

# MTEC 3175

Week 2: “Basics of Game Design”  
Lecture: Kinds of Play & Game Values

# Game & Reading Response!

Brutal Honesty & Questions Appreciated

*Also, Playtimes from Howlongtobeat.com:*

Baba is You: 6 story, 19 w/ extras

Braid: 5 story, 6 w/ extras

Papers Please: 4.5 story, 8 w/ extras



# GAMES, DESIGN *and* PLAY

A DETAILED APPROACH TO ITERATIVE GAME DESIGN



Colleen MACKLIN | John SHARP

# OpenLab Housekeeping Notes

- For the few who didn't do the freebie "just post an image and a little bit about a game you're playing for a Game Journal credit" post on OpenLab, please consider adding one soon!
- Adding a Youtube Link and/or Image for Game Journal posts is worth a lot for grading
- Really impressed with the quality of responses so far! Keep it up!

# TYPES OF PLAY





Prof. Levine Says:  
LET'S CHECK THE DICTIONARY

# PLAY

- 1. engage in activity for enjoyment and recreation rather than a serious or practical purpose.  
*"the children were playing outside"*
- 2. take part in (a sport). ← no! a GAME!  
*"I play softball and tennis"*



# M&S's Kinds of Play, Pt. I: MOST COMMON

- **Competitive Play:** Play that pits players against each other, leading to winners & losers. Allows for “Yomi”.
- **Cooperative Play:** A form of gameplay that emphasizes player collaboration to meet a goal. This can include symmetrical and asymmetrical cooperative play.
- **Skill-Based Play:** With both competitive & cooperative play, players are asked to develop skill to perform the game's actions in pursuit of its goals. Skill-based play can be broken down into active skill (motor) and mental skill (problem-solving).
- **Games of Chance & Uncertainty:** These games that are ask players to develop strategies to allow for unpredictable moments or aspects of the game. Purely chance-based games remove decision-making from the player experience.
- **Simulation-Based Play:** Games that model aspects of real world phenomenon.





# M&S's Kinds of Play, Pt. 2: MORE SUBTLE

- **Experience-Based Play** :A kind of play focused on providing players with an experience of the game through exploration, unfolding a story, or communal engagement.
- **Whimsical Play**: A kind of play that emphasizes silly actions, unexpected results, and a sense of euphoria by generating dizziness and an experience you need to feel to understand. Based on conceptual absurdity.
- **Role-Playing**:A game that generates stories through players inhabiting different roles and following a loose set of rules through which all sorts of possibilities can emerge, limited only by the players imaginations. Includes both emergent & progressive storytelling.
- **Performative Play**: A theatrical form of play that generates dramatic action and acting. It often includes a good deal of player improvisation. Performance can be unintentional or conscious.
- **Expressive Play**: A form of play that often subverts player choice in an effort to clearly express and share something about human experience. Expressive play might involve authorial expression or player expression.

# IN CLASS EXERCISE I

Competitive Play	Experience-Based Play
Cooperative Play	Whimsical Play
Skill-Based Play	Role-Play
Games of Chance & Uncertainty	Performative Play
Simulation-Based Play	Expressive Play

- 1) Mix & Match kinds of play to generate new play experience.
- 2) Work in groups of 3, design a paper-based or physical game based on 2 kinds of play from the list above.
- 3) The game should take no longer than 10 minutes to play.

# GAME DESIGN VALUES

*(An Academic Concept That Is Maybe Not New To You)*

# DESIGN VALUES ARE...

- a concept made up by architect Ivar Holm in a 2006 book
- repeated by designers Zimmerman (NYU) and Flanagan (Dartmouth) in their 2014 books
- repeated by Macklin & Sharp (Parsons) in their 2016 book
  - repeated by this CityTech curriculum

# DESIGN VALUES ARE...

qualities & characteristics you want to embody in a game.

this can reflect you own goals as a creator,  
but also the experience you want your audience to have.





# 5 KEY APPROACHES

- **Aesthetic:** aesthetic design values focus on the form & experience.
- **Social:** social design values focus on social change & the betterment of society.
- **Environmental:** environmental design values address the concerns of the environment and sustainability.
- **Traditional:** traditional design values use history and the region as inspiration, which might involve working within a genre or reviving a historically important game.
- **Gender/Race/Sexuality:** gender/race/sexuality-based design values bring a feminist or de-colonial conceptions of equality to the design process.

**WHERE DO THESE ABSTRACT  
PRINCIPLES SHOW UP IN  
GAME DESIGN?**

# SOMETIMES...

...it relates to the “mechanical” nature of the game and its play—the actions players perform, the objects used, the goal of the game etc.

NABOO - THEED

GALACTIC ASSAULT

100

- ASSAULT** (PC: 100000)
- HEAVY (PC: 250000)
- OFFICER (PC: 400000)
- SPECIALIST (PC: 500000)

BATTLE POINTS 224

N-1 STARFIGHTER	500
V-WING	750
AT-RT	1,000
CLONE JUMPTROOPER	2,000
HAN SOLO	5,000
REY	5,000



PRE-ALPHA BUILD



THERMAL DETONATOR



VANGUARD: REPLENISH



DISRUPTION



ASSAULT TRAINING

DC-15A



- START
- CHANGE CARDS
- CHANGE WEAPON
- CHARACTER INFO

# SOMETIMES...

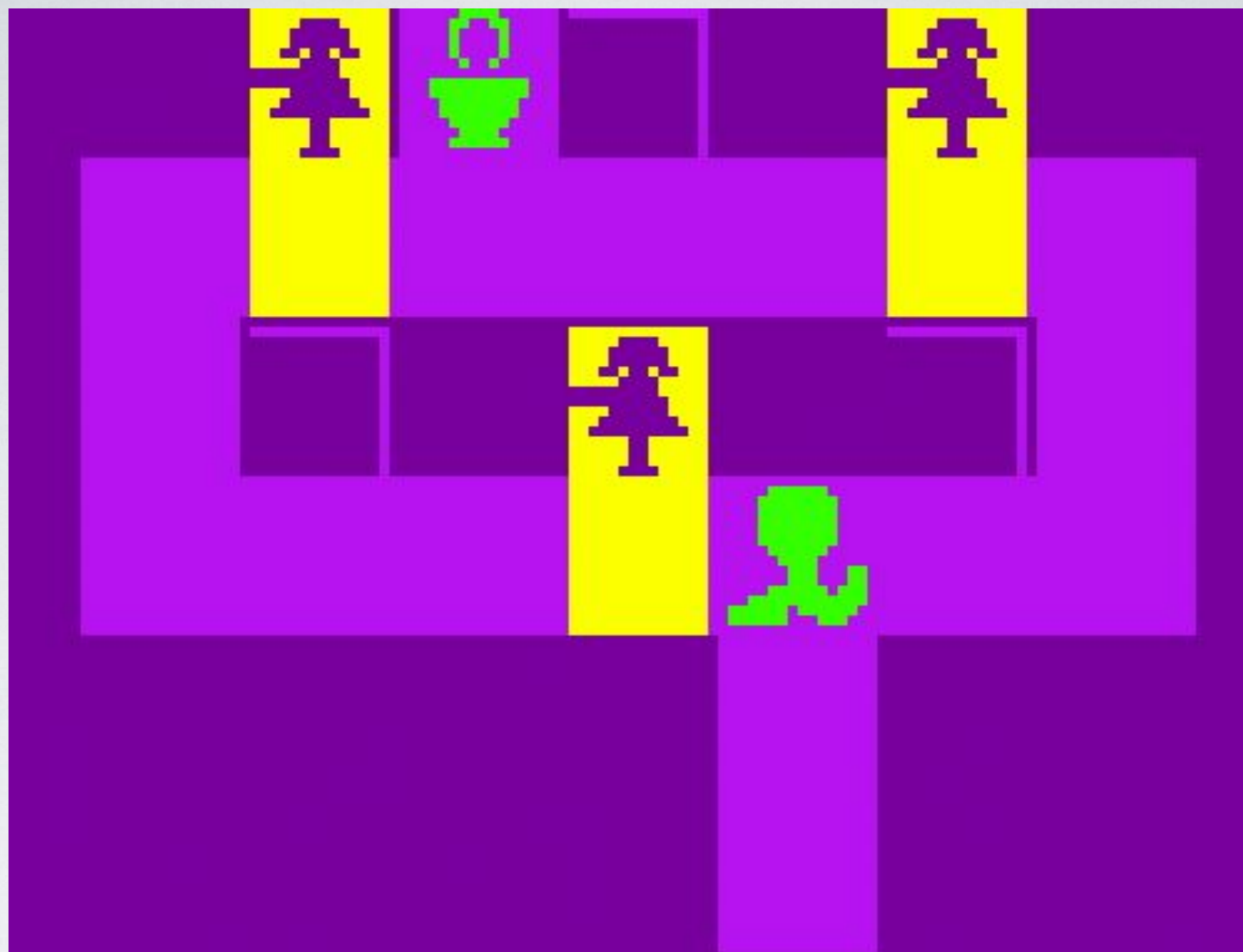
...design values are adjectives, like fast, long & twitchy—descriptions of the what the game will feel like while playing.



# SOMETIMES...

...its related to who the designer envisions playing  
their game.





I FEEL LIKE A SPY  
WHENEVER I USE  
THE WOMEN'S BATHROOM

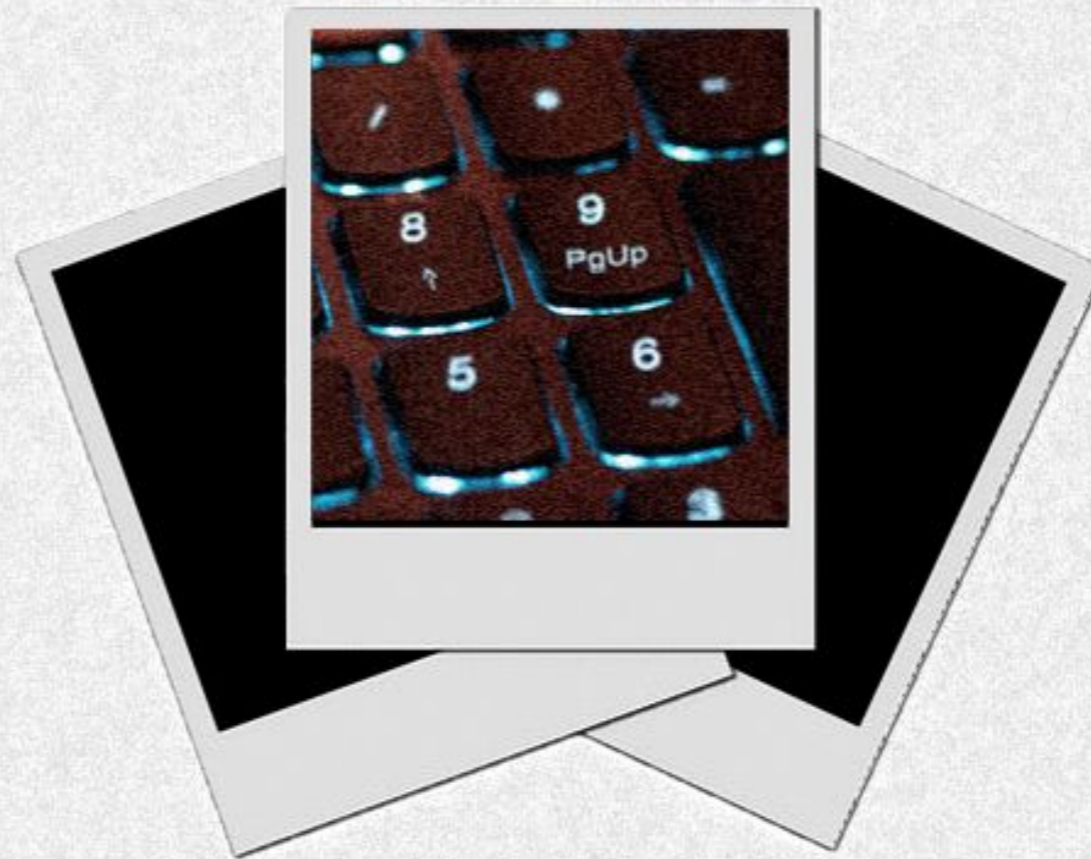


# Depression Quest

an interactive  
(non)fiction  
about living with  
depression

by  
zoe quinn  
patrick lindsey  
isaac schankler

show menu (esc)



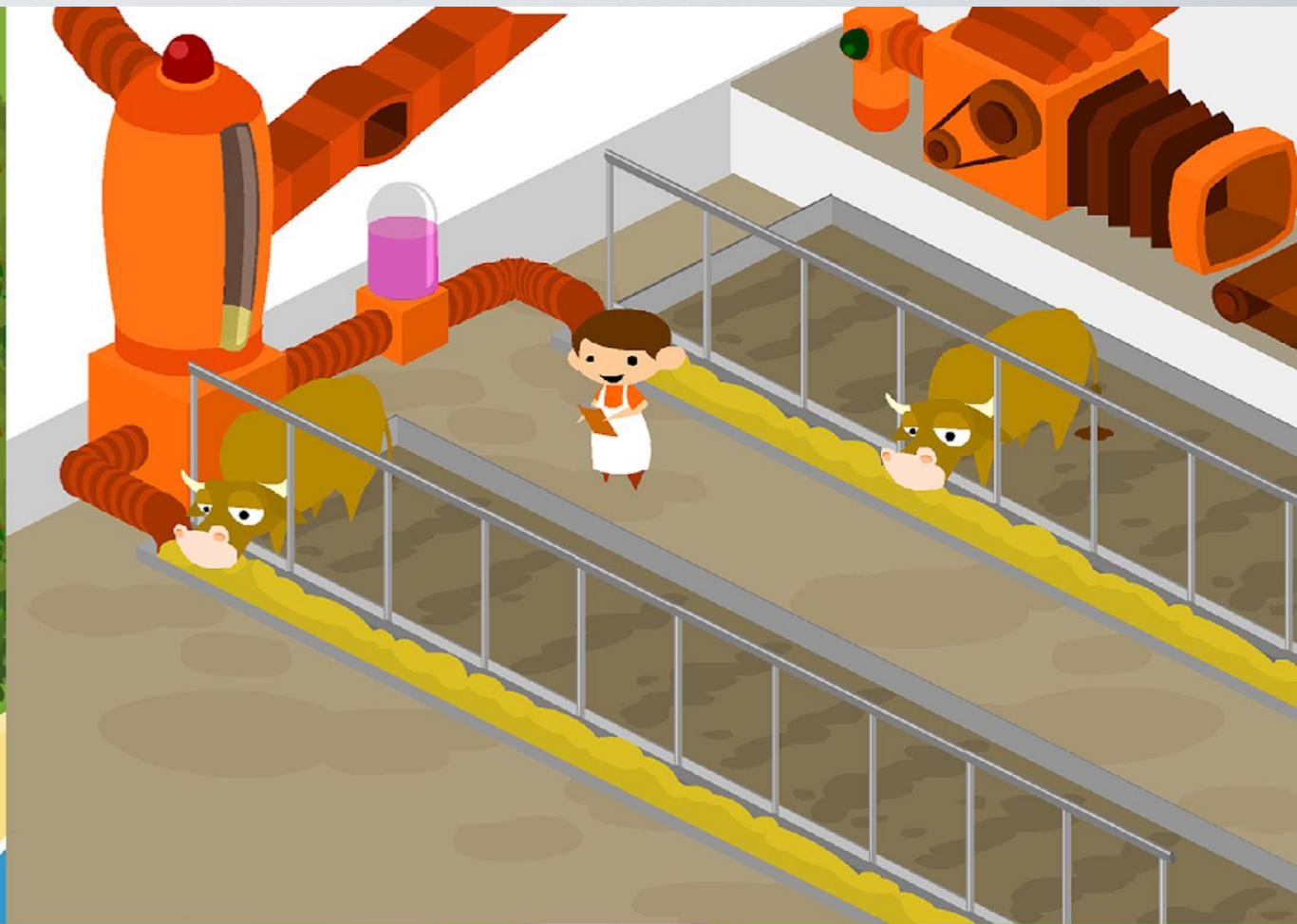
**It's an unseasonably warm Wednesday evening.**

You've spent the past several hours at work. The past week or so you've found your job motivation flagging more so than usual; you've been in a fog practically all day today, simply going through the motions without realizing even what you've been doing half the time, and yet time seemed to be moving at half speed. You're so checked out that when your boss approaches you to tell you that it's dead and you can go home early it barely registers.

# SOMETIMES...

...design values are derived from different personal, political and cultural values.

Social design values express an idea about the human condition, or a political position based on personal or collective values.



L. J. MAGIE.  
GAME BOARD.

APPLICATION FILED MAR. 23, 1903.

NO MODEL.

2 SHEETS—SHEET 1.

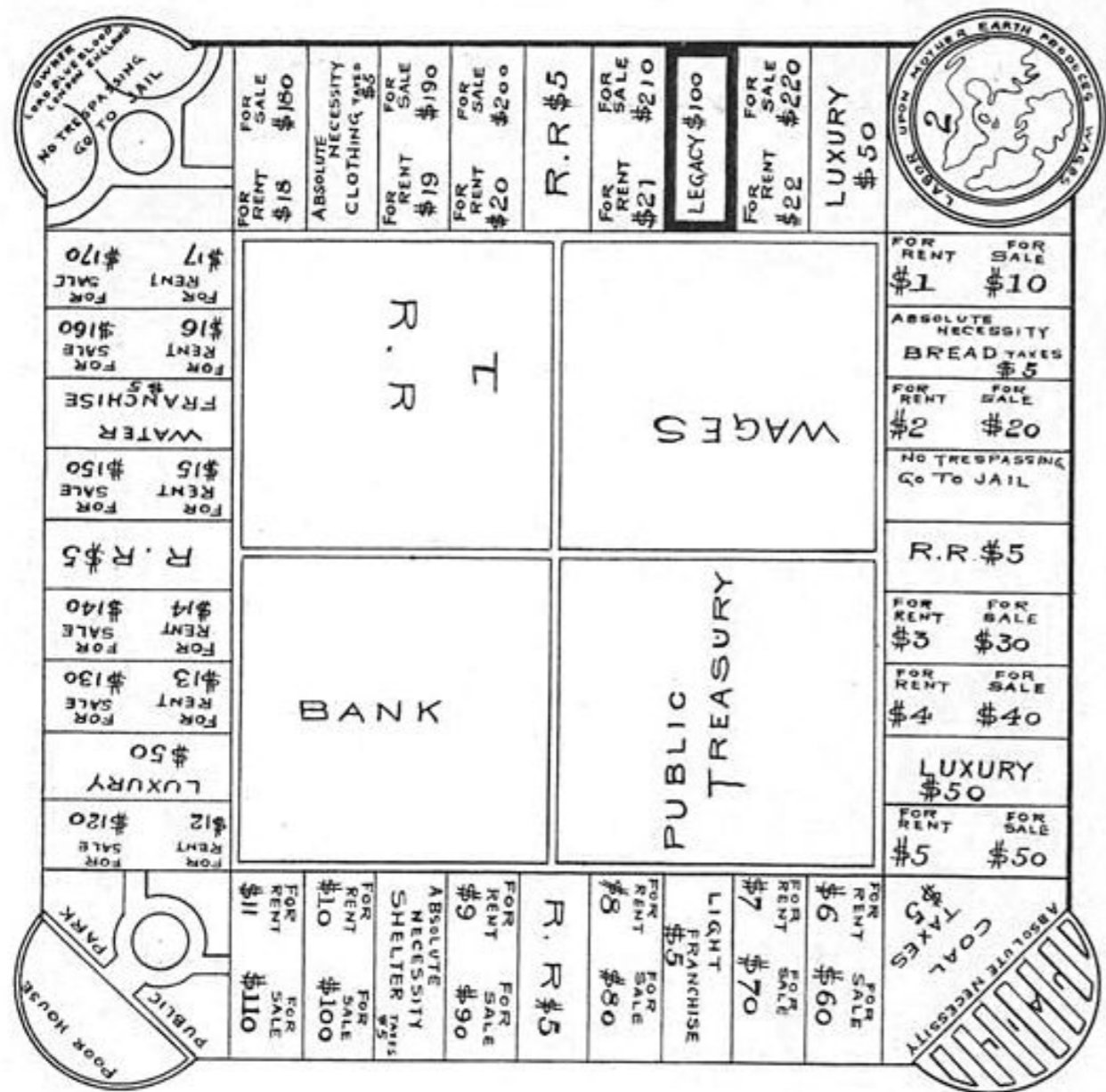


Fig. 1.

Witnesses  
F. L. O'Connell  
M. H. O'Connell

Inventor  
Lizzie J. Magie  
by John A. Saul  
Attorney



# BUT USUALLY...?

Prof. Levine suspects they're not consciously intended by game developers at all.

This is an academic idea which is hard to refute, like high-school English teachers insisting on “themes” in every work.

They **might** be there anyway, but not always on purpose.

# CREATING DESIGN VALUES

(...maybe should be “implementing”?)

# QUESTIONS TO ASK.

- **Experience:** What does the player do when playing? What does the player get to do? How does this make the player feel?
- **Theme:** What is the game about? How does it present this to the players? What concepts, perspectives or experiences might the player encounter during play? How are these delivered? Systems modeling? Metaphor?
- **Point of View:** What does the player see, hear, or feel? From what cultural reference point? How are games and the information with it represented? Simple graphics? Stylized geometric shapes? Highly detailed models?
- **Challenge:** What kind of challenge does the game present? Mental challenge? Physical challenge? Or is it more a question of a challenging perspective, subject or theme?
- **Skill, strategy, chance & uncertainty:** What skills does the game ask of the player? Is the development strategy important to fulfilling play experience? Does chance factor into the game? From what sources does uncertainty develop?
- **Context:** Who is the player? Where are they encountering the game? How did they find out about it? When are they playing it? Why are they playing it?
- **Emotions:** What emotions might the game create in players?



Tenth Anniversary Edition

# The Art of Game Design

A Book of Lenses



Jesse Schell

CRC Press  
Taylor & Francis Group  
HARDCOVER BOOKS

# IN CLASS EXERCISE II

- 1) Pick 1 of the 3 games you played last week.
- 2) Find a partner who played the same game as you.
- 3) Reverse engineer its game design values.

# Questions?

*Next Week's Playtimes from Howlongtobeat.com:*

Limbo: 3.5 story, 4 w/ extras

Spelunky\*: 17.5 story, 39.5 w/ extras

Super Meat Boy: 10 story, 18 w/ extras

but... forgot, SMB might be too expensive...

could do N++, or Super Crate Box?