Motivation

The process of creating my latest board game was a unique blend of inspirations that came together seamlessly. After recently watching the adrenaline-fueled movie "Mad Max: Fury Road," I was captivated by its dystopian world and post-apocalyptic theme. This inspired me to infuse my board game with a similar setting, where survival and resource management are paramount. Drawing from some of my favorite board games, I incorporated mechanics that added depth and excitement to gameplay. Inspired by "Concordia," I integrated a dynamic hand management system, allowing players to strategically plan their actions and optimize their resources. Taking a cue from "Gloomhaven," I introduced a diverse range of action choices, ensuring that each decision had consequences and shaped the outcome of the game. Additionally, I drew inspiration from "Ankh: Gods of Egypt" to incorporate an area control element, where players compete for dominance over territories, leading to intense conflicts and strategic maneuvering. By remixing various aspects from the above, I came up with the idea of two players having a duel on the table top, trying their best to knock each other out.

Values & Play Experience
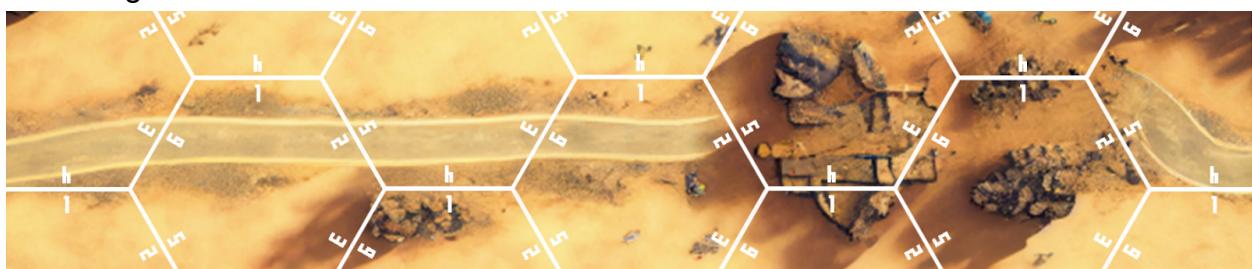
Lately I have been playing a lot of Texas hold'em. I like the game because of how deep the game is both strategic wise and mind game wise. Therefore the first thing that came to my mind is to make a game that has a *mind game* playing a big role, because I believe that is making all the fun when playing with your friends. Friends always argue over little things, they can easily have a heated debate about what is the best way to win any kind of game, that is sports, video games, board games, no exception. Hence the second thing is to make **different victory paths** so that people with different personalities can take whatever approach they are most relatable to, and be very willing to demonstrate how their strategy is simply better than others. This is fantastic for the game because when both players think they are outsmarting their opponent, it draws people back to play the next one. Either for revenge or to try out new ways of winning. I also wanted the game to be *thematic* enough for players to conduct straightforward actions, such as using gas to power the engine, and stagger when you are injured. These little things that seem completely normal actually help the players to immerse into

the battlefield, where you are fighting for your clan rather than just playing some pieces on a sheet of paper. Meanwhile, I also wanted the game to be fun by itself, even without any skin it should work as an interesting game with its *core mechanics*. Players contemplate on what each other is going to do next while trying to figure out the best, yet safe move for themselves. Since the cards are going to the discard pile, you would also need to plan ahead of time to arrange some efficient sequence of moves. Observation is key, players are motivated to *keep their head up* to observe the current status on the board. This prevents them from just playing their own solitaire game and welcomes more interaction among the players. Finally, the game gives out huge rewards and *satisfaction* when you successfully land an attack on your opponent. But it balances itself by being potentially overpowered if you choose the more peaceful path to claim or develop and manage to survive, which is yet another kind of satisfaction.

Design
- Hexagonal tiles and direction indicator

By using this and a d6, we no longer need a campus like thing to show direction, it's elegant and straight forward at the same time.
- Development tokens and abilities
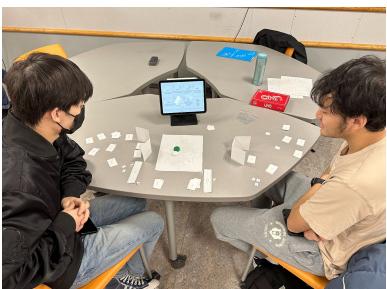
There are 3 tech tokens and 3 civil tokens, the tech ones include: spear, armor, and engine. Giving you longer range when attacking, protects you from injury penalty, and allows you to play better action, respectively. They resemble the ability you will likely achieve when you have stronger technological development. On the other hand, civil developments grant you support, revolt and construction abilities where you can claim or overtake a tile at ease.

- The advantage of self territory

Claiming territory is the fundamental concept of the game. There are multiple good reasons that you might want to claim. First, your mobility is enhanced if you have a chain of territory on the map. This chain can also be used to restrict enemies movement and to better anticipate which way they are heading. Secondly, some ability has power only when you are on self territory, and after all you can always win by conquering half of the land.

Playtest, Feedback & Struggles

	Features: rectangular tile map, single action on each card (around 15 of them) Feedback: 1. There is not much going on with the claimed area, not rewarding/thematic. 2. Only your hand or your health will end up being the restriction when you decide which card to play.
	Features: rebalanced gas, own territory movement boost, enemy territory reduce health. Feedback: 1. The game drags a bit without anything really happening. 2. The opponent is too far away and not engaging. Struggles: 1. How to encourage fighting and remain balanced? 2. How to make the components more accessible?
	Features: Hexagonal tile map, use d6 as direction indicator, use colored cube as territory ownership marker, top and bottom actions on a single card. Feedback: 1. Number on map confusing. 2. Attacking is underpowered. 3. Developing is underpowered, while the perks are unbalanced.

	Feature: the bottom action quick attack that has priority over move, three copies of four different kinds of development instead of two copies of three different kinds. Feedback: Fun, but a digital version will make administrative work much easier. Struggle: What is a good way to teach this slightly complicated game?

Accessibility & Approachability

Done:

1. Player screen to play cards conveniently without putting them facedown.
2. Ipad health and tank tracker. Visible to both players.
3. Player aid for actions and development abilities.
4. Uses d6 to indicate directions. Much easier than any paper piece.

Improve:

1. Numbers such as 6 and 9 on the map are hard to read. Put underscore to fix.
2. Too much administrative work, namely keeping track of the tank and health, direction indicators, etc. Everything can be streamlined with a digital version.
3. Lack of a graphical game rule.

Future Work

1. DIGITAL VERSION coming out this summer!
2. Individual card artwork
3. More detailed player figures, such as a 3d printed battle vehicle.
4. A better written rulebook and player aid.