

In **GUMSHOE**, the exciting new game from **Sleuth Publications**, you take a step back in time to the gangster-ridden streets of San Francisco in the 1930's. You join the ranks of the Continental Detective Agency as a private 'Dick'. Using all of your guile and cunning you track down and solve the cases to bring culprits to justice.

This game catches the full flavour of life in the 30's, and makes you feel that you are stepping right into the pages of a Sam Spade story. It is played in much the same way as Consulting Detective, but has so many added extras that it easily outdoes the former in style and originality. Set in the City of San Francisco, we get a very well-illustrated flavour of the city from several helpful game aids:

The **Maps of The City** and surrounding area are both large and well-printed. The city area is set out as a street map and gridded for easy reference to see where you are as you ferret around the city solving clues. I liked the idea of including these maps, as they are useful and interesting, and as an added extra, can be used with other games systems set in the 20's or 30's!

Two **Telephone Directories** give the names of all the relevant people and places, complete with reference numbers to locate them on the maps and in the clue book in case you want to question them.

The **California Department of Motor Vehicles** provides a list of all the license numbers and owners of vehicles, along with fingerprints that really add to the enjoyment of the game. These can be matched with the prints found at the scene of a crime, and with those on the **criminal record cards** to eliminate or incriminate possible suspects. The book also offers information on 'how to read finger-prints', a thoughtful addition.

The **Mug-shot Cards** show the criminal records and fingerprints of people encountered in the game, complete with relevant mug-shots of that person (another thing I really liked about the game).

The **Autopsy Reports** show examinations that were carried out at the scene of the crime by the Forensic experts. They give Bullistic reports so that the murder weapon can be matched with those your suspect may carry.

GUMSHOE - a preview by Peter England

It had been another hazy day on the streets of San Francisco, the lead that I had been following had turned up blank; I had played my ace and in doing so had ruined my hand.

I crossed the street to Joe's and ordered my usual of a Regular Burger and black coffee. Joe came over with my order, the half-cut smile forever engraved on his weary face.

"Hiya Lou, thought we'd missed ya tonight."

A frown crossed my beat-up brow as I lifted my Trilbe and gazed up at him, "Huh?"

"You were home earlier, saw the lights go on in ya office."

Spinning in my seat I stared across at 42nd. up at my decrepid window. A flicker of light caught my keen eyes and in the same instant I was up and grounding my way across the street with the familiar feel of my .38 in my hand.

The **Fingerprint Reports** detail the fingerprints that were found at the scene of the crime, and allow you to match them from the Motor Vehicle files and mug-shot cards.

My favourite of all the components of Gumshoe are the **Daily Newspapers**. These are set out just like a real newspaper and contain actual events of the day, alongside invented column items and ads. Hidden in these are clues to the case that you are working on, and hoaxes of course.

The most important items of the game are the **Report Book and Time Sheets**. The report book is for when you think that you have completed a case, or have run out of time. You must then report back to the **Old Man** and answer his questions relating to the case. These are found in the front of the book, with the answers conveniently to hand at the back. The time sheets are essential, especially if more than one person is playing, as you have from 9:00 am to 9:00 pm to solve a case, each clue location eating up a portion of your precious time.

Now that we have examined the contents of the game, I suppose we should consider how the game actually plays...

Firstly, the maps should be placed where all can see them, and a time-sheet given to each of the players. The daily introduction is then read aloud from the case book. After reading this, the newspaper for that day should be studied, to seek out any clues or relevant details. Now the players must decide who is going where and whom they are going to question.

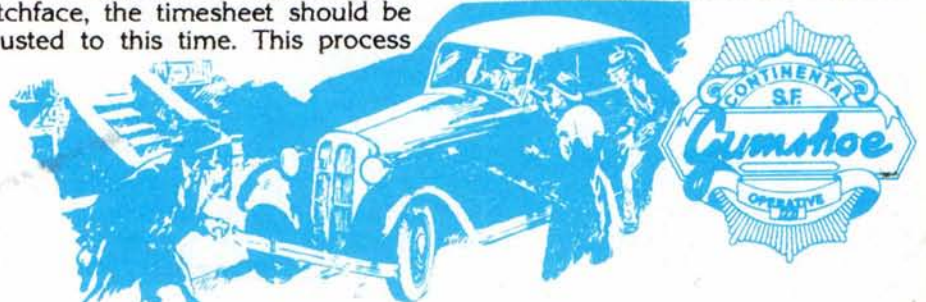
The next step is to refer to the Telephone Directories to find the relevant clue points in the clue book. After reading the clue description, which could turn up a blank, a red herring or a whole chunk of relevant information, you should mark down the time indicated on your timesheet. If, after the clue, there is a picture of a watchface, the timesheet should be adjusted to this time. This process

continues until you run out of time (9:00pm), when you must return to the office for the Old Man's questioning.

After reading the case introduction, it is a good idea to read the relevant autopsy and Lab. reports. During the course of following the clues, you can try to match fingerprints and also follow your progress on the maps from the references given at the back of the Telephone Directory. Sooner or later, you should come to a conclusion of the case and be able to answer the Old Man's questions. Don't worry if you can't solve the case at once, because I found that some cases follow on from the previous case, and you may not be able to solve a case until you have completed several others; hence one case may last several days.

When I play-tested the game, everything seemed to fall into place, and sooner or later I solved the case. One thing I really liked about the game was that in some of the clues you are faced with an "if" situation, ie. you must decide what to do from several possible choices. The element of danger involved means that you could end up in a shoot-out, or with a nasty bump on the head.

To conclude, although Gumshoe was designed to be played by several people, it makes an excellent solo game. The game is a brilliant concept, and outdoes any solo games that I have previously played. Sleuth are definitely onto a good thing with this one; the contents are well-produced, and there is so much in the box that you really get value for money. It is well-designed and very playable, and most cases can keep you occupied for hours. Gumshoe manages to capture all the thrills and adventure of 1930's America, and even rises above their previous amazing game, Consulting Detective. So when it arrives in the shops and you want something to keep you occupied for a long time, and is value for money, rush out and buy Gumshoe...Peter England.



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Gumshoe

FROM THE PEOPLE WHO BROUGHT
YOU 'CONSULTING DETECTIVE'
SLEUTH PUBLICATIONS PROUDLY
PRESENT THEIR NEW BLOCKBUSTER:

Gumshoe

The place: San Francisco. The year: 1934.

The day: Monday 9.00am.

Push open the door of the CONTINENTAL
DETECTIVE AGENCY, and YOU are the GUMSHOE.

Everything you need to enter the
1930's world of the hard-boiled
detective; dig out the clues, search for
solutions. Gumshoe contains detailed
maps, directories listing thousands of people
and places, a case book filled with hundreds of
clues, police mug-shots, nine dated newspapers,
a fingerprint file and case reports with the solutions.
You have the tools, the contacts, and nine days
to unravel the mysteries that haunt the city by the bay.

BETTER GET TO IT, GUMSHOE! For 1-6 Private Eyes.
Available in April from most good games shops.

In case of difficulty, GUMSHOE is also available from
Sleuth Publications: 89 Victoria Street, Liverpool L1 6DG.

