

# WHAT GAMES ARE

"VERY REAL" / "ICONIC DEPICTIONS OF PATTERNS IN THE WORLD"  
 (VS. A "MAGIC DISCONNECTED REALITY")  
 CURULE



ABSTRACTED & ICONIC FORMAL SYSTEMS

POWERFUL LEARNING TOOLS

MEANT TO BE "FUN"

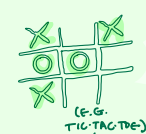
WHAT CONNECTS THESE 2?

**FUN** = THE FEEL-GOOD FEEDBACK (ENDORPHINS) OUR BRAIN GIVES US WHEN WE AFFORD PATTERNS FOR LEARNING/MASTERY PURPOSES

"LEARNING IS THE DRUG"

(SO, FUN IS CONTEXTUAL)

HAVING FUN IS A KEY EVOLUTIONARY ADVANTAGE



GAMES ARE TEACHERS OF...  
 HOW TO UNDERSTAND YOURSELF  
 HOW TO UNDERSTAND THE ACTIONS OF OTHERS  
 HOW TO IMAGINE  
 HOW ASPECTS OF REALITY WORK

SO WHAT DOES THIS MEAN FOR GAME DESIGN?

DEFINITION OF A GOOD GAME:  
 "ONE THAT TEACHES EVERYTHING IT HAS TO OFFER BEFORE THE PLAYER STOPS PLAYING"

THE MORE RIGIDLY CONSTRUCTED YOUR GAME IS, THE MORE LIMITED IT WILL BE

(MAYBE ADDRESS THIS WITH EITHER: MAKE THE GAME SOLVE OR MORE VARIABLY LIKE HUMAN PSYCHOLOGY, ETC.)

GAMES THAT FAIL TO EXERCISE/CHALLENGE THE BRAIN BECOME BORING

BOREDOM = SIGN YOU HAVE FAILED

HOW BOREDOM MIGHT STRIKE:

1. PLAYER FINDS A "GOOD ENOUGH" SOLUTION STRATEGY
2. PLAYER RECOGNIZES THE COMPLEXITY, BUT ISN'T INTERESTED IN LEARNING
3. PLAYER SEES NO PATTERN ("TOO HARD")
4. RAMP UP TOO SLOWLY
5. RAMP UP TOO QUICKLY
6. ENTIRE PATTERN MASTERED

# WHAT GAMES AREN'T

STORIES

ABOUT BEAUTY/DELIGHT

ABOUT JOKEYING FOR SOCIAL STATUS



GAMES	STORIES
EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING	TEACH VICARIOUSLY
GOOD @ OBJECTIFICATION	GOOD @ EMPATHY
QUANTITIES, REDUCE, & QUALIFY	QUAL, DIFFER, & MAKE SUBTLE DISTINCTIONS
EXTERNAL (ABOUT PEOPLE'S ACTIONS)	INTERNAL (ABOUT PEOPLE'S EMOTIONS & THOUGHTS)

YOU MASTER A GAME, NOT A STORY.

SIDENOTE... DOES THAT PREDATE STORY SINCE ANIMALS PLAY BUT STORY REQUIRES SOME FORM OF LANGUAGE?

AVOID STORY FIRST WITH SHALLOW GAME MECHANICS...

FORMS OF "ENJOYMENT"

1. FUN = ACT OF MASTERING A PROBLEM MENTALLY
2. AESTHETIC APPRECIATION = ENJOYABLE, BUT NOT ALWAYS FUN
3. VISCERAL REACTIONS = GENERALLY PHYSICAL
4. SOCIAL STATUS SIGNALS = INTRINSIC TO OUR SELF-IMAGE & COMMUNITY STANDING



CALLED "SENSARIMANDA" IN SCIENCE FICTION (RESPONDING PATTERNS, NOT LEARNING NEW ONES) ("DELIGHT")



WE MAKE MENTAL CHALLENGES OUT OF THIS & THEN FEEL POSITIVE EMOTIONS...

- SCHARDENFREUDE
- FIERO
- NUNES
- KVELL
- SOCIAL BEHAVIOR (SIGNALS OF IMPACT, FEEDING PEOPLE, ETC.)

REASONS THAT WE OTHER THAN FUN PLAY A GAME:

- PRAISE
- PREDATION
- STORYTELLING
- IMPORT

BUT MANY OTHER THINGS CAN ALSO FULFILL THESE, SO THEY'RE NOT WHAT MAKE GAMES SPECIAL/UNIQUE