

Why colors clash Hate Is Enough

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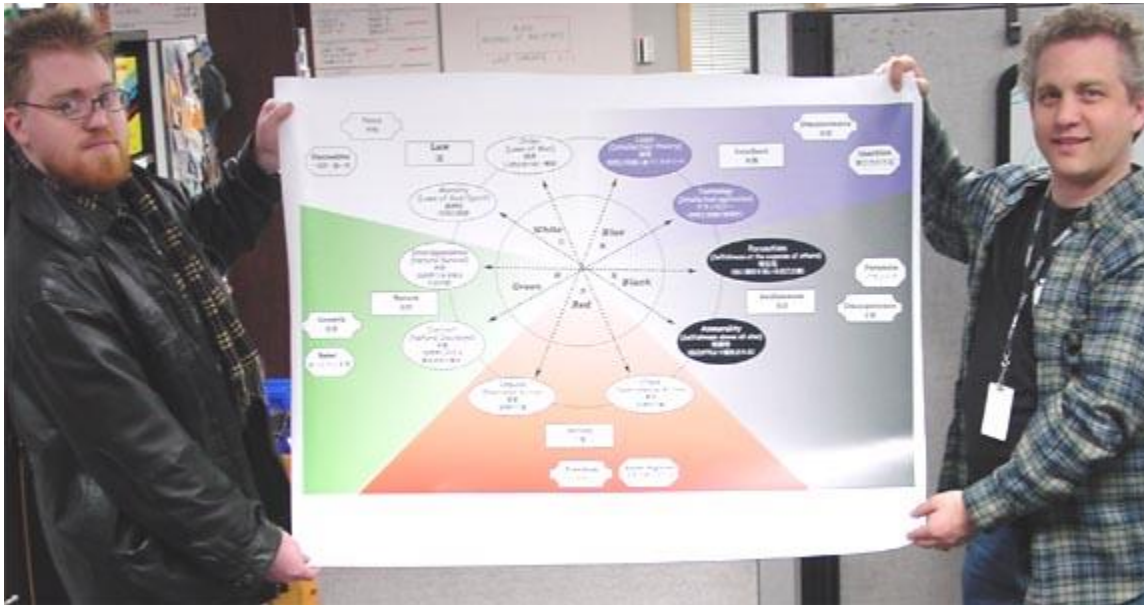
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Why can't everyone just get along?...

The answer rests in the color wheel. Ah, the color wheel. Many people appreciate the genius of Richard Garfield's basic **Magic** mechanics, but another innovation of Richard's that gets less attention but is equally important is the color wheel. The color wheel is the source not just of the game's flavor but also of its mechanics. As one of the people who has spent a great deal of time with the color wheel (I'm what's known in R&D as a flavor guru, much akin to a rules guru but with flavor), I have become more and more impressed with it the deeper I've studied it.



Tyler Bielman, R&D's Intellectual Property Manager, helps Mark unfurl the color wheel.

So why do the colors hate each other? I'm glad you asked. Here in a nutshell are the basic five conflicts of the game:

WHITE VS. BLACK

Morality vs. Amorality (aka Good vs. Evil)

White believes in the existence of a set of moral rules; black doesn't. In white's eyes, that makes black evil. In black's eyes, that makes white foolish. White believes that it is its moral responsibility to destroy black. Black believes it is its responsibility to destroy anyone who wants them destroyed (or anyone who gets in their way).

Light vs. Dark (Day vs. Night)

White is open, honest, and straightforward. White likes having its rules displayed for all to see (and, of course, to follow). Black likes secrecy. Black has agendas. White enjoys the light of day; black enjoys the dark of night. White will use the light to illuminate the evil of black; black will use the dark to corrupt the naïveté of white.



The Good of the Group vs. the Good of the Individual

White values the group; black values the individual. White's rules (what it calls laws) put the importance of the group over the importance of the individual; black cares only about itself. White will try to impose its laws on black to protect the innocent. Black will defy those laws to protect the rights of the individual – in other words, itself.



GREEN VS. BLACK

Life vs. Death

Green is about the natural way. Black is about *its* way. Green believes that everyone should step back and just let nature do its thing, whereas black believes that it needs to step in and make sure things happen the way it wants. Green believes no force is more powerful or important than life, but black believes death trumps life. Death is the

ultimate power. With death, black can make the world into the image it wishes.

Growth vs. Decay

Green wants things to realize their potential, and it believes that only through growth will the world's potential be reached. Black, however, thumbs its nose at potential. A dead creature, for example, has little potential... Well, other than as a resource to zombify.

Symbiosis vs. Parasitism

Green wants things to live together in harmony (well, as much harmony as the food chain allows). Black wants things to bow at its feet and do what it tells them. Green believes in the interconnection of all living things, and from that interconnection comes the true power of nature. Black sees all living things as yet another tool it can use to gain the power its craves.

GREEN VS. BLUE

Nature vs. Nurture

Green believes that an individual is born with all his important qualities; blue believes that an individual is a blank slate that can be shaped and formed. Green strives to find the hidden potential inside each living thing: Strength comes from within. Blue believes that potential is created: Any living thing can be trained or taught or changed to become whatever blue wants it to be.

Natural Growth vs. Artificial Growth

Green respects nature and natural growth, while blue respects progress and artificial growth. Green looks at the natural world and sees the essence of life. Blue looks around and sees a series of natural resources ripe for use in its latest experiment. Green wants to protect nature killing anything that threatens it; blue, wanting to further advancement, is nature's greatest enemy.

Reality vs. Illusion



Green believes in what *is*; blue believes in what *could be*. Green's strength lies in its ability to recognize the value in all living things. Blue's strength rests in its ability to understand perception. Green threatens you with what you know, while blue threatens you with what you don't.

BLUE VS. RED



Intellect vs. Emotion

Blue embraces intellect, but red embraces emotion. Blue believes that the key to victory is knowledge. Red believes the key to victory is passion. Blue thinks before it acts; red just acts.

Thought vs. Action (Cold vs. Hot)

Blue is about the coolness that comes with the distance of thought; red is about the heat that accompanies the fury of action. Blue plots. Red acts. Blue plans. Red smashes. Blue anticipates. Red destroys.

Caution vs. Impulsiveness

Blue believes that mistakes come from rushing. Red believes that mistakes come from not listening to your gut. Blue sits and

studies; red charges and kills. Blue thinks red is dangerous and must be controlled, whereas red thinks blue is threatening and must be destroyed.

WHITE VS. RED

Order vs. Chaos

White believes in the importance of rules. Red hates rules – red just wants to be free. White wants things neat and orderly; red likes things messy and chaotic. White believes that red needs to be reigned in to avoid anarchy, but red believes white needs to be abolished to avoid fascism.



Defense vs. Offense

White thinks the best offense is a good defense. Red doesn't think that much; red just likes smashing things. White feels a need to protect. Red feels a need to destroy. Obviously, these two agendas clash.

Strategy vs. Spontaneity

White believes that rules always help. There's no reason that shouldn't apply to battle. Red doesn't feel a need to think that far ahead... That's what impulses are for.

As you can see, the colors have a good reason for hating one another. Hopefully, this article will give you a sense of the depth of the Magic colors. Stay tuned to MagicTheGathering.com for future articles and columns on the intricacies of **Magic** flavor.

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