Game Design
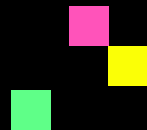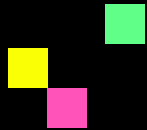
START

Game Design

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What is Game Design?

Game design is the act of deciding what a game should be
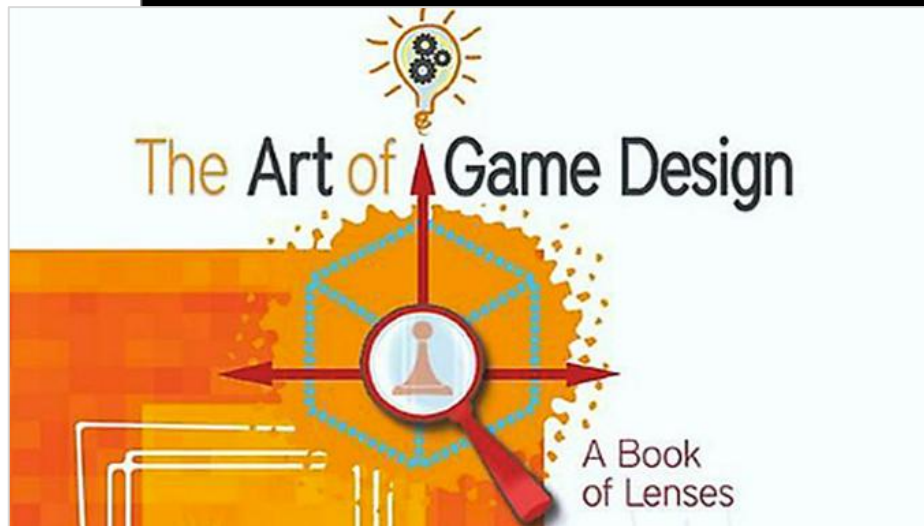
"… game design is more art than science, more like cooking than chemistry…"

Jesse Schell

x2

How Video Games Are Made

The Beginning

There is the designer

- **All that's real is what you feel.**
  "The only reality that we know is the reality that we experience. We filter reality through our senses and through our minds, and the consciousness we actually experience is a kind of illusion."

- **How to create good experiences?**

The Most Important Skill is **to Listen**

Listen to:

Team
Audience
Game
Client
Self

x4

The experience rises out of a game

——

A game is something you play and have fun

    Fun is pleasure with surprises

Work and play...

    Equivalent to servitude and freedom

Whoever MUST play CANNOT play...

    "Play is manipulation that indulges curiosity."

x5

The Lens of Surprise

2 The Lens of Surprise

Illustration by Diana Patton

Surprise is so basic that we can easily forget about it. Use this lens to remind yourself to fill your game with interesting surprises. Ask yourself these questions:

- What will surprise players when they play my game?
- Does the story in my game have surprises? The game rules? artwork? technology?
- Do your rules give players ways to surprise each other?
- Do your rules give players ways to surprise themselves?

x6

What is a Game?

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"[a game is] an interactive structure of endogenous meaning [inside the game] that requires players to struggle [conflict and challenge] toward a goal."

Greg Costikyan

Game Qualities:

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Q1. **Games are entered wilfully**
Q2. **Games have goals**
Q3. **Games have conflict**
Q4. **Games have rules**
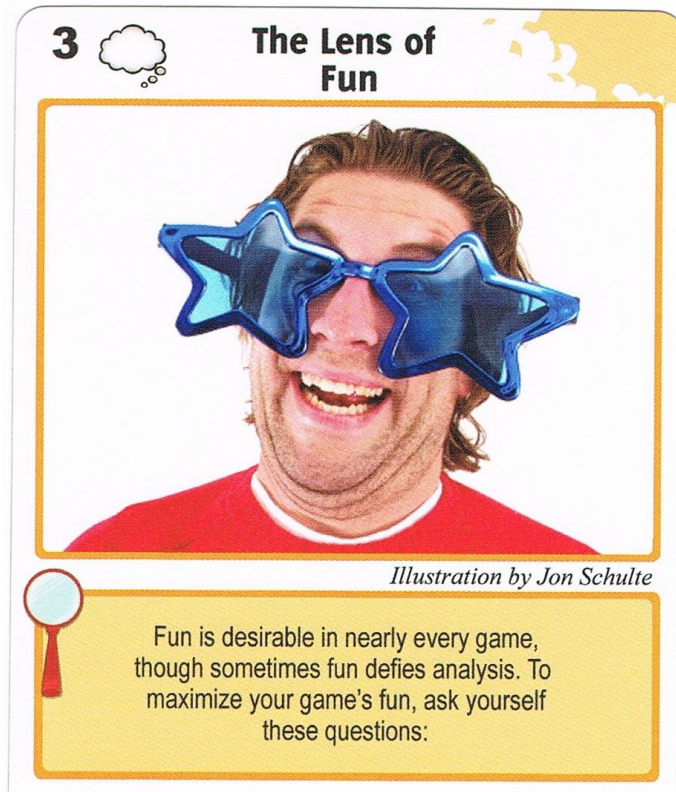Q5. **Games can be won and lost**
Q6. **Games are interactive**
Q7. **Games have challenges**
Q8. **Games can create their own internal value**
Q9. **Games engage players**
Q10. **Games are closed formal systems**

x7

The Lens of Fun

3 💭 **The Lens of Fun**

Illustration by Jon Schulte

Fun is desirable in nearly every game, though sometimes fun defies analysis. To maximize your game's fun, ask yourself these questions:

Lens #3

What parts of my game are fun? Why?

What parts need to be more fun?

🪙 x8

The Lens of Problem Solving

The Lens of Problem Solving

Illustration by Cheryl Ceol

Every game has problems to solve.
To use this lens, think about the problems
your players must solve to succeed at your game.
Ask yourself these questions:

What problems does my game ask the player to solve?

Are there hidden problems to solve that arise from gameplay?

How can my game generate new problems so that players keep coming back?

x9

Video Games

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x10

Game Elements

What is a game?

A game, like most artistic mediums, is just a means to create an **Experience**.

The **experience** is **key** to good game design.

When **someone plays** a game they are **experiencing** something.

The **Elemental Tetrad** is a way to **balance** the **parts** of a **game** to create a satisfying experience. And what are these parts?

more visible

Aesthetics

Mechanics   Story

Technology

less visible
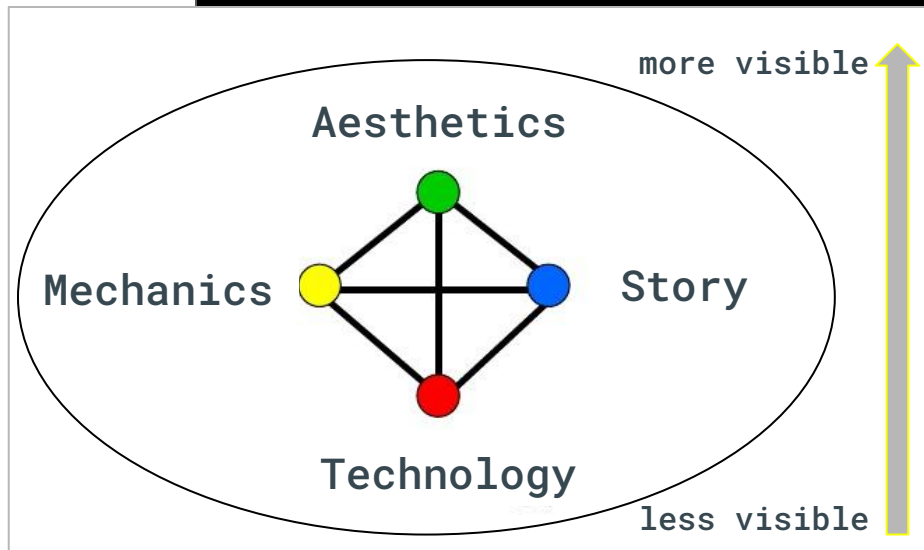
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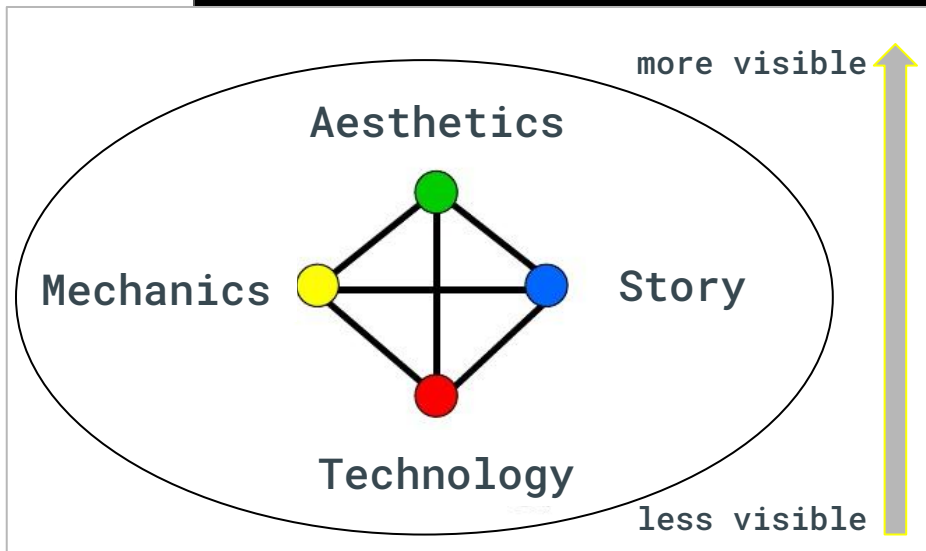
The Elements Support a Theme

Theme Resonance

> The best themes are the ones that resonate with players

> Resonant themes elevate your work from craft to art

Study the tetrad in a unified perspective towards the theme

Aesthetics

Mechanics   Story

Technology

more visible

less visible

0x12

From the Conception to the Development
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Video Games Design

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1. **Conceptualization**: the Idea
2. **Storytelling**: the Narrative
3. **Game Mechanics**: the Experience
4. **Level Design**: Creating the World
5. **Interface**: Establishing the Connection
6. **Documentation**: Clarifying & Communicating the Idea
7. **Testing**: Good games are created through Playtesting

x14

A Video Game is a Form of Art

0 x15

Game Design Checklist

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1. The designer **creates an experience.**
2. The **experience rises** out **of a game.**
3. A game is a **problem solving activity,** approached with a **playful attitude.**
4. **Elemental Tetrad unified** in **a resonant theme.**
5. **Game Design** is an **art form!**

Elemental Tetrad

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Mechanics: these are the procedures and rules of your game.

Story: this is the sequence of events that unfolds your game.

Aesthetics: this is how your game looks, sounds, smells, tastes and feels.

Technology: the technology is essentially the medium in which the aesthetics take place, which the mechanics will occur and through which the story will be told.

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Game Design