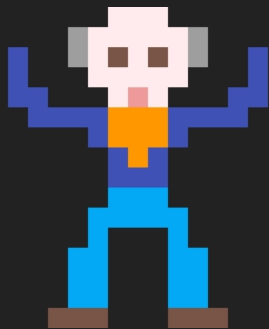


Be Ready to Present Your Prototype!



Characteristics of Games

Part 2

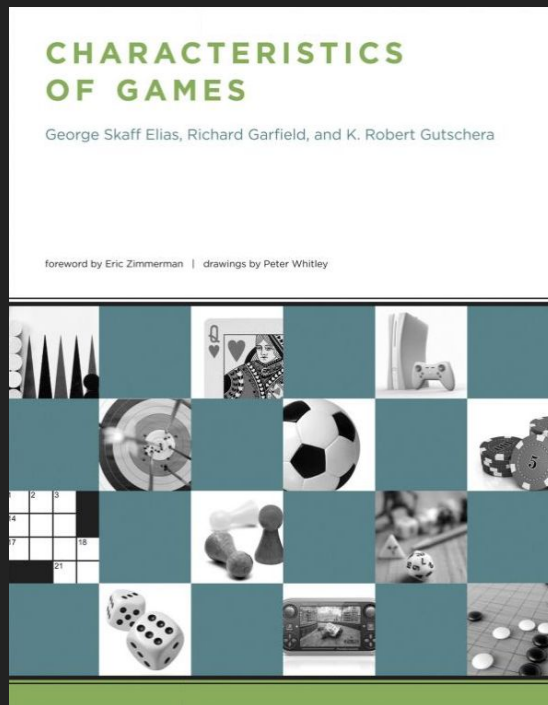
Characteristics of Games: Part 2

Rules

Standards

Outcomes

Ending/Victory Conditions



Sid Meier

Creator of several games (Civilization, Pirates!) defined games as:

“a series of interesting choices”

Bernard Suits

Author of “The Grasshopper - Games, Life and Utopia” said:

“playing a game is a voluntary attempt to overcome unnecessary obstacles”

Rules

Instructions telling players what actions they can take.

Explain how the game state is changed.

Determine if the game state has produced a winning/losing outcome.

Rule Enforcement

Players

In a casual setting, the players enforce the rules.

Judges

Formal sporting events and tournaments.

Environment

The game taking place on a computer or in a field or subjected to the laws of physics.



The Rules \neq The Game

Rules can be added or removed without it becoming a new game.

Rules might be changed to keep a game the same (or in the same spirit).

Video games often have patches to fix exploitable rules.

First-Order Rules

Rules that anyone needs to know in order to **play** the game.

Rules someone would need to **watch** and understand what's going on.

What you tell someone when you **teach** them how to play.

How to move the pieces in chess. You kick the ball into a goal to score.

Second-Order Rules

Rules such as penalties in sports games.

Rules for violations in tournaments.

In video games, there are tons of these such as:
how items affect your character, exp are needed for leveling, etc.

Be Careful!

(when designing non-computer games)

Rules can be a barrier to entry for new players.

Try to achieve the same desired effect with as few rules as possible.

Players (typically) do not read rulebooks.
(most traditional games are taught orally)

Be careful about adding rules to fix things (try something else).

Standards

Commonly accepted patterns, systems and expectations.

Helps with onboarding new players.

Standards: Card Games

Standard deck:

Several card games use a 52 card deck.

Activities such as:

Dealing and Shuffling (randomization).

Mechanics such as:

Hidden information, Discarding, Adding cards into your hand.



Standards: Races

Multiple simultaneous participants.

Starting line and Finish line.

Starting signal.

Measured time.

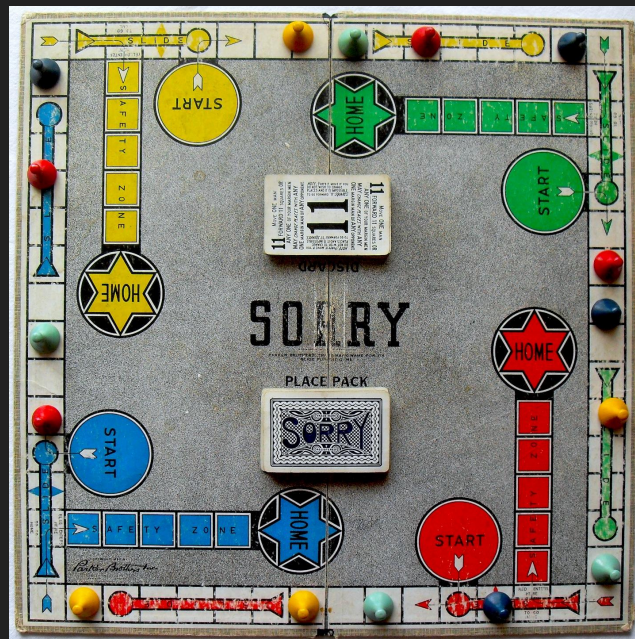


Standards: Board Games

Track style board layout (with squares).

Dice (or other random movement).

Pieces to represent the players.



Standards: First Person Shooters

WASD keys (on PC)

Spacebar to jump

Health bar/indicator

Ammo bar/indicator

Different weapons

Respawning



Game Designers!

Standards

Learning when to use them (and not) is part of your game design journey.

Heuristics

Standards help players with positional and state heuristics (am I winning?
What should I do next?)

Innovation

Successful games (usually) have one or two innovative elements.

Outcomes

Orthogames

Games that end at some point and winners or losers are declared.
Board games, Sports, single-player games.

Nonorthogames

Games with no formally declared winners or losers.
MMOs, Role-playing games.

Common Types of Outcomes

Unique winner (single person or team): Chess, Football

Unique loser (everyone else is considered a winner): Drawing straws

Subset of winners (based on criteria/alliance): Qualifying races

Rankings (might have unique winner/s)

Performance (time, points, money)

May allow for Draws or no Draws

Or Combined of above

Outcomes and Politics

Games with a **unique winner** can become different towards the end due to players taking chances or making desperate plays to win.

Games where the goal is to avoid losing (**unique loser**) can lead to picking on the player that is most behind.

A playgroup may decide a game is over with the **remaining** players being the winner.

Ending and Victory Conditions



Ending Conditions

Winning ends the game: Checkmate, Finish line of race.

An end condition occurs, then the winner is determined: Scrabble (tiles run out), Timed games.

Sometimes an end condition occurs regardless of what the players do.

Depending on the type of game, there can be some dynamics with trying to end a game sooner, or prolong its ending.

Victory Conditions

Many games have a Victory Condition (what a player needs to do to win).

The Victory Condition is to be in the proper state and might be independent of the ending condition (who has the most points or is in the lead when time runs out).

Ending Conditions vs. Victory Conditions

Ending Conditions

Player controlled, such as winning, finishing. Non-player controlled such as timers, running out of resources, etc.

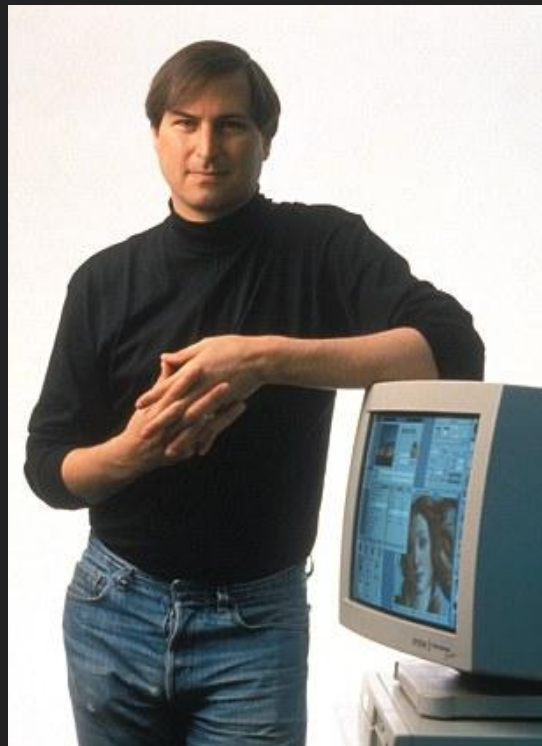
Victory Conditions

Being in the right state at the right time. Having the most points, being at the finish line first, etc.

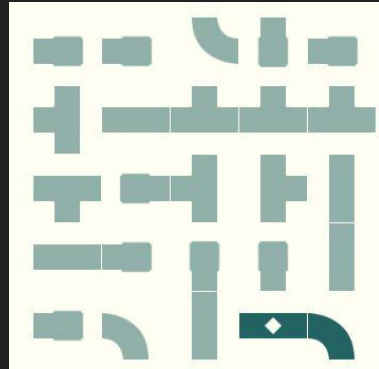
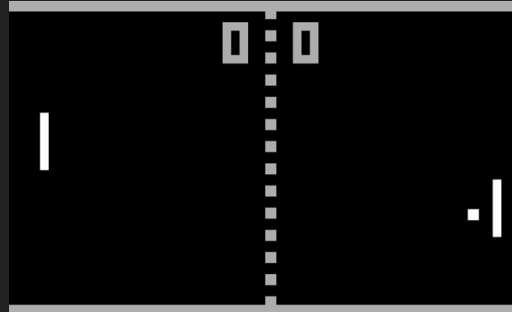
Steve Jobs (1994)

"Ultimately it comes down to taste. It comes down to trying to expose yourself to the best things that humans have done and then try to bring those things in to what you're doing.

I mean Picasso had a saying he said good artists copy great artists steal. And we have always been shameless about stealing great ideas and I think part of what made the Macintosh great was that the people working on it were musicians and poets and artists and zoologists and historians who also happened to be the best computer scientists in the world."



Minimal Versions



Prototype 3

(Due next week)

Let's review the requirements!

Fast Prototype!

Make a game with a unique loser.

20 minutes to make and play your game!