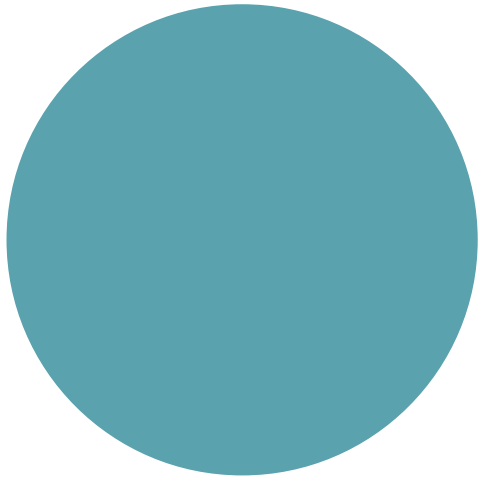
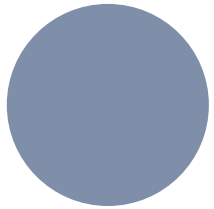
Game Balance

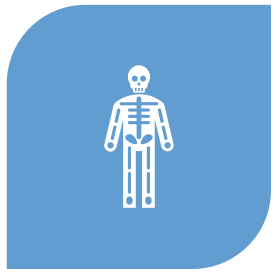
Wodtke

cs247

What we talk about when we talk about game balance

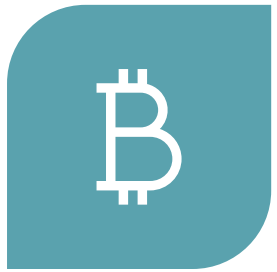
4 types of balance



ALL PLAYERS HAVE EQUAL ABILITY TO WIN (OR DON'T)

CHALLENGE LEVEL RIGHT FOR AUDIENCE (BALANCE GAME AND PLAYERS)

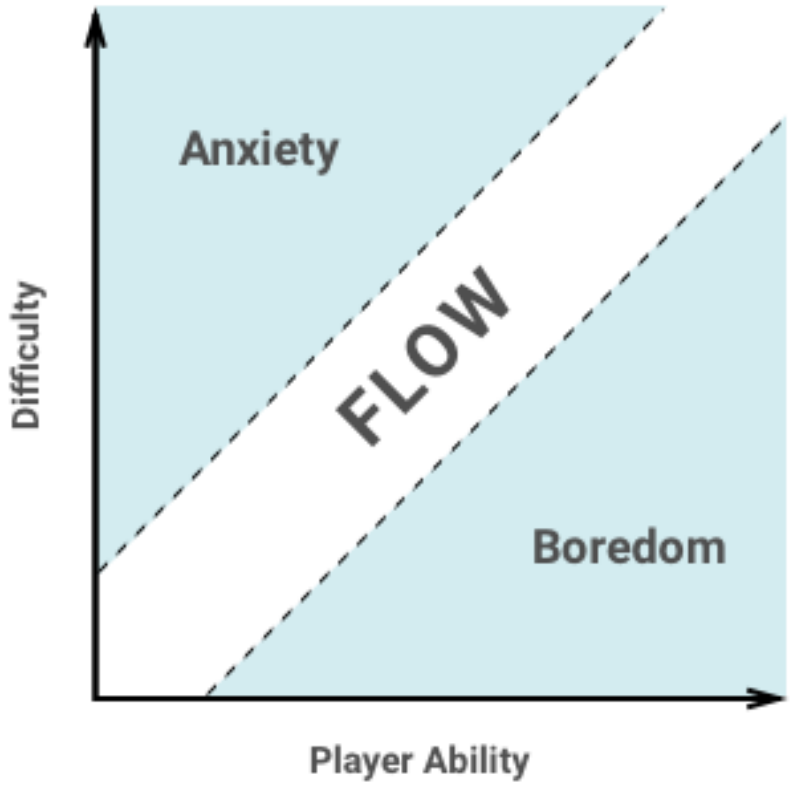
STRATEGIES ARE EQUALLY VIABLE (OR AREN'T)



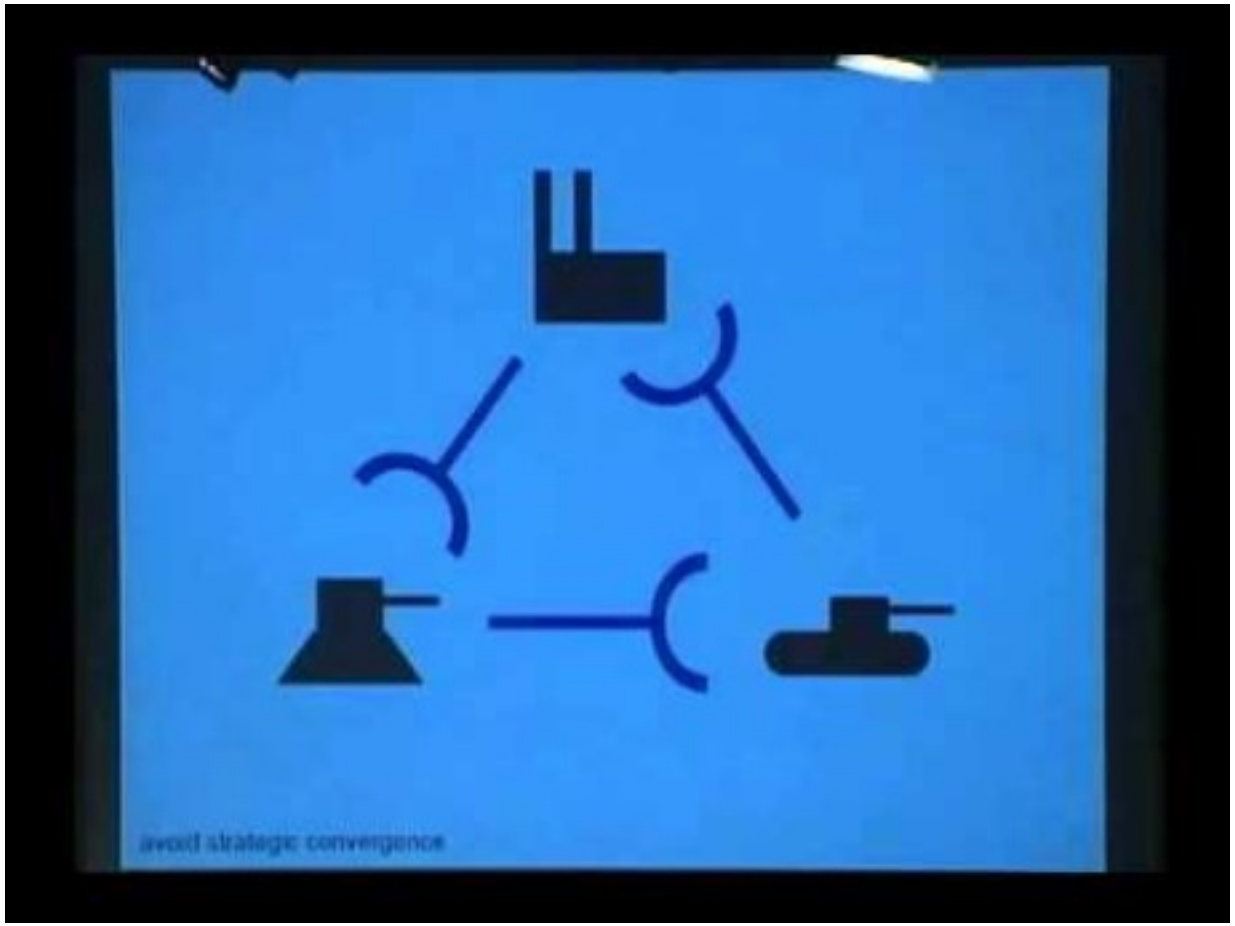
RESOURCES HAVE SAME COST/BENEFIT RATIO

Who are the players? Do they differ in skills?

Player/Difficulty matching



Choices



How to balance

Math

Design Instincts

Playtest it

Downsides

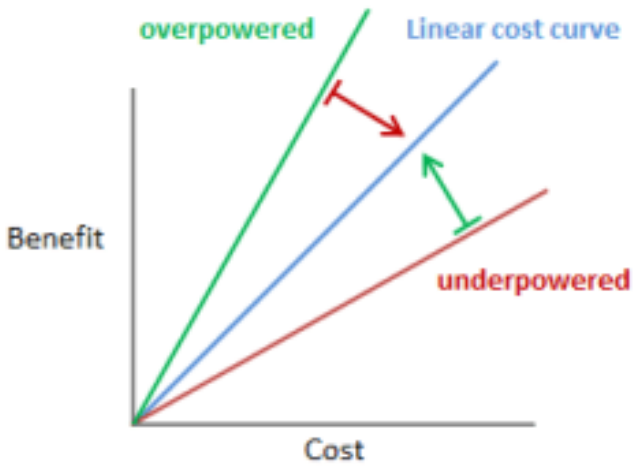
Math	Instincts	Playtesting
Math can be slow and dangerous if you get it wrong	Feel it: not everyone has developed good instincts	Playtest it: stuff still sneaks through

Math may not be the problem.

Types of Strategies for balance

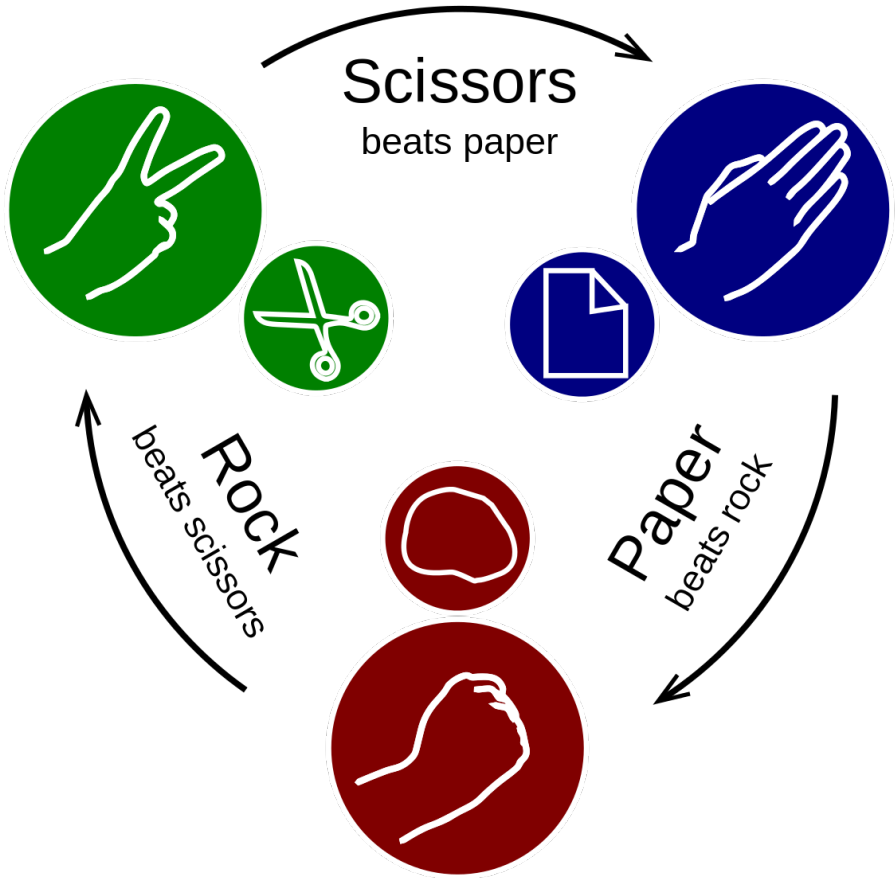
- Transitive
- Intransitive
- “Fruity”

Transitive



- Cost and benefit should be equal OR
- Follow a ratio (gets more expensive in a non-linear way as you get more experienced)

Intransitive

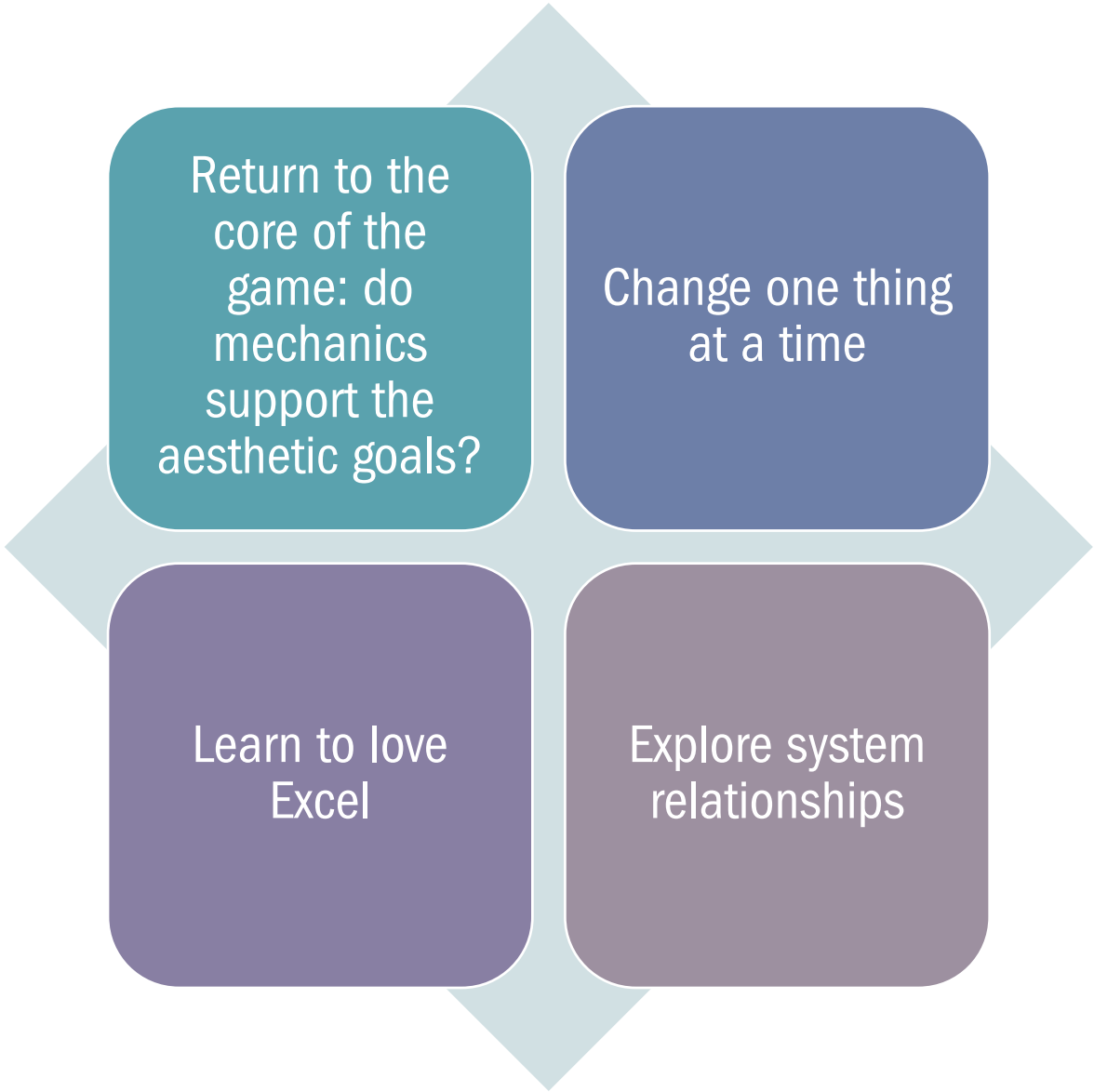


“Fruity” (Ian Schreiber’s term)

Golden Rules

Player/Player	Player/Gameplay	Gameplay/Gameplay
Players should never be put in unwinnable situations through no fault of their own	Game should be fun to learn and fun to play (game is more fun when more is learned)	All game options must be worth using sometimes and the cost must be commensurate with payoff

Techniques


Return to the core of the game: do mechanics support the aesthetic goals?
Change one thing at a time
Learn to love Excel
Explore system relationships

The rule of two

The rule of 2

Is something too low? Double it

Is something too high? Cut it in half

Q&A

More resources

https://gamebalanceconcepts.wordpress.com/2010/07/21/level-3-transitive-mechanics-and-cost-curves/