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Polybius

Released in 1981

★★★★★ (94 total votes)

Game Summary

We need information.

Genre

Abstract
Puzzle

Game Details

This game had a very limited release, one or two backwater arcades in a suburb of Portland. The history of this game is cloudy, there were all kinds of strange stories about how kids who played it got amnesia afterwards, couldn't remember their name or where they lived, etc.

The bizarre rumors about this game are that it was supposedly developed by some kind of weird military tech offshoot group, used some kind of proprietary behavior modification algorithms developed for the CIA or something, kids who played it woke up at night screaming, having horrible nightmares.

According to an operator who ran an arcade with one of these games, guys in black coats would come to collect "records" from the machines. They're not interested in quarters or anything, they just collected information about how the game was played.

The game was weird looking, kind of abstract, fast action with some puzzle elements, the kids who played it stopped playing games entirely, one of them became a big anti videogame crusader or something. We've contacted one person who met him, and he claims the machines disappeared after a month or so and no one ever heard about them again.

Until the ROM showed up.

Here's what we've found so far:

- Found english strings "insert coin" and "press 1 player start" and "only" - looks like a 1 or 2 player game.
- Text in the game says "(C) 1981 Sinneslöschen" Maybe a German company?

If anyone has heard any additional information about this game, we'd appreciate hearing about it.

Quick update, we just wanted to go on record here that Steven Roach is full of himself, and knows nothing about this game. We have it on good authority. No, Polybius is *not* a Tempest prototype. No, Polybius is *not* a vector game. Does the title screen *look* vector? No, it does not. We've recently received some new information about the game (today's May 16, 2009), and yes one of us is flying to the Kyiv, Ukraine area tomorrow and yes the trip is related to this information. Stay tuned.

"Maybe" Images

(fuzzy search, these MAY match the game, or they may not)



([ImageViewer.aspx/84053881-13dd-4afe-ab49-0808e7576bb0](/ImageViewer.aspx/84053881-13dd-4afe-ab49-0808e7576bb0))

Coinop.org Member Ratings / Comments

★★★★ by **Sinnesloschen**. Comment: "ORATOR <http://6152410.ath.cx/> If you know something and want to collaborate. Polybius is real. orator.pp.p3@gmail.com " 2009-12-18 19:20:28Z

★★★★ by **Prg107**. Comment: "Hi all, I had the (bad) luck to get my hands on the ROMS of this game!!! (I thought it was an urban legend until then). After I while, I found an old version of MAME which made it run. After playing it I had the WORST nightmares of my life, for at least five days. People who wrote it knew what they were doing. Some days passed, I couldn't decide if I had to distribute this rare ROM to the public or to destroy it, finally I completely wiped it. Maybe you'll say I did the wrong thing, but I assure you that code was diabolic. I'm sure I've done the right thing & hope not to see it again." 2009-04-09 07:22:31Z

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