

Game Design

9/6/11: What's this About?

What is a Game?

- A game is something you play

What is Play?

- “Play is the aimless expenditure of exuberant energy” – Friedrich Schiller

What is Play?

- “Play refers to those activities which are accompanied by a state of comparative pleasure, exhilaration, power, and the feeling of self-initiative.” – J. Barnard Gilmore

What is Play?

- “Play is free movement within a more rigid structure.” – Katie Salen and Eric Zimmerman

Qualities of Games

- Entered willfully
- Have goals
- Have conflict
- Have rules
- Can be won and lost
- Interactive
- Have challenge
- Can create their own internal value
- Engage players
- Closed, formal systems

What is a Game?

- A game is a **system** in which **players** engage in an **artificial conflict**, defined by **rules**, that results in a **quantifiable outcome**
 - **System** - set of parts that interrelate to form a complex whole (objects, attributes, internal relationships, environment)
 - **Players** - one or more participants **play** by **interacting** with the system
 - **Artificial** - a boundary is maintained from “real life”
 - **Conflict** - contest of powers, either between the player(s) and the system, or between the players themselves
 - **Rules** - provide the structure out of which play emerges by delimiting what the player can and cannot do
 - **Quantifiable outcome** - Goals, which distinguishes games from less formal play activities

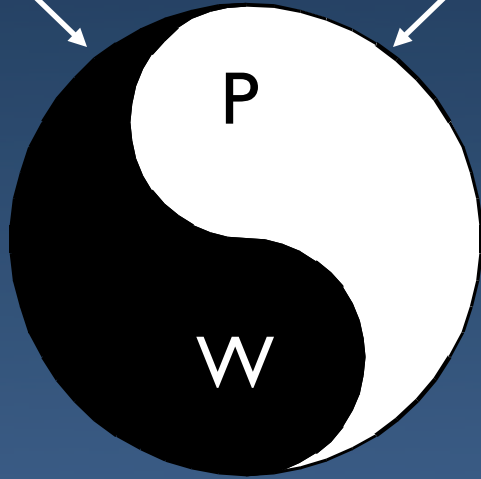
Goals?

- No victory conditions, true. But certainly role-playing games have goals; lots of them, you get to pick. Rank up the old experience points. Or fulfill the quest your friendly GM has just inflicted on you. Or rebuild the imperial and stave off civilization's final collapse. Or strive for spiritual perfection. Whatever.”

-Greg Costikyan

Particles

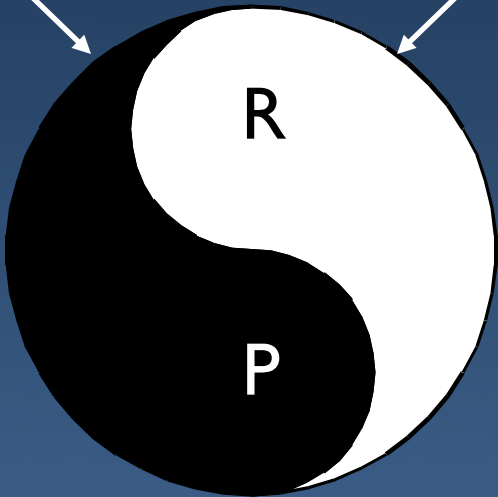
Waves



Stuff

Rules

Play



Games

Rules

- Limit player action
- Explicit and unambiguous
- Shared by all players
- Fixed
- Binding

Play

- Free movement within a rigid structure
- Expression of the system
- The space inside, between, and among the rules
- Opposes and resists
- Uses existing structures to invent new forms of expression