

## Nic Howe Board Games CPR

Where Settlers of Catan succeeds as a classic example of a “Eurogame” is fostering a social and dually cooperative competitive atmosphere that emphasizes player interaction in order to lead yourself to victory rather than domination of the other players that the typical American style of board game focused on. What this does is make Settlers of Catan an incredibly accessible game that also creates a more light-hearted atmosphere that continues to bring people back instead of driving the less competitive players out due to frustration. Catan emphasizes a more social, inviting environment rather than a harsh competitive one that drives people away. The main ways in which it accomplishes this is through a complete absence of combative interaction between the players, and a focus on cooperation between the players in order to achieve victory.

The most brilliant mechanic to Catan when you consider it as a social game is that it is impossible to win on your own. In order to come out with the ten victory points required for victory you need to work with your opponents. You need to trade your excess resources with them in order to get the scarce resources that you need for your current project. Of course, the player you’re trading with will only accept the deal if they feel like they’re getting what they need and not giving up too much. This creates a constant positive feedback loop for all the players in the game. Every player feels like they’re getting ahead with every transaction, and no player benefits from singling out any other player because that player may ultimately have the resources that are needed. Because of this constant positive feedback loop, this creates a lighthearted environment where every player is enjoying themselves because they all feel like they’re doing well.

This also creates a consistently positive social environment for the game, one where players are rewarded for constant interaction with their fellows, and so are encouraged to create and maintain said environment. Any game of Catan results in deals being thrown around like candy, players, constantly bargaining with one another, constantly *interacting* instead of simply rolling to destroy your enemy's units. In that sense as well, Catan lacks any sort of direct combative interaction. The only marginally combative interaction comes from the robber, and even then it's rare that using the piece would be solely targeted at one player in particular.