



# FROG GOD GAMES

# NECROMANCER Games



## *Dear Loyal Gamers,*

**Frog God Games** and **Necromancer Games** will not sign the new Open Game License (OGL) Version 1.1. We believe that what Hasbro is doing is wrong, in bad faith, and likely not legal. We fully believe that the strength of the industry is based on multiple people with diverse approaches making rules, settings, and adventures for our favorite game.

Twenty-three years ago, Clark Peterson and I started a tiny company called **Necromancer Games**. At midnight on the day 3rd Edition released, we published *The Wizard's Amulet*, the first third-party adventure to support it. Our company then worked with Wizards of the Coast (WOTC) to put together the 1.0a OGL. The promise that we could start, grow, and operate a business creating adventures for D&D was in the bedrock of what has become my life's work.

We have published for D&D 3.0, 3.5, and 5th Edition. We have published for Pathfinder, Swords & Wizardry, Old-School Essentials, and Castles & Crusades. We have published more than 500 unique products over the years, and even built our own warehouse. All of this was done with the blessing of WOTC through the 1.0a OGL and a contractual **promise** that we could do this. Third-party publishers like us made the D&D brand larger and more universal. We helped make them money for the past 23 years.

We are not offended by their desire to make money off the third-party publishing market. We are offended that unless we give them **the permanent right to use and sell our intellectual property with no compensation**, we cannot continue to operate. We are offended that unless we give them the **right to let them revoke our ability to publish at any time** with only 30-days notice, we cannot make any more books. We are offended that even though we have spent thousands of dollars on making virtual tabletop versions of our games, we can't do it anymore. WOTC sounds like Darth Vader talking to Lando Calrissian in *The Empire Strikes Back*: "I am altering the deal. Pray I don't alter it any further."

WOTC, in bad faith, is breaking a promise, clear and simple. After we have invested 23 years and hundreds of thousands of dollars into our company, they want to pull the rug out from under us. They are intentionally damaging **Necromancer Games** and **Frog God Games**, as well as the entire industry.

If they proceed and succeed in deauthorizing the 1.0a OGL, we will have to stop production. We will lay off staff and quit hiring and paying 70 or so freelancers. We will have to cancel projects we have spent tens of thousands of dollars on already. This will put us and several dozen other companies out of business. Putting third-party publishers out of business will create a monoculture of work in D&D that prevents diversity of thought and makes it so only one company has input into the hobby. This has a real effect on people — real people — not just companies.

We do not care about One D&D. What we do care about is our ability to use the perpetual 1.0a OGL granted to us in 2000 by WOTC, as they promised we could.

So, what does all this mean for **Necromancer Games** and **Frog God Games**?

First, it means we need to stand up to them, fight, and continue working under our existing license. In this case, by "we" I mean everyone who is a creator in this industry. Second, we need to band together to create a non-OGL and non-WOTC version of a System Reference Document (SRD) that can forever be used by anyone. Why, you ask? WOTC has proven themselves to be untrustworthy and we all need to wean ourselves off them as soon as we can. We will work with our friends in the industry and have been in conversation with many of them already about doing this. **Go Black Flag!**

What you can do to help is to buy books from us and other third-party publishers right now so we can afford to continue to operate, pay our people, and keep our pool of artists and writers from starving. Look for opportunities to let WOTC know that what they are doing is wrong, be it with social media or with your wallet.

Have no fear, we are sticking around. We know it's going to be a bumpy ride for a while, but if the fans support us, **Necromancer Games** and **Frog God Games**, as well as dozens of other companies like us, we will win this war and continue to make great products for the hobby.

Bill Webb, CEO **Frog God Games**