

Although I don't play a lot of games, I enjoy those that involve strategic thinking. Fire Emblem is one of my favorite video game franchises. I've also played games like Town of Salem, Werewolf, and Avalon with some of my friends. These kinds of games catch my attention because I like the additional challenge that comes with trying to think in another person's shoes, considering the little information I get from them. Playing Unstable Unicorns with my classmates and with the social psychology concepts in mind has given me new insights on strategy games and how they can change how people think and interact with each other.

I noticed that our group's dynamic changed gradually as the game progressed. First, we aren't very close as a class, so it was understandable that, initially, we weren't vocal about each other's plays. Second, everyone in the group has never played Unstable Unicorns, so we were all testing the waters at the start. However, when everyone stopped playing basic unicorn cards and started getting the hang of the game, it became competitive. Instead of being passive whenever someone put down an interesting card, everyone seemed of the plays and reacted more. Sir Railey and the high school interns would also give us hints about what kind of plays we could do with the cards we have, and I believe this contributed to the increased competitiveness because we were slowly understanding the different possibilities.

I observed coordination among the group whenever someone has the choice to destroy a unicorn card. Even though we all want to win, everyone gives suggestions of the optimal card to destroy considering everyone else's stables. The destruction of a powerful card would help each of us with our own goals. At one point towards the end of the game, I was going to win in my next turn, but everyone else started working together to make my stable crumble. It was interesting because the players who were trying to bring me down wouldn't even have a chance to win because time was running out. I think at that point they were stopping my victory in the spirit of the game. It was also interesting whenever someone would play a unicorn card that would turn the tides of the game; everyone starts cooperating by using their neigh cards to stop the player.

At one point during the game, Robin was going to destroy James' Queen Bee card, but everyone was suggesting against the play because there were other more "dangerous" cards. In the end, we all accommodated Robin's decision because it would still benefit us in the end.

Although the atmosphere during the game was competitive because everyone started doing strategic plays and maximizing their upgrade and magic cards, I felt that our group had more conflict. It was pretty obvious that our game wasn't progressing as much as the other group's game. Our discard pile was significantly higher than the draw pile, but everyone only had one to two cards in their stables. A lot of unicorns were destroyed throughout the game, and there were a lot of destructive plays. I think everyone wanted to win, and since we were new to the game and unfamiliar with the deck, it was easier to make sure nobody else would win rather than make strategic plays that would benefit us as individual players.

Social influences aren't something I usually observe, but since I had them in mind, I found it very interesting. I noticed that everyone was attacking James' stable right from the start. I think that everyone conformed to the idea that he was the target because he played interesting cards at the start of the game. Even when other people were ahead by a few unicorns, some of the players would still target James or neigh his plays. Sir Railey also had a lot of influence in our game. I think we regarded him as more experienced than us, so we would follow his advice and do the plays he suggested. Of course, in spite of the destruction

that ensued, we were still bound by the rules of the game and had to comply with what's played against us. Whenever we're neighed, we have no choice but to comply, unless we had more neighs or a super neigh.

I enjoyed this activity, and it made me realize that a lot of social processes and social influences are involved in nearly every kind of interaction we have with other people. I also realized that understanding these concepts may even be used to one's advantage during games like these.