

Q: What is a game?

A: A game is a ritual course of action based on a set of rules negotiated and agreed upon by two or more players.

SHE: Whose definition is that? Yours?

HE: Yes.

SHE: Is all that necessary?

IT: Necessary my foot! Is that it?

KAFKA: It? Essentially, a game is a logos, a model made to hold the Kantian categories. Existentially, games do not exist. Existence has no rules, no feet, no it.

HELOISE: Must a game always have rules?

ABELARD: Heloise, please.

MADONNA: Shut up and let her talk!

EMERSON: The purpose of Society is to contain the Soul of the One.

MADONNA: What the hell? Jeezus You people!

ALICE: Oh, yes. A game must have rules to begin. The addition or subtraction of the rules as the game is played can also be one of the rules. A rule may even contain a rule to change itself for no reason at all.

ISOLT: Can anything be a game? Can life, or death, or love, or hate be a game?

SADE: Yes. Death as a game makes perfect sense. If death is a game then anything can be made into a game.

WITTGENSTEIN: That sounds familial. That is my idea isn't it? The last part, I mean.

AUGUSTINE: O happy fault! . . . Not!

IBID: Can murder, rape, stealing or lying be a game?

LOLITA: Yep. You bet.

HCE: Then everything is a game. Everybody's feet are somebody else's game.

PO: Only if you make it so. Just.

ATALANTA: What about games you do not want to play. Can someone make you play a game?

SISYPHUS: No. No one can make you play a game.

CANTOR: What kinds of games are there? How many kinds of games are there?

NASRUDIN: "How many kinds of anythings are there?" is a game. By the way, how many kinds of anythings are there?

PIERCE: You speak as if things are not matter and are not real.

DOROTHY: You speak as if those things are not real that matter most. They are. Really.

CHOMSKY: Are there games made up only of words? Do games have to have words? Do words have to have games?

NACHIKETAS: Yes . . . Um . . . Not always.

MANN: I love this! It is so bourgeois. Are not games fundamentally different from everything else? Cannot a game be something that nothing else can be?

RUSSELL: Yes. You can make up a "This is not a game!" game. That is a peculiar feature of games. Only in a game can something be itself and not itself at the same time. Games can be not-games. Mathematicians do this. They often refer to their games/not-games as paradoxes. But games are not facts.

HEIDEGGER: Can something be a game and be something else at the same time? Can something be made up of two or more games and not-games at the same time? Can something be and not be at the same time?

PELAGIUS: Yes. If you choose.

ARJUNA: Is there any limit to the number of games and not-games something can be at one and the same time?

KRISHNA: No.

KLEE: A pedagogical question. Can a game also be a not-game?

SAPPHO: A game can be a game and part of something else not-a-game.

FREUD: Explain.

TIRESIAS: Here is a game not-game:

FADE UP to show what appears to be a landscape composed of TWO SAND-COVERED HILLS and a BRIGHT BLUE SKY.

PULL BACK as the shot moves to an OVERHEAD. The sand is SHIFTING and the hills appear to be MOVING.

PULL BACK as the sand falls away to reveal a WOMAN'S BREASTS as she turns slowly from her back to her side.

WIDEN the shot to show her body nude from her neck to the top of her pubic hair. She is

lying on her side on the sand, resting her weight on one arm. Her other arm lies down the length of her side.

A FEMALE VOICE begins to speak SOFTLY in an EVEN, SOOTHING voice:

"This game is for two players. This type of game originated on the African continent and is thousands of years old. The object of the game is to obtain three sets of playing pieces on a side, each set containing one each of four classes of objects (We will use primary colors which means at least one red, one blue, one green and one yellow playing piece.) The first player to do so ends the game.

Here is a list of parts:

1. A playing board with concave indentations having the following pattern:"

PAN to the area in front of the woman's STOMACH. With the PALM OF HER HAND she makes TWO VERTICAL, PARALLEL ROWS of THREE HOLLOWES EACH in the sand.

She continues speaking SLOWLY, EVENLY:

"2. Two sets of playing pieces, each set containing 4 red, 4 blue, 4 green, 4 yellow and 3 black pieces. Any other types of objects would work as well (for example, shapes or sizes.)

The play:

1. Prior to beginning play players place their pieces as follows:"

Beginning with the TWO TOP INDENTATIONS the woman places FOUR RED CLAY BALLS in each indentation. In each of the next TWO INDENTATIONS she places FOUR BLUE CLAY BALLS. The next TWO INDENTATIONS receive FOUR GREEN CLAY BALLS each. The last TWO INDENTATIONS receive FOUR YELLOW CLAY BALLS each.

She continues:

"The black pieces are placed one each behind (or beside) any three sets of colored pieces."

She places a BLACK CLAY BALL beside any three of the four indentations to the left of the left vertical row and to the right of the right vertical row.

"2. Players decide in advance who has first move. Players alternate turns.

3. On his or her move a player has one of three type of moves available:"

As she SPEAKS the woman DEMONSTRATES each of the FOLLOWING MOVES:

"a. The player may elect to move any one colored piece (black is not a color) from any group of pieces on his side of the board to any adjoining group of pieces (for example, up or down one position on a vertical row).

b. The player may pass one of her colored pieces to her opponent's group opposite

the group from which the piece is passed provided no black piece is associated with the group to which the piece is passed.

c. The player may take one of his opponent's colored pieces and place it in the group that is directly opposite the group from which the piece is taken provided no black piece is associated with the group in which the piece is placed. Upon placement of the piece the player must remove a black piece from one of his (the player's) other groups and place it behind (or beside) the group in which the piece has been placed.

4. No group may at any time contain less than three colored pieces or more than five colored pieces.

5. A player may not pass her turn."

FADE TO WHITE.

TIRESIAS: Do you see? Do you understand the rules?

LILITH: Yes. I have always understood the rules.

ARIADNE: Would you like to play the game? I'll help.

SPINOZA: No. Can't.

JUNG: Now for the other side of the coin. Would you like a different example?

NEFERTITI: Yes. One that is more orderly.

ARACHNE: Here is a game simpler than the first, more elegant.

ATHENA: Careful.

FADE UP to a CLOSE-UP of a FLAME coming from a small STONE BOWL filled with liquid. The bowl is resting on a STONE FLOOR. The flame is surrounded by darkness.

PULL BACK to show the SHOULDER and HAIR of a person.

PULL BACK to show the nude BACK of someone sitting in the darkness. The figure has LONG HAIR and its back is covered with SCARS. The light from the flame outlines and creates an aura around the figure.

CLOSE-UP on the back of the figure. The scars are of an intricate design, unintelligible at first. Gradually, a TONDO emerges, its interior is the same design as that found in the "RING OF NESTOR" the "Tree of Eternal Life."

PAN to the LEFT of the figure to show a wall covered with images of animals. They are immediately recognizable as PALEOLITHIC cave paintings.

The SEATED FIGURE is painting a grid on the CAVE WALL by blowing pigment through a reed. The movements are SLOW and METHODICAL.

CLOSE-UP on the painting.

A different FEMALE voice begins to speak in EVEN, MEASURED breaths.

"This is a game for two or more players. The play consists of forming a series based on shapes and/or colors. (Any other classes of objects can be used as well.) When a series is created or discovered by one player the play ends."

As the voice continues, the seated figure creates an image of the game by filling the squares in the grid with RED, GREEN and BLUE CIRCLES, SQUARES and TRIANGLES. The images are created as before by blowing pigment on the cave wall from a small, thin reed.

"List of parts:

1. A playing board with a minimum grid size of 9 x 9. The size of the grid is arbitrary. The grid contains the game. Without a grid or boundary play can be made to continue indefinitely. Without a grid or boundary there is no game.
2. A set of markers representing three or more classes of objects with each class containing a minimum of three additional classes of objects. This example uses 36 markers as follows:

- Four red circles.
- Four yellow circles.
- Four blue circles.
- Four red squares.
- Four yellow squares.
- Four blue squares.
- Four red triangles.
- Four yellow triangles.
- Four blue triangles.

The markers do not have to exist until they are used. They may be kept in the imagination.

The play:

1. Players decide in advance who has first move and the method of alternating play.
2. The first marker is placed in the center of the board. The second player then places a marker to any side of the first marker. Play continues with each player placing one marker in his turn.
3. On her turn a player may place a marker adjacent to any marker on the board provided the following conditions are met:
 - a. No two markers of the same shape or color (object class) may be placed side by side or may connect on a diagonal.
 - b. A marker may not be placed diagonally (corner to corner).
 - c. A marker must connect with another marker on at least one side.

4. A player may not pass his or her turn.

5. If a series is discovered it must be pointed out before a marker is placed on the board. If a series is completed it must be declared as the marker is placed on the board. One may declare a series only during one's turn. After a marker is placed on the board play passes to the next player.

The following rules are optional:

6. In lieu of her turn a player may elect to add another class of objects to the play. All other players must agree. The board is enlarged accordingly.

7. Players may each bring a collection of objects to the game and combine their objects for the playing pieces. The class of objects added to the play must be an identifiable property of a significant number of the objects in the collection as determined by the players.

8. Players may agree to make the playing board n -dimensional (i.e. 3 (space), 4 (time), 10 (hyperspace), etc.) and to allow any class to be added to the play. By class is meant a set or collection of anything, whether that thing is an object (real or imagined), a process, or a characteristic or property of an object or process.

9. Each player may agree or disagree privately or publicly to believe the following:

"This is a type of game everyone already knows how to play. We are born knowing how to play it. We call it by many names. Sometimes we call it "cause and effect", "understanding", or "knowledge." Sometimes we call it "reality." When we say we have discovered it in something we call it "science." We sometimes call the not-game part of it "art", "mysticism" or "zen." It is one of the oldest games of all. It is one of the games we use to make up all the other games.""

FADE TO BLACK

BORGES: I see. Or I think I see. It is both a book and a labyrinth.

SENECA: If you choose. Do you understand the rules?

ANAXIMANDER: Yes. I think so. Is the non-limited in there somewhere?

SWEDENBORG: Yes, of course. The non-limited is everywhere. Would you care to play the game?

AMIDA: No.

ZENO: Would you like another example?

SWEENEY: No. Two is enough. Three is too many.

ZARATHUSTRA: Does anyone have any questions of me?

PRAJAPATI: Not a one.