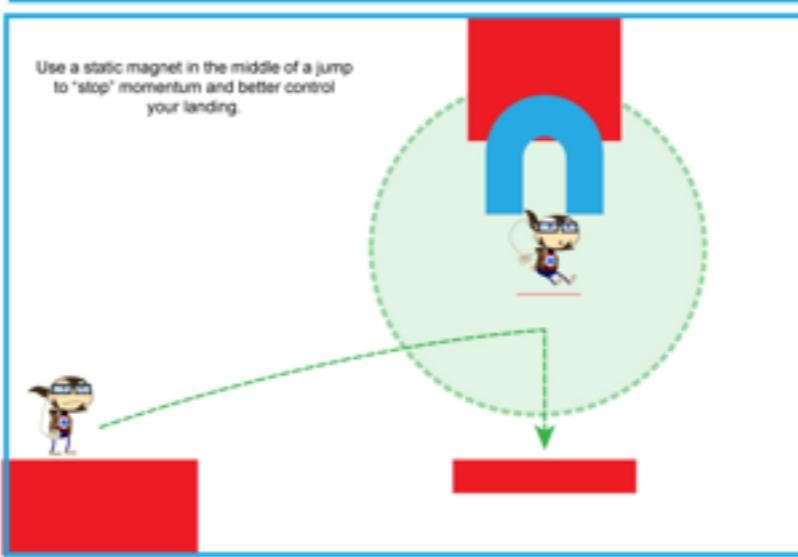
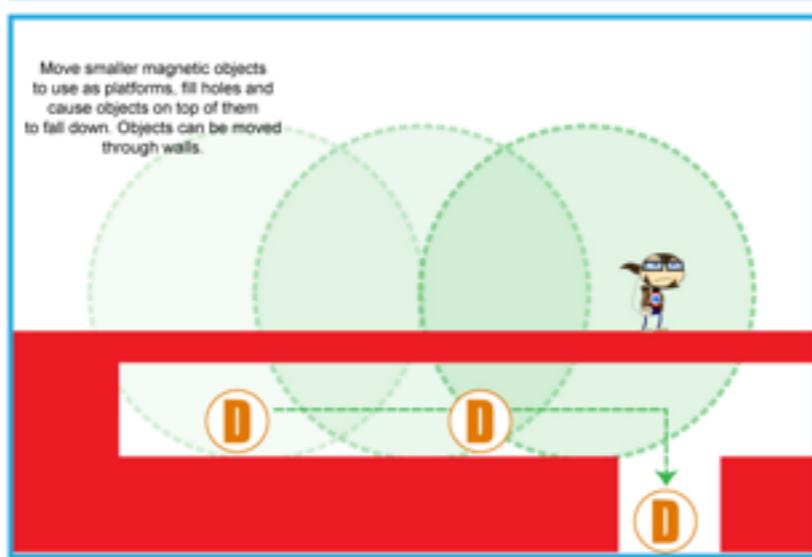
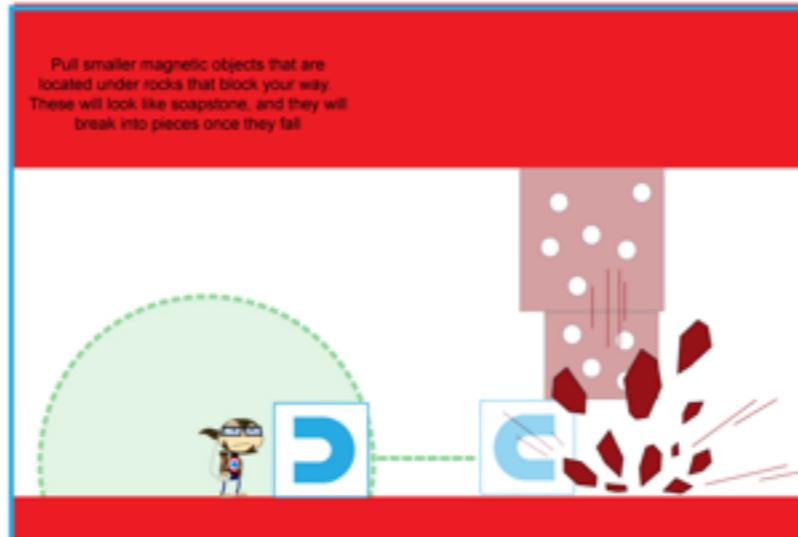
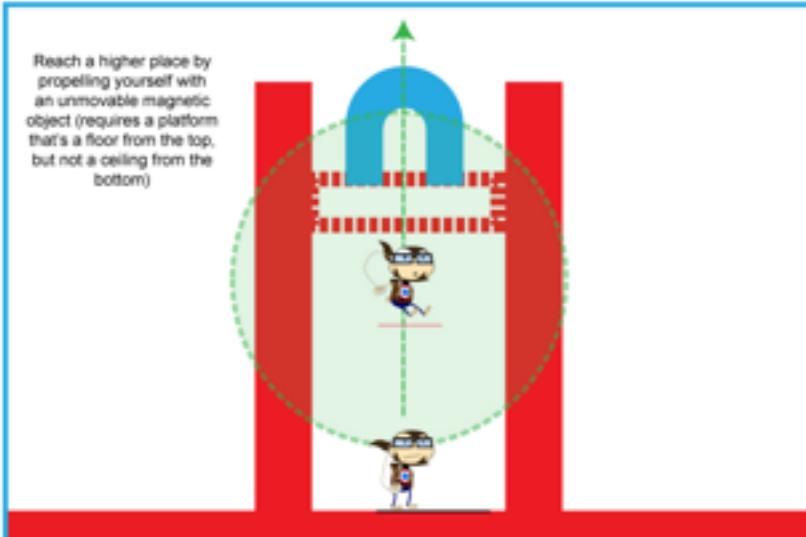


Narrative in Game Design



Basic Puzzles

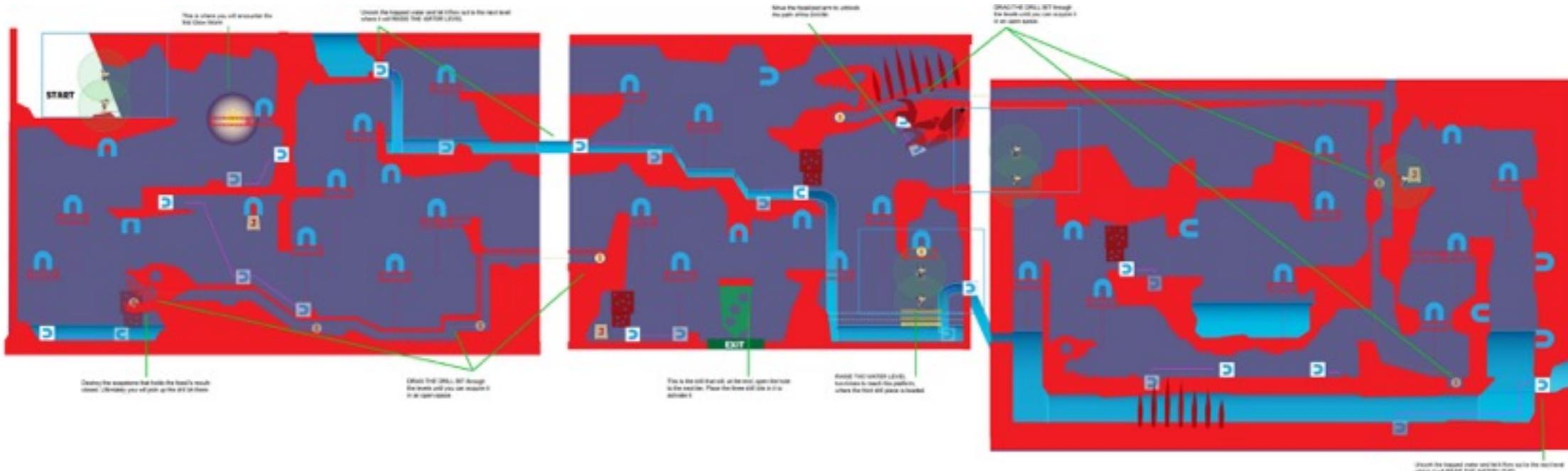


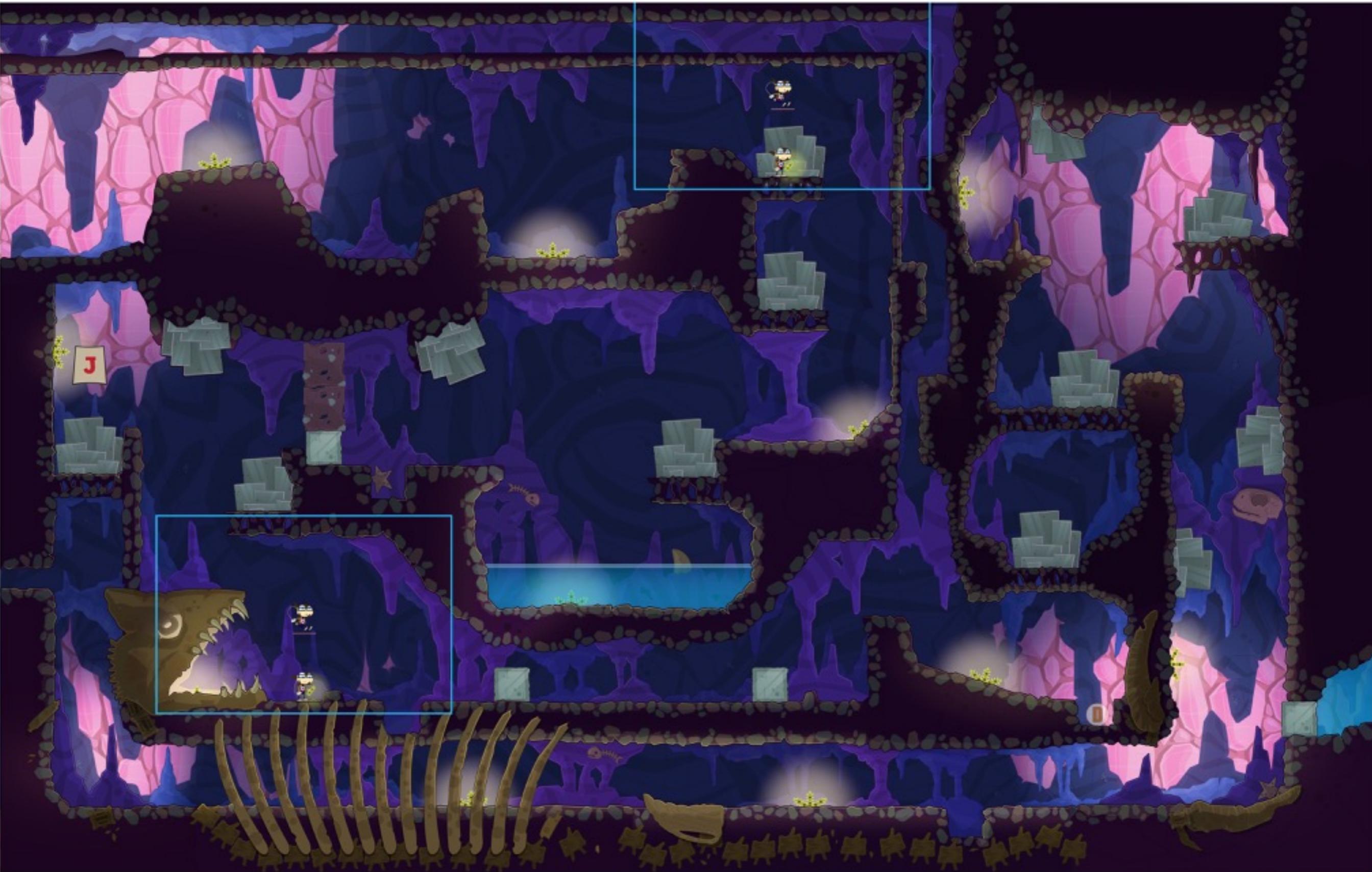
Nomenclature

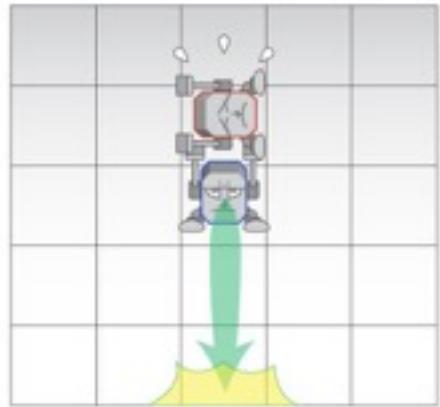
	Unmovable magnetic object
	Movable magnetic object
	Porous Ceiling(can jump on top of it from below)
	Piece of the drill (these are movable magnetic objects, they have an intermitent weak light, and if possible, have a beeping sound that grows in intensity as you approach it)
	Piece of the Journal (secondary objective)
	Water

Nomenclature

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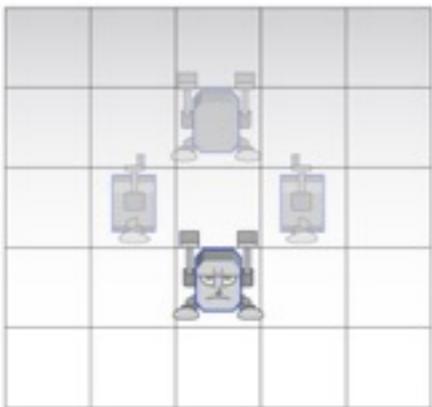




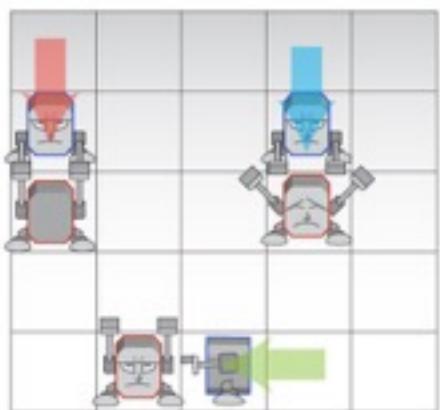
The objective of **megafightingbots** is to defeat your opponent by grabbing him and tossing him against the floor or wall. Each robot has a health bar, which decreases by a bit every time they get tossed. The two main variables for this game are:

How hard it is to grab and toss your opponent.

Against what you toss your opponent.

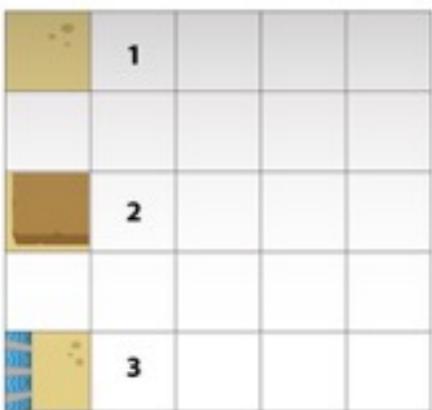


Each robot can face forward, left, right, and back. The player controls where the robot faces by simply moving the mouse in each direction. The robot can move in the direction they are facing. The player controls their movement by clicking on any in the direction they wish to go. The control scheme is similar to Bomberman; for us the developers it is all a grid, but for the player is rather seamless, like an open sandbox.



How hard is to grab your opponent is based on your position in relation to your opponent. Grabbing an opponent face to face is the hardest, and requires to click the mouse rapidly. Grabbing your opponent from the side or back is easier and requires less clicks.

Positioning yourself in the right place is the key to the game. The environment has three different surfaces that make the navigation an interesting challenge.

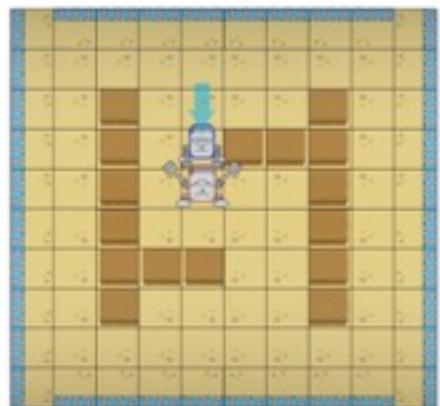


This three surfaces are also against what you toss your opponent:

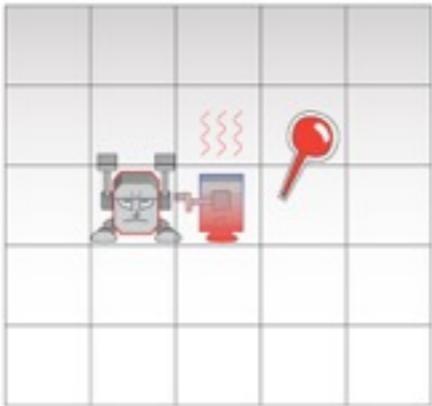
The first surface is just the regular floor. The players can walk on it and receive minor damage when tossed against it.

The second surface is a regular barrier and the players can't walk over. Being tossed against it causes more damage.

The third surface is the electric fence that surrounds the arena. If a player walks into it they get stunned for a bit. Being tossed against it causes the most damage.



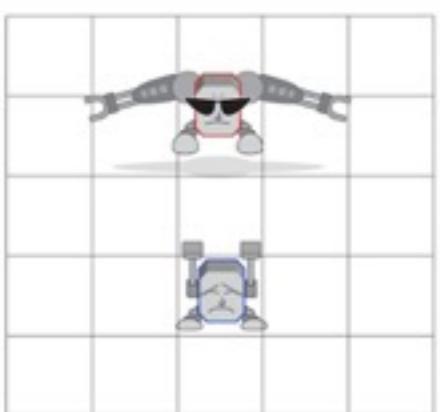
Enemy behavior and varied layouts are simple ways to make the experience more complex. We can think of other surfaces that have different effects if time permits (teleporting warps, oil spills that make you loose control, elemental hazards like fire pits or water pools that harm or aide the player)



In order to sell the joke that this is a heartless, money-grabbing game, there should be a number of **unfair** mechanics tied to a fictional credit's system.

The first **unfair** mechanic is the cool down system: every time the player has to press the bottom repeatedly, a temperature indicator should increase until "the robot overheats". When this happens, the robot turns red and is stunned.

The Player can "buy ice to cool down the machine!" (maybe from a not so friendly penguin!) or something to that effect. The idea is to give an unfair advantage to those who can afford it in this fictional game.



The second **unfair** mechanic has to do with the gear available for each robot. The player is by default equipped with gear that makes him slow and overheats very fast. It takes much skill to beat an opponent with the first gear.

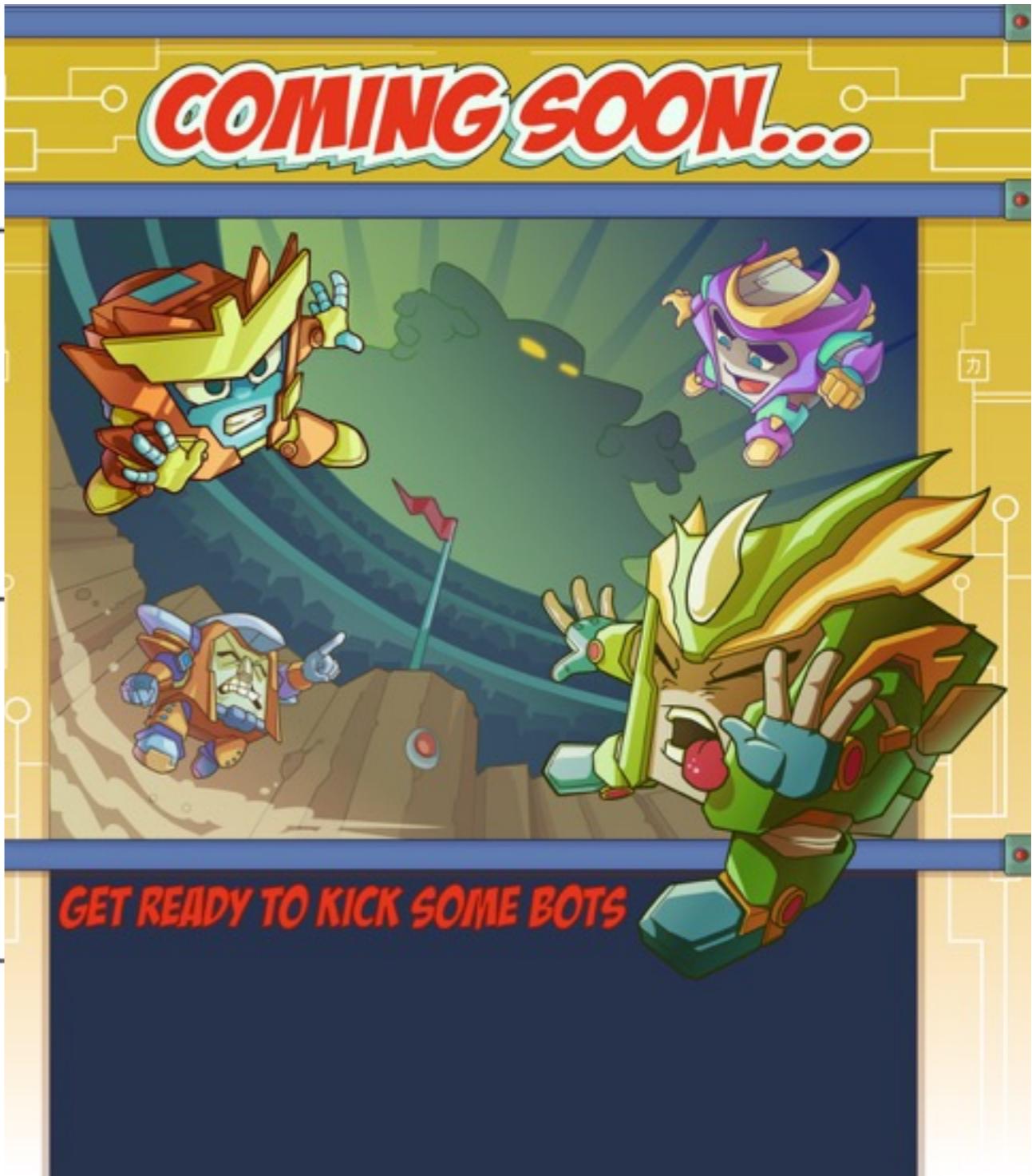
The player should be taunted by a fictional opponent that features ridiculously overpowered gear. It should be obvious that the gear gives an unfair advantage: maybe the arms are so long that they can grab the player from a very long distance, or the legs have rockets to fly fast and above obstacles.



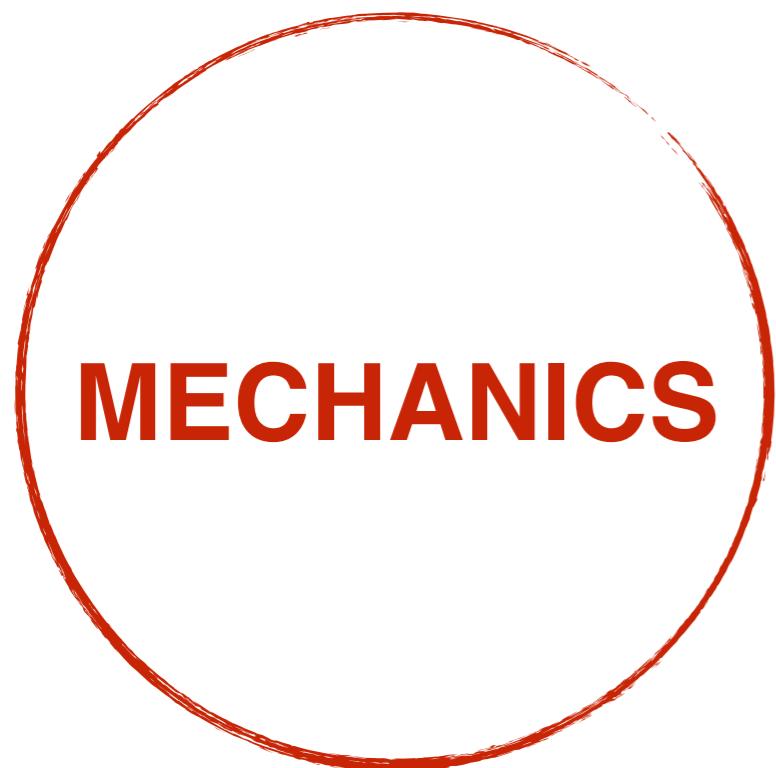
As for how the robots would be build:

All the robots have the same basic shape. We can create a standard animation for it and swap the "faces" printed on them. Arms and legs would be mirrored to their respective sides. The last ingredient is a mask that works as a shield and can be swapped too.

If we make, say, 5 faces, 5 arms, 5 legs, and 5 masks, we will have a very high number of permutations, to give the appearance of a very high number of characters. We should create an extra set or two of ridiculously overpowered gear for the unfair mechanics (and all the ads, of course!)



AESTHETICS

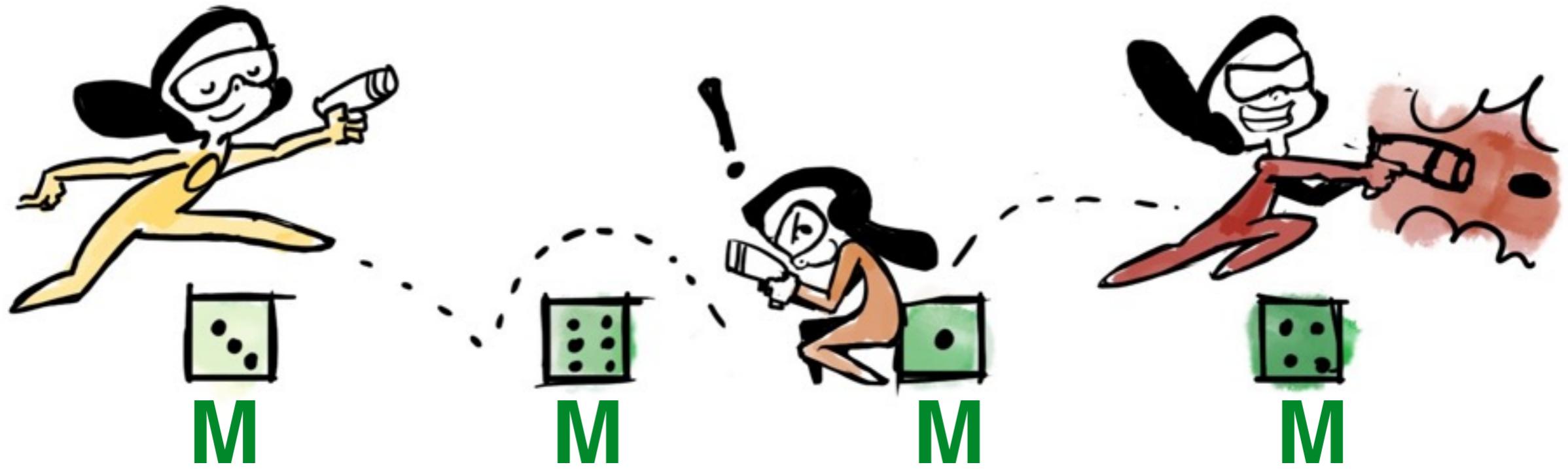


STORY

TECHNOLOGY



Narrative?



In games, **Narrative** is created by the real-time behavior of the **Player** as she interacts with the **mechanics** you design.

A game is a system in which players engage in an artificial conflict, defined by rules, that results in a quantifiable outcome.

Zimmerman, Eric; Salen Tekinbas, Katie (2003-09-25). Rules of Play: Game Design Fundamentals (Kindle Locations 2099-2100). The MIT Press

Game?



But why do we put ourselves in these Artificial Conflicts?



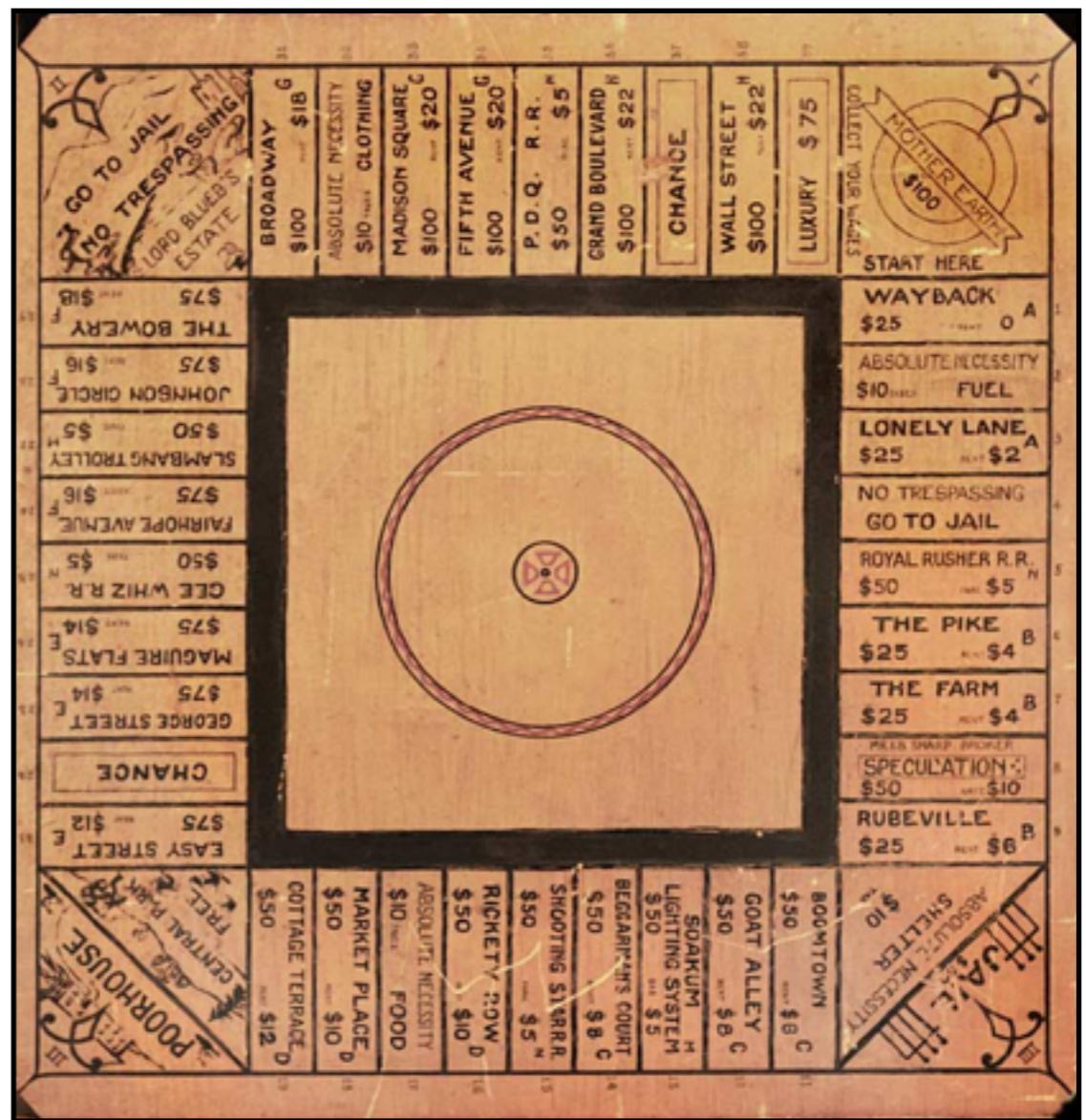
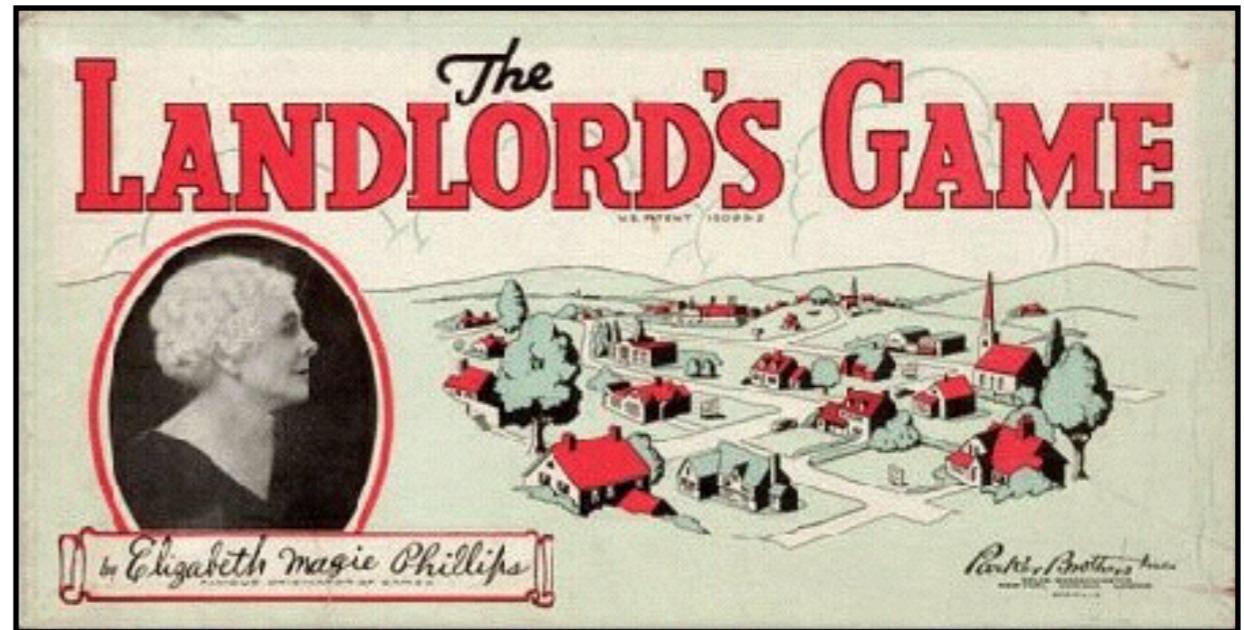
Perhaps to experiment **first-hand** scenarios, test new
stylized behavior, learn how to work around **constraints**,
and elicit **positive change**



Mechanics
Are like colors in a palette



1904







What makes you decide who is a
winner or a **loser** in your games?

What makes you decide what attributes
or behaviors are **desirable** or **undesirable**?



Consider that every **Design** choice you make for your game **is rhetoric**: an argument about what is desirable or not.

For example, what are you saying when you use...

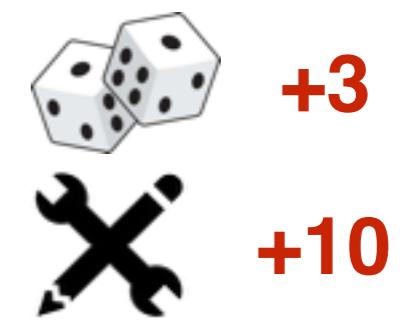
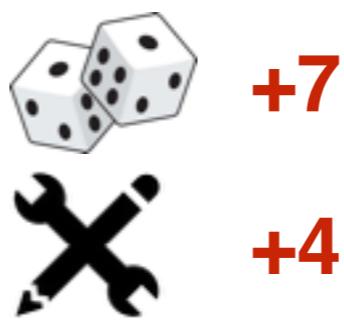
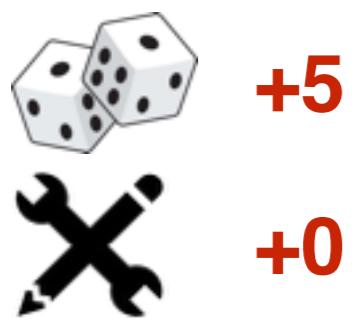
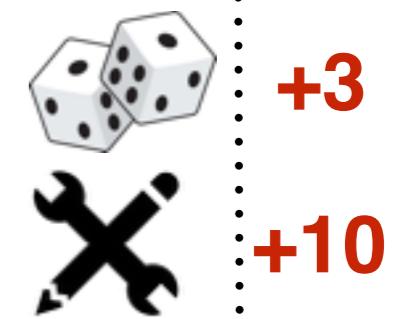
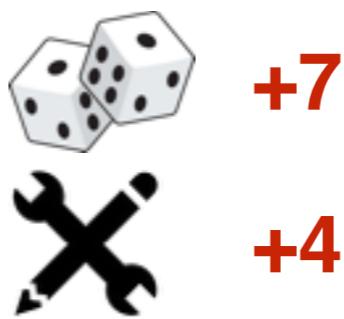
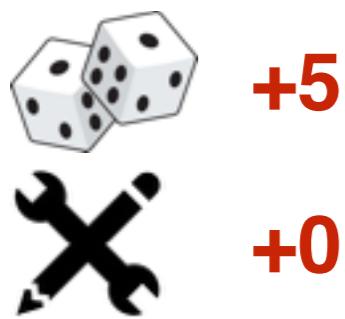
Chance

vs

skill

Miserable
Life...

Amazing
Life!

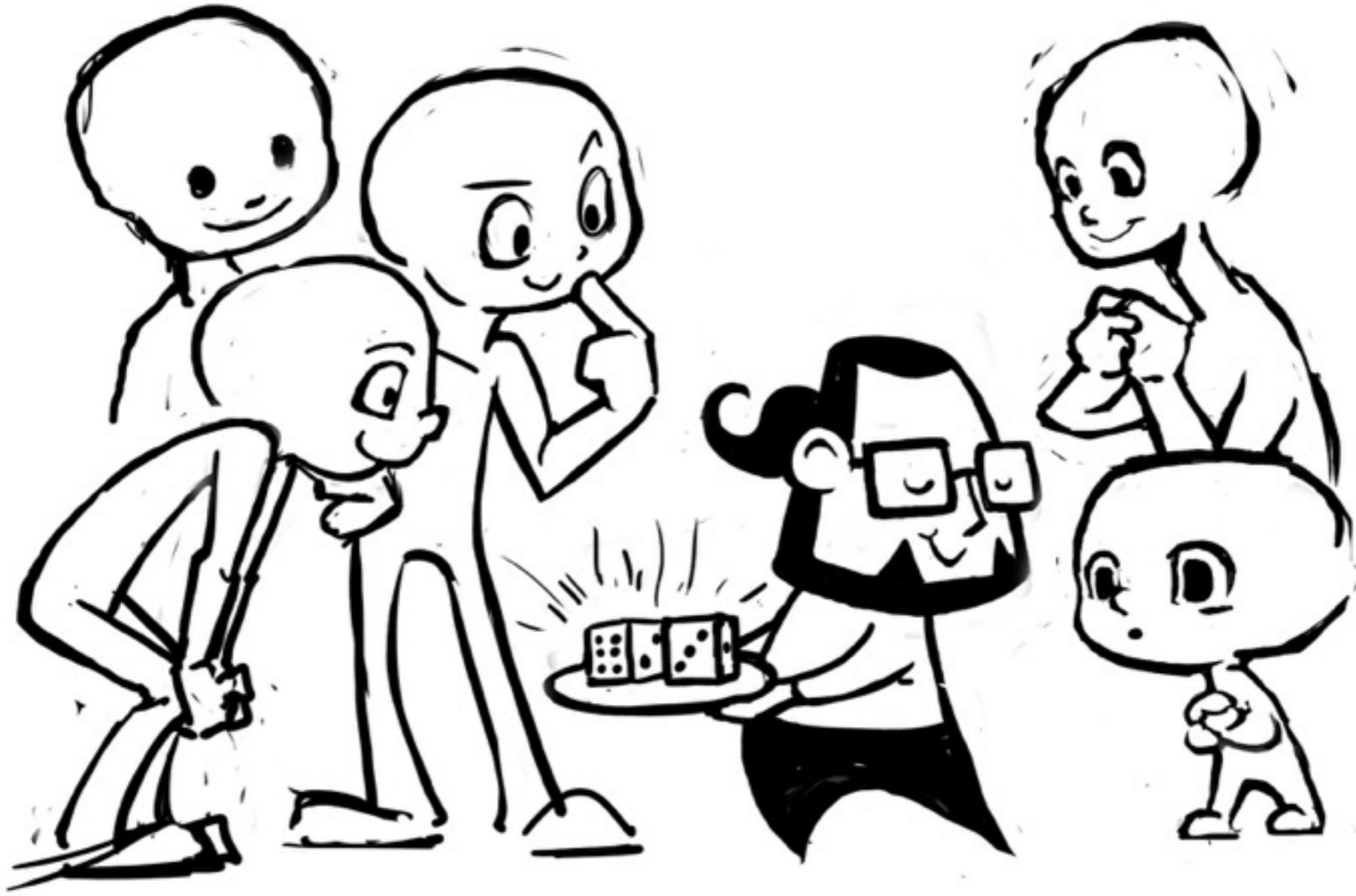




Theme is your view of how to act in the world.
It is your moral vision.



Whenever you present a **player** with means to reach an end, you are presenting a **moral** predicament, exploring the question of right action, and making a moral argument about how best to live or **play**.



Your moral vision is totally original to you, and expressing it to a **gaming** audience is one of the main purposes of **designing a game**.



Uri Tzaig, “*Two Balls*”

Sometimes transformative games are simple **alterations, juxtaposition or reinventions!**

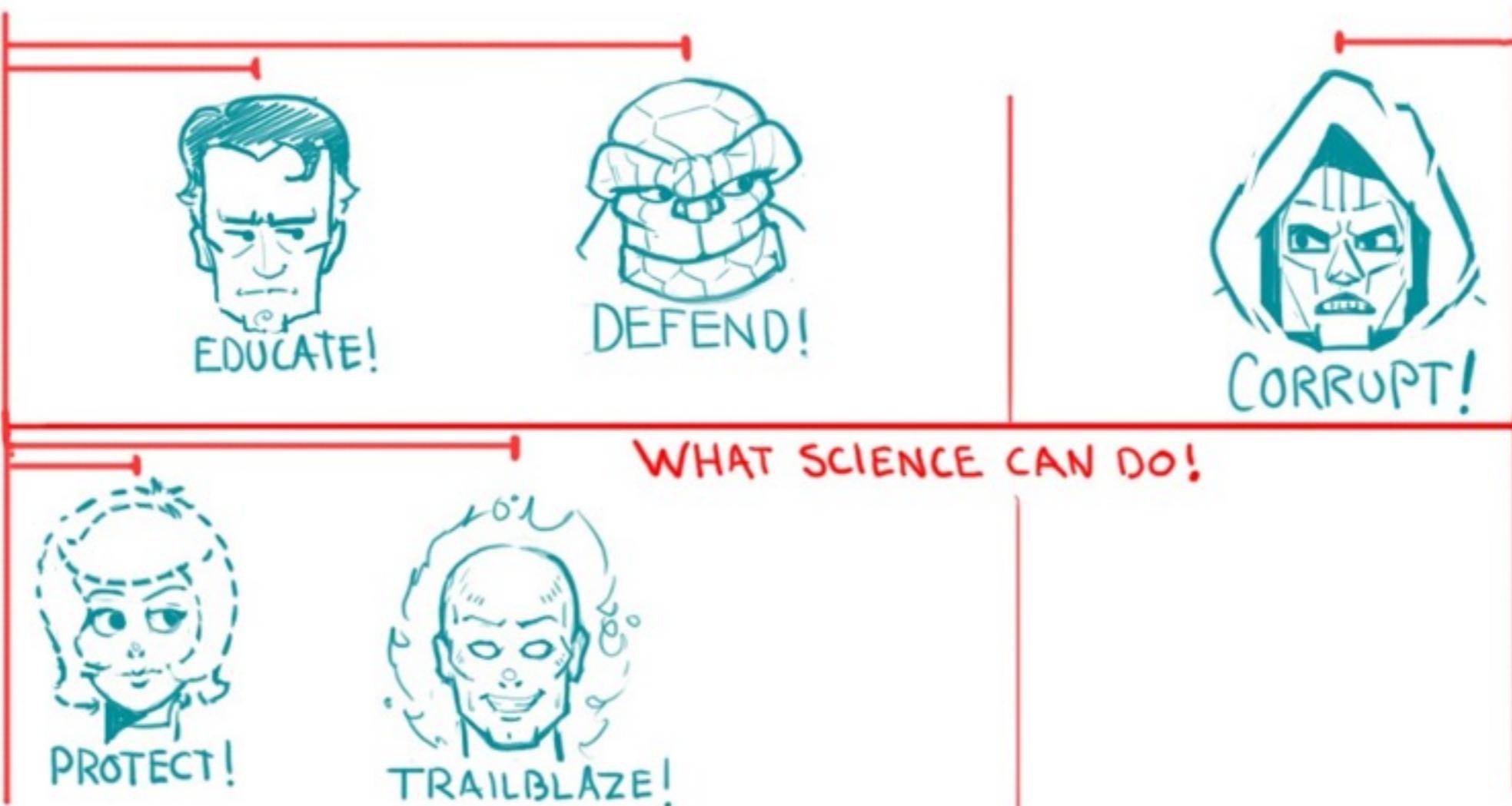
4 tips to strengthen narrative in games:

1. Map rhetorical elements along a theme line, to find contrast
2. Write a detailed account of your ideal play-through
3. Create and maintain a mechanics archive, from reference or your own
4. Constantly adjust the focus into what you and your players need, rather than what you or your players want

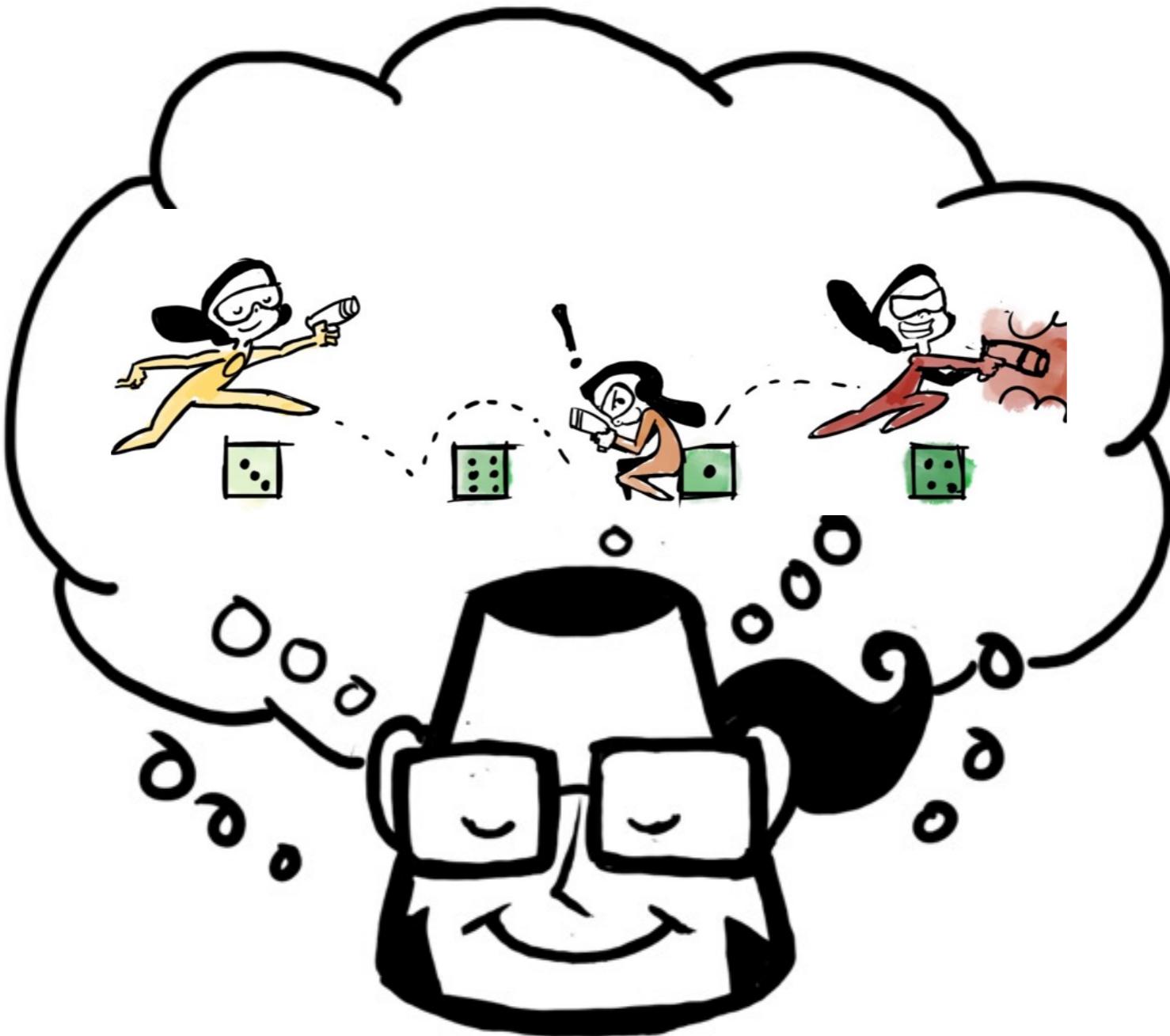


Science! vs Science?

Start by finding the opposite sides of the moral argument, the opposite sides of the **Theme**



New elements can be added and located within the extremes of your **Theme**



When you have a hard time clarifying your theme,
an **ideal play-through** “betrays” your moral
arguments powerfully

Board Game Mechanics

Acting	Action / Movement Programming
Action Point Allowance System	Area Control / Area Influence
Area Enclosure	Area Movement
Area-Impulse	Auction/Bidding
Betting/Wagering	Campaign / Battle Card Driven
Card Drafting	Chit-Pull System
Co-operative Play	Commodity Speculation
Crayon Rail System	Deck / Pool Building
Dice Rolling	Grid Movement
Hand Management	Hex-and-Counter
Line Drawing	Memory
Modular Board	Paper-and-Pencil
Partnerships	Pattern Building
Pattern Recognition	Pick-up and Deliver
Player Elimination	Point to Point Movement
Press Your Luck	Rock-Paper-Scissors
Role Playing	Roll / Spin and Move
Route/Network Building	Secret Unit Deployment
Set Collection	Simulation
Simultaneous Action Selection	Singing
Stock Holding	Storytelling
Take That	Tile Placement
Time Track	Trading
Trick-taking	Variable Phase Order
Variable Player Powers	Voting
Worker Placement	

A well maintained **mechanics archive** will help you experiment by iteration

Sit beside a stranger.
Strike up a conversation



REJECTION
THERAPY

Challenge a stranger to
rock, paper, scissors,
lizard, Spock



REJECTION
THERAPY

Request a lower
interest rate from a
credit card provider



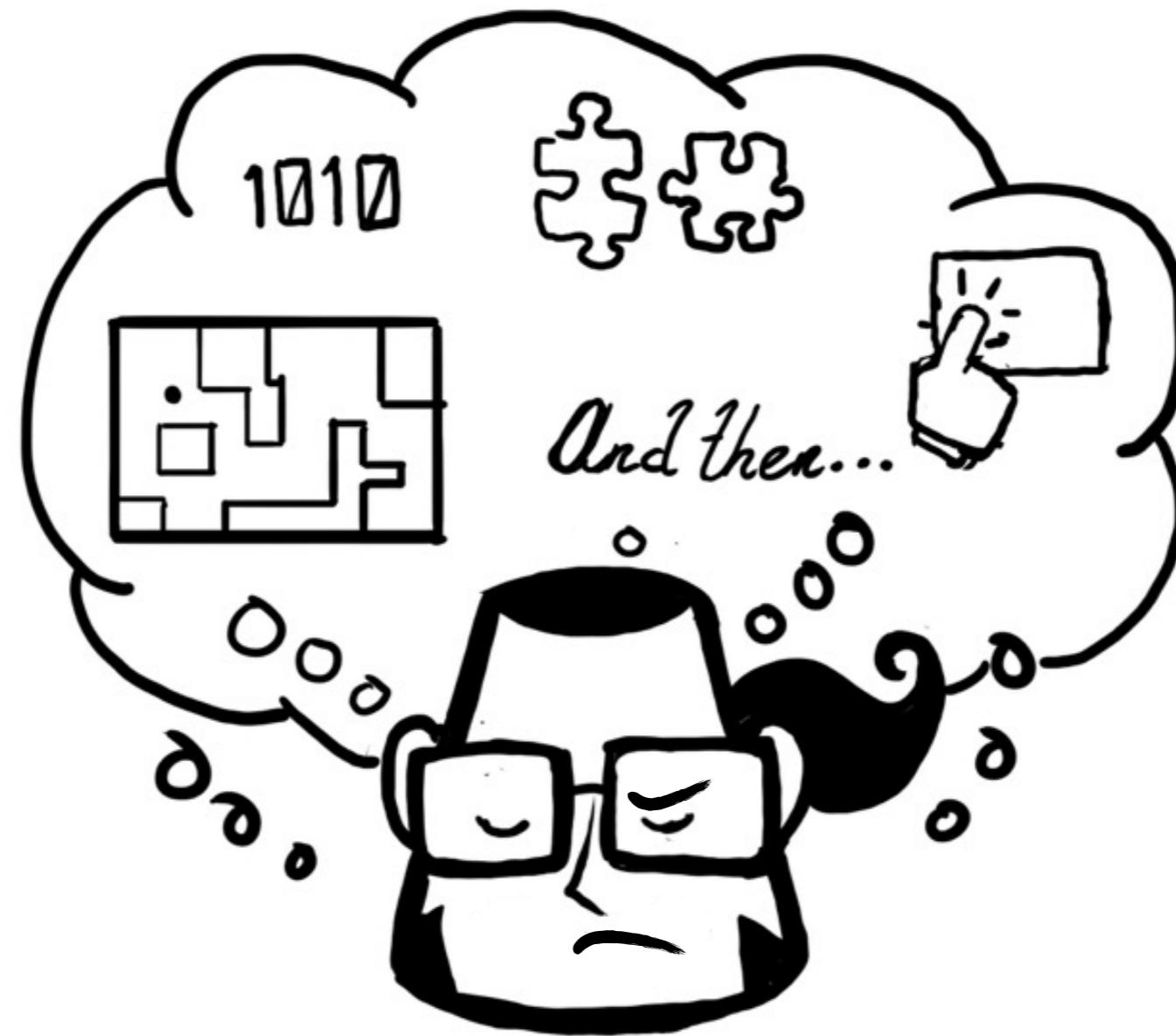
REJECTION
THERAPY

It's easy to get carried away with experimentation! Constantly adjust your focus to “needs” rather than “wants”, and the theme will remain clear

in conclusion...



When you, as a **Designer**, create **Mechanics** from which interesting **Narratives** emerge, you invite your **Player** to have unique **conversations**



The **knowledge and sensibility** for Game Design can be applied to more than entertainment. Often, **engagement** is more important than fun!



Share your **world view**, your moral arguments, using not only technology, aesthetics and story, but also **mechanics**

The End

Thanks!

