NEW YORK NOIR: BROCHURE

1-4 players (co-op) / 2-4 hrs / 14+ / Narrative Deduction

Jesse Reichler (**jessereichler@gmail.com**) / "Co-op for Two" on YouTube

Overview

New York Noir is a film-noir, narrative mystery detective/deduction game, set in New York City, and spanning several decades from the 1930s through the 1950s.

A cooperative/solo game in the spirit of Sherlock Holmes Consulting Detective, and consists of multiple chapters (cases) that form an ongoing campaign.

Investigate crimes, identify evidence, and bring justice to the victims. Along the way you'll need to make tough moral choices that affect how the story unfolds.

Components

- White pages directory (78 pages wirebound, 8.5x11 b&w)
- Yellow pages directory (44 pages wirebound, 8.5x11 b&w)
- Reverse directory (100 pages wirebound, 8.5x11 b&w)
- Map atlas & neighborhood guide (40 pages wirebound, 8.5x11 color)
- Case story booklets
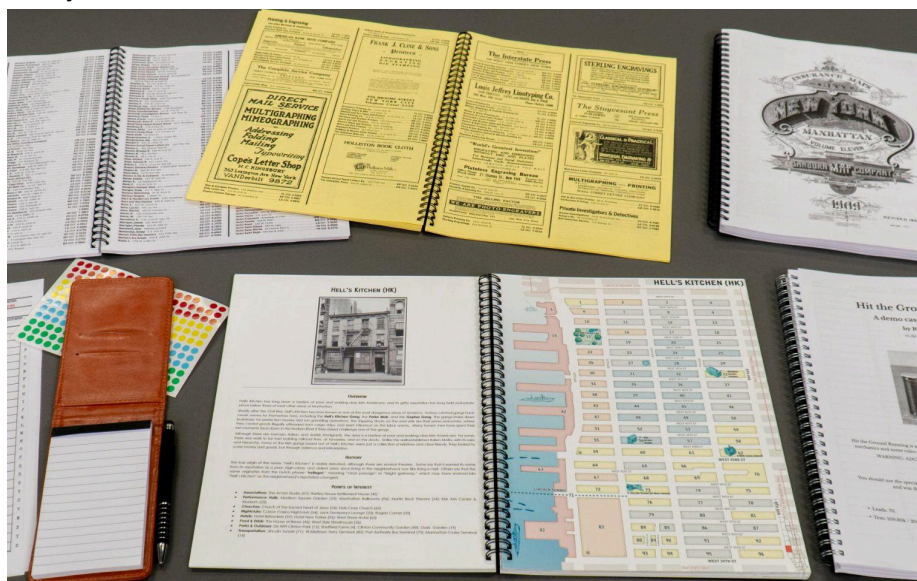
Highlights

- An evolution of the Sherlock Holmes Consulting Detective system.
- Cases are connected to form an overarching campaign story, with branching narratives, and tough moral and psychological choices.
- Each case spans multiple days with dramatic events between days, and includes full page-sized documents that players discover.
- Players visit historical landmark locations that span dozens of real Manhattan neighborhoods, each with their own personality.
- Narratively integrated hint system that supports a wide range of player skill levels.
- Directories and maps suitable for future expansions and fan cases.

For More information:
- On the YouTube channel "**Co-op for Two**" you can watch design diary videos about the design philosophy and coding behind New York Noir, as well as full playthrough videos.
- Discord available for authors interested in writing a case.

Mechanical differences from "Sherlock Holmes Consulting Detective":
- 6x the number of locations and directory entries as SHCD
- Oversized spiral-bound map atlas book with over 35 separate neighborhood maps. Each neighborhood has its own personality and small-town feel.
- In addition to residential directory (12,000+ entries) and commercial directory (4,000+ entries), includes a new "Reverse" directory which organizes entities by spatial co-location, supporting additional kinds of navigational puzzles.
- Independence of addresses and clue lead numbers solves a number of issues in SHCD, including accidental aliasing and leaking of information.
- Cases include an envelope of full-sized facsimile documents and photographs that are gradually retrieved as evidence is discovered (similar to a cold-case game).

Story & Case design differences from "Sherlock Holmes Consulting Detective":
- Cases are split into acts over the course of multiple "virtual days", with events that change the world between days.
- Scoring: Rather than encouraging players to guess solutions as early as possible to maximize score, players are encouraged to be thorough and are scored on a variety of other statistics that reflect the players "style" of play.
- Narratively integrated hint system ensures players see all important story elements, but are incentivized to figure out things ahead of other characters in the game.
- Players must identify the evidence to prove their theory of the case.
- Players must make occasional moral and psychological choices which have narrative consequences and result in alternate story epilogues.
- Software support tools to help authors build professional looking case books.

Future Work:
- We are currently focused on building more software tools to facilitate the creation of high-quality, typeset cases. Case authoring tool is now online (https://www.nynoir.org).
- We are in the process of creating play-by-mail software support tools, and online playtesting tools.
- Four finished cases have been written so far.

Credits:
- Lead design and programming: Jesse Reichler.
- Box Art: Adam Hall; In-game sketches: Logan Hill.
- Additional demo case writing: Rocky Helton & Water.
- General editing: Debbie Levy.
- Map data: Open source from New York City.
- Software used: QGIS (mapping), Latex (typesetting), Python (general coding), Geopandas (GIS library), Django (member website services).
- Some photos from Library of Congress and public domain.
- Neighborhood overview text: Michelle Hinn and Jesse Reichler.