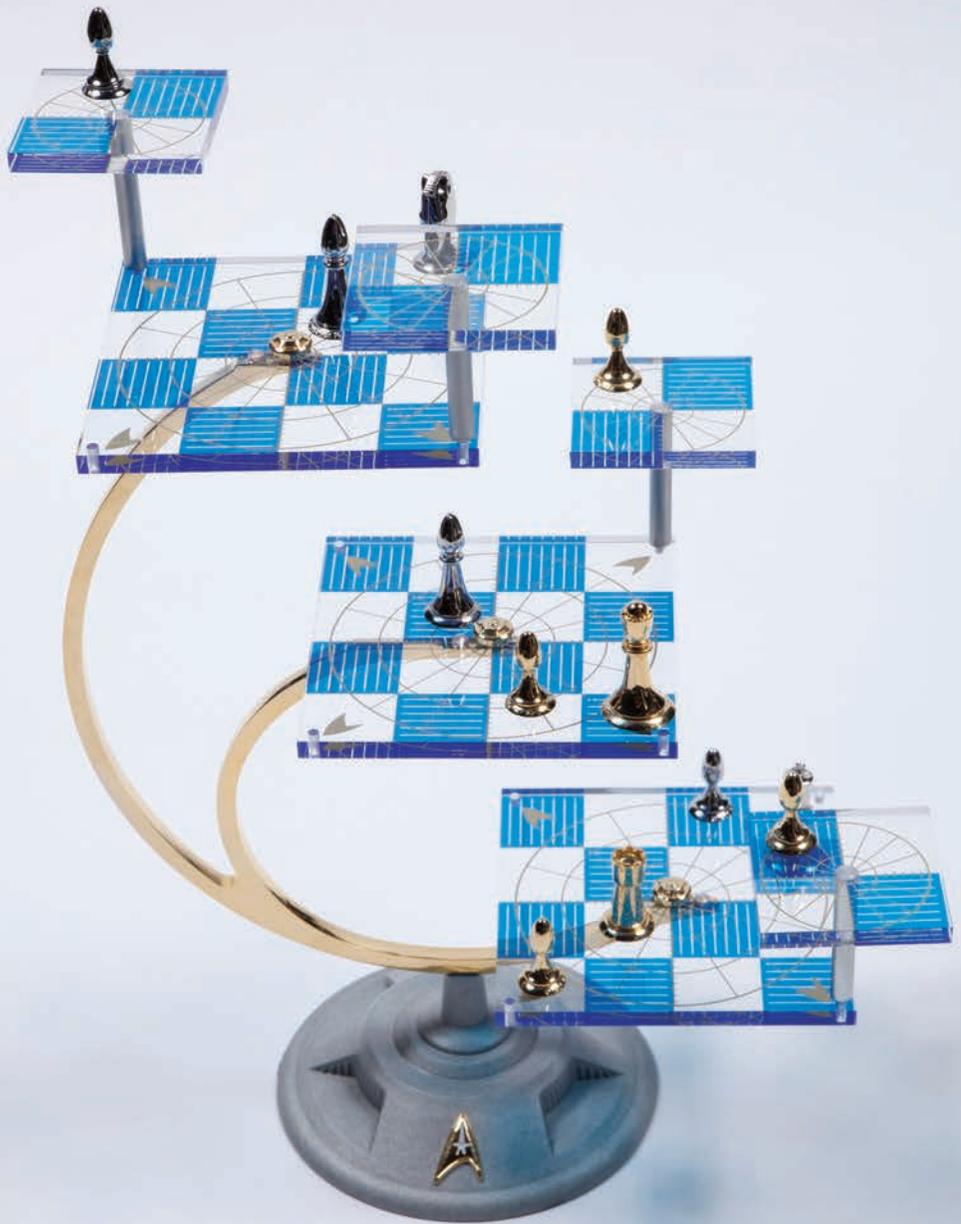


EVERYBODY'S GAME

CHESS IN POPULAR CULTURE



OCTOBER 18, 2012 – APRIL 21, 2013



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Everybody knows that queens, kings, bishops, and pawns are chess pieces, but what happens when cultural icons like Miss Piggy, Homer Simpson, Darth Vader, and Piglet take their place?

Chess in Advertising

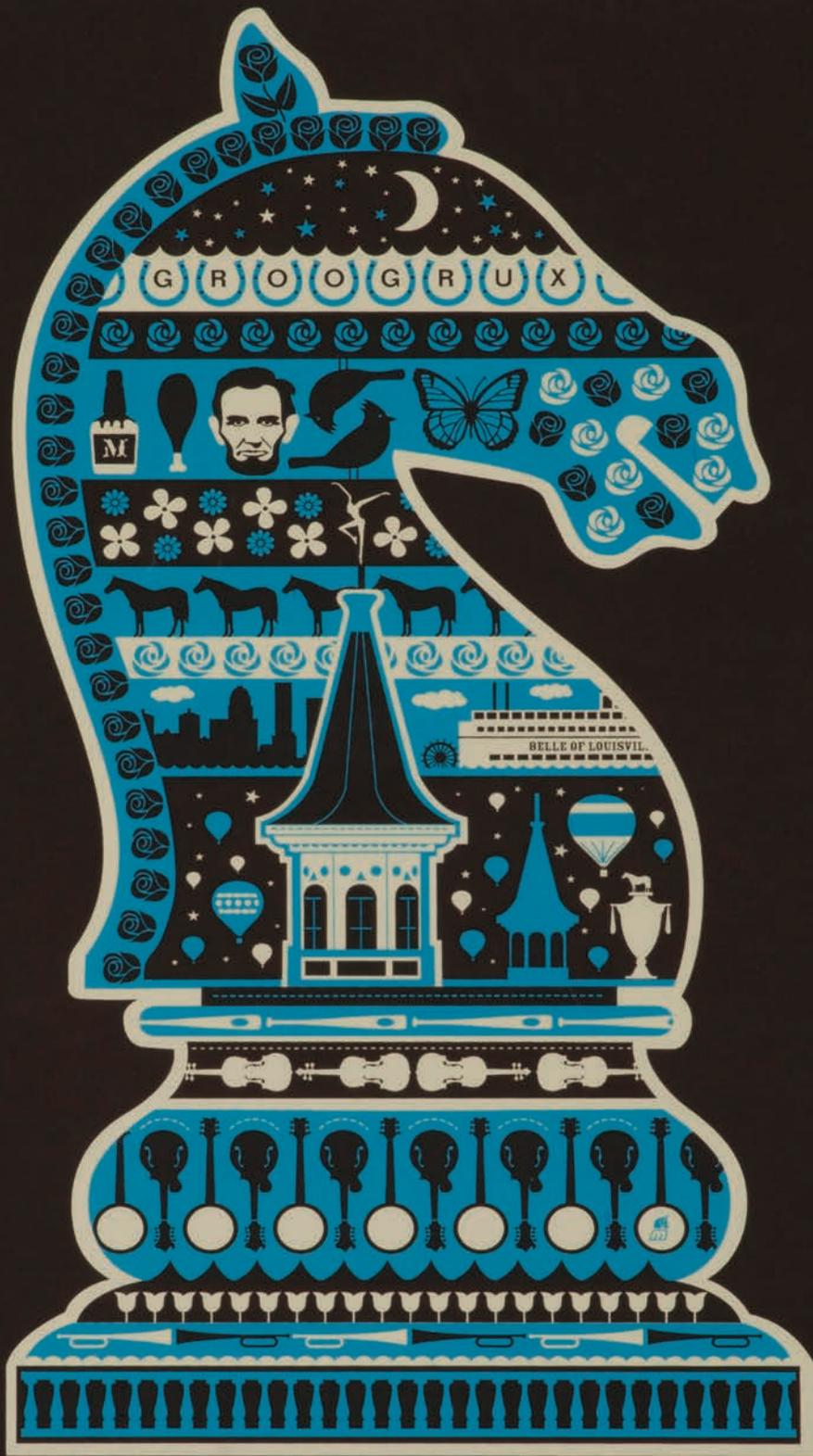
Since the birth of mass media, the rich and recognizable symbolism of chess has been used to add an intellectual edge to entertainment and marketing campaigns alike. For hundreds of years, chess has been a reflection on the culture of its time, as the pieces represented “players” in wars and characters in popular literature.

Often associated with intelligence, sophistication, inspiration, strategy, class, and success, chess effortlessly fits into marketing campaigns selling myriad products. There is something so unique about the game of chess—its far-reaching popularity and easily recognizable concept makes it the ideal tool to promote merchandise ranging from alcoholic beverages to insurance. And, because the game and terms associated with it are so ingrained into society, one does not have to be a skilled player to understand intricate details and see the connections, making it a perfect metaphor for when a company wants you to make the right “move” to buy its product. Since many chess terms and phrases, such as checkmate, pawn, and opening move, are now a part of the English lexicon, the game’s inclusion in advertisements captures a certain air of class and logic, touching on aspects that marketers believe people see, or want to see, in themselves.

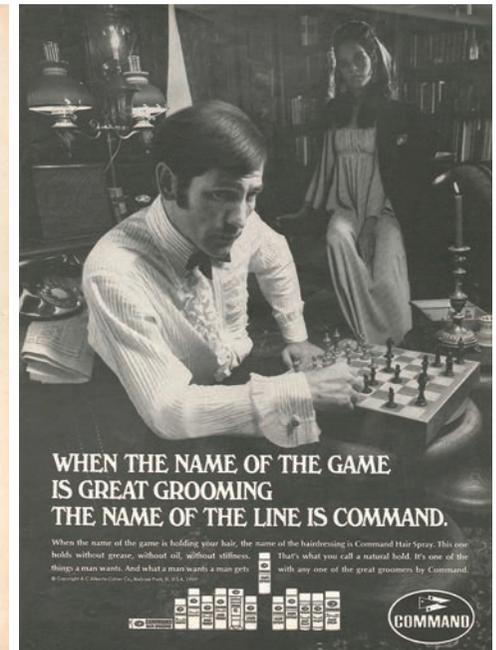
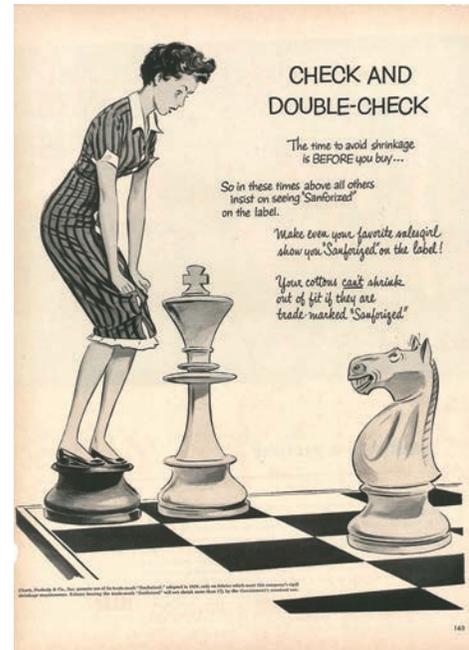
Everybody’s Game: Chess in Popular Culture takes a playful look at how the ancient sport is represented in contemporary society by showcasing the game of chess as it has been featured in such mass media as magazine advertisements, rock music and movie posters, and other popular venues. These examples demonstrate that while chess is a serious game, there is more to it than just the competition—chess is everybody’s game.



Winnie the Pooh Chess Set
SAC Limited, Studio Anne Carlton of England ©Disney



DAVE MATTHEWS BAND
 07-25-2010 | HULLABALOU FESTIVAL | LOUISVILLE, KY



Left:
Dave Matthews Band Concert Poster
 Hullabalou Festival, Louisville, KY, 07/25/2010.
 Created by Methane Studios

Top Left:
Sanforize – Life, 1952
 The Sanford Company TM 1930

Top Right:
Command Hair Spray – Playboy, June, 1969
 ©Copyright A-C Alberto-Culver Co., Melrose Park, Ill. U.S.A. 1969.

Bottom:
Smirnoff
 ©1997 Ste. Pierre Smirnoff FLS (Division of Heublein, Inc.) Hartford, CT.



Chess Sets

Widely believed to have originated during the 6th century, the rules of chess have changed relatively few times in a 1500-year span. The pieces, however, have changed radically and have consistently represented a snapshot of the contemporary culture, history, and lifestyles. Much liberty has been taken in the creation of the elaborate characters represented by the pawns, rooks, knights, bishops, queens, and kings; yet despite endless reinterpretations of each piece, the game remains recognizable regardless of differences in age, culture, or language.



Chess sets represented in *Everybody's Game* appeal to a wide audience familiar with contemporary popular culture as well as satisfying a love of nostalgia. In a savvy marketing ploy, companies have created a variety of collectible chess sets that showcase our passion for television, movie, and literary characters. What could be sweeter than seeing Kermit the Frog as a king and Miss Piggy as, of course, a queen? What could be more satisfying than having Princess Leia and Luke Skywalker checkmate Darth Vader?



You do not have to look closely to see chess references everywhere. Using the history of the game, enthusiasts have celebrated chess in parody, contemporary music, and different cultural outlets, making the game accessible and ubiquitous. With its great appeal and timeless message, the game easily adapts to a variety of media, rendering it universal, hip, and ultimately, trendy. What other game could have such a broad influence reaching wide and varied audiences? With an estimated 39 million players in the United States and over 600 million players world-wide, chess and its nuances will continue to permeate our society, stimulating imaginations and interest in the game.

Top:
The Simpsons Chess Set
 Matt Groening
 TM & © 1997 20th Century Fox Film Corp.

Middle:
Star Wars Chess Set
 ©Lucasfilm Ltd.

Bottom:
The Muppet Show Deluxe Collector's Chess Set
 TM & ©Henson, 1999



EVERYBODY'S GAME

CHESS IN POPULAR CULTURE

October 18, 2012 – April 21, 2013

Curated and organized by the World Chess Hall of Fame.

Special thanks to Bernice and Floyd Sarisohn.

Related programming and a downloadable pdf of this brochure can be found at www.worldchesshof.org.

WORLD CHESS HALL OF FAME

Director: Susan Barrett
4652 Maryland Avenue
Saint Louis, MO 63108
(314) 367-WCHF (9243)

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Back Cover Image:
Doug Anderson, Hollywood vs. Broadway Chess Set, c. 1990s
Ceramic with luster glazes and gold details

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