



The Experiment is Loose

John Carter
Saturday School
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Send your rules questions to Level Four Judge [John Carter](#). Can't find the answer to your question somewhere else, like the [Magic Comprehensive Rules](#)? Maybe he's already answered it! Try the [Saturday School Searchable Rules Database](#).

Dissension went on sale yesterday. Now it's up to the analysts and players to decide whether the "Guild model" experiment was a success. All this weekend there are release events celebrating the culmination of the *Ravnica* block—perfect opportunities to experiment for yourself with the world of Ravnica.

Q: If [Protean Hulk](#) went to the graveyard, could I search my library for any number of [Kokusho, the Evening Star](#), or could I only search for one? --Jeremy R.

A: You could only find one Kokusho. The sum of all the creatures' mana cost must be six or less. That's one Kokusho by itself, or perhaps four [Suntail Hawks](#) plus four [Little Girls](#).

Q: How does forecast would interact with [Dovescape](#)? --Johnpaul A.

A: Forecast is an ability, not a spell. You can use forecast and never trigger [Dovescape](#).

Q: If I were to play a [Boseiju, Who Shelters All](#) with a [Dovescape](#), could I get free Birds and keep all of my spells? --John K.

A: Boseiju will let your instants and sorceries produce their normal effect shortly after [Dovescape](#) gives you a small flock of Birds. Your creature spells won't trigger the [Dovescape](#) in the first place, and your enchantment and (non-creature) artifact spells won't be sheltered by Boseiju.

Q: How does [Doubling Season](#) work with [Flash Foliage](#)? Do both of the tokens block the creature targeted by [Flash Foliage](#)? --Jan B.

A: You'll get two tokens blocking the targeted creature instead of just one. You can't split the tokens among attackers.

Q: If I were to give [Rakdos the Defiler](#) double strike, and I dealt combat damage to the opponent... --Yusuke T.

A: Yes, half of your opponent's non-Demon permanents would be sacrificed after first strike resolved, and then half of the opponent's remaining non-Demon permanents would be sacrificed after regular damage resolves. Ultimately, that's 75% of the opponent's nDPs.

Q: If multiple creatures with the graft ability are put into play at the same time using [Protean Hulk](#)'s ability, can they graft their +1/+1 counters on each other? --Hank

A: Creatures that come into play at the same time can see each other coming into play. You'll be able to move counters from a grafter to any of the other creatures.



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***Extra*:** If you graft away all the counters on the grafter, you won't be able to move counters from that grafter, and chances are it will go to the graveyard as a state-based effect (zero or less toughness).

Q: When Writ of Passage is either forecast onto a creature, or it attacks, is it considered unblockable only if the ability resolves, or is the power requirement a constant check? --Ian

A: Writ works almost the same based on whether it's being forecast or it's enchanting the creature. If it's forecast, the target must be legal (a creature with power 2 or less) when the ability is announced and when it resolves. If it's triggering as an enchantment when the creature attacks, the trigger immediately checks if the creature has power 2 or less. If it does, then the trigger continues on; if not, the trigger immediately goes away and does nothing. As the trigger resolves, it checks again to make sure. Once either the forecast or the triggered ability has resolved, changing the creature's power won't change its unblockability.



Q: I was wondering how does the card Muse Vessel work? --Alex

A: Muse Vessel removes cards from a player's hand - your opponent or yourself - for 3 and 2. You can also spend 1 to play a card you've removed from the game with the Vessel, such as the land you might have just removed from your opponent's hand. What it doesn't do is pay any part of the cost or change the rules about playing cards. You won't be able to play a sorcery like it's an instant just because you Mused one earlier. Playing the removed card will put it on the stack - you don't get to replay the card ad infinitum. Once the card resolves, it goes into play under your control (permanents), or into its owner's graveyard (instants and sorceries).

***Extra*:** In many respects, Muse Vessel is like Ornate Kanzashi. Unlike the Kanzashi, if you don't play the card that turn, you can reactivate the Muse and play a removed card on some other turn.

Q: If I use the activated ability of Prahv, Spires of Order on Char, does it prevent the damage from all the effects? --Hyrum T.

A: Yes, any effects from that source that would deal damage are prevented. Char would deal zero to a target creature or player and zero to the person that played it.

Q: Can Eternal Dragon be used to search out the Ravnica dual lands or can it only search for basic Plains cards with its ability? --Sean

A: To save everyone time, here's the simple breakdown of landcyclers and fetching:

Ravnica dual lands and Revised dual lands can be fetched by: Landcyclers, the Mirage fetch lands, the Onslaught fetch lands, Farseek, and anything looking for a *basic land type*.

Ravnica dual lands and Revised dual lands cannot be fetched by: Anything looking for a *basic land*.

The key idea is that basic lands have basic land types, but non-basic lands can have those types, too. If the effect wants a basic land of a given type, you won't find duals, but if the effect only cares about the type of land and not whether the land itself is basic, then finding a dual should be easy. Compare Gaea's Touch (require a basic Forest) to Wood Elves (wants a Forest - basic or not) for a clear contrast.



Q: How does transmute and split cards work. --Matt A.

A: You can transmute for a card if the mana cost matches either side. For example, Supply // Demand can be found with Dimir Infiltrator (Supply) or Drift of Phantasms (Demand), but it can't be found with Brainspoil. Regardless of what side you used for transmuting, you can play either half of the card, not just the side you went looking for.

Q: With Bond of Agony, is X a mana cost or the life I need to pay or both? --Evan

A: It's both. You have to pay ⓧ and X life to play the Bond. If the spell gets countered, the life is already gone. You can't pay more than you have life and mana to pay.

Q: If I play an Avatar of Discord with no cards in hand, do I get to keep it or is it sacrificed? --Kevin M.

A: The Avatar will be sacrificed. Viridian Shaman or Nekrataal are similar in that they both try to do something when they come into play. Unlike Avatar of Discord, they don't have any consequence if you can't. The Avatar is more demanding and requires that it be sacrificed if you didn't discard.

Q: I play Demonfire, and I am holding only one instant in my hand. My opponent tries to counter Demonfire. In response, I play the instant. Now that my hand is empty, will hellbent trigger for Demonfire? --Chris S

A: Demonfire's hellbent ability is constantly checking your hand size. If you don't have any cards in hand when the counter tries to resolve, the counter won't stop the Demonfire, and the Demonfire will resolve as normal.

Q: How does Bronze Bombshell interact with Endless Whispers? I would assume that should I sacrifice my Bombshell with a Whispers in play, the opponent would get it at the end of turn, at which point it would explode, and then come back to me at the end of next turn to repeat the madness. --J. R.

A: Well put—if the Bombshell goes to the graveyard (more than just a sacrifice can send it there), your opponent will get it at the end of the turn. This will cause the Bombshell to explode, and you'll get it back at the end of the following turn (end of turn triggers only happen once per turn).



Q: How does Swift Silence work? --Niels

A: When Swift Silence resolves, every other spell on the stack gets countered. Anything that gets countered by Swift Silence lets you draw a card. In general, this makes Swift Silence much like Dismiss. However, if there are multiple other spells on the stack, you will counter them all and draw a card for each.

Extra: There are two things to remember. One is that it doesn't affect abilities—just spells. The other is that if the spell isn't countered (such as an instant played with Boseiju mana), you won't draw for that spell because it wasn't countered.

Q: Psychic Possession is an Enchant Opponent. If my opponent were to somehow gain control of Psychic Possession, it would be put into the graveyard as a SBE as he is not his own opponent, and thus not a legal enchantee. Am I right? --Michael

A: Correct—you can be your own worst enemy, but you can't be your own opponent. Our friends the state-based effects will peel the Possession off of the not-so-opponent and put it into the graveyard the next chance it gets.

Q: I control Leyline of the Void, and my opponent controls Sacred Ground. If I play Wildfire, will his land return? --Nicolas

A: No, Sacred Ground won't trigger because the Leyline replaces the “go to graveyard” from the sacrifice with “remove from the game.” The Ground never sees what happens.

Q: If I sacrifice Shambling Shell with Golgari Germination in play, can I put the Shell's +1/+1 counter on the token created by Germination? In other words, which resolves first? --Greg P.

A: The token resolves first, but you started the process by picking a target for the counter. Since the token wasn't there to be targeted, you can't put the counter on the token even though the token will arrive before the counter.

Q: If I had an Ascendant Evincar in play, would creatures like Golgari Rotwurm get +1/+1 for being black, or -1/-1 for being green, or would the effects just cancel out? --Brian R.

A: Being black in addition to any other colors qualifies Golgari Rotwurm as a black creature. The fact it's also green doesn't make it non-black. Only the +1/+1 from the Evincar will apply.



Q: When exactly is the earliest my opponent can play Time Stop? --Richard W.

A: The earliest point in any turn for playing any spell or ability is when you receive priority as the upkeep starts. This point is after the active player (whose turn it is) has untapped and after any beginning of upkeep triggered abilities have triggered.

***Extra*:** You can, of course, respond to the Time Stop with instants and abilities regardless of when it's played.

Q: About Chaos Orb: If it lands on your opponent's library is the library destroyed? Before he flips can I spread out my cards so there is no way it can touch two cards? If my opponent is using it, can he flip it high and then while it is in the air, manually sweep my playing field into a quick pile that gets landed on? --Duane G.

A: Chaos Orb only destroys permanents—the library is a zone, not a permanent. The generally accepted practice on spreading permanents after Chaos Orb has been revealed is that anything in play has a virtual pin stuck through it. You can turn the cards ninety degrees and back, but there's no wild smearing of cards all over the table, and no gluing Morphlings to the ceiling. The same goes for your opponent—he or she can't stack your permanents in a nicely nuke-able bundle anymore than you already had when the Chaos Orb first showed up.

Q: I was a Chinese citizen, but I'm becoming a United States citizen. Once I become a United States citizen, can I still play in Chinese Regional Championships if it's the first Regional Championships I'm playing that year? --Zhen

A: The official requirements for Regional Championship participation require participants to have been citizens or residents since January 1st of that year. A Chinese citizen living in the United States could fit both of those qualifications, however, there's one other restriction on Regionals. You can play in only one country's Regional Championships—which only makes sense because you're aiming for the National title. If you play in a United States Regionals, you can't play in a Regionals elsewhere in the world until the next Regionals season.

The Regionals season is underway. In the United States, Regionals will be happening on May 20th—just two short weeks away, and on the very first day Dissension becomes legal in Constructed events! Check out magicthegathering.com for coverage, or slap a new deck together and head for the tournament hall for yourself.

Class Dismissed.

--Carter

*Carter has been playing **Magic** since 1994 and has been a certified judge since 1997. He has judged at every size and type of event, and he's always interested in new ideas to make events and **Magic** better for the gaming community. Carter enjoys helping players understand the rules, even if his analogies aren't as funny as he thinks they are.*



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