

notes on Murphy origin episode:

NOT created by Charles Darrow, per Parker Ross / Weber claims

Elizabeth "Lizzie" Magie (Phillips)

- created the "Landlord's Game" in 1903
- progressive feminist
- Democrat (abs. Henry George)

* supposed advocate of the poor, BUT,

* "single-tax idea" = tax land
in proportion to its increase
in value, which George maintained
would lead to the end of land
property rights entirely, aka.
John Marshall + McCulloch v. Maryland.

reinforced state legitimacy
by arguing for single-tax ideas
claimed that while individuals have
right to property, they do NOT
have right to land, i.e. real
estate, "since Nature or God created
the land itself, no individual
has the right to assume ownership
of that land." M. Rolland, For a
New Liberty, 40.

* fits with the
original one of the game: "The Landlord's Game"

it was supposed to be an educational
critique of land monopolies, rentier capitalism,
and general inequality.

ME: if William Jennings Bryan had built a board game,
this would be it * Cross of Gold Boulevard?

Magic's game plan had, originally, a board with properties as well as wages for labor on "Motto Earth."

+ two sets of rules

"Monopolist/competitive" version

"Prosperity" version
- ironic is that this was the anti-monopolist/cooperative version
the free market rejected.

ME: Magic reminds me of the early feminist-suffragette soccer crowd of Elizabeth Cady Stanton, John Vard House, etc reform movements.

Charles Bruce Darrow
learned this version of game;
WWI vet, later salesman / leasing, sten engineer.

• lost job early in Depression;
supported family with odd jobs including eventually adopting Magic's game

• added function elements including color-coding, wooden houses + hotels, other property names in Philadelphia / Atlantic City area (Jardens)

• copyrighted in 1933, patent in 1935.

• sold to Parker Bros. for \$7000 check + royalties in 1935.

• Magic stated in her own writings that the intent of the game was to teach against "land-grabbing".

ME/analysis: even in the middle of the Depression, players preferred the entrepreneurial and competitive aspects of the Darrow revision. BUT, game still reinforces an anti-capitalist mentality.

much of the gameplay from the original was left intact.

1. a trip around the board meant each player "just wages"
2. sales prices + rent costs in each square were meant to reinforce that rent transactions are always involuntary; railroads too.
3. there were "no trespassing - go to jail" squares.
(changed to more ambiguous "Go directly to jail")
- * ALSO, "The Poor House" square became the "Jail Parking" space.
4. possessions are acquired mainly through luck.
5. no consumer choice or consumer sovereignty.
(this is replaced by the roll of the dice.)
6. landing on a property creates only a loss, but no mutual gain.
- ME: that often puzzled me as to why:
what did it actually mean "to land on something"
7. so called monopolies (color-coded areas)
are very easily obtained whereas in real world, "monopolies" only form in the market due to better market superiority = consumers prefer it.
8. Chase and Community chest cards are better representations of centralized, regulatory and draconian state.
9. Central banking = "No player can borrow from or lend money to another player."

10. all mortgages are price controlled to a 10% interest rate. (Fischer would be proud = anything else is "wrong")

11. re: inflation: "the bomb never goes bankrupt"

12. if it were reality, "Monopoly" one could think of each square as an individual monopoly grant; only the govt can give out such grants, so govt was the original owner of all

WILD: ~1961,

a 161-hour marathon game of Monopoly at the University of Pitt., the bomb ran out of money.
 • players used Parker Bros. for a bailout.

• company sent extra game money in a plane to Pitt and even had an announcer can pick it up and deliver it (thus devaluing the already extant money).

the initial price, therefore, isn't so much about ownership, but the exclusive cost of lobbying the govt for a special monopoly grant.

other players are "mandated" to pay you because you own the privilege.

*monopoly, truly defined, is "a special grant of privilege by the state."

ME: again, even as a kid, I would wonder if, for example, one railroad service was better than the other, or just how shitty it must have been to live on Baltic Place.

Miss quote from H. Austin summarizes what's wrong with Monopoly by omission:

"Neither the entrepreneurs nor the farmers nor the capitalists determine what has to be produced. The consumers do that... Their buying and their abstention from buying decides who should own and run the plants and farms. They make poor people rich and rich people poor. They determine precisely what should be produced, in what quality, and in what quantities. They are merciless bosses, full of whims and fancies, changeable and unpredictable."

other oddities:

+ Maggie received \$500 from P.B.

+ saw Monopoly games and rejoiced in popularity; only later to become indignant.

+ died an embittered, childless widow who had worked at the U.S. Office of Education as a typist.

+ Ralph Anspach, left wing academic who was sued by P.B. for his 'Anti-Monopoly' game, 1973.

(misses how anti-capitalistic that game is.)

San Francisco State

- big proponent of anti-trust laws.

+ Wright Bros. filed their patent on the same day as Maggie

* played into the

role of federal case workers;

"competitors" or "monopolists"

* ironically, goal of game is to return to a truly "free market system."

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