flip monster (e.g., "Deus X-Krawler"). Ensure "Sphinx of the Cycle" is in your Graveyard and at least one Spell is in your Graveyard (e.g., the Ritual Spell used to summon "Tarotrei").
2. **Opponent's Turn (Main Phase):** The opponent attempts to make a play.
3. **Action:** Activate "Tarotrei's" Quick Effect, targeting your Set "Deus X-Krawler" to flip it face-up.
4. **Chain:** As "Tarotrei's" effect resolves, two effects trigger:
   * **Chain Link 1:** "Deus X-Krawler's" FLIP effect (activating its one-sided "Skill Drain").
   * **Chain Link 2:** "Sphinx of the Cycle's" Graveyard effect (Effect 2), as a monster's battle position was changed.
5. **Resolution:** "Sphinx of the Cycle" banishes a Spell from the GY and Special Summons itself to the field. "Deus X-Krawler" resolves, applying its floodgate.
6. **Resulting Board:** Your opponent is now facing "Tarotrei," a one-sided "Skill Drain," and a 3000 DEF "Sphinx of the Cycle."
7. **Opponent's Turn (Later):** Your opponent attempts to attack over "Deus X-Krawler."
8. **Action:** Activate "Tarotrei's" Quick Effect, targeting your "Deus X-Krawler" to flip it face-down (protecting it).
9. **Trigger:** "Sphinx of the Cycle" (now on the field) triggers its effect (Effect 1), as a monster's battle position was changed. You can now target one card your opponent controls and return it to the hand.

This sequence demonstrates how "Sphinx of the Cycle" provides a free, recurring body *and* an additional, renewable bounce, all triggered by the "Prediction Princess" deck's normal play style.

### Key Synergistic Interactions

| **Card Combination** | **Resulting Interaction / Play Line** | **Strategic Value** |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Sphinx of the Cycle** (on field) + **"Book of Moon"** (Set by Sphinx) | Activate "Book of Moon" on an opponent's monster. **Triggers:** "Sphinx of the Cycle" (Effect 1) to bounce another card. | Converts a 1-for-1 trade ("Book") into a 2-for-1 (Book + Bounce) interruption. |
| **Sphinx of the Cycle** (in GY) + **"Prediction Princess Tarotrei"** (on field) | Activate "Tarotrei's" Quick Effect to flip *any* monster. **Triggers:** "Sphinx of the Cycle" (Effect 2) to Special Summon itself from the GY by banishing a Spell. | Establishes a 3000 DEF wall and sets up the bounce (Effect 1) for *free* during the opponent's turn. |
| **Sphinx of the Cycle** (on field) + **"Prediction Princess Tarotrei"** (on field) | "Tarotrei" uses her Quick Effect to flip a monster down. **Triggers:** "Sphinx of the Cycle" (Effect 1) to bounce a card. | This is the core loop. "Tarotrei's" setup effect is transformed into a "Bounce 1" interaction *every time* she uses it, massively increasing the deck's disruptive ceiling. |
| **Sphinx of the Cycle** (on field) + **Any FLIP Monster** (e.g., "Deus X-Krawler") | Use "Book of Taiyou" (Set by Sphinx) to flip your "Deus X-Krawler" face-up. **Triggers:** 1) "Deus X-Krawler's" FLIP effect. 2) "Sphinx of the Cycle's" bounce (Effect 1). | Turns "Book of Taiyou" into a "Skill Drain + Bounce 1" card. Allows you to re-use your powerful Flip monster effects multiple times. |

## VI. Deck Ratios and Strategic Recommendation

The user's query about playing the card as a "one of/ or 3" is central to its strategic application. TCG deck-building theory dictates that 3-of cards are essential starters you must open, while 1-of cards are typically recursive, searchable, or high-value utility pieces.

### Analysis of OCG Deck Lists

The provided OCG deck lists, which are the first to incorporate *Doom of Dimensions* cards, are our primary data source for its real-world application:

* An OCG "Prediction Princess" deck list from the Konami database includes **1 copy** of "Sphinx of the Cycle".
* A second, mixed "Prediction Princess" OCG deck list also runs **1 copy** of "Sphinx of the Cycle".
* A third OCG "Flip" deck list, which is less focused on the Ritual engine, runs **2 copies** of "Sphinx of the Cycle".

### The Case for "1-of" (The Competitive Standard)

In an optimal "Prediction Princess" build, "Sphinx of the Cycle" is a definitive **1-of**.

* It is a Level 8 monster and not a primary starter; "Bibliomuse," "Diviner of the Herald," and the Ritual Spells fill that role.
* Drawing it is suboptimal, although its own effect mitigates this. Its true power is its *recursion from the Graveyard*.
* Therefore, you only need one copy. It functions as a high-value, recursive tool that you can send to the GY via cards like "Dogmatika Maximus". It is, in effect, a "Garnet" that you *want* to mill. This makes it the perfect "1-of" utility piece.

### The Case for "2-of"

The deck list running two copies is likely doing so to increase the odds of opening the "Sphinx of the Cycle" + "Book" engine naturally, treating it as a secondary, self-sufficient engine rather than just a recursive tool. This is a valid choice for a less combo-oriented, more "Flip Control" focused build.

### The Case for "3-of"

Running three copies is strategically incorrect. It is not a starter, and drawing multiple copies is a catastrophic "brick," as all three of its effects are hard-limited to once per turn.

### Final Recommendation

* **In "Prediction Princess" (Optimal Build):** Play as a **1-of**.
* **In "Sphinx Flip Control" (Casual/Rogue):** Play as a **1-of** or **2-of**.
* **In "Pyramid of Light" (Nostalgia):** Play as a **0-of**.

## VII. Concluding Assessment

"Sphinx of the Cycle" is a powerful and well-designed card that successfully provides legacy support for a *mechanic* rather than a nostalgic, but non-functional, *archetype*.

1. **Role:** It is a self-contained, recursive *utility engine*. It provides consistency (searching "Book of Moon" / "Book of Taiyou"), extension (a free 3000 DEF body from the hand or GY), and renewable interruption (a targeted bounce).
2. **Play Style Impact:** It has **zero** impact on the traditional "Pyramid of Light" strategy. Conversely, it **transforms** "Prediction Princess" and other Flip-based decks, elevating them from passive "stun" decks to active "control" decks.
3. **Play Lines & End Boards:** It creates a powerful, symbiotic loop with "Prediction Princess Tarotrei," turning her standard effects into triggers for a free Special Summon and a targeted bounce. This makes the deck's end boards significantly more resilient and interactive.
4. **Ratios:** It is a definitive **1-of** in its most competitive home ("Prediction Princess"), where it is best utilized as a high-value, recursive tool sent from the Deck to the Graveyard.