

Planning a *Let's Pretend* Game

**Games of make-believe:
role playing games as devising theatre**



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Abstract

This dissertation seeks to formulate guidelines for the construction of a *Let's Pretend* game in order for a group to create a collaborative narrative through pretend play. A *Let's Pretend* game would provide a system for a performance event in which players are able to enter an imaginary world, take on roles in such a world and take actions in these roles. For this a *Let's Pretend* game should have a structured system of play; the structure for narrative in an imaginary environment; the means for participants to collaborate; and the means for participants to direct themselves.

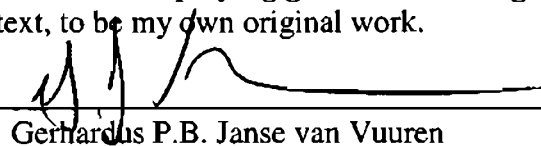
The practical component of this research, *The Foreshadowing* workshop, combines the role-playing game and a devised theatre workshop into one process. In this process the elements of games of make-believe can be identified. Bernard Suits' theory on games of make-believe identifies the prelusory goal, lusory means, constitutive rules, and the lusory attitude as the basic elements of a game.

The guidelines for a *Let's Pretend* game can be derived from the conventions of the role-playing game and devised theatre workshop. These guidelines would address all the requirements of a *Let's Pretend* game, except self-direction, which is not available in the role-playing game, or devised theatre workshop. For self-direction, guidelines are derived from Bernard Suits' notion of the game as institution through the process of rules clarification.

The primary guidelines for constructing a *Let's Pretend* game then are: that the game structure should foster fidelity to game world specifically through the imaginary roles. The character creation process should allow these roles to be the focus for action resolution. These roles should be able to develop through interactions and these

interactions, as dramatic moves, would determine the plot. The structure of the game should further foster collaboration, be easily learnt and transferred, allow for the negotiating of rules and most importantly afford all players access to the directorial function. This dissertation, however, does not attempt the construction of such a *Let's Pretend* game. This would be the subject of future study.

I hereby confirm that this dissertation, **Planning a *Let's Pretend* Game, Games of make-believe: role playing games as devising theatre**, unless indicated to the contrary in the text, to be my own original work.

Sign:  Date: 14/12/05
Gerhardus P.B. Janse van Vuuren

Title page illustration: Bob Aull, as illustration to Maurer, Steve (1991) *The Pitfalls of Game Mastering*. *Dragon Magazine*. Issue no. 170, Vol. XVI, no 1, June 1991. p. 89.

**There's something moving behind that door...
Perhaps it's a vicious ogre waiting to tear you limb from limb.
Or a horde of zombies thirsting for blood.
Or maybe a terrifying dragon ready to engulf
you in a maelstrom of fire.
Problem?
Nope. Not for you.
You're a hero--
a powerful wizard, a strong fighter, or a sneaky rogue.
You can handle whatever comes
at you in this introduction to the greatest fantasy game of all time.**

DUNGEONS & DRAGONS™ Adventure Game (Tweet et al. 2000: back cover)

Dedication

To Leona Tadmor, who gave me a DUNGEONS & DRAGONS® boxed set which sparked this research, and to Hilla Morgan, who believed in the power of fantasy. These two inspiring friends were with us in this world at the beginning of this research, but in another world at the end.

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Abbreviations

AD&D	- Advanced Dungeons & Dragons
D&D	- Dungeons & Dragons 3 rd edition
DM	- Dungeon Master
GNS Model	- Gamist, Narrativist, Simulationist Model
GURPS	- Generic Universal Role-Playing System
PC	- Player Character
RPG	- Role-playing game
RPGs	- Role-playing games
TSR	- Tactical Systems Rules

Let's Pretend

The Idea for a Game

And here I wish I could tell you half the things Alice used to say, beginning with her favourite phrase "Let's pretend." She had had quite a long argument with her sister only the day before—all because Alice had begun with "let's pretend we're kings and queens;" and her sister, who liked being very exact argued that they couldn't, because there were only two of them, and Alice had been reduced at last to say "Well you can be one of them, and I'll be all the rest."

Through the Looking Glass – Lewis Carroll (Gardner, 1970:179-180)

This dissertation is concerned with the *plan* of pretend play. Pretend play is the suspension of disbelief in order to create an imaginary world, which exists in a different time, space, and with people different from the present reality. Most children, like Alice, take part in make-believe or pretend play.

Bernard Suits (1978:95) evaluates pretend play (in his words: '*open*' games of *make-believe*) as a flawed rudimentary game because its goals, strategies, and rules are unclear and unfixed. Pretend play is not exact with all persons playing more or less with their own rules. This uncertainty of pretend play tends to lead to disagreements on the rules of play. When two boys point their fingers at each other and shout bang, who is to say who missed, who shot first, and who is dead?

Because the rules of pretend play are not clear, people neglect pretend play as they grow up, in favour of more certain and specific games with clearly fixed rules and strategies. Structured or '*closed*' games on the other hand are efficient because their rules are more fixed and exact. Players do not have to negotiate rules constantly, and more time can be devoted to playing the game. Examples of these are athletic games, board games, card games, and more recently, the vast variety of computer games.

We take the uncertainties of pretend play into adult versions such as drama workshops and devised theatre, which led Richard Schechner (1993:25-26) to ask:

How do players, directors, spectators, and observers know when a play act begins, is taking place, and is over? Is being "over" the same as "concluding" or "finishing"? What metaplaying is framing the playing?

These questions form a starting point for my enquiry into pretend play.

1.1 Research Context

According to Suits (1978:137), closed games have succeeded in becoming established institutions because of their exactness; while 'open', make-believe games have not because of their in-exactness. I suggest here that since the publication of the theory of Suits in 1978, the *role-playing game* (RPG)¹ has established itself as a make-believe game with clear rules and strategies.

Devised theatre prides itself on not being systematised, but dependant on the collaborative energies of the group involved (Oddey, 1994). This however means that devised theatre workshops frequently reinvent basic working methods. Devised theatre uses *role-play* and *games* as part of the storehouse of techniques. Games are common practice in drama and theatre processes, forming part of workshops, rehearsals, warm-up, and educational processes in Drama- and Theatre-in-Education. These theatre games are elements of the bigger process and not the organising factor for that process.

It is my argument that it is possible to use the game structure as organising principle for a process such as a devising theatre workshop. The type of game I suggest to use as basis is the RPG, an *open* game of make-believe (Suits, 1978). I refer to the game structure of make-believe play as the *plan* for pretend play.

Pretend play transforms the ordinary into the imaginary in a way that Garvey (1991:82) describes as:

...a voluntary transformation of the Here and Now, the You and Me, and This or That, along with any potential action these components may have.

Garvey's description (see Table 1.1) summarises the aspects of pretend play that this dissertation touches upon namely:

- participation,
- direction,
- world,
- role,
- setting, and
- efficacy.

¹ Players and rulebooks know and refer to the role-playing game as an RPG. The RPG community makes use of a number of standard abbreviations and these I employ where necessary.

Table 1.1 Aspects of the plan of pretend play

Garvey's (1991:82) description of pretend play	Aspects of pretend play	Basis of the plan of pretend play
a voluntary	participation	collaboration
transformation	direction	self-direction
of the Here and Now	world	} imaginary environment
the You and Me	role	
and This or That	setting	
along with any potential action these components may have	efficacy	Ability to implement the plan of pretend play

I combine the provisional pretend play aspects of world, role, and setting, as the imaginary environment for pretend play. I view participation especially in terms of collaboration, and direction specifically as self-direction. These three combined aspects (imaginary environment, collaborative participation, and self-direction) form the basis of the *plan*, while the aspect of efficacy resides in the ability to implement the *plan*. The purpose of the *plan* is to construct a pretend play game and I refer to the *plan* of pretend play as a *Let's Pretend* game.

I define a *Let's Pretend* game as a structured system of play that provides the means for participants to create a *collaborative* and *self-directed* narrative in an *imaginary environment*. I assume, in terms of this dissertation, that it is possible to formulate guidelines for the design of a *Let's Pretend* game and therefore for the subsequent construction of such a game. However, I limit myself to the formulation of guidelines, and the construction of a *Let's Pretend* game falls beyond the scope of this dissertation.

1.1.1 Practical Research Workshop

I directed a devised theatre workshop – *The Foreshadowing* workshop - as the primary practical component of this research. The workshop process ran from 27 March to 18 April 2002. I also make use of my experience gained from participation in other RPGs and devised theatre workshops.² The purpose of the workshop was to test the use of the mechanics of the DUNGEONS & DRAGONS™ RPG as a workshop method to create a performance text collaboratively.

Using the RPG as a theatre devising method does not have any theoretical precedent.³ I derived the possibility for this from Mackay's (2001) analysis of the RPG as performance art. Mackay (2001:115) makes the connection between the RPG and the devised theatre workshop when he says:

A specific role-playing game text can be the basis for what Schechner called a workshop and Fine designated as an idioculture.

Studies in RPGs predominantly focus on the performance aspects of these games. Kurt Lancaster (1998), Daniel Mackay (2001), Gary Alan Fine (1983), and Sean Patrick Fannon (1999), expound on the artistic, aesthetic, social, and entertainment values of the game and game genres and not on the efficacy building of the players. I address the self-efficacy of the players under the aspect of self-direction.

Kurt Lancaster also uses Richard Schechner's performance theories to explore aspects of the RPG. He particularly makes use of Schechner's idea of the 'restoration of behaviour'. This, as shown later, explains how RPGs, through using *readymades*, draw on popular cultural imagery and concepts to form a performance text.

In *The Foreshadowing* workshop, a group of five female students played through a set RPG adventures. I had cast the players from first and second year drama students in Drama Studies at the then University of Natal, Pietermaritzburg. The players'

² As actor and workshop participant in *The Fall of the House of Dunsinane*, a TIE production on *Macbeth* directed by Debi Tromp. As director of *The House*, a follow-up project after *The Foreshadowing*. As co-director (with my wife Petro) and actor in *Titbits of Ham*, a TIE production based on *Hamlet*. And, as director of *We have trouble keeping the dishes clean*, a devised play in a contemporary setting.

³ TSR (Tactical Systems Rules), the company that developed DUNGEONS & DRAGONS™, has performed aspects of Campaign scenarios, such as *Dragonlance*, at Game Conventions but these performances were not created through a devised theatre workshop (Weis & Hickman, 1999).

participation in this workshop is a matter of public record as they participated in the public performance of *The Foreshadowing* as result of the workshop process. I therefore refer to them by their real names and the names of their characters. These players and their characters were:

- Amy who played *Zak*,
- Avershree who played *Fortune*,
- Bistra who played *Liandrin*,
- Carolyn who played *Annataya*, and
- Naadiya who played *Lia*.

The ethical considerations of this research were and will be addressed as follows:

- During auditions the players were informed that the workshop would be used as a basis for research for a Master's degree.
- After selection and during an individual interview each player was informed of the nature of the research, that they would be required to keep a journal, that the workshop sessions would be recorded on audio-tape, and that their participation would be observed for research purposes.
- Each player individually gave consent and agreed to be part of the workshop process and the resulting research.
- Neither the journals nor the audio-tapes are necessary for future research as this will expand on underlying principles and processes and not on the particular individual contributions. After the conclusion of this research the workshop journals will be returned to the players. The audio-tapes will be destroyed because they hold only a curiosity value beyond this research.

The Foreshadowing was a devised theatre workshop that used the rules and mechanics of a popular commercial RPG system⁴, DUNGEONS & DRAGONS® (D&D), to create a performance script for eventual rehearsal and performance.

⁴ DUNGEONS & DRAGONS™ (D&D) are considered the leader and original format of RPGs. Tactical Systems Rules (TSR) developed it in the mid 1970's through the changing of tabletop War Game rules to allow players to play individual characters instead of armies.

In *The Foreshadowing* workshop, we played a set of three RPG sessions that provided the source material for the construction of a theatrical script. For this the three Core rulebooks of the D&D game (*Player's Handbook*, *Dungeon Master's Guide*, and *Monster Manual*)⁵ and the introductory *Adventure* booklet from the DUNGEONS & DRAGONS® *Adventure Game* (2000) was used. I designed the second introductory adventure (see Addendum B) and also adapted an adventure called *Spirits of the Tempest* by Michael Selinker (1995), which he based on William Shakespeare's *The Tempest*. In the adventure, the player characters are companions on the Duke of Milan's ship the *Donna Milano*, which shipwrecks on Prospero's island.

In the most common *plan* of role-playing a game, one person, the DM, prepares a scenario for an adventure. These scenarios can be bought as Campaign Scenarios that include a whole world description with a series of adventures. Many scenarios can also be downloaded from the Internet. DMs can however construct their own scenarios and adventures or adapt any scenario they are using.

The players each play an imaginary player character, or PC, guiding their PC's steps through the planned scenario with a combination of improvised decisions or actions, and random dice rolls to simulate chance factors. The characters are chosen to fit into the given scenario and players are normally presented with a list of options from which to choose a character type. The DM plays all other characters that the player characters meet during their adventure.

The interaction for the game takes place with the players seated around a table and the role-playing takes place in the imagination through verbal enactment and description. Participants imagine resulting actions, or at most represent these with counters and maps on the tabletop.

⁵ The *Player's Handbook* gives all the information about races, classes, equipment, combat, and magic a player would need. The *Monster Manual* contains a list of monsters that players might face. The *Dungeon Masters Guide* holds information for running adventures including how to design and prepare these adventures. It also includes information on advanced combat, magical items and some information on what happens behind the scenes in terms of game design and game balance.

Every RPG system is dependent on some explicit rule system normally contained in rulebooks. The D&D 3rd edition game system⁶ consists of three core rulebooks that combined provide a structured game system. The rules describe possible character types to play, identified by race and class⁷. The rules also explain how characters acquire and use skills and equipment. Most importantly, the rules explain the combat and magic system. Most RPGs explore some fantastical world. The game is set in a certain setting or genre like fantasy, science fiction or secret agents where characters can use some kind of extra- or paranormal abilities. Certain actions are randomly determined by the rolling of dice and arbitrated by the DM.

This is the plan followed during *The Foreshadowing* workshop process. We had to adapt this plan in order to account for the needs of a devised theatre workshop. These adaptations are discussed in Chapter 2.

In order to record the narrative and process, I required each player to keep a journal and I recorded the role-playing sessions on audio-tapes. The players completed the adventure using RPG conventions. After that, we had a few sessions reconstructing the narrative and improvising some dialogue scenes. From the improvised dialogue, journal entries, and workshop audio-tapes I wrote a script, which was then rehearsed and performed. The script was altered extensively during rehearsals for congruence and theatricality.

The fact that the script exists (Addendum A), and was performed in 2002, demonstrates the possibility of using a RPG as devising method. However, I do not evaluate the quality of the script and the resulting performance because it falls outside the scope of this dissertation. What is relevant to this study is the planning of, and pretend play during, *The Foreshadowing* workshop on which the script is based.

⁶ Part of DUNGEONS & DRAGONS™ 3rd Edition is the use of a specific set of rules as a role-playing system called the D20 system which the 3rd Edition separated from the game of DUNGEONS & DRAGONS™. The system makes use of a 20-sided die to resolve most issues. Other role-playing systems that exist are Rolemaster and GURPS or Generic Universal Role-Playing System.

⁷ Race in D&D refers to Fantasy races such as elves, dwarves, and gnomes and must not be confused with an understanding of race in terms of colour. In the game, all humans are of the race 'human' which include any description of human. In the STAR WARS™ RPG, this element is referred to as species, including various alien or extra-terrestrial races. Class can be likened to profession. Some of the classes available are Fighter, Paladin, Cleric or Sorcerer.

There were a number of limitations and shortcomings to *The Foreshadowing* workshop process. Firstly, I had minimal experience in theatre practice. I could therefore not accurately predict the future theatrical consequences of decisions made during the workshop. In order to overcome this I relied on advice from my supervisor and other lecturers. I did not always take and follow their advice. I also situated my workshop as part of the Honours directing course where I was one of a group of three directors involved in devising plays. Discussions and seminars during this course provided additional theatrical insights.

The second limitation resided in the cast's general inexperience in terms of RPGs and gaming conventions and specifically their unfamiliarity with the rules of the D&D system. Partly to overcome this I cast players with an interest in fantasy. During the workshop, two introductory adventures preceded the main adventure. This was in order for the group to get to know the basic style and conventions of the RPG. It also aided in the players becoming familiar with each other as a group as well as developing their imaginary characters. In terms of the D&D rules, I acted as a translator of the rules, providing the players only with rule descriptions and implications on a need to know basis. This is a common practice in RPGs with novice players (*Dungeon Master's Guide*, 2001:8).

1.1.2 Background

My introduction to RPGs was in 1989 when I participated in a *Basic* D&D dungeon crawl. A dungeon crawl is a certain type of adventure in which the party of adventurers searches an unknown imaginary structure, typically a dungeon, room by room thus constructing an adventure. This was also the basic premise used in constructing a follow-up play on *The Foreshadowing* called *The House*. The dungeon crawl is an archetypal adventure scenario, which forms part of any campaign. In the early days of RPGs, the world outside the dungeon was virtually non-existent.

I role-played a character called *Madatan*, a Halfling thief. A Halfling in basic D&D is similar to, and inspired by, J.R.R. Tolkien's (1937) *The Hobbit*. Because of a copyright dispute, D&D had to use the name Halfling instead of Hobbit. I remember one event when the party entered a room with a table. I, as *Madatan*, said: "*I look at*

what is on the table.” The DM responded that I could not see the tabletop because I was too short. I had to ask another character to pick me up. This experience highlights how I, as an average sized young adult can play in earnest, during a make-believe game, at being a three foot tall Halfling.

I became involved in RPGs again in 2001 as a DM of a small group of players. We played the second edition system, also called ADVANCED DUNGEONS & DRAGONS® (AD&D)⁸, with only a *Player's Handbook* and making up rules as we went along. Usually at least three core rulebooks are necessary to play successfully. What struck me was the way the group created a comprehensive narrative from these shared but imaginary experiences. It was noticeable how players would describe the adventures they experienced in the game world after a session. I have found that in the retelling of the experience the players would conflate the mechanics of the game into a unified account. Players recount their adventures in the first person and their stories have the feel of vivid and lived through experiences. I think that, because participants live through the experience in the imaginary world, they have a direct and personal identification with the narrative. Therefore, they are able to draw on a rich background of impressions to recount the story. This assumption prompted my interest in the relationship between the RPG and an oral narrative structure.

I had come to the University of Natal to do a Masters degree in Fine Arts but was first doing a Postgraduate Diploma in Fine Arts. My intention was to develop narrative work in visual media. One of the areas of interest I explored was the visual depiction of actions unfolding in time. The limitations of purely visual forms continuously frustrated me because the narratives could not provide experiences capable of deep immersion as well as entertainment. The involvement, rapt attention, and accessibility that a narrative structure presented did not seem to fit into visual art. The sense of narrative and immersion that I could not find in my visual artwork I found in my ‘downtime’, in the RPGs I played. These RPG experiences, however, were not shared with a broader

⁸ The DUNGEONS & DRAGONS™ game system has had a number of editions that have been reworked in such a manner that they are almost completely distinct game systems. The first version was called DUNGEONS & DRAGONS™, also referred to as *basic D&D*. The second version was called ADVANCED DUNGEONS & DRAGONS™ or *AD&D*. In 2001 DUNGEONS & DRAGONS™ third edition, also referred to as *3rd Ed*, was released.

audience, nor did they relate well to my visual art endeavours. Where I found resonance was in the field of drama especially in devised theatre.

During this time my wife Petro was devising a theatre product as part of Honours study in drama. She devised or 'workshopped' a play which she called *The Shaman's Conversion*. Although I was not involved in her process I experienced it vicariously. Through conversations, observations of her process and viewing of her and others' devised theatre plays, the similarities and problems of the devised theatre process and the RPG struck me as significant.

I combined my frustration with static visual materials (that are not able to portray engaging narratives) with my direct experience of the narrative created in the RPG and the vicarious observations of the workshop process. This gave me the idea to use the RPG system and structure to create the narrative and script of a theatre piece, which resulted in the play, called *The Foreshadowing*. I wanted to test the idea of playful game experiences forming a basis for a comprehensive narrative. The only way I saw was through theatrical re-enactment of the past imaginary experience.

1.1.3 Game, Theatre, and Workshop

The D&D game as RPG system is structured to organise pretend play. The devised theatre workshop also organises pretend play. It can therefore be said that both have a plan for pretend play. By using the RPG system in a devised theatre workshop I am combining the two plans. I compare them here to clarify which aspects of each plan will combine and which will modify each other.

The RPG and the devised theatre workshop share similar characteristics. In both:

- a group of participants,
- working without a predetermined script,
- create a narrative performance,
- through improvisation,
- in fictional roles, and
- make-believe situations.

In terms of these characteristics the RPG and the devised theatre workshop can be compared using the following theoretical concepts: *performance elements* (Mackay, 2001, Lancaster, 1998, and Schechner, 1977); *narrative structure* (Mackay, 2001,

Vogler, 1988 and Rimmon-Kenan, 1983); *improvisational strategies* (Johnstone, 1979, Izzo, 1997 and Fannon, 1999); *taking on of role* (Morgan & Saxton, 1987, Bolton, 1998, and Fine, 1983); *representation of reality* (Lancaster, 1998, Fine, 1983 and Mackay, 2001); *replication of power structures* (Mackay, 2001, Foucault, 1979 and Berry, 2000); *play processes* (Mackay, 2001 and Schechner, 1978); and *game-play characteristics* (Suits, 1978)⁹. This dissertation uses the last theoretical concept as a framework for discussion, linking it to relevant aspects of the other concepts.

There are, however, important differences between an RPG and a devising theatre process that need to be taken into account. Devising theatre and RPGs each encompass two major processes, namely: creation, and performance. For the devising theatre process, creation includes an exploratory (workshop) phase and a rehearsal phase. It is this workshop phase that can be compared to an RPG. The difference comes in with reference to the performance process. For both devising theatre and the RPG the performance includes the actions of the *players* and the response of the *audience*. Yet, for devised theatre, the creation process can contain aspects of performance but it is generally separate from the primary performance. For the RPG, the two processes are simultaneous occurrences.

During the RPG there is immediacy in creation, action, and response, and the performance happens in an improvisational manner. It can also be interrupted, stopped, or reversed, without any severe sense of break in enjoyment. In theatre, the performance happens after the creation. The script is completed before the performance, and during the show, it is expected to run smoothly without breaks that would inhibit the flow of the performance. The creation process in the game is an open ended and divergent process with each choice leading to a variety of more or less successful avenues to explore. The theatre process from rehearsal onwards, however, is convergent and closed, with choices leading towards a final and complete product that do not usually leave loose ends or unexplored avenues.

⁹ I have referenced here only the most pertinent sources related to these aspects.

The goal of the game or workshop is a performance *process*, while the goal of the theatre is a performance *product*. According to Schechner (1985), the workshop phase of devising theatre is a participative process of private entertainment that participants can only experience by *playing* along. The RPG is also a private entertainment not done for an audience but for and by the participants. This is in contrast to the resulting theatre performance that is a form of public entertainment inviting scrutiny and exposure (Schechner, 1985).

In the RPG game the *players* are the audience; they *play* the game for their own enjoyment and enjoy watching their own performance as it relates to those of the other participants. They are not performing to an outside audience and players could consider such an audience inhibiting.

The *players* or actors in a theatrical performance are *playing* for an audience. They do not *play* for themselves or their fellow actors who are aware that performance is a rehearsed re-enactment. In such a public performance, it would be counterproductive to surprise their fellow actors with unrehearsed actions. The outside audience is an expected presence, and enhances the performance by their presence. Even during the rehearsal and workshop, the audience is present in their absence, as decisions are made by both actors and director that take the eventual audience into account. This is not the case with the RPG where the audience is always present in the participants. Herein lies the most important difference between the workshop process of *The Foreshadowing* and a regular RPG.

Table 1.2 Two major processes

	Creation process		Performance process	
	Exploration	Rehearsal	Players acting	Audience responding
Devised Theatre Process	Creation process diverges and may include performance elements	Creation process converges and Performance become fixed	Simultaneous with Audience response	Simultaneous with Players acting
	Private activity with awareness of future Audience		Players and Audience are separate groups of people	
Role-Playing Game	Simultaneous occurrence with Performance and Audience response	Do not exist in the RPG	Simultaneous occurrence with Exploration and Audience response	Simultaneous occurrence with Players acting and Exploration
	Private activity with Audience present		Players and Audience are the same people	

In analysing *The Foreshadowing* process, I came to the realisation that the collaboration I sought was lost in the process, and that I was unconsciously but overtly directive. This led me to continue looking for a structure or game *plan* that combines game-play, make-believe, narrative, and self-direction.

1.2 As the Grasshopper Suggests

The goal of this dissertation is, as the Grasshopper suggests, the formulation of guidelines for making a *Let's Pretend* game or *plan* for such a game. The Grasshopper is the fictional game-playing hero in Bernard Suits' imaginative theory of games in *The Grasshopper, Games Life and Utopia* (1978). The book sets out, in a series of Socratic dialogues, to discover the meaning of the Grasshopper's dream.

Then let me tell you that I have always had a recurring dream, in which it is revealed to me – though how it is revealed I cannot say – that everyone alive is in fact engaged in playing elaborate games, while at the same time believing themselves to be merely going about their ordinary affairs. (Suits, 1978:10)

Although Suits gives this view of the world where everybody plays a game, he also states that it is an untenable Utopian view. In other words, while he could view all people as playing games, people themselves cannot view themselves as always playing games. This dissertation does not delve into the dream but follows up one of the minor suggestions that the Grasshopper made in Suits' game thesis. This suggestion is the construction of a *Let's Pretend* game as an open *game of make-believe*.

If rudimentary make-believe pastimes (such as children's play) are indeed games, Suits suggests that we find out how they work in order to improve and institute them as acceptable adult pursuits. Suits suggests that the *plan* of pretend play be clarified in order to eliminate the 'in-exactness' of children's pretend play. I propose that this clarified plan of pretend play would result in a *Let's Pretend* game. Such a *Let's Pretend* game would function as adult entertainment and pastime, but could also have other benefits such as being a useful avenue to vent excess 'dramatic potentiality' (Suits, 1978:96).

The ability to implement the plan of pretend play requires the efficacy of the players. Self-efficacy is a person's ability to control events that have an impact on their lives and through that control, produce a desired outcome, or prevent an undesired one. In order to implement the plan players need to know the potential impact their actions would have. Albert Bandura (1997, 87-88) argues that we learn self-efficacy through direct experience and vicarious experience, both of which relate to the fictional learning space.

Make-believe games can empower people by giving them an opportunity to practice behaviour. As a safe and contained interpersonal environment, a *Let's Pretend* game could be an effective 'self-efficacy' belief builder (Bandura, 1995:4). Bandura (1995:13-35) indicates that positive self-efficacy has an impact on coping with family changes, intellectual development, career development, and health promotion.

Fine (1982) approaches the social context of the RPG and considers various aspects that relate to the game players' efficacy. Fine (1982) explains that during the game the players interact with the rule system to create an idioculture, a complex social interrelationship. The idioculture of the game mirrors the cultural reality and thus the power structures normally functioning on the participants (Mackay, 2001).

Pretend play is imitative. Imitation is the most vital way through which small children learn. By pretending to be somebody else, they are able to play act different sets of behaviour. In pretend play, they imitate working, cooking, cleaning, and killing. The pretend play world has a vital safety measure however - it is not real. At any moment a child can step back from the imaginative and say, 'I am not playing anymore.' This engagement or disengagement is voluntary. As Mary Warnock (1994: 108) states: "Being able to imagine our lives and the world different from what it is, is one of our most important human qualities." Pretending or playing at make-believe is a necessary 'lying' about reality.

In a sense we develop ourselves by lying and pretending. We dress up in a certain getup in order to encourage ourselves to play a certain role at first, until it becomes part of our repertoire (Rhinehart, 2000:205).

Konstantin Stanislavski (Braun, 1982:75) calls this pretending the 'magic if' and Dorothy Heathcote (Wagner, 1976: 67) refers to it as the 'big lie'. This lying, pretending, make-belief playing of roles is what makes pretend play in RPGs and theatre activities possible.

Developmental Psychology, Education, and other social sciences make an extensive study of the child and play. Most writers (Huizinga 1949, Caspi 1992, Garvey 1991 and Schechner 1978) seem to suggest that play supersedes games and that playing is in some way essential to being a human being. Brady and Brady (2000:9) define a game as "...any rule-bound interaction in which individuals or groups seek to achieve jointly recognised objectives." This definition is too broad for the description of games

of make-believe, and does not consider the aspect of play. Playing seems to be a natural part of growing and learning and being in the world and, therefore, play behaviour is readily visible in animals and children.

We (humans) play the same games as most mammals, but we also engage in some that are uniquely our own (Donald, 2001:94).

According to Gary Izzo (1997), play is not a human creation but an innate quality. We play because it is fun and “is self-sufficient – a temporary activity satisfying in itself and ending there” (Izzo, 1997: 9). Enjoyment is the only real motive for play. Play is freedom and exists outside the boundaries of time and responsibility.

According to Lantz and Zimmerman (1999), play occurs when human beings interact in the rule structure of the game. A game is provisionally defined as a structured system, with rules and conventions, within which play takes place. Games function in a double movement consisting of (1) the rule structure of the game, and (2) the playing of the game by the players having freedom to act (Lantz & Zimmerman, 1999). Computer games for instance have very specific and restrictive rules built into the program. Other types of structured play such as Theatre Sports is very open to rule changes and rules are very flexible.

Most theories on games do not consider the basic elements of games. The game concept is used as a framing device to view reality in order to make sense of collective cultural and social activities by social theorists such as Roger Callois (1962), Erving Goffmann (1959), Eric Berne (1966), and Johan Huizinga (1949). Johan Huizinga and Eric Berne for instance approach social occurrences in terms of games or play. Johan Huizinga provides a view on people as playing beings, *Homo Ludens*, rather than *Homo Sapiens*. Eric Berne does an analysis of social ‘games’ that people play. These writers tend to view all human behaviour as games.

When everything is a game, the concept of the game becomes an empty construct. Suits criticises this perspective as *radical instrumentalism*, and devotes a chapter to the criticism of Berne’s (1966) work, *Games People Play*. *Radical instrumentalism* is the opinion that when people follow the rules of a game, regardless of their attitude to the rules, they are playing a game (Suits, 1978:146).

Berne defines a game as “an ongoing series of complementary ulterior transactions progressing to a well-defined, predictable outcome” (1966:48). What Berne identifies as life games are not games, but game- and play-like behaviour during social interactions. Suits’ conclusion is that Berne erroneously identifies the activities he describes as games and the answer lies in a proper definition of games. Their writings (Berne, Huizinga, and Goffman) are therefore not useful as material to consider for the construction of a game, because they work on a different concept of the game.

Roger Caillois (1962) attempts a comprehensive classification of games and places theatre in the sphere of games of make-believe or as he calls it, “mimicry”. Caillois discounts the possibility of constructing a game of make-believe however because according to his classification games are either governed by rules or characterised by make-believe behaviour but not both.

Suits (1978) is the only game theorist that provides a clear and basic definition able to include the possibility of constructing a game of make-believe. His thesis is however not focussed on constructing such a game but on providing a clear exposition of games.

1.2.1 What are the rules of pretend play?

Like most people, Alice’s sister argues that pretend play does not have fixed rules.

She had had quite a long argument with her sister only the day before—all because Alice had begun with “let’s pretend we’re kings and queens;” and her sister, who liked being very exact argued that they couldn’t, because there were only two of them... (Gardner, 1970:179-180)

This is not entirely true. Pretend play has rules, but they are unfixed, unclear, and mediated; as Gary Izzo (1997:11-12) suggests about the power of a stick to become a sword. A stick-sword only remains a sword as long as all players accept the ‘rule’ that it is so. When one player disbelieves it, the other players will mediate the imaginary, trying to convince such a player it is so, or have the game fall apart. As any other activity, the dramatic skill of make-believe can be the focal element of a well-constructed game (Suits, 1978:96). Therefore, it should be possible to create a structured system of play for pretend play. The question is: what would be the rules of such a pretend play game?

A starting point can be found in the narrative character of pretend play. The exploration of the imaginary environment is a narrative act. This means that pretend play actions are logical within the boundaries of the imaginary world. Pretend play is not fantastical improvisation bordering on madness as some writers suggest (Caillois, 1962). The rules of cause and effect and internal logic structure the fantasy of pretend play. Although they may be imaginary, the actions in pretend play have noticeable effects. If, when playing house the host would pour imaginary tea in a cup, the players would have to drink the imaginary tea, make favourable comments about the tea, and not spill it. The internal logic of pretend play means that the context allows certain aspects but not others. In a game of Kings and Queens a racing car driver would be out of place, but not a knight in shining armour. It is not possible to play 'House' *and* 'Cops and Robbers' at the same time because the two 'games' function in two separate imaginary worlds.

It is, however, not possible to play a pretend game with other people without their collaboration. The players need to collaborate by agreeing on the rules of the game they are to play. Alice ends her argument with her sister by taking on all the other roles, letting her sister only play one. This is not unlike an RPG where every player plays one specific character, while the DM plays multiple roles.

The players need to be collaborative and agree on what creates the boundaries of pretend play. They need to agree on the boundaries of the imaginary world they are to play in. They also need to agree when play starts and when play stops. When they are playing they have to pretend that the imaginary world is, for the moment, the only world, and act *as if* the rules of the imaginary world are the only ones that exist.

The rules of pretend play create imaginary environment congruency based on collaborative agreement to engage with the imaginary. In other words, it is the willingness to believe the 'big lie' together.

1.2.2 Requirements of a *Let's Pretend* Game

Suits (1978:41) defines a game as follows:

To play a game is to attempt to achieve a specific state of affairs [prelusory goal], using only means permitted by the rules [lusory means], where the rules prohibit use of more efficient in favour of less efficient means [constitutive rules], and where the rules are accepted just because they make possible such activity [lusory attitude].

From his definition, four elements of a game are derived namely, the *prelusory goal*, *lusory means*, *constitutive rules*, and the *lusory attitude*. According to Suits (1978:134), the *prelusory goal* of a game of make-believe is to prolong the game, and therefore, for the players not to make dramatic moves that would end the game. A game of make-believe consists of the making of continuous dramatic moves through the means of role-performance maximization. Make-believe games do not use the more efficient means of creating a script but the less efficient *lusory means* of improvisation on the spot. These means are prescribed by the *constitutive rules*. The *lusory attitude* of the make-believe game accepts the imaginary world as real in order to play the game (Suits, 1978:130-138).

For this dissertation, a *Let's Pretend* game (*plan* of pretend play) is a structured system of play that provides the means for participants to create a collaborative and self directed narrative in an imaginary environment. A *Let's Pretend* game should provide:

- a structured system of play;
- the structure for narrative in an imaginary environment;
- the means for participants to collaborate;
- the means for participants to direct themselves.

I use these four requirements as indicators of the *plan* of pretend play. A structured system of play is translatable to various contexts and is not dependent on the skills or personalities of certain participants to sustain. There needs to be a setting for the dramatic play to take place in. This setting is inevitably imaginary. A *Let's Pretend* game should provide a structure for determining, and limiting, such an imaginary setting. The means to create a narrative needs to be collaborative and self-directed. Collaborative means are usable by every participant so that every participant can contribute to their full capabilities. The participants also need to be self-directed. There

should not be a single person guiding the game although individual participants might fulfil directive roles during the game.

The RPG already displays most of the elements of games of make-believe, in various degrees, as do certain instances of devised theatre workshops. In addition some of the elements of games of make-believe can be seen in Drama-in-Education, Interactive Theatre (Izzo, 1997), LARPing or Freeform role-play, Theatre Sports (Foreman & Martini, 1995), Murder Mystery Evenings, and Simulation Gaming. I choose to focus on the RPG as instance of a game of make-believe, because it relates to the elements of such games as described above. This is evident from the way in which Fannon (1999:87) defines a RPG.

roleplaying game: A recreational activity based on the assumption of roles in a fictional setting by the participants, where rules are presented for the resolution of tasks and conflicts (normally involving a facilitator), and where the participants are not placed in direct competition to achieve their goals.

Furthermore, Mackay (2001:4-5) defines a RPG as:

...an episodic and participatory story-creation system that includes a set of quantified rules that assist a group of players and a gamemaster in determining how their fictional characters' spontaneous interactions are resolved. These performed interactions between the players' and the gamemasters' characters take place during individual sessions that, together, form episodes or adventures in the lives of the fictional characters." (italics his)

In the fantasy RPG a number of players assume the roles of imaginary characters, and within the limits created by the rules of the game, act in an imaginary environment. These actions can be mundane but tend towards the daring, dangerous and heroic (Fine, 1983:6). In the RPG the players do not act physically in a conventional manner, but verbally describe what their characters would do in the imaginary world. This is different from theatrical improvisation that 'acts out' scenes. Otherwise, the processes are similar in that players perform roles by improvisation in an imaginary setting. Writers have approached the RPG as a dramatic form (Lancaster, 1998), a socio-cultural phenomenon (Fine, 1983), an entertaining hobby (Fannon, 1999), and a performance art (Mackay, 2001). I approach the RPG in this dissertation as a *game of make-believe* (Suits, 1978).

1.3 Epistemological Basis

In retrospect, I am able to identify an epistemology that accounts for the complexity of the material, on one hand, and of my attempts to organise it, on the other. The metaphor of the rhizome, proposed by Umberto Eco (1984: 81), best describes the epistemology from which I worked. A rhizome is an underground network of stems, roots, shoots, and fibres. The metaphor of the rhizome describes a notion of knowledge where:

- every point is possibly connected to every other point with the possibility of infinite juxtapositions;
- no points are fixed but only exist as connections or relationships;
- the network is dynamic and constantly changing where, if a portion is broken of, it can be reconnected at any other point;
- no points are inevitably prior to, or subordinate to, others in the form of a hierarchy, genealogy, or structure;
- the network is open, having no inside or outside, and can be connected with something else in all dimensions.

Using the 'point' of *role-play* as an example starting position, the result of the rhizome metaphor is as follows:

- *Role-play* connects to every other point in the knowledge network, and can be juxtaposed with each of these points. These include obvious points such as pretend play, characterisation, or simulation, but also points that are further removed, or even seemingly unrelated, such as therapy, education, rules, and efficacy. This results in an infinite variety of positions to explore;
- *Role-play* is not fixed but only functions in relation to other points - such as *role-play* in relation to education, or *role-play* in relation to rules. In other words, these relationships are not stable and can connect, disconnect and reconnect in any combination (of which the above suggest an infinite variety exist);
- The relationship between *role-play* and other points are dynamic and each connection or re-connection changes the understanding of *role-play*. The term has no meaning in itself, but can be understood only in connection with other points;
- *Role-play* is not prior to or subordinate to any other points, and does not indicate any inevitable relationships;
- *Role-play* is open to any outside connections, being neither central nor peripheral to the network.

The structuring of this dissertation in a linear sequence, divided into chapters and sections, is only following the conventions of language and writing and is not an indication of the structuring of the knowledge network. Starting at a chosen point in the network, I follow connections until these connections become too far removed from the start. Then I return to the start, which has since moved due to the dynamic nature of the system, to follow a new set of connections until having moved too far from the start again.

This moving from point to point through connections impacts directly on the methodology used. For every movement an appropriate methodology is utilised and discarded when no longer relevant. It is like exploring a varying region; sometimes you have to walk, sometimes you take a bicycle, and sometimes you need a boat. In this way, some of the methodologies utilised are phenomenology, ethnography, case study, textual analysis, interviews, observer participation, cultural criticism, performance theory, literature review, and comparative analysis.

Lastly, I do not arrive at a final destination but only make contingent conclusions. Any exploration of the network moves either away from, or closer to, a starting point, and the result is only an awareness of the possibilities and limitations of the network, none of which are inevitable or static. The network in which this dissertation is situated, as I stated above, is pretend or make-believe play and the starting point chosen is the *plan* of pretend play seen as a *Let's Pretend* game.

Table 1.3 Structure of Dissertation

Chapter Two	<i>The Foreshadowing</i>	This Chapter describes The Foreshadowing workshop process. The workshop process is situated in the broader context of a theatrical production that does not form part of this research.
Chapter Three	What did the Grasshopper say about games?	This Chapter provides an overview of Bernard Suits' theory on games especially as it relates to pretend play. With this, the performance circumstances and the game as institution are discussed as it describes the requirement for a structured system of play.
Chapter Four	Story Geography	This Chapter further explore the structure of pretend play as it relates to the creation of an imaginary environment and a narrative.
Chapter Five	Play at all Fairly	This Chapter provides and exploration of the rules as means of pretend play, regarding collaboration and self-direction.
Chapter Six	Explaining Afterwards	This Chapter provide contingent conclusions concerning guidelines for a <i>Let's Pretend</i> game

2

The Foreshadowing ***A Devising Workshop Approach***

We are flying to another world and we see this world. Everything is brighter, sharper and anything is possible. Let's call this world Rugua. And as we get closer we see a country, Selpan. And then closer still we see a coastal village called Breen. And in the bay as we are drifting down we can see a grand sailing ship anchored. Imagine a place in this village, an inn, called the Black Pig inn. And as you open your eyes you notice five distinct people waiting in this inn.

Dungeon Master, *The Foreshadowing Script* (2002)(Addendum A)

The participants of *The Foreshadowing* workshop followed a double journey. The first journey was through the real time process of casting, creating characters, and playing in adventure sessions. The second journey was as imaginary characters in the imaginary world of *Rugua*. The analysis of these journeys is done in **Chapter 4** and **5**, after I have provided a theoretical basis in **Chapter 3**. In this Chapter, I only describe the two journeys, happening simultaneously and influencing one another.

The Foreshadowing process - as the practical component of this research – aimed at creating a theatre play based on the popular commercial RPG system, DUNGEONS & DRAGONS™. *The Foreshadowing* workshop contained a set of RPG sessions used for the construction of a theatrical script. After the workshop phase this script was rehearsed and performed. This dissertation is concerned only with the workshop phase of the process.

During *The Foreshadowing* workshop, I used a combination of approaches common to either theatre or RPGs. The approaches were:

- The casting of players/actors,
- A process of taking on of role (en-role and de-role),
- Some stage combat exercises,
- A system of character creation,
- The RPG adventure and narrative format.

The first approach used, the casting of the players, is a theatrical one. RPGs are usually open to players of all levels of experience. However, for the sake of the research I needed to set some criteria. The initial criteria for casting aimed at compiling a multi-

cultural cast. This would have been a cast of three male and three female students, two each Black, White and Indian.

During the casting process, however, I found myself leaning towards casting people according to their performance abilities, rather than just the stated multi-cultural requirements. For *The Foreshadowing* workshop I needed good performers, since the process had to lead to a performable piece of theatre. This became less significant because my research emphasis shifted to the creation process and not the polished product, and the rehearsal part of the workshop receives less attention. On this basis, I then decided on a cast of six female students, three White, and three Indian. These six players were chosen based on performance abilities, visual and temperamental variety, and racial mix. One Indian student withdrew from the process before we started which left me with a cast of five.

An added criterion in casting was an interest in fantasy because of Kurt Lancaster's idea of reconstructing behaviour as derived from Richard Schechner's performance theories. Lancaster (1998) explains that role-players in games construct their characters, and these characters' actions, from bits of experience collected through exposure to fantasy elements in popular media and culture. Schechner (1985:101) states that the combination of imaginary, or 'non-event' material, with material from a historical or personal past generates source material for the workshop. In other words, the workshop phase examines ordinary experiences closely by deconstructing a combination of bits of real and bits of imaginary behaviour. Schechner (1985:99) calls these bits of behaviour 'readymades of culture'. These *readymades* are 'accepted' ways of using the body, 'accepted' texts, and 'accepted' feelings from popular culture. An example of a readymade text would be 'Frankly my dear, I don't give a damn'.¹ The workshop is able to deconstruct ordinary experience because of the playful aspect of the workshop where actions are taken 'as if' certain conditions apply (Schechner, 1985:103-104). Without an experience or background in fantasy providing a set of *readymades*, the players would not have sufficient material to reconstruct during the role-playing sessions. During casting I made assumptions about the players' interest in fantasy, which was only confirmed during the interviews and through the questionnaires.

¹ Originally from the movie *Gone with the Wind*.

In the role-playing sessions of the workshop, I used a process of en-roling and de-roling, as is common to Drama-in-Education (Morgan & Saxton, 1987:117-121). At the beginning and end of each session I guided the players through description from the ordinary world into the imaginary and back again. I felt that it provided the players with a heightened awareness of the otherworldly in the role-playing scenario. This also ritualised and separated the workshop from the ordinary world. There is normally no process of en-roling or de-roling in the RPG and each player is responsible for their own character identification. In addition, but peripheral to the workshop experience, I took the players through a series of stage combat exercises. This was done because the D&D system is to a large extent combat based and I made the assumption that combat would form part of the eventual narrative and the theatrical performance.

Character creation followed the D&D system. In this, each player makes a combination of random dice rolls to determine their characters' capabilities according to six basic attributes. These are strength, dexterity, constitution, intelligence, wisdom, and charisma. From these basic attributes a character framework is developed and transcribed on a character sheet (See *Annataya's* character sheet in **Addendum C**). Players choose character types according to race and class from a set of available options. In terms of race, the players were restricted to human except for one player, Naadiya (*Lia*), whom I cast as an elf, because of her elf-like features².

I specifically did not use certain devising theatre methods such as the improvisation of scenes, thematic exploration, or the collage of scenes (Oddey, 1994). Firstly, scenes were not improvised physically, since this would have negated the aim of determining whether the imaginary improvised experience could later be translated to a physical playscript. Physical improvisation is also not a necessary requirement for the RPG. Scenes might be verbally role-played but physically acting them out is uncommon.

Secondly, the workshop did not explore, brainstorm, or improvise around a theme or concept. The workshop was also not approached through a random exploration and improvisation of scenes. Because no random scenes were constructed, there was also no need to construct a plot, or to collage the scenes, as I have experienced in other devised

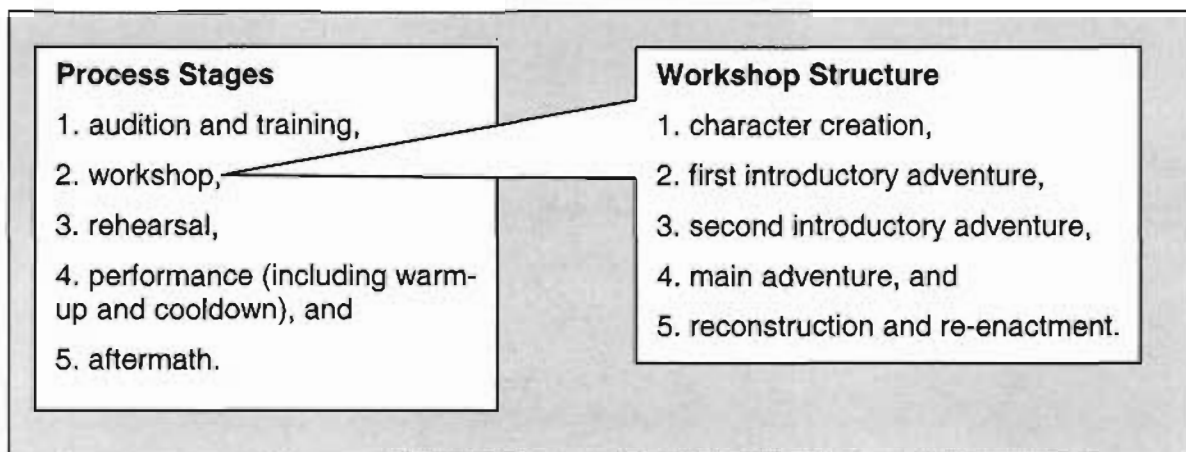
² "Elves are short and slim... They are graceful but frail. They tend to be pale-skinned and dark-haired, with deep green eyes." (D&D *Players Manual*, 2000:15).

workshop processes. The adventure scenario and plan provided the plot with the intention that the subsequent script would follow the same narrative structure as the RPG. As in any improvisation, the participants construct the story together in the RPG and the actions of a character are dependent on the actions of others.

2.1 The Foreshadowing Process

The Foreshadowing workshop and process is summarised in **Figure 2.1**. Together with the written summary following the table, it shows which parts of the workshop are of importance to this dissertation.

Figure 2.1: Overview of *The Foreshadowing* Process



Stage 1: Audition and Training

The audition process with resulted casting obviously preceded the workshop. Before and during the workshop the players also did some basic stage combat training. My assumption that combat would be important influenced my direction during the next stage of the process, a subject that is discussed throughout the dissertation in relation to different points in the rhizome. Gender related power structures, concerning weapon use and physical training, are also important aspects for possible analysis here, but is unrelated to the *plan* of pretend play and not relevant to this dissertation.

Stage 2: The Workshop

For this dissertation the workshop phase is from the moment when the players started creating characters until the first physical re-enactment of the role-played adventures.

The workshop phase of *The Foreshadowing* can further be divided into five separate phases. These are:

1. character creation,
2. first introductory adventure,
3. second introductory adventure,
4. main adventure, and
5. reconstruction and re-enactment.

The context of the main adventure is created by what happened before and after in the other steps of the workshop. Each of the steps of the workshop lasted one session, except for the main adventure that was concluded over three sessions.

Stage 3: Rehearsal

The workshop phase was followed by a transcription of the role-played adventure from the improvised dialogue, journal entries, and the workshop audiotapes. For this, the adventure was broken down into scenes, and sections were edited or expanded. Through rehearsal the final performance script developed. The script was altered extensively during rehearsals in order to aid in congruency and theatricality. The workshop script created specific problems that had to be addressed during rehearsal. These problems were resolved with varying success, but the evaluation and analysis of these processes fall outside the scope of this paper.

Stage 4: Performance (including warm-up and cool-down):

The Foreshadowing was performed three times as a play with two other Honours directing students' plays. The performance of *The Foreshadowing* play is a considerable factor in terms of the pressure it placed on the workshop to create a theatrical piece. How it specifically affected the workshop atmosphere is, however, also not analysed here but only mentioned.

Stage 5: Aftermath

An analysis and reflection concluded the process. Each of the players had an opportunity to reflect on the process in a journal and I use some of their comments as illustrating points in this dissertation. The ethical considerations of this research, including the participants consent, are listed in Chapter 1, page 5.

3.2 The Foreshadowing Workshop

Phase 1: Character Creation

The workshop phase of *The Foreshadowing* started with the creation of characters. As mentioned earlier, the basics of character creation already started during and through the process of casting. Because the players would eventually have to portray the characters created, I assumed from the start that the characters would be the same race (human, except for the one elf), gender, and roughly the same age as the players.

After the casting process, I met with each of the five players for an interview. The main aim of the interview was to have each player create a character but it also gave me a chance to get to know the players better. The interviews also provided me with background and cultural information on each player. I did not want players to create characters as a group because I wanted each player to exercise their own preferences.

During the interview, the players completed a questionnaire (**Addendum D**). At this stage of the research the dissertation focus was not determined yet and the questionnaire aimed to cover a broad range of aspects. I wanted to explore each participant's bias and background by determining the players':

- familiarity with fantasy and myth.
- relaxation or entertainment pastimes such as reading, watching and playing.
- cultural, family and school background.
- motivation for being part of the process.
- knowledge of popularised fantasy forms such as *Lord of the Rings*.

The primary purpose of the interview session, however, was to create a character for the role-playing sessions. This was done by the exploration of a hero type and qualities the player would want to enact. Each player chose a character class and created a character (DM Journal: 2002). The characters were created using the D&D system's character

creation process (D&D *Player's Handbook*, 2001:4-5). The player would make dice rolls to determine six basic abilities (strength, dexterity, constitution, intelligence, wisdom and charisma) and from there a character is developed. The method in which a character is transcribed is a character sheet (**Addendum C**). On this character sheet the attributes of the character are written in numerical form, in lists of skills and proficiencies. It is possible to generate a usable character by using only the rules as given in the rulebooks (D&D *Player's Handbook*, 2001:4-5). This has been done by at least D&D³ themselves, and by James Buck with his NPC Generator (<http://www.aarg.net/~minam/npc.cgi>). Because such characters lack personality and 'character', they are constraining to players and lend themselves to mechanical play only. The numerical statistics, therefore, do not give the player a role to play. The players each have to generate, or flesh out, their own playable character. In order to assist them in accomplishing this, I had players write a background description or back-story for their character.

The character backgrounds ranged from the general to the very specific and each player gave their characters unique motivations. Some of the material generated was too specific and divergent in relation to my own intentions as DM. Especially *Fortune* (Avershree) and *Annataya's* (Carolyn) background histories provided material that could not be explored in *The Foreshadowing*. Carolyn created a destiny for *Annataya* by writing a legend and prophecy for her character to fulfil:

A child who would be separated from her people in infancy but be united with them in adulthood. A child who would grow to adulthood and who would be powerful, noble and just. A child who would one day set right the evil they were fighting and defeat it for all times (Carolyn's Journal: 2002).

The process of interviews and character creation took almost two weeks. It was however, an essential introduction to the workshop process because it meant that we started the process with each player ready with a character to play.

³ The D&D Players manual includes a software program on CD called *D&D Character Generator, Demonstration Version 1.2* developed by Fluid Entertainment, Inc.

Brief descriptions of relevant details of the participants of the process at the time of The Foreshadowing workshop are as follows:

- Carolyn, *Annataya's* player, 19 years old, White female, second year varsity and drama student, who also takes ballet classes. *Annataya* is a human sorcerer with a chaotic good alignment. She is blond with blue eyes. *Annataya* knows the spells *Read Magic*, *Detect Magic*, *Ray of Frost*, *Light*, *Sleep*, *Shield* and *Flare*. Her main strength is her charismatic personality. (see **Addendum C**).
- Avershree, *Fortune's* player, 19 years old, Indian female, Second year varsity and drama student. *Fortune's* full name is Feydin O'dal, a human fighter. *Fortune* wields a two handed sword and her main strength is her physical strength. She has a low charisma and therefore lacks in people skills.
- Naadiya, *Lia's* player, 18 years old, Indian female, first year drama student. *Lia* is an elven fighter. As an elf she is blessed with grace and agility. Being of another race she stands out however and by nature she does not mingle easily with humans.
- Bistra, *Liandrin's* player, 21 years old, White female (Bulgarian), first second and third year drama student, with a previous honours degree in computer science. *Liandrin* is a chaotic neutral Cleric of the deity *Olidammara*⁴, the god of thieves. *Liandrin* changed her name during the adventure from *Nadira*. As a Cleric with a high Wisdom, *Liandrin* has access to strong divine spells, but has a disadvantage in not being very good in any of the other five attributes.
- Amy, *Zak's* player, 18 years old, White female, First Year Varsity student, second year drama student. *Zak's* full name is Erin Zakula, a young street urchin and aspiring Bard. *Zak* knew the spells *Dancing Lights*, *Daze*, *Mage Hand*, *Read Magic* and *Message*. As a Bard *Zak's* strength lies in the number and variety of skills but has a weakness in not being specialised in any area.

Table 2.1 (page 30) provide the basic attributes of each character.

⁴ "...Olidammara (oh-*lih*-duh-mar-uh), is chaotic neutral. His title is the Laughing Rogue. Olidammara delights in wine, women, and song" (D&D Player's Manual, 2000:92).

Table 2.1 Summary of Player Character Statistics

	Annataya	Fortune	Lia	Liandrin	Zak
Strength	11	18	Naadiya, Lia's player lost her character sheet after <i>The Foreshadowing</i> workshop process.	11	14
Dexterity	16	14		8	14
Constitution	15	16		11	14
Intelligence	13	13		11	14
Wisdom	12	12		16	8
Charisma	18	6		12	16
Hit Points	13	24		17	17
Armor Class	13	20		13	14
Base Attack Bonus	1	2		1	1
Skills	Spell Craft, Concentration, Alchemy, Balance, Move Silently, Diplomacy, Hide, Listen, Search, Spot	Swim, Move Silently, Jump, Climb, Listen, Spot, Hide, Search, Diplomacy		Spell Craft, Buff, Concentration, Diplomacy, Hide, Listen, Move Silently, Search, Spot	Pickpocket, Tumble, Gather Information, Local Knowledge, Escape Artist, Concentration, Spell Craft, Diplomacy, Disable Device, Hide, Listen, Move Silently, Open Lock, Search, Spot

The players were not the only ones who had to prepare for the adventure. The preparation for any RPG might involve a lot of writing on the part of the DM (Mackay, 2001: 52). Mackay describes how a lot of time could be spent on preparing certain parts of the game script. These would include writing descriptions of characters the players would meet, creating the narrative structure of things that might happen no matter what the players do, and the drawing of diagrams or plans of places the players might visit. Other things to write are lists of spells and equipment as well as monsters or opponents.

For *The Foreshadowing*, part of the preparation lay in adapting the given scenario *Spirits of the Tempest* (Selinker, 1995) to suit the requirements of the group and the process. Certain aspects of the plot were determined beforehand and needed preparation. For example, the Ship would be apparently wrecked in the storm no matter what the player characters did. For this a flow diagram relating time to event needed to be prepared. In this plan the storm would start only after the players went to bed.

In applying a basic working method of DM preparation, namely the planning of the scenario, I worked against one of the requirements of a *Let's Pretend Game*. The restrictive influence of this planning and the DM control that is associated with it demonstrate the shortcomings of the RPG as pretend play and the need for formulating guidelines for a *Let's Pretend Game*, in particular the notion of self-direction.

The maps of the island had to be drawn in slightly more detail than Selinker's (1995) planning because his plan only treated the island sketchily while my main focus was on the events on the island. Prospero's cave had to be simplified from the multi-dimensional bubble-like structure of the original adventure to a basic cave structure (Selinker, 1995:19). Because of the eventual staging of the play, I felt that Selinker's dimensional doors would create a setting that was too complicated to reconstruct (See **Figures 2.1** and **2.2**). The role-playing adventure was also planned to occur in a number of other settings for which maps and diagrams had to be prepared, such as:

- The Black Pig Inn.
- The Ship – *The Nodna Limona*.
- Sycorax Island – Beach, Lagoon, and Forest.

The non-player characters and their spell and equipment lists that had to be prepared for the main adventure were: the wizard Prospero and his daughter Miranda; the Duke of Milan; the King of Naples and his son Ferdinand; Caliban; Ariel; and three Dryads. The non-player characters (NPC's) are all the characters played by the DM as opposed to the players who each play one player character (PC). Most of this preparation had to be finished before we started play, however, some would have to be adapted, or extended as the players made their choices and started influencing the game plan.

Figure 2.2 Selinker's design for Prospero's Cave

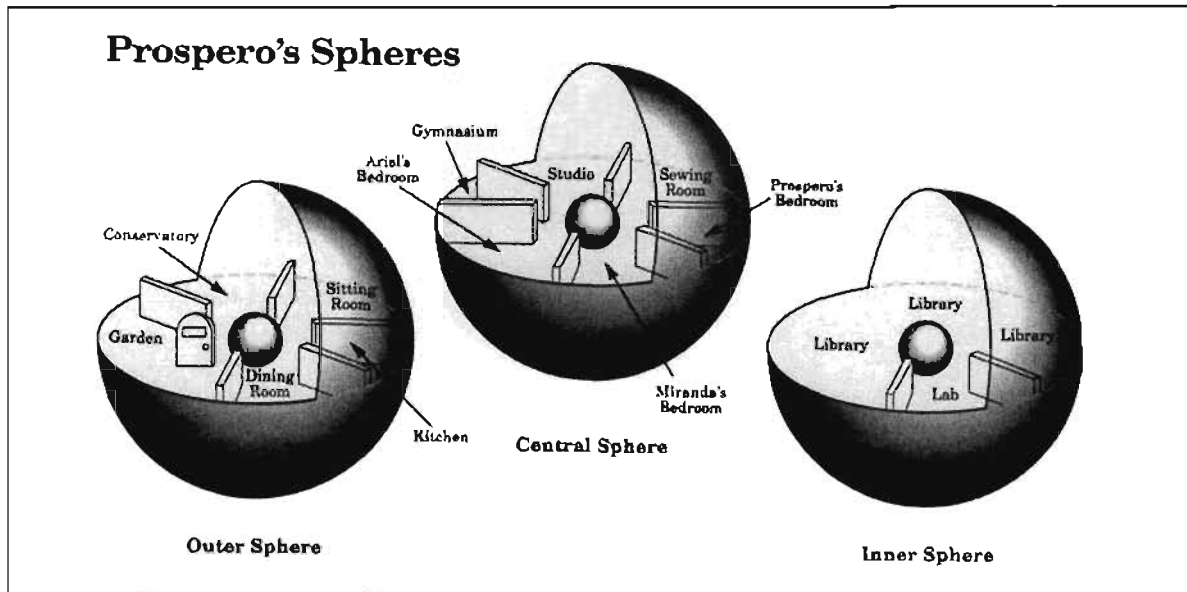
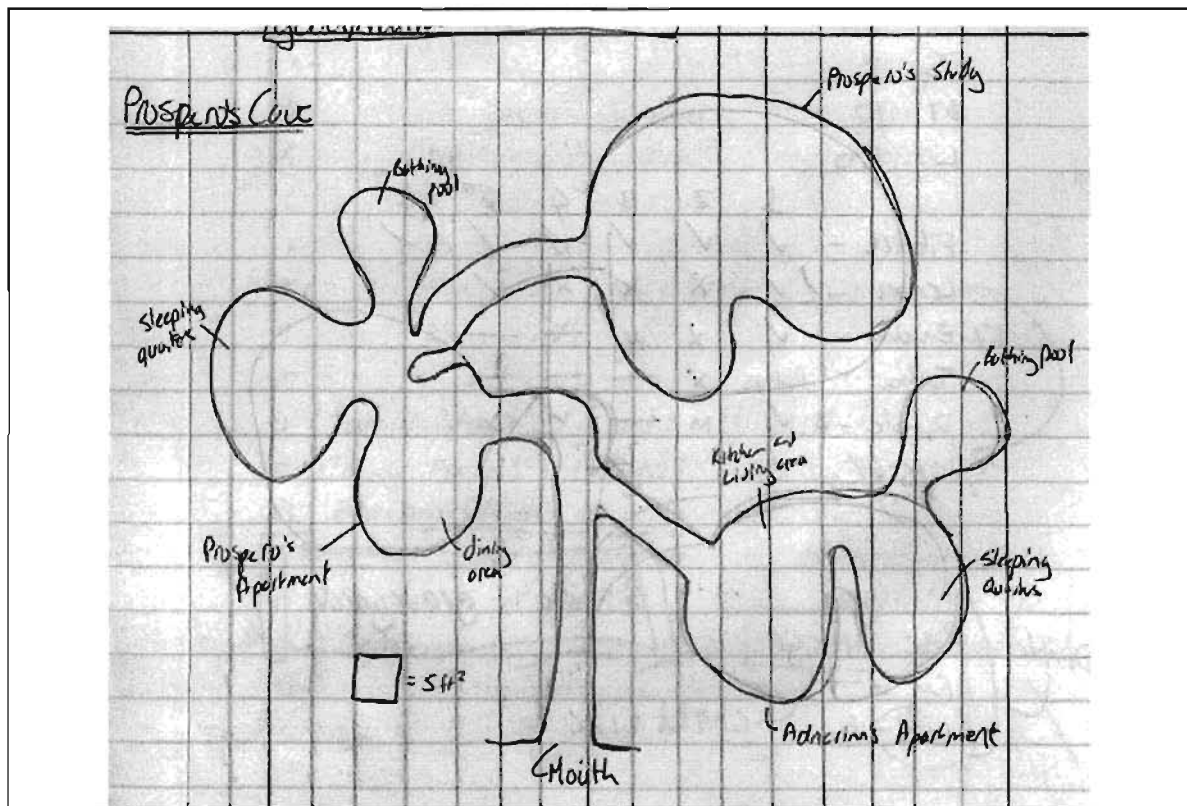


Figure 2.3 Altered design for Prospero's Cave



Phase 2: First Introductory Adventure – Save the Unicorn

We started role-playing for *The Foreshadowing* around a table in the middle of the Studio Theatre⁵, where we incongruously created an imaginary stage. At first, it felt daunting, sitting around a table in the middle of nowhere. After a while the fantasy world dominated and any awareness of the surroundings took a backseat to the awareness of play. For the duration of the game the surroundings become totally irrelevant.

During the first session on 27 March 2002, the players were introduced to the game mechanics, including the basic rules for combat (**Addendum E**). The players were also introduced to each other's characters as they joined for an introductory adventure. The adventure originates from the DUNGEONS & DRAGONS® *Adventure Game*. In the adventure, the players free a unicorn that has been abducted by a goblin gang (D&D *Adventure Game, Adventure Book 2000:4-5*).

A local woodcutter approaches the characters while they are waiting in an Inn. The letters the characters had received brought them together in the *Black Pig Inn* in the village *Breen*. I developed these places, as DM. The country they are in is *Selpan*, which is a reversal of Naples from *The Tempest* and Selinker's planning. The world they are in is *Rugua*, a name we decided on together as a group at the end of the process, and which is a reversal of *augur*, a word which relates to prophecy or a *foreshadowing*.

The woodcutter tells them of the missing Unicorn, and guides them to the edge of the *Dark Forest*. The characters follow a trail until they come upon the goblin hideout. They enter the hideout, kill four goblins and free the Unicorn named *Alabern*.

Play during this first session lasted about an hour and was hampered only by the fact that Bistra (*Liandrin*) wanted to attend an audition for another play, scheduled at the same time. During her absence the group reviewed combat mechanics and completed unfinished sections on the character sheets. An hour was, however, enough time to complete the introductory adventure.

⁵ The Studio Theatre is a basic black box theatre, which forms part of the Hexagon Theatre complex on the Pietermaritzburg campus of the University of KwaZulu-Natal. The Studio Theatre is mostly used for student productions.

Phase 3: Second Introductory Adventure – Trouble in the Inn

The second adventure was played on 1 April 2002. A mysterious guest arrives in the middle of the night and takes a room in the Inn in which the player characters are staying. I created this adventure myself specifically as a short episode for player characters staying in an Inn. This adventure scenario is given in **Addendum B** as an example of a RPG scenario. I used it here because the players and their characters needed more experience, but the main adventure would start in this same Inn and I did not want the characters to leave.

In this second preparatory adventure, a rogue *tiefling*⁶ wizard summoned three *salamanders* from the elemental plane of fire (D&D *Monster Manual*, 2000:159). In the process, the wizard was killed and the three *salamanders* proceeded to create havoc in the *Black Pig Inn*. The player characters are awakened by the screams of a guest dying at the hand of a *salamander*. The player characters rush out unprepared, not taking any weapons or donning any armour. The player characters almost died, rushing into combat unprepared. With a vast amount of ‘luck’, provided by the DM, they survive and manage to kill the *salamanders*. *Annataya* (Carolyn) was alert enough to salvage a couple of scorched scrolls from the wizard’s room.

At the end of the session, *Onafets*, a servant of the Duke of *Limona*, met the party of adventurers in the *Black Pig Inn*. *Onafets* employs them to accompany the Duke of *Limona* as companions and guards on his journey home. They are given an advance on their pay in order to buy clothes. This allows them time to think about what their characters may need for the journey before it actually begins. I also used this as a method to consider costume design for the future theatrical play. I set each player the task to design their character’s clothes. This adventure took one session of play, lasting two hours on a Saturday morning.

⁶ A tiefling is a person who has some kind of extra-planar fiend in their ancestry, most likely a demon or devil. “Twisted, devious, and untrustworthy, tieflings more often than not follow their inherent traits and heed the call to evil.” (D&D *Monster Manual*, 2000 :152).

The two introductory adventures were unrelated to the main adventure or to each other. Their sole purpose was to give the players some experience in the mechanics of the RPG and their characters enough points to be level 2 characters. We could have integrated these introductory adventures better into the workshop, character development, and final script.

Phase 4: The Main Adventure – The Tempest

The main adventure spanned three sessions on 10, 13, and 15 April 2002 lasting approximately three hours each. These sessions formed the basis for the play script that was developed for later theatrical performance. The adventure was adapted from the adventure scenario *Spirits of the Tempest* by Michael Selinker (1995) from the role-playing magazine *Dungeon Magazine*⁷. This adventure is based on William Shakespeare's play *The Tempest*. In it the players are guests and bodyguards to the Duke of Milan and join him on his ship.

"Spirits of the Tempest" does not try to disguise its source. Players who read the play prior to playing the module will find their knowledge does not help them as much as they might like. Knowing Prospero is a mage and has magical servants does not make that magic any less dangerous. And one other aspect of the play has been altered for this module: Prospero is nowhere near as benevolent as in the play. His servants may try to kill the PCs (*player characters*), especially if they threaten to derail Prospero's careful scheme of revenge (Selinker, 1995:9).

In the adventure, the player characters are companions on the Donna Milano until they are shipwrecked on Prospero's island. On the island, they meet up with the Duke, his servant Stefano (*Onafets*), and the King of Naples (*Selpan*). They have encounters with Ariel, in the guise of a harpy, three dryads in the forest and then Caliban (*Nabilak*). The climax of the adventure is when *Nabilak* leads them to Prospero's cave. Just after they meet Prospero, the Duke attacks Prospero and the player characters are left to resolve the situation.

⁷ **Dungeon Magazine** is one of the two publications that support DUNGEONS & DRAGONS® and other RPGs. *Dungeon Magazine* focuses on the game world by publishing game scenarios. The sister magazine, *Dragon Magazine*, focuses on game mechanics and rule extensions.

To disguise the adventure origin I changed the names of the characters by inverting them. In this way *Stefano*, for instance, became *Onafets*. I have come into the habit of inverting names in planning role-playing adventures and fantasy scenarios in order to create fantastical names. This habit led to very strange sounding names that the players had difficulty pronouncing and remembering.

Amy: "*Beg you pardon!*"

Gerhardus: "*Oinotna.*"

Amy: "*Is this his name?*"

Gerhardus: "*Ja.*" (*The Foreshadowing* Audio-tape 4, Side B)

"Are we going to have to say these names on stage?" (Annataya) (*The Foreshadowing* Audio-tape 4, Side B)

I employed it here without considering the need, which in retrospect was not necessary because the players had no working knowledge of the plot of *The Tempest*.

Session 1 - 10 April

The main adventure (10 April 2002) starts with the player characters already being employed by *Onafets* as guards and companions to *Oinotna*, Duke of *Limona*, for his trip home. A couple of days after their first encounter, *Onafets* informs them that the Duke's ship has thrown anchor in the bay.

Before play begins, Avershree (*Fortune*) reminds me about experience points. As Ron Edwards (2004b) explains in the D&D system, players gain experience points for bashing monsters (such as the goblins and the salamanders) and then use these points to improve their character to become better at bashing monsters. This means that the behaviour that is rewarded is the behaviour that is shown. According to a table, players gain levels as they gain experience points. To gain level two a player need 1000 experience points, and for level three 3000 points. I wanted the players to be at least level two characters when they played through the adventure.

Going up in level changes the *hit points* of the character, making them better at staying alive and giving them more options to act on. It also gives the players better fighting and survival abilities, improved skills, and lastly, it gives them access to more spells. The first two preliminary adventures were not enough to push them up to level two. Saving the unicorn is worth 300, and the second adventure 1900 experience points divided between the player characters. Each player therefore only gained 440 experience

points. I therefore made a decision to ignore the experience points and levelled all characters up to level 2.

When play begins, the adventurers proceed to the ship where they meet some of the crew and the captain, who gives them a tour of the ship. They do not meet the Duke yet, but are invited to supper with him. *Onafets* disappears on errands for the Duke and the adventurers are left to their own devices. They explore the ship, settle into their cabin, and discover that the ship is also carrying additional passengers. These are the King of *Selpan* and his son, *Idref* (Ferdinand). The King of *Selpan* (Naples), Duke of *Limona* (Milan), and his servant *Onafets* (Stefano) were the main non-player characters and antagonists during the adventure. The next day is spent on board where the adventurers discover that the Duke has a brother who has mysteriously disappeared a number of years ago. The Duke's brother, who was ruler of *Limona*, went missing with his daughter amidst rumours of him making deals with the enemies of *Limona*.

The party have supper with the Duke, the King of *Selpan* and his son, *Idref*, on their first and second evenings aboard. During these conversations, they learn some things about the Duke, but some questions - especially concerning his brother - remain unanswered. The King of *Selpan* is looking for a wife for his son, but *Idref* does not seem to be interested in any of the adventuring party, or much else for that matter. During supper on the second evening on board, the adventurers attempt to question the Duke about his brother. *Onafets* discourages these questions while the Duke ignores them. The Duke, however, produces a deck of what he calls *Fate* cards. Each of the adventurers gets an opportunity to draw a card that could change something about their own fates.

During a role-playing campaign player characters would usually pick up quirks, equipment, and objects that differentiate them and give them individual personalities. *The Foreshadowing* characters only existed for a short period and in order to enrich the characters I decided to intervene and endow each character with a significant alteration. I used the *Fate* cards for this purpose so that I could do so within the game context. This deck of cards is a specific magic item, a *Deck of Many Things*, from the *D&D Dungeon Master's Guide* (2001:236-238). In order to make these cards fit into the adventure I made them a possession of the Duke's. The Duke is cast as a manipulator of people's

lives and it therefore makes sense for him to use such a powerful item in order to ‘play’ with the lives of people. On board ship, the Duke presented the cards to the characters as an opportunity. For most of this section the DM acted in character as the Duke, attempting to answer the questions as such.

The Duke’s explanation for presenting the cards was that it seemed to him that the characters are all looking for something in their lives. He says that the cards might help them on their way, or it might not. The responses of the player characters are overwhelming and everybody is ‘game’ to participate. *Fortune’s* (Avershree) card enhances her sword magically but it costs her some of her intelligence. The card *Liandrin* (Bistra) draws awakens her moral conscience. *Annataya* (Carolyn) receives the power to change a single event. *Zak* (Amy) draws a card with a negative effect and she becomes unlucky. *Lia* (Naadiya) receives a three-coloured, obviously magical, cloak. Their questions, however, are still mostly unanswered.

In the middle of their second night on board the *Nodna Limona*, the adventurers are awakened by noises on deck and a storm seems to be brewing. From the DM’s perspective, three small air elementals are attacking the ship, creating a raging storm, and in the confusion *Leira* (Ariel) spirits away *Idref*. The player characters have, of course, a different experience. The noises they hear indicate that chaos is reigning on board, but having learnt their lesson, the player characters first gather all their gear before they venture on deck.

The ship’s deck is in turmoil and the captain urges them to go below, but they ignore him. *Annataya* (Carolyn) determines that the storm is unnatural, by casting a *Detect Magic* spell (D&D *Player’s Manual*, 2000:193). Then she sees how *Idref* is swept overboard by some magical force. The crew and other adventurers respond to *Idref’s* abduction as if he just fell overboard. Some of the adventurers notify the King and attempt to help him rescue *Idref*. In this way *Fortune* (Avershree), *Annataya* (Carolyn) and the King land in the water. The others try to appeal to the Duke but are thwarted by *Onafets*, who pushes *Lia* (Naadiya) overboard and in a struggle *Liandrin* (Bistra) also ends in the water. *Zak* dives in herself to try to save somebody. In the water, the adventurers are unable to locate the ship and after swimming for a while all eventually lose consciousness and sink.

Session 2 - 13 April

The adventure continues as the characters wake up, stranded on a beach. According to the plan the player characters are supposed to be under the impression that they are stranded on an island with no hope of leaving with the ship they came on. The ship is under an illusion, cast by Prospero, of being a shipwreck. All the crew is under a similar *Sleep* spell from which they cannot awaken.

My planning supposed that the players would first try to determine their immediate circumstances before proceeding to explore the island. However, despite having almost drowned in the tempest (and despite the fact that she did not take swimming as a skill⁸) *Liandrin* (Bistra) decided to swim out to the wreck to see what she can salvage and *Fortune* (Avershree) decided to join her. They broke the illusion of the shipwreck and thus knew that they were able to leave the island if they could awaken the crew. Their efforts failed, but in case the crew awoke in their absence, they left a note to inform the captain of their whereabouts.

This episode meant that, firstly, that I had to deal with the party splitting and, secondly, that I had to expand the illusion of the ship in order to accommodate the investigation.

On the beach, the rest of the party started exploring. According to Selinker's plan, they are separated from the Duke and the King of *Limona* for most of the adventure. However, I brought them in contact with one another then as the adventurers find them washed up on the sand. In retrospect, this separation should have lasted much longer, but I wanted to use the Duke to feed the player characters more information, because they did not understand what they had to do on the island. Using the Duke to give the player characters information meant that I was directing what they knew. If they were left to their own devices they would have had to decide for themselves what was going on and could have worked out a different purpose for being on the island. This therefore undermined their power to direct themselves.

⁸ Swimming is a skill based on the attribute of Strength. Every player who takes swimming as a skill can improve their swimming skill. If they do not take swimming as a skill they use their Strength bonus instead. Liandrin's Strength bonus was +0, meaning that she had no modifiers to add to a die roll for swimming.

After arousing the Duke, they questioned him again and it brought them under the impression that he was, if not actively hiding something, not as innocent as he seemed. In spite of my efforts, the players did not get much more information out of the Duke and I had to lead them by their noses for a while, using the non-player characters to initiate action.

The characters decided to explore the island and had two options, either to go along the beach or to head straight into the forest. They decided to head into the forest. Just before leaving the beach, an illusion of a table appeared before the group. The characters held back but the King and Duke rush forward forcing the party to follow. When at the table a *harpy* appears. The intention of the *harpy* is to scare the players rather than attack them. Their attempt to attack the *harpy* fails and suddenly both the *harpy* and the table disappear. The table is of course a trick of Prospero's and the *harpy* is *Leira* (Ariel) in another form. This event was not used in the writing of the script.

The characters then headed into the forest where they had to hack their way through thick undergrowth. They became aware of movement ahead of them and attempt to move silently but do not succeed. Three young ladies (*dryads*) noticed the characters and waved a greeting at them. The *dryads* placed a *Charm* spell on the adventuring party and at first only *Onafets*, the Duke, and the King succumbed to it (D&D *Monster Manual*, 2001:79). The characters engaged in conversation with the dryads and found out that there were at least two other humans on the island. They also found out that there were two other creatures, an ugly one and a playful one. Through the conversation the *dryads* managed to also cast *Charm* successfully on *Zak* (Amy), *Liandrin* (Bistra), and *Annataya* (Carolyn). In desperation *Fortune* (Avershree) and *Lia* (Naadiya) knocked their companions unconscious and dragged them away. The *dryads* were more perturbed than angry and did not stop them.

Although her character *Zak* was under a spell and should not have been able to act during this encounter, Amy did. She took part, with *Fortune* (Avershree) and *Lia* (Naadiya), in the planning of getting away from the dryads. Amy could only do this by stepping out of character and I only noticed this occurrence in reviewing the audio-tapes.

The only safe place the party could be dragged to was the edge of the lagoon, onto a small beach. Having being revived they shared how they felt an irresistible urge to befriend and stay with the dryads. All still felt the after effects but the only one that seemed to be ungrateful was *Onafets*. I created the impression that *Onafets* would have gone back had it not been for the Duke. This might have been a good time to get rid of *Onafets* but I did not make use of it. The companions were still talking when a ghastly looking figure appeared from the lagoon. This was Caliban, or as I called him, *Nabilak*. There was no pre-constructed creature type, like the dryads, in the *D&D Monster Manual* (2001) that I could use for *Nabilak*. I therefore created my own creature by combining a *Sea Hag* and a *Giant*. *Nabilak* has a gruesome appearance that makes even the strongest gag and vomit. Players had to succeed at a *Fortitude* saving throw by getting more than 11 on a d20. If they failed they would receive 2d8 temporary *Strength* damage. *Nabilak* revolted most of the party. *Zak* (Amy) and *Liandrin* (Bistra), because they failed their *Fortitude* saving throws, were affected to such an extent that they were incapacitated. *Annataya* (Carolyn), with the support of *Lia* (Naadiya), used her charisma to sweet-talk the monster. *Nabilak* turns out to be a much kinder creature than expected. He told them of the man and woman who lived on the island and he explained that he collected firewood for them. He volunteered to take the party to their cave and immediately sets off. The rest of the party followed quickly behind.

At this point I realised that the King, Duke, and *Onafets* had become passive onlookers and attempted to get rid of them. I had them show reluctance in following *Nabilak* and they started falling behind the rest of the party. *Fortune* (Avershree) and *Liandrin* (Bistra) however caught on to this and fell back to 'talk' to the Duke. This encounter was unplanned but led to an intriguing role-playing encounter. *Fortune* and *Liandrin's* insistence that the Duke keep up, because "they were employed to protect him", and the Duke's evasive reaction changed the player characters' attitude towards the Duke. In this encounter *Fortune* used the disadvantage of having an abrasive personality to her advantage in order to intimidate the Duke.⁹

⁹ Incidentally, this was also the easiest scene to translate into a theatrical re-enactment. This might be because the dramatic tension of the encounter was clear and the 'beats' of the scene translated easily from the workshop to the final script.

Eventually the Duke reluctantly followed with the King and *Onafets* in tow. *Nabilak* continued to lead the party on to the cave entrance where a huge pile of firewood was stacked beside it. At this point I ended the session because we had run out of planned time. After this session I wrote the following in my journal:

This was act two of the play that we did on Saturday, building up tension, asking questions and not getting enough answers. What lies ahead is act 3, the big confrontation and then the conclusion (DM Journal, 15/4/2002).

This session did however not take place as I planned.

Session 3 - 15 April 2002

The events of the last encounter of the main adventure happened in Prospero's Cave, and were the most problematic part of the workshop. Not only was it the most difficult role-playing session, it also was a problem in scripting, rehearsal, and even during final performance. The planning for the last session pre-empted certain responses.

My expectation as workshop director was that the last session would be a '*big confrontation*'. However, the players did not share this expectation. Their focus, at this point and as had been throughout, was on gaining answers to the questions that perplexed them. Therefore, the last session was a tug of war between combat simulation and in-character conversation, which did not work well together.

Naadiya (*Lia*) recollected the events of the last encounter as follows:

- *Came into the cave met Prospero*
- *When he spoke the Duke charged at him and I (Lia) got in between both of them pushing the Duke aside.*
- *Fortune and I tried to tie the Duke down but struggled to do so.*
- *He got up and attacked me so I took out my sword and grazed one of his arms again trying to tie him up.*
- *After I go to Idref trying to get questions and answers for the chaos that was going on he reacted by attacking me.*
- *When Nabilak came he attacked Idref and then attacked Zak, so I responded by attacking him too.*
- *Everything went on. Girls fell asleep and Nabilak and Duky and Idref.*
- *I went to Adnarim and asked why this was happening and if she could stop (it).*
- *She goes to her father.*
- *He stops/Explains. (Naadiya's Journal: 2002)*

During the combat sequence in Prospero's cave, their lack of knowledge of the rules inhibited the players from playing their roles as warriors. The RPG breaks combat down into six-second rounds. This is done to order the chaos of characters attempting actions

simultaneously. To order the sequence the *Initiative*¹⁰ of each character is determined, and in each round, they then act in sequence. In **Figure 2.4** each column indicates a round. In the columns a tick indicates that the character took some action. A dash indicates that the character chose not to act or was unable to act because of not being present or being unconscious. A cross indicates that a particular action was unsuccessful or blocked by another character. Where the character chose to cast a spell the spell's name is written down.

Figure 2.4 Initiative Sequence

Lia	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✗	✓	✗	✓	✓
Prospero	✓	✓	✓	well at the bottom	—	—	—	—	—	✗
Zak	—	Doze	✓	✓	✓	✗	✓	✗	✓	✓
Fortune	—	✓	✗	✓	✓	✓	✗	✓	✗	✗
Laira	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Adnorim	✓	—	—	—	—	—	✓	✗	✓	⊗
Idref	✓	—	—	—	✓	✗	—	✗	—	—
Onokete	✓	✓	✓	✓	—	✓	✓	—	—	—
Anatoya	ready/pen	✓	✓	✗	✓	✓	Flare	Flare	✓	✓
Misturik	—	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	—	—	✓
Qinofra	✗	✗	—	✓	—	—	✓	—	—	—
Liendrin	✓	✗	✓	✓	—	—	✗	✗	✓	✗
Klug	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—

The players in *The Foreshadowing* continuously wanted to do more than what was possible as actions in each six-second round. An action could be the drawing or use of a weapon, picking something up, moving a certain distance or uttering a short phrase such as a command or a spell (D&D *Players Handbook*, 2000:121). Players wanted to strike up conversations and demanded long explanations from Prospero and the Duke.

¹⁰ *Initiative* is determined by rolling a d20 and adding the character's *initiative* modifier. The character with the highest *initiative* acts first and the rest follow in sequence.

The unfamiliarity of the players with the gaming convention of slowed down game time inhibited their efficacy (See **Addendum E**). Experienced role-players are able to hold the scene and their character in suspended animation in their imagination in order for a complex sequence of actions to resolve. I expand on this in **Chapter 4** and **5**. In spite of these difficulties the story played itself out as follows.

The party encountered *Idref* (Ferdinand) and *Adnarim* (Miranda) in the first parts of the cave where they are playing chess. Prospero has informed *Adnarim* of the party's presence and she knows that he is expecting them. She therefore greets them heartily and leads them into Prospero's study. Prospero greets the party but is interrupted when the Duke draws his sword and tries to advance on Prospero. In doing this, he pushes *Annataya* (Carolyn) aside taking her out for one round. Only *Lia* (Naadiya) and Prospero are able to react to the Duke immediately and *Lia* intervenes. *Fortune* (Avershree) and *Lia* are able to stop the Duke and start an attempt to tie him down. *Onafets* attacks *Fortune* from behind. *Zak* (Amy) attempts to reach Prospero with a *Daze* spell (D&D *Players Manual*, 2001:191) and *Annataya* becomes mesmerised by Prospero's magical mirror.

The sequence of events layered so much at this point that it becomes difficult to explain simultaneous events. Each *character* only experienced the part of it directly available to them but the *players* were aware of everything happening, adding to player *and* character confusion. *Idref* became startled, drew his sword, and began attacking people at random. *Lia* (Naadiya) countered him, which led to the Duke being able to free himself. *Fortune* (Avershree) had a 'lucky' hit and killed *Onafets*. *Annataya* (Carolyn) and *Liandrin* (Bistra) attempted to reach Prospero but he cast a *Darkness* spell and then *Levitated* himself (D&D *Players Manual*, 2001:190 & 222). *Liandrin* wasted a *Command* spell, trying to tell Prospero to "stay" (D&D *Players Manual*, 2001:185-186). At that point he was not going anywhere. *Zak* spent most of her time trying to reason with Prospero and asked him to stop what was going on. *Annataya* cast a *Flare* spell that disabled the Duke (D&D *Players Manual*, 2001:206). *Nabilak*, who had stayed outside initially, entered, and in a mistaken attempt to protect *Adnarim* attacked at random. In the meantime *Lia* disabled *Idref* but was then felled by *Nabilak*. Shortly thereafter *Fortune* disabled *Nabilak*. In the meantime *Liandrin* did not know what to do and left

Prospero's study. The King also stayed outside and I had him run into *Liandrin*, in order to turn her around and bring her back into the action. Shortly thereafter *Annataya* cast a Sleep spell and most the characters whom was left standing fell asleep, including *Fortune*, *Zak* (Amy), and *Liandrin*. At this time, the action settled down and Prospero took control of the situation.

Prospero could heal *Lia* (Naadiya) but *Onafets* and *Nabilak* died in the encounter. Prospero also had a chance to explain the circumstances of his disappearance to the King and the rest of the party of adventurers. Prospero explained that the players had to leave all their magic behind in order to leave the island, which they then proceeded to do.

The playing of the *Tempest* adventure ended here and we proceeded to the scripting of the theatrical play. Before this we however had one session where the adventure was re-enacted in an improvisational manner with the players playing all the parts. For this re-enactment I was the only audience member.

Phase 5: Reconstruction and re-enactment

The narrative of the RPG does not exist, says Mackay (2001:50), until the actual performance of the narrative. In the context of *The Foreshadowing* workshop, there are, however, two kinds of performances. The kind Mackay refers to, and the actual performance that we were working towards. During the game, the past performances (first kind) continue to exist during each gaming session in the memory of the players or as written down transcripts of events. In *The Foreshadowing*, the noting down of events was an essential part of the process. This was not only written down by each player but also audio taped. This was to facilitate the re-enactment of the RPG performance and the scripting of a text for final performance (second kind).

There exist two dramatic performance texts of *The Foreshadowing*. The first is a RPG performance in which specific people took part and exists only as a historical occurrence. The only things transportable from this text, independent of the players, are the rulebooks and preparatory notes.

The second text is the theatrical script created from the role-playing performance. This independent script can be transported independently from the original performers (Addendum A). The physical script, therefore, shares more similarities with the text of *The Tempest* than with the DUNGEONS & DRAGONS® rulebooks.

During the last workshop session on 16 April 2002, the role-playing adventure was reconstructed.

There is more that happens but I am not very clear on all the detail and sequencing. Needs to be extracted from the tapes and carefully choreographed. There are also some minor things that I want to change e.g. Lia used her bow and arrow and somebody used a crossbow. I want to eliminate these actions and substitute them with different ones to keep a little bit of consistency and less clutter.

(DM Journal, 18/4/2002).

This is how I ran the last session to accomplish the objective of creating a script for performance. Each player created a mindmap or summary of the adventures from their point of view. In this summary, the players highlighted the ten most significant events, or encounters. I combined these on one page and determined a timeline. During this process, I eliminated references to the introductory adventures, because they were irrelevant.

I then asked the players to narrate and re-enact the adventure. This they proceeded to do without script or further direction easily improvising actions and taking the roles of non-player characters. This re-enactment concluded the workshop phase of *The Foreshadowing*. The next phase started with the creation of a written script.

3

What did the Grasshopper say about games?¹

A Theory of Games

Then let me tell you that I have always had a recurring dream, in which it is revealed to me – though how it is revealed I cannot say – that everyone alive is in fact engaged in playing elaborate games, while at the same time believing themselves to be merely going about their ordinary affairs.

The Grasshopper (Suits, 1978:10)

This dissertation is aimed at providing guidelines for a *Let's Pretend Game*. Such a game would be a structured system of play that provides the means for participants to create a collaborative and self directed narrative in an imaginary environment. Make-believe play is dependant on the imaginary world, the players experience of that world 'in character', and the possibility for that experience to form a narrative. In order to construct such a game there needs to be a framework that would facilitate these processes. This framework should provide:

- a structured system of play;
- the structure for narrative in an imaginary environment;
- the means for participants to collaborate;
- the means for participants to direct themselves.

In this Chapter, I describe a theory of games in support of the above assumptions. This theory has been formulated by the philosopher, Bernard Suits.

3.1 Defining the Game

Bernard Suits' (1978) theory of games of make-believe is set out in his work *The Grasshopper, Games, Life and Utopia*. Suits (1978: Preface) presents an Utopian existence that consists of game playing. In order to argue his point he formulates a definition of games and makes a philosophical exploration of where such a definition could lead. Amongst other considerations, this brings him to make-believe games and

¹ Suits, 1978: 17

their possible usefulness. The idea of a *Let's Pretend* game is based on Suits' description of games of make-believe.

From here on I refer in this dissertation to *games of make-believe*, meaning thereby Suits' description. When I refer to a *Let's Pretend* game, I refer to a specific type of game of make-believe, as is suggested and explored in this dissertation.

It is seemingly easy to identify games especially with the proliferation of games in recent times (Scholder & Zimmerman, 2003). Sports such as cricket are easily identifiable as games, as are board games such as MONOPOLY and chess, card games such as poker and computer games such as WARCRAFT™ (2003) or MAJESTY™ (2000). Although games are easily identifiable, describing what makes them games is problematic because other activities that do not seem to be games also share game characteristics. Common usage of language, such as 'playing the game of love' or 'playing the stock market' also confuses the issue. Making clear which characteristics are essential to games not only describes games effectively but also makes it possible to identify what activities are not games.

Suits' short article of 1967 called *What is a Game?* sets the groundwork for his complete theory published in 1978 as *The Grasshopper, Games, Life and Utopia*. In this work he presents his argument in the form of a Socratic dialogue. Suits states that he intends to discover and formulate a definition of games and "...to follow the implications of that discovery even when they lead in surprising, and sometimes disconcerting, directions" (1978:IX). Because of the clarity and rigour of Suits' approach to games, his definition and theory are useful in the understanding of games in this dissertation.

Suits (1978:41) provides a short definition of a game as "the voluntary attempt to overcome unnecessary obstacles." This is deliberately choosing a more difficult way to do something rather than an easier way (Bradford, 2005). Suits (1978:41) also provides a longer and more complete definition:

To play a game is to attempt to achieve a specific state of affairs [prelusory goal], using only means permitted by the rules [lusory means], where the rules prohibit use of more efficient in favour of less efficient means [constitutive rules], and where the rules are accepted just because they make possible such activity [lusory attitude].

This definition is broad enough to include anything usually regarded as a game such as board or card games, and athletic games. Yet, the definition is also narrow in excluding

the idea of regarding all, or any, human behaviour as games (Bradford, 2005). With the use of the concept of the *open* game, as games without winning as a preliminary goal, it also includes games of make-believe.

Open games differ from a normal view on games as being competitive. An open game does not attempt to declare a winner and the purpose of the open game is to continue play as long as possible. Suits (1978:133) defines open games as “games which have no inherent goal whose achievement ends the game.” In other words, an open game does not have a goal such as winning which would conclude the game. Open games are specifically focussed on co-operation and players are not set in opposition to each other. The closed game has a goal to declare a winner at the end of the game and by nature sets up the players as competitors. Winning a game is only an additional element of playing a game and the possibility of being able to win or not, is not a defining characteristic of a game.

The chief point is that the end here in question is not the end of winning the game. Finally, with the stipulation of what it means to win, a third end emerges: the activity of trying to win, that is playing the game (Suits, 1967).

The above description refers to the purpose of a closed game. The purpose of the open game is the prolongation of the game, in other words, to try to keep playing, for as long as possible (Suits, 1978:131).

A game of make-believe, such as children’s pretend play, a *Murder Mystery Party*, or RPG (see also Chapter 1, page 19), is a type of open game. The point of games of make-believe is the “invention of dramatic responses on the spot” (Suits, 1978:136). In order for the dramatic moves of the game to continue each response to a previous move becomes a stimulus for a successive move (Suits, 1978:134). In order to continue the game the players are then intent on “role performance maximization” (Suits, 1978:135) which means that they would not make dramatic moves that would end the play. Translated into terms of improvisation, we could say that, in order to keep a dramatic improvisation going, the players should not block each other but should use positive assumption in order to keep the scene going (Izzo, 1997:156). Games of make-believe as open games are essentially co-operative. In order to keep a dramatic episode going the players need to be engaged in goal-governed role-performance.

A *Let's Pretend* game needs to be a game of make-believe as an open game where the participants play by making dramatic moves. Talking about dramatic moves in games is only meaningful after the distinction between what is a game, and what is not, has been made (Suits, 1978: 131 footnote). Suits' definition above attempts to clarify this.

According to Suits, most rule disputes in games of make-believe occur because there is a different understanding amongst the players about which rules apply. Some players apply the principles of a closed game while others apply the principles of an open game. In a game of cops and robbers the intention is not that either the cops or the robbers should win the game. A closed game attitude to cops and robbers would want to create rules that are clear when a person is shot or not. An open game attitude accepts the justification that even a hit does not mean a kill such as:

"I shot you, you are dead."

"No I'm not, I'm wearing a bullet proof vest."

Because a closed game is easier to define and the rules are clearer to apply, most children, as they grow older, revert to competitive or closed games (Suits, 1978:137). In a paintball game, there are for instance very clear indications of killing shots and misses.

3.2 Game Elements

The functioning of a game of make-believe is clarified by explanation of the four elements of the game as found in the definition of a game. From the definition the basic elements of games can be identified as:

- The prelusory goal,
- The lusory means,
- The constitutive rules, and
- The lusory attitude.

3.2.1 Prelusory Goal – a state of affairs

Suits (1978:36-37) distinguishes between three goals in the game. The first goal is the creation of an achievable state of affairs. This first prelusory goal does not state how this state of affairs is to be achieved, and because any achievable state of affairs could be made the goal of the game, it is not very specific. This goal is a prelusory goal because it can be described independently and apart from any specific game. In a game of chess,

the state of affairs to be achieved is immobilising the opponent's king. This needs to be stated before and independent of the game to which it applies. All other goals in the game are dependent on the prelusory goal (Suits, 1978:46-37). The state of affairs created by a make-believe game – goal governed role-performance – is achieved through the continual improvisation of dramatic responses.

The second goal, or lusory goal, of a game can only be described in terms of a specific game. The lusory goal begins to determine how the state of affairs should be achieved but can only be understood in relation to the other elements of games. In chess, the king is immobilised when placed in checkmate. How checkmate is achieved can only be understood when the rules of movement of chess pieces are clarified. The third goal is the desire to participate in a game. This goal is a lusory goal of life itself and not part of the game (Suits, 1978:36-37).

Each particular make-believe game determines differently how the improvisation of dramatic responses as a prelusory goal is to be achieved. The RPG attempts to structure improvised dramatic responses through a comprehensive game system. The lusory goal for players in a role-playing game is the assumption of roles (Fannon, 1999:87). The aim is to experience an imaginary world through the eyes of a player character and to direct the actions of this character. The devised theatre workshop is similarly a game of make-believe based on the improvisation of dramatic responses. The devised theatre participants establish a certain setting in which to improvise a scene, working with dramatic responses. Devising theatre is however not as systematised as the RPG in determining the means of achieving the prelusory goal.

3.2.2 Lusory Means – permitted actions

The lusory means are all the ways or actions permitted in order to meet the required state of affairs of the prelusory goal. Evidently, the required state of affairs can be achieved in a number of ways. An opposing chess player's king can be rendered immobile through the application of glue. However, in terms of chess this is not a permitted means. There are means that are permitted in order to achieve the prelusory goals and means that are not permitted. The permitted or legitimate means are called the lusory means and can only be understood in reference to the rules (Suits, 1978:37).

The proscription of means rules out effective means in favour of ineffective or difficult means. Outside the context of a game, the usual approach to a task is to select the most efficient means to accomplish the task. For a game, however, the least efficient means are chosen. This means that the difference between work as technical activity and play in games is that the means in games are not the most efficient (Suits, 1967). However, a certain misconception concerning the difference between work and play persists.

The belief that working and playing games are quite different things is very widespread, yet we seem obliged to say that playing a game is just another job to be done as competently as possible (Suits, 1967).

Playing games is quite different from working and not only for the reason that games choose less efficient means. Work aims to use resources efficiently while playing frequently wastes resources. Play has however also a very different sense in the lusory attitude, as will be discussed shortly.

As an example of less efficient means certain games set a time limit. Tasks in these games would obviously be easier accomplished without a time limit and it seems that the only reason why a time limit is placed is to make the task more difficult. This is different from a technical task where a time limit may exist, such as completing open-heart surgery before the patient dies. In such instances the time limit is not chosen specifically to complicate the task, and if the participants had any choice they would remove the time limit. In a game, the time limit can be removed, but the participants choose not to do so in order to continue the game. Choosing inefficient means only partly describes games because in other situations outside the context of games, such as in simulation training, the inefficient means can still be chosen without a lusory goal. The purpose of choosing inefficient means must be for engaging in play behaviour for it to constitute being a game element.

If the point of a game is the completion of a task in a certain time limit, that means that the only way to play the game would be to stick to the time limit.

If the rules are broken the original end becomes impossible of (sic) attainment, since one cannot (really) win the game unless he plays it, and one cannot (really) play the game unless he obeys the rules of the game (Suits, 1967).

This means that the goals of the game, and the rules concerning the time limit, are directly related to each other and can not be separated.

In an open game, efficient means would be to make use of some machinery, that would prolong the game but minimise the risk. Means that are available for the sustaining of continuity are, for example, the use of a script. In Suits' make-believe game the use of a script to provide dramatic responses is ruled out as too effective a means. Because play is uncertain and cannot be determined beforehand, scripted theatre for the actors cannot be a form of game-play. Half way between scripted theatre and the open game of make-believe is the semi-scripted *Murder Mystery Party* game, which is also a much more efficient means than free improvisation to achieve dramatic moves.

The permitted but more ineffective means is making up dramatic responses on the spot (Suits, 1978:38). The means for achieving dramatic responses in addition require that actions and words are not merely incidental but are reactions to the stimuli of previous actions. In obtaining dramatic results, a dramatic response needs to consist of *appropriate* reactions to the preceding stimulus. Role performance is another permitted means for use in playing a make-believe game. In order to be able to achieve role performance the player needs to have access to a definable role.

Important to note here is that, although there is no script, it does not mean that there is no structure. Pretend play in the make-believe game is based on a structure or, in terms of this dissertation, a *plan* for play.

3.2.3 Constitutive Rules – prohibition on efficiency

A rule can be described as “a general norm guiding conduct or action in a given type of situation” (Twining and Miers, 1982:127). Rules relate to the prelusory and lusory goals of the game.

Prelusory or constitutive rules prohibit certain means useful in achieving the prelusory goal. These rules constitute the game and permit the players to play the game. The constitutive rules, together with the requirements of the prelusory goal, set out all the necessary conditions for playing the game. The *lusory* rules, or rules of skill, function inside the area determined by the constitutive rules. Breaking a rule of skill will mean that a player will fail to play well. Breaking a constitutive rule however will mean that a player will fail to play the game at all. It is the constitutive rule that prohibits the use of efficient means (Suits, 1978:38).

Rules are lines that we draw, but in games the lines are always drawn short of a final end or a paramount command. Let us say, then, that a game is an activity in which observance of rules is part of the end of the activity, and, where such rules are non-ultimate; that is, where other rules can always supersede the game rules: that is, where the player can always stop playing the game. (Suits, 1978:27)

The game rules do not extend out of the game but stop short of the game limits. In soccer, the ball is not supposed to leave the field. At the end of the time limit, however, the ball may be removed without the possibility of an infraction of the game rules. Yet, stealing the ball during or after the game will be an infraction of a rule. This rule is however not a game rule but a legal rule existing outside of the game.

The means or goal for soccer is the scoring of a goal by kicking a ball past the goal posts in the time limit and on the field specified by the rules. Because the rules restrict the time and space of the game they also restrict the goal or means of the game. A soccer player does not have to be continuously trying to score a goal. He only has to try scoring a goal during game time. Thus, “the means permitted by the rules are smaller in scope than they would be in the absence of the rules” (Suits, 1967). It is the task of the *gamewright* to determine these rules so that the game is not too hard or too easy to play (Suits, 1978:30).

There is a distinct difference between games and games of make believe but the aspects of rules above still apply to games of make believe. In chess a player does not have to imagine being the king, or suspend disbelief in order to see the battle progress, imagining wounds and deaths. Fannon (1999,), using an example from Monopoly, claims that all games involve an element of role-play. Garvey (1995,82) says that pretend play selects the most significant aspects of life and applies rules of internal consistency to them during pretend play. In other words, even small children are able to invent and apply rules that they extract from reality. If somebody does not play according to the rules, they break the illusion of the imaginary environment and disrupt the performance. A constitutive rule that participants must then subscribe to is the suspension of disbelief, without which there would be no possibility of role-playing.

The lusory goal is in the overcoming of obstacles or inefficiencies in the participants' way (Suits, 1978). The rules then should be interpreted to uphold the obstacles in order to participate in the game through the development of certain skills or excellences. A skill in terms of the role-playing game would then be something like the

ability to create a believable and consistent character. The obstacles are partly that this character is formed through a series of statistics that needs to be interpreted. The rules should then enforce the statistics but allow the character development. In terms of theatre a person would develop a combination of skills in order to participate, for example, skill in voice projection. The conventions (rules) of theatre allow for more enunciation and projection on stage than in normal speech, keeping the obstacle in place but allowing it to be overcome.

3.2.4 Lusory Attitude – a voluntary acceptance of restrictions

In ordinary life one of the worst reasons to do, or not do something, is just because there is a rule that says so. In a game however this justification is readily accepted and even necessary to play the game. During games, players accept certain limitations in order to play a game. Without accepting the limitations, players will not be able to play the game and the game will in fact not even exist. Suits states:

In games, I obey the rules just because such obedience is a necessary condition for my engaging in the activity such obedience makes possible. In moral conformity the rules makes the action right, but in games it makes the action (Suits, 1967).

The attitude that accepts the rules just so that a certain activity can take place is the lusory attitude. The players must voluntarily choose to follow the rules of the game merely for the sake of being able to engage in the activity that the following of these rules creates (Suits, 1978:39-40). The lusory attitude is the acceptance of the constitutive rules so that the activities made possible by such acceptance may occur (Suits, 1978:39-40).

In order to play, the players acknowledge that the game exists with rules and conventions in place. They then engage with other players under the restrictions of these rules to gain pleasure and enjoyment from the act of participation. Although a game is a system of rules, it only activates when humans enter the system and thus play begins. Play is something greater than just the parts of the rules together because it is a complex system of interrelationships of the parts, or rules, from which the whole emerge (Lantz & Zimmerman, 1999).

The lusory attitude unifies the other elements to provide all the necessary conditions for the activity of game playing (Suits, 1978:35). The lusory attitude is not the only attitude a player can have towards a game but it is the least, and any additional attitude does not eliminate the lusory attitude (Suits, 1978:146). It is possible for players to have different attitudes towards the game but they must have the same attitude towards the rules. The players must accept the rules in order to play the game. If they have a different attitude to the rules, as for instance following the rules but not in order to play, they would then not have a lusory attitude and will therefore not be playing. It is possible to follow rules without accepting the restrictions that make them a game but such a person will not be playing a game. Actors on stage can, for instance, move chess pieces around on a board according to the rules of chess. Their moves are, however, predetermined and they are not playing chess but acting as if they are. Insisting that, when people follow the rules regardless of their attitude is the same as playing games, is a radical instrumentalist approach to game playing (Suits, 1978:146).

According to Gary Izzo (1997), all play takes place in a play space. This space is an imaginary rather than physical space. Izzo (1997:9) refer to this space as the *temenos* of the mind. The *temenos* is the sacred circle used for ritual and performance by the Greeks. Izzo (1997:9) says that the players' collective regard of the space grants it the special powers of *temenos*. It is not the physical space, however, that delineates the playground. This is especially true for dramatic improvisation, which transforms any space into an imaginary reality when all participants act 'as if' it is so. This is what Dorothy Heathcote refers to as believing the 'big lie' (Wagner, 1976: 67). It is possible to do improvisation in any physical space because the real stage for action is in the imaginations of the participants.

The *temenos* of the mind has special powers. Everything inside the space becomes part of the elements of play while everything outside does not have any bearing on play for as long as play lasts. The intrusion from outside on play by outside viewers inhibits play because it breaks the sacred circle. It causes a breach in the boundary that lets the real world leak into the world of play (Izzo, 1997). The technique for improvisation requires the players to stay in the moment and not to break out by

returning to ordinary reality. The longer the imaginary space can be sustained the better chance the improvisation has of breaking new ground (Izzo, 1997).

Mackay (2001:3) uses the term *imaginary entertainment environment*, which denotes the expansive imaginary world in which make-believe play can take place. The imaginary entertainment environment spans various media such as the *Star Trek* universe, which started as a television series, but also resulted in films, books, role-playing and computer games, as well as simulations and fact files. The detailed and widespread nature of the imaginary entertainment environment makes it easier for people to recreate the world in the imagination.

The lusory attitude resides in believing the 'big lie'. Pretending is the necessary suspension of disbelief in order to create an imaginary world, which exists in a different time, space, and with different people from the present reality. This transforms the ordinary into the imaginary. There exist rules of internal consistency in pretend play (Garvey, 1991:82). These rules are not imposed from outside but are constructed within the play itself and exhibit a certain flexibility of interpretation as long as they are consistent with the limitations of the chosen imaginary world.

Such flexibility might suggest that this is a world of endless possibilities but the conventions of the drama sphere and game mechanics limit the possibilities (Mackay, 2001:56). Mackay makes these statements in criticism on Schechner's view on play namely that it presents the potential for unlimited possibilities. In terms of Mackay's (2001:57) analysis of frames of meaning,² he describes the theatre frame as all the events taking place in the imaginary entertainment environment as witnessed by the player characters. These are in other words the actions of the characters, as they appear in the imaginations of the players. The rules and scenario combined create the *imaginary-entertainment environment*.

This fantasy, or other world, describes an important aspect of both the devised theatre workshop and of the RPG. It is the world in which action takes place. In the devised theatre workshop the participants, the actors and director, create the world. In the role-playing game the specific game system influences the environment, leading it in a certain direction. D&D, for instance, is a system designed for heroic fantasy whereas

² The frames of meaning, of which theatre is one, are discussed in more detail in Chapter 4.

the RPG system VAMPIRE, THE MASQUERADE® creates a world of contemporary gothic horror. The participation and agreement of the players mediate how they play and understand this environment.

The elements of a make-believe game can then be summarised in the following table:

Table 3.1 The elements of a make-believe game		
Prelusory Goal	<i>a state of affairs</i>	Making continuous dramatic moves
Lusory Means	<i>permitted actions</i>	through role performance maximization
Constitutive Rules	<i>prohibition on efficiency</i>	on the spot
Lusory Attitude	<i>a voluntary acceptance of restrictions</i>	In a make-believe setting

A make-believe game in conclusion then, is a game that has the following characteristics:

- The state of affairs that is created by a make-believe game is “goal governed role-performance” (Suits, 1978: 136), where the goal is the continual improvisation of dramatic responses. Games of make-believe have as goal the improvisation of dramatic responses.
- The means of games of make-believe are role performance and dramatic moves, where each response to a previous move becomes a stimulus for a successive move.
- The rules of make-believe games firstly prohibit the use of a script as a more efficient means, and secondly prohibit dramatic moves that would end the play.
- The attitude of play in games of make-believe accepts the restriction of the role and the dramatic moves during improvisation. This attitude includes the voluntary suspension of disbelief.

All these aspects can be found in both the devised theatre workshop and the RPG. It therefore makes sense to try to use the RPG in order to facilitate play-making in a devised theatre workshop for the purpose of finding a way of creating a Let’s Pretend Game. For this, a set of four requirements has been formulated. These are:

- a structured system of play,
- a narrative and imaginary world,
- a means of collaboration, and
- the means for self-direction.

The basis for a *Let's Pretend* game is found in the theories of Bernard Suits (1978) concerning open games and games and make-believe. Suits suggests that pretend play can be formalised as a make-believe game. This is dependent upon his definition of the make-believe game as an open game. The four basic game elements were identified. These are:

- the prelusory goal which determines a state of affairs,
- the lusory means which prescribes permitted means,
- the constitutive rules that places a prohibition on efficiency, and
- the lusory attitude that voluntarily accepts the above restrictions.

All four of the game elements identified by Suits support the notion of a structured system of play or a *game*. Make-believe play as a required state of affairs addresses the notion of an imaginary world. The narrative requirement is partly satisfied through the prohibition on efficiency that requires sequential dramatic moves. It however does not address issues of plot development, genre, or deeper meaning. The collaboration of the participants is required for the creation of the make believe world, as well as the exchange of dramatic moves. Lastly, the voluntary participation of the players implies that they are able and willing to submit to the playing of the game and that their efficacy and self-direction could be high.

Suits however does not address the fact that in pretend play a player is both a performer and an observer. Secondly, that although other players' pretend play may be observed and appreciated it is primarily the performance for the self that encourages continued play. Having looked at predominantly the game aspect of a make-believe game, I will now look at it from the perspective of it being a dramatic performance.

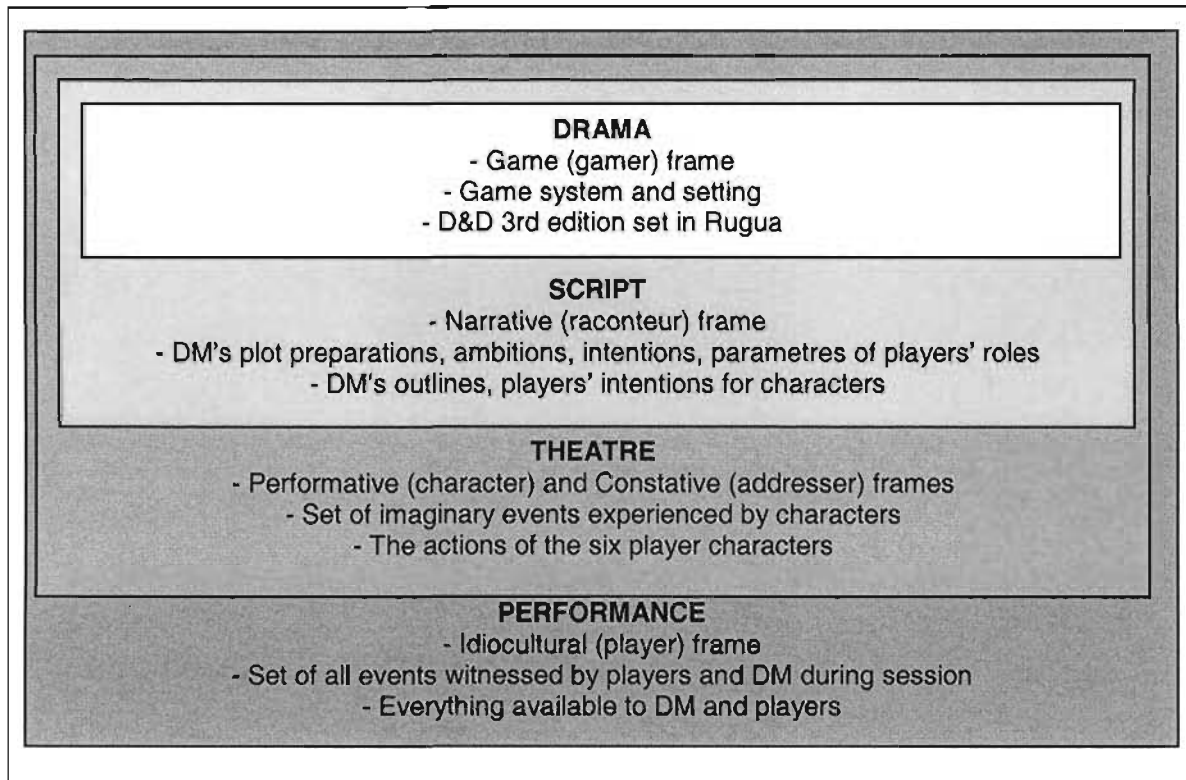
3.3 Performance Circumstances

Where the previous section focussed on the game aspects of the RPG and devised theatre workshop, this section focuses on the performative aspects of these occurrences. It will be shown that the qualities that separate Suits' game of make-believe from other games are the same qualities that create the conditions for performance. For this purpose, the two processes of devised theatre workshop and the RPG will be viewed as theatrical

performances. The theatre of the workshop and RPG performance is very much a private theatre performed for the inner circle of players in which all present are both actors and audience. It is this aspect that I highlight in this section, as it does not feature in Suits' theory. The performance conditions, formulated in this chapter, are based on the writings of Richard Schechner (1977 & 1985) although he has not formulated it in the way in which I present it here. I also draw on the work of Mackay (2001). Mackay analyses the RPG and concludes that it can be viewed as a performance art. He based his theory mainly on Schechner's (1977) taxonomy of performance, or performance spheres, and highlights what he calls the aesthetics of the role-playing game.

Schechner (1977 & 1985) identifies a taxonomy of performance dividing it into four spheres: performance, theatre, script, and drama. These spheres become consecutively smaller, each sphere being contained within the previous one. The performance sphere is the largest and contains the theatre sphere, which contains the script sphere, which in turn contains the drama sphere. These spheres contain each other in terms of time/space and in terms of concepts and ideas. The drama sphere is therefore contained within the script sphere in the sense that we can say that drama is a specific type of script. Similarly theatre is contained in performance and we can look at theatre as a specific type of performance (Schechner, 1977:38-39). Mackay (2001:51-53) adapts Schechner's taxonomy and redraws it as a taxonomy of performance for the RPG. In Figure 3.1 this is adapted to reflect specific details concerning *The Foreshadowing*:

Figure 3.1 Taxonomy of the RPG performance



Schechner (1977:39) expands upon the performance spheres by assigning dominance to various groups of people in each particular sphere. In the performance sphere, for example, he assigns it to the audience. Because the RPG does not have a clear distinction between player and performer, the two categories of theatre and performance merge in the RPG. For Schechner the position of the performers and the spectators are essential for the distinction between these two spheres. Schechner (1977:39) also acknowledges that these boundaries are arbitrary and flexible and that it is, for example, possible for the performers to be their own audience. The RPG and the devised theatre workshop function as a complete performance system because the performer and the spectator are contained in the same person.

In the RPG the theatre is the events that occur around the table in the context of the game and which is available only to the player characters and the non-player characters controlled by the DM. The performance is the events that include the characters' interactions in the theatre sphere but also out of character remarks and events (Mackay, 2001:53).

Schechner's definition of the drama sphere suggests that all of this exists independent of the performers. According to Mackay, the drama sphere is not as independent in the RPG but he is not clear in this exactly. What is independent, though, is the specific role-playing system and the particular scenario. In terms of both Mackay (2001:50) states that it is possible to talk of a particular performance of DUNGEONS & DRAGONS, just as you can talk about a particular performance of *The Tempest* by William Shakespeare. Schechner describes drama as the written or verbal narrative, independent of the person who carries it. Mackay (2001:49) sees the analogy for this in the role-playing game rulebook. This means that, on the most basic level the drama of *The Foreshadowing* is contained in the three core rulebooks of the DUNGEONS & DRAGONS role-playing game.

Schechner ascribes the control of the drama sphere to the author, composer or scenarist. In terms of the RPG this would mean that the drama sphere belongs collectively to the game designer, who designs the game system and scenario, and the DM, who adapts and interprets it for each adventure scenario and group of players. In devised theatre this will be a shared control between the director and actors, and the writer who records and edits the script.

Mackay (2001:49-50) further allows for the differences between a conventional dramatic text and a RPG in the sense that these differences stem from the nature of the two performance forms. This is, for instance, seen in the fact that Schechner's explanation of drama allows for little improvisation while the role-playing game relies on improvisation for the completion of performance. In terms of a devised theatre workshop, which also relies on improvisation for its completion, devised theatre is in this specific sense closer to the RPG than to a conventional dramatic text. This is especially true of *The Foreshadowing* workshop where the two were combined. Here, control was

in the hands of both DM and players. In this way, the relationship between Theatre and Drama explores the collaborative effort of the participating individuals.

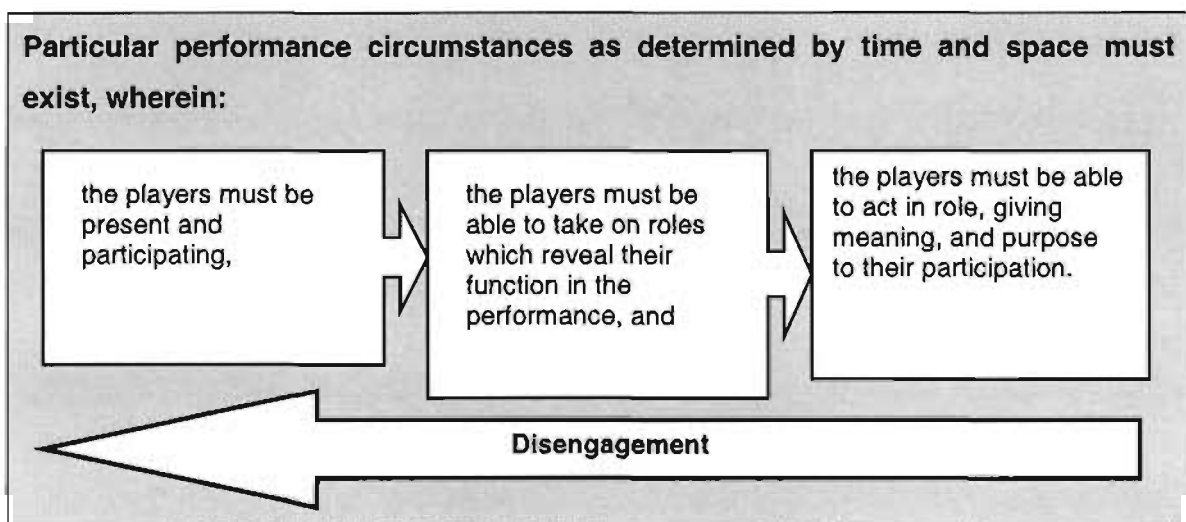
If both the RPG and the devised theatre workshop are performances, as the above analysis would suggest, then conditions of performance should apply to both. These are:

- structured time and space,
- the participation of player,
- the taking on of roles, and
- the taking of action in role.

In light of this a make-believe game can be framed as a performance event where players in role take action.

Despite being the conditions by which a make-believe game can be delimited, the aspects given above also act as a four-step sequential process of engagement with the performance. The performance is an extraordinary event separate from the ordinary life of the players. This means that a person would arrive at the specified time and place for the performance as step one. The moment the person enters the space or the specified time start the person becomes a player, having a certain attitude and *presence of mind* towards the process. In step three the player would then take on a role or enrol and prepare to act and, in step four, the player would act in role. In order to disengage from the make-believe game the same process would be followed in reverse.

Figure 3.2 Conditions for Performance



These conditions need to be met to constitute performance or the performance that comes about is constrained by the limitations imposed by these conditions. To say that particular performance circumstances must exist is to say that time and space must be organised, planned, and structured for the purpose of performance. Pragmatically this means that a venue (space) must be booked for a certain time. Another pragmatic result of the organisation of the performance event is the notification of the performance to the players and the audience in order to ensure their presence. This distinguishes the theatrical performance from a confidence trick (con) where some participants are playing roles but others are deceived and thus not let into the 'act'.

This first condition that particular performance circumstances must exist relates to the prelusory goal of Suits' theory. The state of affairs to be achieved during the game is a planned and structured performance event.

The conditions for the performance require that the players are present and participating in order for the performance to take place. This seems an obvious requirement in terms of the constraints of time and space. Suffice it to say at this point that the absence of a player who is expected to play a role would have a negative impact on the performance of all players, present or absent.

Despite physical presence, there is another sense in which the players are present and participate in the performance. The presence of the player is also required in a mental sense. The players need to be performative players, aware of themselves, and freely and voluntarily participating in the process. Performance is a typically human activity, shaped by human culture. What makes it a remarkable human activity is that people can be aware of their own performance (Boal, 1995:13). To be a performative player players should be present to themselves as performers in order to be able to perform, a quality animals do not possess because they are unaware of their own performance. Watching a trained animal is in fact watching the performance of the animal trainer because an animal is just as unable to perform as a ventriloquist's dummy. Richard Schechner (1985:122) describes this participative involvement as follows:

Sometimes we're in it, sometimes we're out of it. Even when we are out of it, we're in it; and even when we're in it, we're out of it watching ourselves in it.

The presence and participation of the players can be related to the lusory attitude. The lusory attitude distinguishes game-play from other types of play. Game-play is playing while being consciously aware of the game to be played and therefore accepting the game structure imposed. Similarly, as game players are aware that they are playing, actors are also aware that they are *acting*.

The third condition for performance requires that players need to be able to take on roles that reveal their function in the performances. This aspect is dealt with in detail in Chapter 4. At this point it is sufficient to say that the roles provide the performers with a frame from, and within which, to act. It is the roles that permit them to act. The roles the players take on are the lusory means. The role can be related to script in that it respects the state of affairs of the prelusory goal.

The last condition requires that the players must be able to act in role, giving meaning and purpose to their participation. In other words the role must give them sufficient structure with which to improvise. The role and the conventions of improvisation must give them sufficient structure to be able to make up moves on the spot.

In improv, the exercises are often called structures or games. As the names indicate, the exercises have rules, or parameters, which guide the players. It is possible, indeed often desirable, for players to bend the rules. Yet as long as all players are following the same rules (or all bending them in the same direction), the game moves forward and therefore is successful. (Gesell, 2003).

The players' ability to act in role, giving meaning and purpose to their participation is prescribed by the constitutive rules. The performers' ability to act is determined by lawful and unlawful actions. Improvisation requires the making up of dramatic responses on the spot and this is therefore a lawful action. Just making up responses on the spot is not enough. These responses need to relate to the context of the performance and the actions that the other performers are taking. The performers therefore also need to collaborate.

The construction of an imaginary or other world is contingent upon agreement between participants. The collaborative force of the group of players is essential to the game. This collaborative force is normally referred to in theatre as the ensemble ethos of the cast, and is essential in the workshop process. Ensemble or group inter-dependency

exists not only in theatre but in any activity that requires teamwork or collaboration such as group games. Fine (1983) calls this the idioculture of the game.

The RPG, as an instance of dramatic play, displays a clear collaboration in the creation of a narrative and imaginary world. This collaboration is, however, not always present and the power of participants to have an impact on the plot and scenario varies from group to group. Most other instances of dramatic play are dependent on collaboration of the participants in order to function. Few, however, extend the collaboration in order to let any participant have an effect on the imaginary world or the narrative structure. In other words the constitutive rules tend to limit the extent of collaboration.

During the process people become aware of themselves as they function as professionals, actors, writers and directors. Yet, they also lose awareness of their function and become equal participants in a collaborative process. As co-creators participants perform, watch themselves perform, act, direct, question, analyse, redirect, and react. The players are not only aware of themselves as actors *acting*, participants *participating*, or players *playing*. They are also aware of themselves outside the process as willing participants that can also direct, question, analyse, and structure their own play. The question of self-directed pretend play asks to what extent participants are able to do just that. In order to be able to self-direct, the players need to have an influence not only on their own dramatic moves in role, but also on the rules that govern these moves and eventually on the prelusory goal which determines the purpose of these moves.

But as Richard Schechner (1985:122) says, “sometimes we’re out of it.” A player can be out of the process in any of the four steps with a negative effect because they are prerequisites for, and dependant on, each other. For example:

- a person can be present as a player but not in role, and all actions taken are therefore not taken in role;
- a person could be present but not with the *presence of mind* to be a player making both the taking on of role and the taking action impossible;
- a person could be present, in role but not taking action and therefore not be role-playing;
- a person could be absent and is therefore neither a player, in role, nor able to take action.

This is discussed in more detail in Chapter 4.

The actions and reactions of a person who is out of the performance in terms of the performance conditions will show behaviour inappropriate to make-believe play. This behaviour will not be an aid to the process, it will not be playful, and it will not be collaborative. Therefore, it will limit the performance of not only the person out of it, but of every other player involved. Because pretend play is also a fragile process, any such behaviour would dominate over the correct behaviour forming a power structure that will subvert the function and purpose of the make-believe game. It is therefore important to understand some of the sources, aspects, and influences of the ordinary life of the individual because this is the inappropriate behaviour that will surface during play.

In summary then the problem for the creation of a pretend play game requires that players be able to meet the conditions of performance. In this, players need to be present, in role, and acting in role with purpose. If they are unable to meet these conditions their behaviour will be inappropriate in terms of the performance structure.

This is however not sufficient because the players need to be able to have an effect on more than the immediate moves of their own performance but also on the structure and purpose of these moves through self-direction. For this the structure of the performance need to be separated from the performance and this is done through the institutionalisation of the game. Suits describe this concept of the game as institution, especially in terms of the players' attitude towards the rules, and how this attitude affects behaviour.

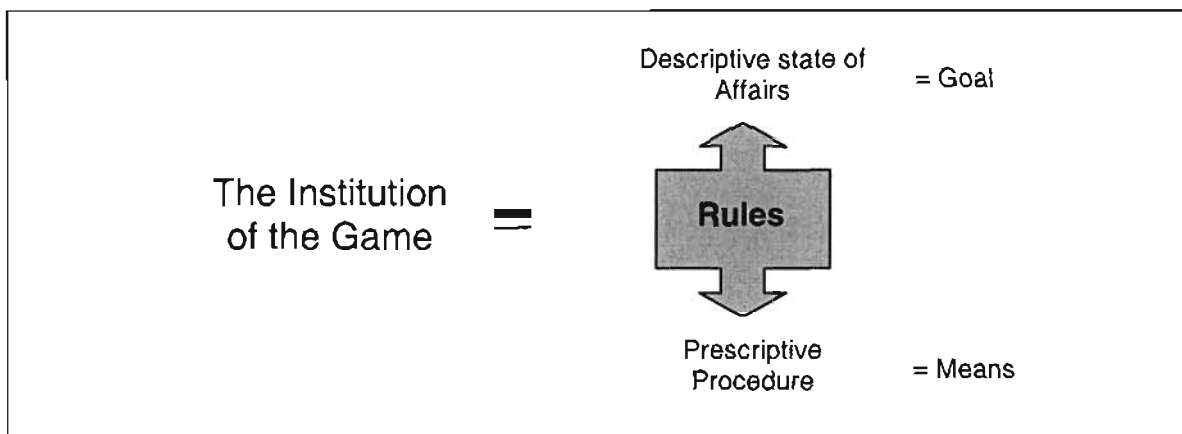
3.4 Game as Institutional Play

Garvey distinguishes between games and play in terms of rules and for her, most play lacks game-like characteristics because the rules are not fixed. Play can be "orderly, internally consistent, and subject to regulation and procedural correction" without becoming games (Garvey, 1991:103). According to her: "Games are play activities that have become institutionalised" (Garvey, 1991:104) through rules. Suits provides a description that highlights inappropriate behaviour in the game. This is based on the understanding of the game as institution. A distinction can be made between the institution of the game and any specific instance of playing the game. The institution of the game is what enables us to talk about an element in the game without playing the

game. Because of the institution of the game, elements of the game can be used without playing the game.

The institution of the game highlights the use of rules in the game. Rules in games are used either to describe a state of affairs, or to prescribe a procedure (Suits, 1978:45). The rules of chess, for instance, describe the immobilisation of the king by describing checkmate. The prescriptive rules regulate the process of playing the game so that one player can achieve checkmate and win. Descriptive checkmate can be achieved by placing chess pieces on the board as illustration of the rules. Placing these pieces is dependent on the institution of chess. It is possible to achieve the prelusory goal aside from any specific game of chess but not possible to achieve it without the institution of the game.

Figure 3.3 Game as Institution



Pretend play is not institutionalised to such an extent that an easy comparison is possible here. Pretend play formalises loose structures, which is again based on extractions from real life. I would argue that most improvisations and theatre games are dependent on some elements of the institution of pretend play.

It is possible to describe pretend play, as game institution, as the continual role performance maximization through the creation of dramatic responses on the spot, with the addition that this should create a narrative. The institution of make-believe games is therefore close to reality, reproducing the structures of reality (Garvey, 1991:82).

The use of the status game during improvisational exercises is here an example (Poulter, 1987). Players are assigned different levels of status in order to experience and play with status during improvisation. Focussing in this way on only one element, *status*, is only an exercise because other vital elements, such as narrative or role development, are neglected. It is the same as chess puzzles published in newspapers that set up the pieces for a chess problem for a reader to solve. In this sense the players are solving a problem or exploring an issue, but not playing a full game. The prescriptive rules of a make-believe game would provide the procedure whereby players would end up in a play situation where status is an element in the game and is used in furthering the narrative by extending play.

Different types of 'players' stand in different attitudes to the game, its goals, and rules. In the game, a trifler recognises the rules of the game but not the goals, using the rules of the game to play their own game. The cheat recognises the goal but not the rules, and will achieve the goal by breaking the rules. The spoilsport does not acknowledge the rules or goal and refuses to play the game. The player recognises the game and its institution, the trifler and cheat recognise only the institution, and the spoilsport does not recognise either (Suits, 1978:46-47).

Table 3.2 Recognising Game and Institutional Claims

	Goals	Rules	Game	Institution
Triflers	No	Yes	No	Yes
Cheats	Yes	No	No	Yes
Spoilsports	No	No	No	No
Players	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes

The trifler has another goal as opposed to the prelusory goal in mind, and attempts to achieve this by obeying the rules of the game. The trifler expresses a 'deficiency of zeal' in striving for the prelusory goal of the game (Suits, 1978:46). In chess, instead of attempting to place their opponent in checkmate, a trifling chess player might be attempting to get as many pieces as possible to the other side of the board before being

checkmated. It is possible to achieve this goal without breaking the rules but it is not the same as playing chess.

A trifler in a make-believe game could also use the rules to their own ends instead of making continuous dramatic moves for the purpose of role-performance maximization and narrative creation. A player could participate for the purpose of interjecting pieces of *readymade* performances. Role-players continuously use *readymades* in role-playing situations such as the expression: "Eh, what's up doc?" The trifler could however live for these moments and spend time and effort in the creation of their character and the setting up of dramatic moves to create opportunities only for these re-enactments.

The cheat on the other hand displays an 'excess of zeal' in trying to meet the prelusory goal of the game (Suits, 1978:46). The cheat wants to meet the conditions of the game, and would ignore the rules to achieve them. The cheat aims to meet the descriptive application of the rules. A cheat would move pieces illegally in chess when the other player is not looking, in order to achieve checkmate. For the cheat to be able to violate the rules, all the other players of the game have to follow the rules. If everybody cheats, then everybody becomes a player in a new game - a game of cheating.

A cheat in a make-believe game could cheat in the making of continuous dramatic moves by not providing role and context related responses. It is for instance possible to keep a conversation almost endlessly going when a player takes the last words of a sentence and changes it into a question.

"I am going home now."

"Going home?"

"Yes, I am tired of your questioning me."

"Am I questioning you?"

Making these types of dramatic moves would make certain that the cheat will not run out of dramatic responses to make.

However, a spoilsport does not care if he or any other player can make dramatic responses. A spoilsport will disbelieve the 'magic if,' and would block any continuous dramatic moves.

"I attack you with my sword."

"That is not a sword, it's a stick."

A make-believe game consists of the making of continuous dramatic moves through the means of role-performance maximization and for the purpose of narrative creation.

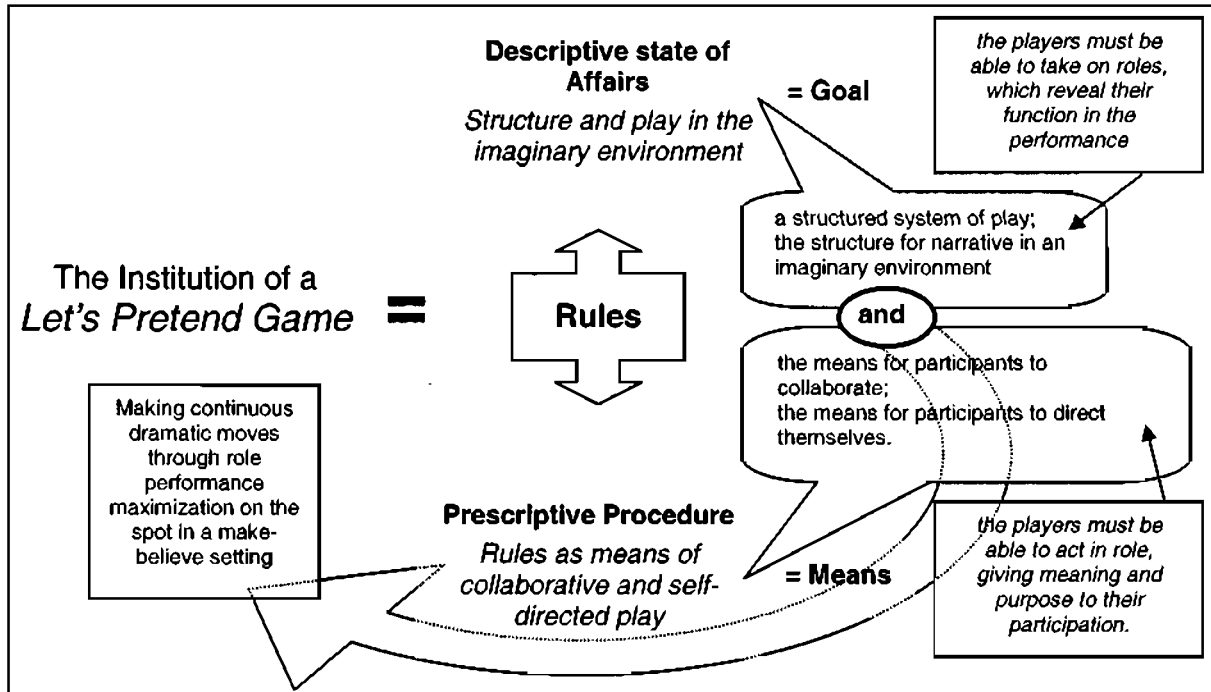
The prelusory goal can be achieved by violating or ignoring the procedural goals of games. It is, however, not possible to play the game by ignoring or violating the procedural rules. The reason why players are able to play chess as a game without a referee that identifies trifiers, cheats, or spoilsports, is the clarity of the procedural rules that exist in the institution of the game of chess.

In the game of MONOPOLY for example, a specific player normally plays the bank, but there are no reasons why any other, or no player in particular, can control the bank. The rules of the game MONOPOLY are clear enough to guide all game behaviour. Such clear and self-regulating rules are not present in the role-playing game or other forms of make-believe play. Therefore, in order to make a make-believe game that is not dependent on the participation of a referee³, the procedural rules of such a game need to be stated clearly. When this is the case, violations or negations of procedural rules are clearly identifiable. This is another requirement set for the making of a *Let's Pretend* game. This requirement supports the conditions for self-direction.

In Figure 3.4 I illustrate how the elements of games of make believe, the conditions for performance and the requirements for a *Let's Pretend* game combine to form the institution of the game. From this diagram it is clear that the rules will play a pivotal role in the institution of the *Let's Pretend* game.

³ In certain instances the DM can be referred to as a referee and Fine (1983) uses the term *referee* to describe the DM.

Fig. 3.4 The Institution of a *Let's Pretend* Game



Based on Suits' theory of games I now proceed to the analysis of *The Foreshadowing* workshop in Chapter 4 and 5. Chapter 4 analyses the descriptive state of affairs as the goal of the game. Chapter 5 analyses the prescriptive procedure as the means of play.

Story Geography

Structure and Play in the Imaginary Environment

"There ought to be some men moving about somewhere—and so there are!" she added in a tone of delight, and her heart began to beat quick with excitement as she went on. "It's a great huge game of chess that's being played—all over the world—if this is the world at all, you know."

Through the Looking Glass - Lewis Carroll (Gardner ed. 1970:207-208)

When Alice recognises the *Looking Glass* world as a game of chess, she reasons that there ought to be certain movements. The expected movements are a result of the structure of the game of chess. Chess is a simulated war game played on a chequered board with a set of white and black playing pieces. The structure of chess is such that a game of chess in South Africa and one in Russia are the same game. The specific instance of play and individual moves might differ, but the structural movement of each piece – pawn, knight, queen, or castle – is the same.

A structured system of play, or institutionalised game, is translatable to various contexts. It is not dependent on the skills or personalities of certain participants to sustain. A novice chess player and a grand master could play chess with each other. It might not be a good game and the likelihood is that the grand master will win. The successful playing of the game, however, is not dependent on the grand master's skill, and neither can the novice's inexperience prevent it. The *Let's Pretend* game also needs to be translatable to various contexts in order to be usable by different groups of people.

The first thing Alice does in an unfamiliar 'country' is to make a survey, to map the boundaries of the world.

Of course the first thing to do was to make a grand survey of the country she was going to travel through. "It's something very like learning geography," thought Alice, as she stood on tiptoe in hopes of being able to see a little further.

Through the Looking Glass - Lewis Carroll (Gardner ed. 1970:215)

The 'country' in which make-believe takes place is an imaginary world. It exists only in the minds of the players and is subjective for each participant. The framework for the imaginary world and narrative has a structure, however. For a *Let's Pretend* game, this structure needs to be as clear as a playing field for a soccer team so that when the game is

played every participant can understand the structure. This is essential for self-direction to be a possibility.

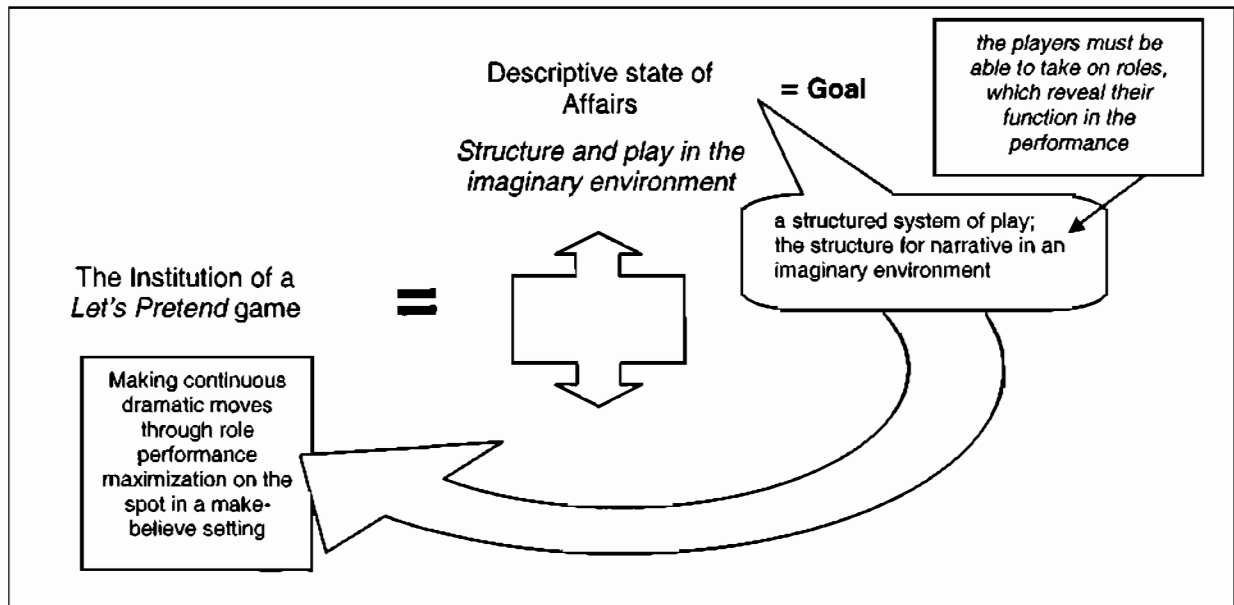
The world that Alice maps turns out to be a giant chessboard in which the chess pieces act as sentient beings. Normally chess does not provide an imaginary world. Except for some novel chess sets, the white and black pieces do not represent specific forces such as America and Irak. It is not necessary for the chess player to imagine himself to be the king in order to be able to move the king. During pretend play players need to act 'as if' they are the characters they are playing. The moves of make-believe play are only possible when the players are 'in character'. The sequence of moves in a chess game does not form a narrative.

In order to construct a *Let's Pretend* game, there needs to be a framework that would enable make-believe play, which is dependent on the creation of an imaginary world, the players experience of that world 'in character', and the possibility for that experience to form a narrative. The imaginary and narrative framework of a *Let's Pretend Game* would therefore provide a structure:

- to create an imaginary world,
- to create character, and
- to create story and plot.

This narrative and imaginary framework is situated in the theoretical framework given in Figure 4.1 derived from the theoretical discussion in Chapter 3.

Fig. 4.1 Structure and Play in the Imaginary Environment



A RPG purports to have a unified structured system of play. Ron Edwards' (2004a) exploration of the origins of D&D, however, show that RPGs are mostly based on the interpretations of the rules/system by the local group of players. One such instance is the game played during *The Foreshadowing* workshop. In *The Foreshadowing* workshop the character creation and play was based on D&D 3rd edition, but I cannot say that we therefore followed a specific system. Even while we played a published module, my intervention in adapting the module made it different from every other instance of players playing the same module.

In this Chapter I explore, with examples from *The Foreshadowing*, the ways in which a structured system of play, and the structure for narrative in an imaginary environment functions. *The Foreshadowing* workshop used the D&D RPG as a structured system and this process is used as basis for developing guidelines for creating a *Let's Pretend* game.

Before I delve into the world, character and story of pretend play I want to introduce a certain approach to RPGs that highlights three possible and basic approaches to game design. Most writing on RPGs originates from the practitioners, the players, and DMs. Sean Patrick Fannon (1999), for instance, wrote an introduction to the RPG in

order to explain the hobby to the uninformed as well as provide the informed with ideas and techniques to develop game-play. Fannon is, however, not critical of the form but rather focussed on the promotion of a popular form of entertainment.

The analysis of RPGs by role-players is an ongoing process resulting in a number of useful approaches. In order to structure and clarify these approaches, the gaming community have suggested various frameworks or models. A significant model is the Threefold Model developed in an Internet forum (rec.games.frp.advocacy) that has been ongoing since 1992 (Kim, 2003). Edwards (2004) developed and reinterpreted the Threefold Model as the GNS model in a number of articles on *the Forge* web page.

4.1 Three Creative Agendas

The Threefold or GNS Model organises agreements on how players play RPGs into three creative agendas namely gamist, narrativist (also called dramatist), and simulationist.¹ These agreements are not necessarily explicitly stated. In short, the gamist agenda focuses on playing a challenging game, the narrativist agenda on creating a good story, and the simulationist agenda on representing an authentic world. Some aspects organised under the three agendas include:

- Mechanical rules
- The construction of scenarios
- Expected behaviour of Player Characters (PCs)
- The resolution of actions
- Dealing with outside distractions (Kim, 2003).

The concept of the three creative agendas relates to the structuring of play, specifically in terms of the narrative and imaginary environment, but it inevitably also has an impact on character.

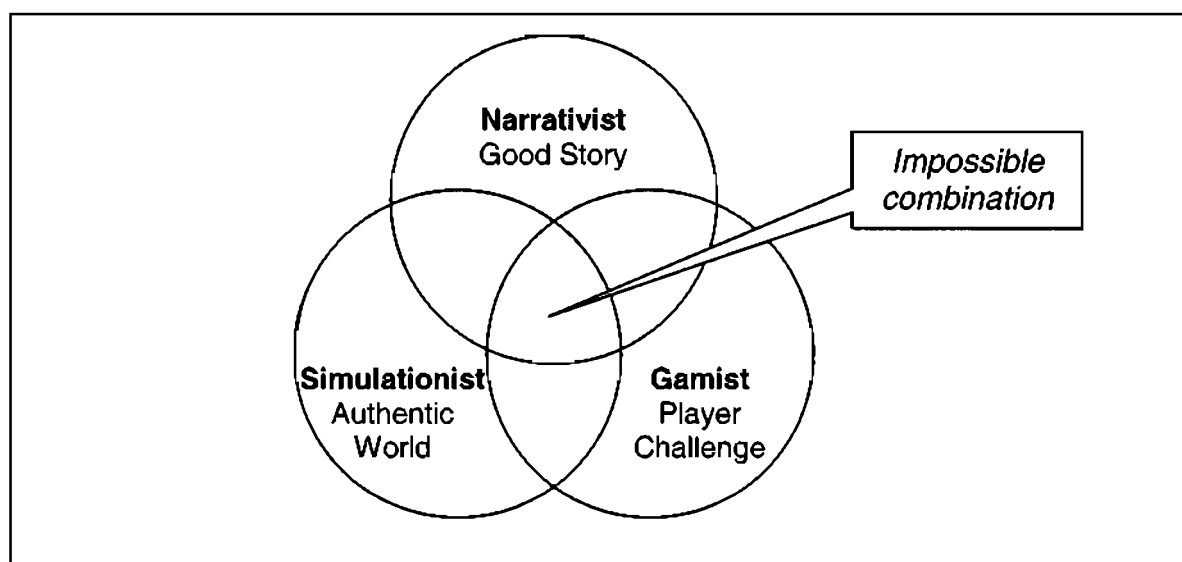
The term Threefold Model originates from a participation in an Internet discussion by Mary Kuhner in July 1997 (Kim, 2003). John H. Kim provides a summary of the development of the model, concluding that many differences of opinion on definitions and the nature of the Threefold Model continue to exist. The Threefold Model

¹ Chris Thornett (1998) wrote a short summary of the Threefold Model, which he called the Triangle Theory of Interactive Drama. The Threefold Model has been renamed by Edwards as GNS (Gamist, Narrativist, and Simulationist).

is not a conclusive, or widely ascribed to, role-playing theory. It is, however, a useful starting point for discussing RPG design: A point that is particularly taken up by Edwards in his series of articles on *The Forge* web site (2004).

Edwards (2004b) suggests that each given role-player adopt one of these agendas or outlooks as a main approach to the game with some aspects of another included. It is not possible to adopt all three outlooks simultaneously because each has different core aims. In addition, the behaviour these aims result in comes easily in conflict (Edwards, 2004b). Most RPG systems attempt to meet the needs of all three agendas. This has the result that all players are frustrated with some aspect of the game system. The DM needs to devote time to adapting and editing the system to the tastes of the group and the individual players. Players identify a good DM by their ability to edit successfully. This editing process can be eliminated, however, if the game system a group plays with inconsistent with the outlook of the group (Edwards, 2004b).

Figure 4.2 The Three Creative Agendas



Edwards (2004b) suggests “that building the system specifically to accord with one of these outlooks is the first priority of RPG design.” Because these agendas relate to the basis of RPG design, they are also relevant to the guidelines for designing a *Let’s Pretend* game and imply that such a game cannot be all things for all people.

4.1.1 Is it Real? - The Simulationist Agenda

For a simulationist player the game is to discover what would happen in a particular set of circumstances. For this, the game is mostly concerned with the fidelity to the structure of the game world and the purpose of the rules is to model this accurately. For the simulationist player the distinction between player and character knowledge is absolute. Character effectiveness should be balanced by the game-world's social system and the laws of nature. Simulationist play is concerned with the creation of realism in the sense that whatever happens needs to be internally consistent with the setting. If magic exists then it follows particular 'laws' and is not dependent on player whim or random decisions.

The existence of Simulationist aspects that emerged in *The Foreshadowing* workshop is indicated by the following quote:

By writing our character's histories separately and not telling the other participants everything about 'ourselves', it made our relationships more true to life.
(Carolyn's Journal: 20/06/2002)

The simulationist agenda is concerned with creating a sense of reality that is faithful to the para-meters of the game world. The playing of the game would attempt to find out what would happen in a given set of circumstances and will not change parameters for effect. For this the adherence to the game rules, as it models the game world, is absolute. When the rules do not model the world adequately, decisions are made on what would 'really' happen. Considerations from outside the game are not allowed to influence decision and actions in the game. For this character actions *in* character are also strongly enforced (Edwards, 2004c and Thornett, 1998).

4.1.2 What's the Plot? - The Narrativist Agenda

Success in a narrativist game is a dramatic resolution to game events. Character interaction should result in scenes "of great horror or humour or passion or wonder" (Thornett, 1998). The balancing of rules and player effectiveness is not an important aspect (Edwards, 2004d). Tampering with the rules or world logic is allowed as long as the result is a good story. The application of rules in a narrativist game is situational and dependent on each particular instance. For this, trust in the fairness of the DM needs to

be quite high. The narrativist game is mainly concerned with an aesthetic appreciation of the story.

The following quote shows a DM intervention in *The Foreshadowing* workshop aimed at protecting the narrative:

...when I ran out of room in the end to see what was in other room. You (the DM) made me bump into King and return because that's where adventure was."
(Bistra's Journal: 18/06/2002)

All three creative agendas produce a sequence of imaginary events that can be called a story. The aesthetics of the narrativist game, however, are concerned with the enjoyment of the moments of creating a story focussed on addressing a problematic feature of human existence (Edwards, 2004d). The problematic feature of human existence can also be referred to as the moral of the story. The moral dilemma set up for the characters in *The Foreshadowing* is the conflict between doing what is right, and doing what is one's duty. The characters were employed by the Duke, who was morally in the wrong, and were led to believe that Prospero, who was the rightful ruler, was the enemy.

4.1.3 Are we having fun yet? - The Gamist Agenda

The gamist agenda is concerned with providing a challenging game for all players (Thornett, 1998) within the context of a fair playing field (Edwards, 2004e). Chris Thornett (1998) describes the gamist approach to the game as sport, and "everything else is window dressing". Challenges in the game could be contests between:

- player characters and non-player characters, or
- between player character and player character, or
- between player characters and imaginary world circumstances, or
- between player and game system.

For a gamist player success in the game is dependant on who came out best after a challenge (Edwards, 2004e). For this, it is important that the game be balanced so that the playing field provides an equal opportunity for achieving success. The following quote indicates the presence of a gamist aspect in *The Foreshadowing* although this was probably the least used approach:

It was very interesting to do something completely different, it always keeps you on your toes (Carolyn's Journal: 20/06/2002).

The game system needs to balance player character effectiveness. Because the players develop characters in order to be able to face certain challenges, the success or failure in those challenges should not be solely based on chance.

The players in the gamist agenda want to be rewarded for their efforts in the game. In order for the game to be fair, the rules need to balance player character options. Lastly, the attitude in the gamist agenda towards the game is like a sport, placing emphasis on the fun (Edwards, 2004e and Thornett, 1998).

In the previous Chapter the elements of a game were identified as the prelusory goal, the lusory means, the constitutive rules and the lusory attitude. These can be identified differently in each of the three agendas of the Threefold Model as illustrated in Table 4.1.

Table 4.1 Game elements in Threefold agendas

<i>Game Element/Stance</i>	Dramatist	Gamist	Simulationist
<i>Prelusory Goal</i>	Good story	Challenging game	Authentic world
<i>Lusory Means</i>	Dramatic moves	Player/Character challenge	Role performance
<i>Constitutive Rules</i>	Situational rules	Balancing rules	Absolute rules
<i>Lusory Attitude</i>	Aesthetics	Sport	Realism

When this is integrated with the elements of a make-believe game (Table 3.1, page 56) it leads to the following synthesis:

Table 4.2 Synthesis of make-believe game elements and Threefold agendas

Prelusory Goal	<i>a state of affairs</i>	Making continuous dramatic moves	Good story or Challenging game
Lusory Means	<i>permitted actions</i>	through role performance maximization	Role performance
Constitutive Rules	<i>prohibition on efficiency</i>	on the spot	Situational rules
Lusory Attitude	<i>a voluntary acceptance of restrictions</i>	in a make-believe setting	Realism

The state of affairs of making continuous dramatic moves focuses, either on a good story (plot) or on a challenging game, depending on the focus. Theatre Sports is for instance an example of a focus on a challenging game. The permitted actions of role performance maximization seem to relate directly to simulationist role performance. The prohibition on efficiency that requires on the spot actions seems to favour situational rules. The voluntary acceptance of the restrictions of a make-believe setting focuses on realism and congruence. It therefore seems that a simulationist agenda agrees most with the elements of a make-believe game, on which the idea of a *Let's Pretend* game is based. If we should take Edwards' advice at this point then a *Let's Pretend* game should be built according to one outlook specifically, which at this stage seems to be a simulationist agenda.

Kim (2003:3) defines a simulationist game as a game "in which effort is made to not let meta-game² concerns during play affect in-game resolution." Edwards (2004b) defines the simulationist agenda when a "player is satisfied if the system "creates" a little pocket universe without fudging."

One of the entertaining aspects of RPGs is the possibility of deep immersion in an imaginary world. Exploration, as part of the creative process, is the imaginary exploration of made up characters in made up situations. Simulationist play achieves moments of dramatic power from the knowledge that, these moments derive naturally from the situation, and is not contrived (Kim, 2003:2). Exploration is central to all RPG role-playing, but in simulationism exploration is the top priority. Simulation makes sincere shared creativity the whole point of the role-play (Edwards, 2004b). Simulationist play is concerned with the creation of realism in the sense that whatever happens need to be internally consistent with the setting. The simulationist game is mostly concerned with the fidelity to the structure of the game world and the purpose of the rules is to model this accurately. Rules are absolute as they represent the laws of nature in the imaginary world.

² The meta-game refers to the Primary and Conventional Frames of meaning, see p 82.

In this Chapter, I further deal with a structured system of play in terms of world, character, and narrative. The aspects of the prelusory goal, lusory means, and the lusory attitude, as they relate to the dramatist and simulationist agendas, give insight into this structure of the imaginary environment. In the next Chapter, I return to the constitutive rules and the gamist agenda in relation to the means for participants to collaborate and to direct themselves. From a simulationist point of view the building of an authentic imaginary world and the willing engagement with that world satisfies both the prelusory goal and the lusory attitude.

4.2 An Authentic Imaginary World

Because the RPG is a collective game of make-believe, the players can only enter the imaginary world through their imaginations. Reading a Fantasy novel or watching a movie and experiencing the world vicariously through the eyes of the main character would, however, be a much more efficient way of experiencing another world. It is in the fantasy world where the role-play takes place. According to Mackay (2001) this world only exists in the imagination of the DM, and the players are allowed in only through description. It is also possible to see it as a product of collaborative fantasy, where the complete world only exists in the combined imaginations of all the participants.

In this way make-believe play fosters collaboration between the participants. The success of make-believe play depends on the involvement and sharing of effort and information of the participants with each other. It is a group effort aimed at group participation and resulting in group learning. The ability of the group to gain knowledge through group effort is one of the means available to aid in collaboration. The construction of an imaginary world is contingent upon agreement between participants.

Each participant in make-believe play, however, perceives the play from their own viewpoint. These viewpoints frame that which is perceived concerning the imaginary environment. Game space in *The Foreshadowing*, for example, existed in at least three separate frames:

- the imaginary world of Rugua,
- the world of the game and the workshop, and
- the ordinary world of the participants.

The problem in the RPG is that the distinction between the various frames of awareness can be very fine. It is therefore easy for a player to transgress the border between frames (Mackay, 2001:58). When a player, for instance, acts with knowledge from the ordinary world in the imaginary world, the integrity of the imaginary environment is threatened. It is a disruption of what Fine (1983:188) calls “pretense awareness” and seems to be the same as Dorothy Heathcote’s (Wagner, 1976:67) idea of the “big lie.”

Understanding from which frame a participant perceives the activities is important in evaluating the integrity of the imaginary environment, especially from a simulationist agenda.

These frames explain the players’ point of view on the game and the level of pretend play with which players engage. The idea of frames mentioned above provides an inadequate summary to the extent of frames of meaning involved in pretend play. Fine (1982) and Mackay (2001) provide a much more extensive summary to these frames.

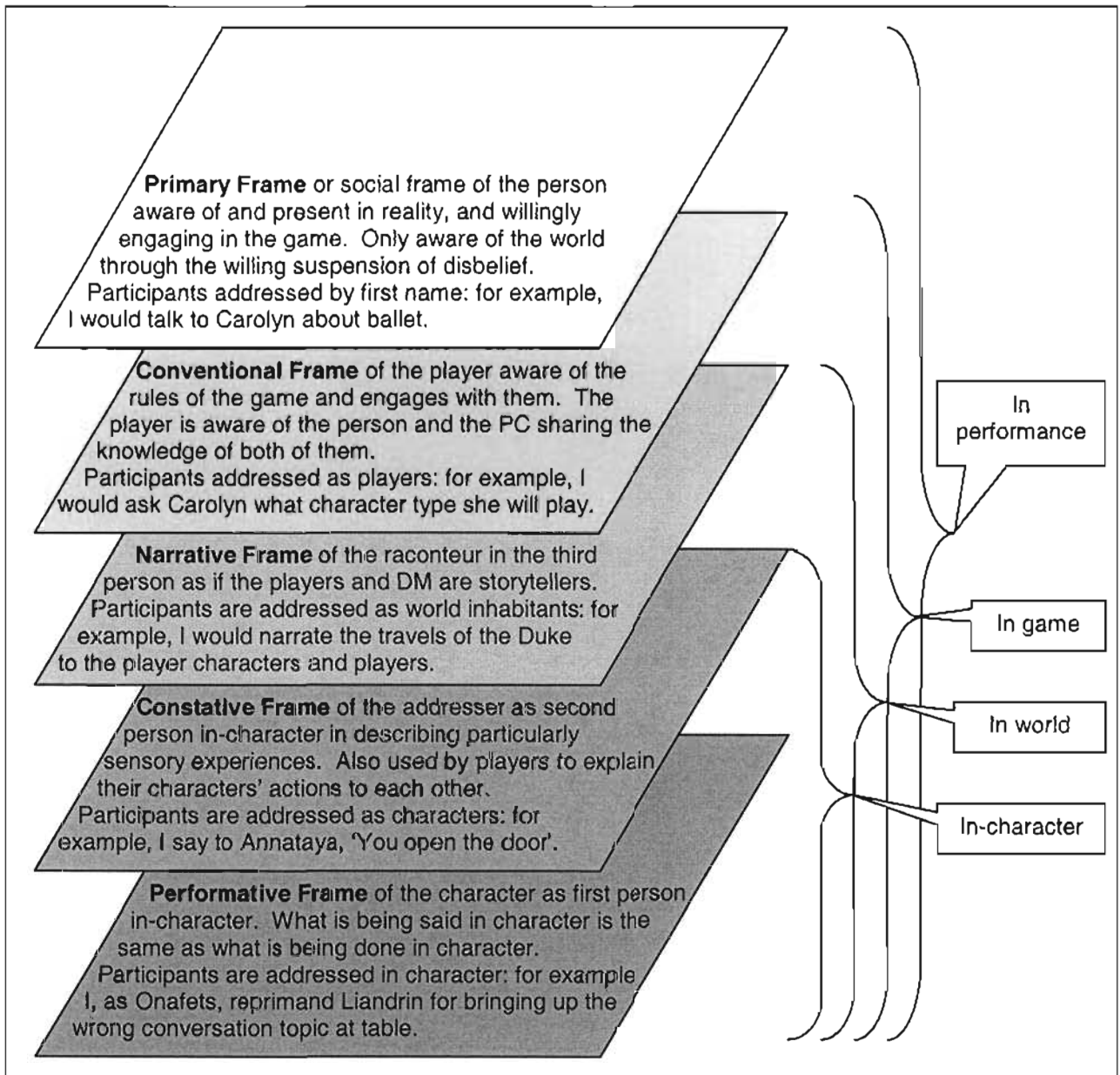
4.2.1 Engrossment

Sociologist Gary Alan Fine (1982) explains that the RPG makes use of certain frames of awareness that create levels of meaning. The awareness of the players in the game is dependent on their frames of reference as separate and finite worlds of meaning. He bases his analysis on Erving Goffman’s (1959) ideas on frame analysis with the reservation that Goffman’s frames are shifting, complex, and too vast to be useful for a detailed analysis. He therefore suggests three frames to be used in the RPG: a primary frame, a conventional frame, and a fantasy frame (Fine, 1982:183-196). In the **Fantasy Frame**, or the gaming world frame, of the character, the player is in role or in character (Fine, 1982). What happens in this frame is what happens in the fantasy world or imaginary environment. The PC (player character) is not aware of the player or the person although the player character might have virtual knowledge that the player does not. Bistra (Liandrin’s player) might for instance have the knowledge of how to swim but the PC Liandrin does not.

Mackay (2001:54) explains that Fine describes the switching between frames as a process of engrossment. The engrossment of the players in the game world is part of the designed structure of games in which participants are caught up. In Drama-in-Education the same process may be referred to as engagement, and the process of becoming deeper and deeper engaged can be described by a taxonomy of personal engagement (Morgan & Saxton, 1987:22). The engrossment is however intermittent. Mackay describes how, as a role-player, he gained the most enjoyment when he engaged with other players *in-character*, from a first person point of view. This, he indicates, is very different from experiences where the actions of characters are only described from the third person point of view.

Mackay (2001:56) uses this distinction to replace the fantasy frame that Fine identifies with three different frames. Fine's three frames are then expanded to five frames in total. The fantasy frame is replaced with the narrative frame of the raconteur, the constative frame of the addresser, and the performative frame of the character. The term of constative Mackay (2001:55) derives from the philosopher J.L. Austin who distinguishes between two types of language. These are the *constative* that describes and indicates and the *performative* that enacts or performs. According to Mackay the first of these three are out-of-character and the last two, in-character. These frames give a more extensive perspective on the player position in relation to the imaginary environment. These frames of awareness have the following characteristics. Firstly, each frame indicates a new level being supported by the level before. Each frame elaborates on, but does not invalidate, the already existing frames. Frame shifting occurs constantly and with relative ease (Mackay, 2001:53). The shifting between frames is called down-keying or up-keying, a structural device used by Goffman (1959).

Figure 4.3 Frames of meaning in the RPG



During *The Foreshadowing*, as in any RPG, there was constant frame shifting threatening the role-playing performance. This was especially acute during times when the rules of play were unclear and needed explanation. During the last combat scene of the role-playing adventure, this especially created problems for keeping the integrity of the performance. During the last combat scene in Prospero's cave the players were aware of what their own characters experienced, and also of everything else going. Therefore they

had difficulty reacting to the appropriate preceding actions because the frames they had to act in became unclear.

In terms of the elements of games of make-believe it meant that players found it difficult to make continuous moves. This was because player actions are not reactions to the directly preceding move. The D&D system of simultaneous actions in six-second rounds of actions or turns mean that players must remain aware of what preceding action their characters are responding to while also ignoring simultaneously the other characters' actions that they are not able to respond to. This requires either a very deep immersion or a high level of character and player knowledge separation. Alternatively, it requires a game system that encourages dramatic moves as reactions to preceding actions without simultaneous layering. It seems as if the last option would be a preferred option for a *Let's Pretend* game, but I will first continue to explore aspects of the imaginary world.

4.2.2 Play Space

The boundaries of the play space can be stepped into and out of and when they are stepped out of, the person steps into the socio-cultural context of ordinary life. The make-believe game is an *extraordinary* life, another world into which the participants step, and from which they can freely disengage.

One of the big issues in RPG's is the logic of an adventuring group setting out together. Why would a disparate group of young women, from different parts of the country, meet up and set out on an adventure together? For *The Foreshadowing*, I used a letter, written by Prospero, inviting the characters to come to a certain place, promising them certain rewards, but leaving the exact task and the identity of the author as a mystery to be solved. These letters were personalised and the aim was to motivate the characters to adventure together, as well as contriving a way for the group to meet and identify with each other. My response after the first session was that:

"The letters worked extremely well and the 'Tension of the Unknown' really got them fired up in the end." (DM Journal, 27/3/2002).

By using an outside force to bring the group together, they were given a reason to form a group.

In *The Foreshadowing* the pretense awareness of the other world, *Rugua*, was heightened by the enrolling or visualizing exercise I employed at the beginning of each role-playing session. In the imaginary environment that the game set up, participants play roles in the play space and in the allotted time determined for play. Gary Izzo (1997) talks about the creation of a play space or *temenos*. The players are 'summoned' to enter the play space. The make-believe game space is part of this collective regard for the sacredness of the *Temenos* (Izzo, 1997:8).

The idea of the play space is that an area of safety is created that is separate from the ordinary world. If the space is not prepared properly, the players enter unprepared for the encounter. The unprepared player does not take up the correct position for performance in the play space. Performance is understood as the simultaneous action of the players and response of the audience which in the RPG are the same people. A participant can take one of the following positions:

- A person can be out of the performance in terms of space/time by not being present – outside the primary frame.
- A person could be present but not involved as a player such as a cleaner working in the venue.
- A player could be out of performance by not playing a role, and lastly
- A player could be present in role but not taking action.

These positions relate to the conditions of performance (See Chapter 3, Section 3.3). These positions can be identified in *The Foreshadowing* workshop.

Two specific instances of players not being present in space/time come to mind. The first was during the initial role-playing session where Bistra (Liandrin) went to the audition of another play that was scheduled at the same time as our workshop. With Bistra (Liandrin) not present, none of the rest was able to play especially because it was our first and introductory session. The second instance was Carolyn (Annataya) who came late for a number of sessions because she had Ballet rehearsals across town that ended just before our scheduled time.

I don't know if there is a solution. It seems to be that no matter how hard I try, I'm always late. I don't think it is you (the DM) who could have done something about it. I should have done fewer things during that period. My plate was a little full (ok, very full!). The strange thing is that I find it easier to work under pressure because then it is easier to cut through all the surface and cut through to the heart of the matter. I know it probably didn't have quite the same effect on the rest of the cast, or you! (Carolyn's Journal: 20/06/2002).

There are no instances during *The Foreshadowing* workshop when non-participants were present. It has happened at role-playing sessions with *Hyboria*, the University gaming society, where a visitor would be a spectator to the role-playing session. Most frequently, these were people interested in joining the RPG at some later stage.

There were frequent occasions where the players would step out of the performance by stepping out of their roles. These were in particular the times when there was some point of rule or game confusion. A specific example is during the start of the main adventure where I was stopped by Avershree (Fortune) to enquire about the experience points their characters should have received. I, as DM, was at this point moving from the Narrative frame to the Constative frame, but had to stop and return to the Primary frame. This is a frequent occurrence in RPGs where the playing easily stops, to sort out aspects of rule clarification.

An example of a player present and in role but not taking action would be the role-playing style exhibited by Naadiya (Lia). Although her character was present she did not take initiative, especially not during the first part of the process. When the game adventure had a direct effect on her character, however, she reacted in role, for instance when Lia was pushed overboard during the storm.

In any workshop process, such as devised theatre, the absence of a player could be problematic. Because the process is collaborative, the absence of a member of the group leaves a gap in the creative process. This is more evident in the RPG where each player plays a specific character and the character's independent actions and motives is controlled by the player. In a devised theatre workshop, where a script is not built up chronologically, alternative scenes can be workshopped when actors are absent although it is undesirable.

The presence of non-participants could also be inhibiting. Because the space created is to be safe to allow for free play, spectators might make the players self-conscious. This is why directors often prohibited the presence of outsiders during the devising process in order to protect the free and experimental atmosphere. Outsiders present at the RPG frequently become bored or confused because there are no observable actions. The only way to become a true observer of the RPG is to become a participant.

Because of the frame shifting processes of the RPG, the slipping into and out of role, or into or out of the game world, is not problematic. The game space allows multiple *consciousnesses* to function. Because of the game space, the narrative can be held in suspension while problems are clarified. However, in a devised theatre improvisation, it could be a problem because it breaks the flow of a improvising a scene. The tension of making on the spot responses is frequently used as a strategy to find moments of dramatic power. It is also possible to freeze an improvisation where the parameters for improvisation are clearly stated and followed.

4.2.3 Resolving Actions

The RPG consists of the improvised interaction between player characters and non-player characters controlled by the DM, or between player characters and game world circumstances. One of the most important game aspects in simulating reality is in the mechanics of resolving actions. Some actions are resolved through improvisation and stated intention. For example, if a player says: 'I eat my food,' the action takes place, unless something else prevents it. Some actions are dependent not only on intention but also on chance and other factors outside the control of the character. For these instances, the DM, in consultation with the rules of the game, determines the chances of success or failure. For example, if a player says: 'I open the door,' the chance of success is determined by whether the door is locked or not. If it is locked the player must have a key, or succeed in picking the lock, or use her strength to break the door down. All these options involve chance elements. How these actions are resolved is an integral part of the game system.

Ron Edwards (2004b) suggests that there are three things to consider in the development and use of a mode of resolution. These are:

- the actual event,
- the energy it takes to do it (cost), and
- the reward.

In terms of the *event*, a mode of resolution determines if it happens or not. The *energy* determines the cost or sacrifice made to achieve the effect. The *reward* determines the outcome of whatever happens. Edwards suggests that an RPG only needs to have a

system in place for resolving one of these, and at most two, and that the other one can be ignored. He also speculates that it does not matter which one disappears. D&D, for example, as used in *The Foreshadowing*, focus mainly on the event and the reward and the cost is infrequently considered. In escaping the dryads, Fortune (Avershree) and Lia (Naadiya) knocked the other characters unconscious (event), in order to be able to drag them away (reward). The cost of resulting headaches was not considered.

In a *Let's Pretend* game actions need to be resolved in such a manner that the player, in role, can reveal their function in the imaginary environment. This is described as role performance maximization. Because the role is central to the action it seems as if the *energy* needed (or cost) is the most important aspect in resolving actions. The *actual event* and the *reward* are not directly related to or dependent on the character and therefore do not necessarily need a system of resolution in a *Let's Pretend* game. For example, the cost for a certain move, such as a high status character helping a low status character, could be a temporary loss of status.

There are basically three modes employed in resolving actions identified by Jonathan Tweet³ and discussed by Jon Edwards (2004b):

- Fortune (random resolution from a range of possibilities),
- Karma (resolution through comparison of fixed values),
- Drama (resolution through *DM*, or player, decision).

Each game system can use only one mode of resolution, or a combination of resolution modes. DUNGEONS & DRAGONS for instance use a Fortune mode for combat and a Karma mode for magic (Edwards, 2004b). For combat in D&D a player rolls a 20-sided die in order to determine whether or not an opponent is hit. The player adjusts the die roll by adding or subtracting skill points and weapon point modifiers. This number is compared to the Armour Class or defensive number of the opponent, which may also be modified. Magic attacks on the other hand are mostly dependent on the relative points of the player character. In D&D 3rd edition magic has become a mixture of Karma and Fortune modes. The method of resolution in theatrical improvisation is the *Drama* mode where a director or actor determines the success of actions taken.

³ Jonathan Tweet is a veteran RPG designer, having been involved with DUNGEONS & DRAGONS for many years. His identification of resolution methods derives from the game *EVERWAY*.

In the Fortune mode a range of possibilities are possible and these methods are normally and historically derived from war games. Most RPGs are also Fortune based. As a randomizer method Fortune systems most frequently use dice but playing cards or other systems are also used. Karma systems work on a fixed system comparing fixed values. One of the games that uses a Karma system almost exclusively is the game AMBER® (Smith, 1992:97). One of the reasons why it can function is because in the AMBER® game the abilities of each character are not known to the player but only to the DM. The only way a player can test their abilities is to try them and see what the result may be. The unknown or *unexpectedness* of outcome is dependent on the DM withholding information from the players. For a Drama system to function the players have to trust the DM to be fair in determining outcomes. The only recourse that players might have against decisions they do not agree with would be because of internal game world logic. A Drama system makes it easy for a DM to be directive and manipulative because of privileged information. Players only gain self-efficacy for their characters in the way that they learn over time or improve what their characters are able to do.

The mode of action resolution has a direct impact on the handling of time in the game setting. In terms of resolution the game deviates the most from direct improvisation in that game time and real time are handled separately. Resolution time is dependent on the time it takes to determine the result of an action. In a Karma or Drama system, it can be almost instantaneous. It can however be a protracted process where dice need to be rolled, charts need to be consulted and modifiers⁴ need to be applied. Seconds of action in game time can take minutes or more to resolve in real time.

How much time is enough or too much in terms of resolution is dependent on the player's outlook on the game. The resolution time needs to be appropriate to the type of game striven for (Edwards, 2004b). A narrativist player will prefer a quick resolution because the story unfolding will be bogged down with complicated resolutions. A gamist player will only be concerned with the fairness of the outcome. A simulationist player, however, will see a quick resolution as unrealistic or inaccurate, not considering all possible variables. In order to achieve an accurate simulation of an authentic world a

⁴ Modifiers are aspects of the game structure, usually contained in numerical tables, that consider the surrounding conditions of actions. When determining the accuracy of an arrow shot at night a negative modifier would be applied.

simulationist player will tolerate long delays in order to determine cause and effect. For a narrativist player who wants the story to move along such a delay would become unbearable. The gamist player would go either way, accepting or rejecting delay depending on the advantage gained. These conflict situations can arise from any aspect of the game such as determining success, or game balance (Edwards, 2004b).

In *The Foreshadowing*, especially during the last combat session, the protracted time handling had a negative impact on play and player engrossment. A faster method of resolution would have been preferred. This would mean either a Karma or Drama approach. A Drama approach, however, can place an emphasis on DM power at the expense of player efficacy. It would then seem that a Karma system with elements of a Drama mode, for player efficacy, would be the preferred mode for a *Let's Pretend* game. The simulationist emphasis of authenticity must be retained while a quick resolution is aimed for.

4.3 A Good Story

Even though a good story is not a simulationist aim it is still an important aspect of a make-believe game. Players do not experience chess as a story and there is no discernible plot. It is possible to relate the events of the game, but this would not be from the point of view of any of the playing pieces. In pretend play, the players make up stories that they are able to relate from the point of view of their characters. Just so Alice can relate her story as the character of a pawn in the *Looking Glass* world. The RPG is a story creation process that develops a narrative in the collaboration of the players and DM (Fannon, 1999:23). A story is more than just sequential dramatic moves but should include plot development, theme, and deeper meaning or subtext.

The story of the RPG also includes character and setting history or, what Mackay (2001:50) calls, the “in-character, non-played character backstories, and the preplayed world history”. For *The Foreshadowing* process, the players did write backstories for their characters and although these were not much used or drawn from, they do exist. Furthermore, what exists in *The Tempest* world is what I as DM determined happened

before. These are the exile of Prospero by the Duke of *Limona*, the *scrying*⁵ of the player characters by Prospero and the sending of the letters. Also necessary are the travels of the Duke. Everything that creates the setting of the play before the action starts is part of the story.

Fine (1983:88) quotes Gary Gygax from a personal interview. Gygax is one of the founding creators of the DUNGEONS & DRAGONS game and the role-playing hobby as a whole.⁶

Not to be pretentious, but the rules of D&D are like Aristotle's Poetics, if you will. They tell me how to put together a good play. And a [referee] is the playwright who reads these things and puts his play together (Gygax in Fine, 1983:88).

Mackay (2001:51) sees in this an explanation of how the DM creates the RPG script as a *plan* of action for the RPG narrative, namely: the DUNGEONS & DRAGONS scenario plus the story contributions of the DM.

The construction of a narrative plot by a group is one of the most difficult tasks in devising theatre. It seems much easier for one person, a writer or director, to guide and control this process. It is not unusual for the story to be written by a scriptwriter, separate from the improvisational space, or after the workshop phase has concluded. To prevent a DM from setting up a predetermined plot it seems that a narrative approach needs to be limited. The plot or script needs to be developed from the character interactions and the narrative needs to be written into the role through character creation.

The 'play' of the devised theatre workshop is improvisational by nature (Schechner, 1993). The participants establish a certain setting in which to improvise a scene, working with dramatic responses as means. The basic technique of improvisation to facilitate continuous moves is the *offer* or positive assumption. Each dramatic move is a response to a previous move. This means that players accept what anyone offers to the scene and continue with it. If they do not accept the offer, by rejecting or ignoring what was given, they block the scene (Johnstone, 1979 & Izzo, 1997). If in an improvised scene an actor establishes a setting to be a dinner party and offers the other guests some roast lamb the following would be a blocking response: "*That's not lamb, that's a bucket*

⁵ Scrying is a Level 4 Wizard spell with which the character "can see and hear some creature, who may be at a distance" (*Player's Handbook*, 2003:247)

⁶ Daniel Mackay mistakenly identifies the quote as coming from *just a DM*.

of toxic waste.” While a response such as: “*No thank you, I am allergic,*” is not. In order to accept offers players must be willing to submit to a collective control of the scene because forcing an own agenda would result in blocking and frustration (Gesell, 2003).

Narrative develops out of more than only continues dramatic moves. The act of role performance maximization further develops the narrative. Because this is also the more apt approach for a simulationist agenda I discuss it here in more detail.

4.4 The Role-Play Character

A *Let's Pretend Game* requires that the players must be able to act in role, giving meaning and purpose to their participation. When the players get together for pretend play it is to participate, to take certain actions that would constitute the performance. The player cannot *not participate*, cannot *not act*. Their presence means that they participate and they participate as role-players. They get together to act and if they cannot act their purpose is subverted and the workshop is not successful. Their actions give meaning to their presence and to the context of the performance workshop itself. Without their action, the play is just an empty shell.

Role-playing is an essential component of Drama-in-Education where students can “live through” experiences of others and learn to understand a variety of points of view and motives (Gallagher, 2001). Heathcote (1984:205) understands role-play or Role as one of the types of Drama techniques. Others mentioned by her are Mantle of the Expert, Analogy, Text, Dance Forms, Simulation and Games (Heathcote, 1984). Gavin Bolton (1998) also defines role-play in relation to drama and simulation. He defines role-play in terms of the rules of behaviour in a social context relying on social conventions. Bolton defines simulation as the game-like structure dependent on the rules that apply. Drama is according to him a higher form into which an aesthetic understanding is injected (Bolton, 1998:24-27).

For the players to experience the imaginary world ‘in character’ during make-believe play they have to create a character or a role to play. There are two major theatrical approaches to characterisation. The first approach can be seen as the Stanislavskian approach, also called method acting. The role or character is approached in terms of the inner life of the actor. This approach can be seen as an *inside out*

approach to role (Stanislavski, 1968). Drama Therapy mostly uses role-play in the Stanislavskian manner.

The second approach, identified with Bertolt Brecht (1964:56,124), places an emphasis on the social purpose and interactive nature of characters. Role is an external attitude that the actors take on. This is then an *outside in* approach to role. Characterisation in pretend play approaches role in a Brechtian manner. Theatre-in-Education and Drama-in-Education use mainly the ideas of the second, outside in, approach to formulate their practices. The taking on of significant roles in social situations or relationships, thus experiencing other people's point of view, facilitates learning. The social aspects can deal with class, race, and attitude, to simulate some aspect of reality.

The performance of players consisting of actions taken in role indicates a certain type of performer, namely a role-player. A role-player is similar to a character actor, but certain differences do exist. For a character actor the character is fully formed and the actor is only to become the character, by understanding and inhabiting the character bringing it to life. A role is not as clearly drawn as a character (Bates, Christopher and Moore, 1989: 157).

A role is chosen and then shaped in contrast to a character which is assigned, a given to be understood and taken on. The role-player, through the play creates and shapes the role. The role also grows out of the player's own preferences, choices, and limitations. The role that a player plays is a combination of the character information and the bits of performance behaviour that the player has acquired through enculturation. According to Lancaster (1998), the player in an RPG reconstructs the role from the cultural *readymades* inscribed into the numbers and system on the character sheet (See Addendum B). The tension between the role prescribed by the system and the role from culture makes it a power relationship that the player must navigate carefully. According to Fine (1983), the RPG player character can seemingly do anything, but the game system directs certain actions.

The role does, however, exhibit a separateness and *otherness* distinct from the player. A role has a personality, typical characteristics, and preferences and therefore a life of its own. A role can dictate behaviour to the player. For the simulationist player the distinction between player and player character knowledge is absolute (Edwards, 2004c). Character effectiveness should be balanced by the game-world's social system and the laws of nature. The player chooses and shapes the role by combining *readymades*, as ingredients for creating the role. These *readymades* could be foreign to the player in the creation of the role. According to Schechner (1985:99) a player constructs the role and assimilates it for display, by using the behaviour of:

- the other, or
- the alienated individual self, or
- the social self.

The behaviour of the other could be gender based such as a female player taking on a male role, using male type behaviour as *readymade*. Behaviour of the alienated self refers to behaviour against which the player has made a choice. Something that the player might find morally objectionable such as criminal behaviour might be acceptable as part of the role. The players also use their own social self for source material and behaviour to shape the role. The player's own beliefs, preferences, knowledge, and acculturation could form the basic elements of the role. These three sources of behaviour, the other, the alienated self, and the social self are synthesised to create the role as a distinct entity, individual and independent from the player.

The RPG rules, as a script, organise the behaviour of the role-players in role, through their prescription of the roles. This relates especially to what the rules allow the characters to be and to do and how that informs a specific imaginary world. In *The Foreshadowing* workshop a question to ask is, what did the roles allow but the players did not take advantage of? There were for instance two fighter characters. Lia (Naadiya), as already mentioned, took very little action. Fortune (Avershree) on the other hand took strong initiative but frequently and knowingly acted inconsistently with the scripted role of a *fighter*.

The script forms a basic code for the event just as the role is codified. The roles draw on stereotypes as *readymades* and therefore aspects are transferable and easily identifiable. The player can know the character script intensely because the player chooses a codified role, but then develops and grows the role creating a script for role behaviour including the thought processes and personality of the role that exist independently of the player.

Roles are not taken on and created randomly, however, but are specific to the context of the performance. The roles are functional, serving the particular performance by being appropriately and particularly chosen. The actions of the role-playing players are also embedded in the roles that they play. A lion tamer would tame lions taking actions that would include cracking a whip and sticking a head into a lion's mouth. The role therefore prescribes the actions that are legitimate for the role-player to take and some actions are not permitted because they are not part of the role. We would not expect the lion tamer to be able to perform open-heart surgery for example.

In other words, the scenario of the RPG places demands on the players to choose roles of a specific type. Frequently players are presented with a menu of possible role types that would suit the purpose of the game. These possible choices both restrict and focus character creation. A circus scenario would include clowns, acrobats, and animal trainers but prison warders or miners will not be available as possible role choices. The classes for D&D are like professions, such as fighter, or wizard, while the races are fantasy based, such as dwarves, or gnomes. Each class and race has special abilities and disadvantages and, according to the rulebooks, these are balanced so that no specific type of character can dominate the game.

All the players in *The Foreshadowing* kept with their first choice of character type except for Avershree (Fortune). I Avershree's first choice of character was the Monk. I persuaded her to take her second choice of Fighter. The reason for this was that I wanted to see how an Indian student would deal with a Western character type. I did not give her the freedom to direct her character from the point of creation. The Monk as a character class is based on eastern spiritual and martial principles and I felt that it was too close to Avershree's own cultural background. Secondly, I wanted the narrative adventure to be

closer to High Fantasy⁷ and in that genre, I do not feel that the Monk is a central character type.

Some RPGs, however, seem overtly systemised forcing stereotypical and puerile play. Playing only according to the numerical attributes of the character (roll playing as opposed to role-playing) can also dominate the game. D&D present a system of stereotypical characters that develops through level advancement.

During a devised theatre workshop and especially in terms of improvisations players may take on many parts and casting is not fixed. In an RPG, the identification of a player with a role makes it difficult to swap roles. Roles and players are intrinsically related. Unlike a character, which can be played by many actors, a role becomes specific and can not be repeated or played by another person, other than the original player who created the role.

In *The Foreshadowing* having the Duke, King and *Onafets* present during most of the adventure produced problems on two levels. Not only did it cause logistical difficulties for me as DM, but also casting problems during the process of writing and performing the theatrical version of *The Foreshadowing*. During the role-playing sessions, it meant that, despite the monsters the players encountered, I was also forced to play three non-player characters. The result was that these characters were not only less active than they should have been, but their presence also complicated encounters. These three characters ended up being very flat and one-dimensional.

Putting these three and two other dominant non-player characters *Leira* (Ariel) and *Nabilak* (Caliban) all on stage during rehearsal and performance, meant that players had to act out multiple roles. The taking on of character and the tension of being in or out of character created a tension of simultaneous consciousness for the players. However, during *The Foreshadowing* workshop, I as DM, was the only one that struggled with playing multiple roles.

⁷ High Fantasy is fantasy that deals with great quests and immense struggles between good and evil. High Fantasy is grounded in a Western European historical and mythological background and the most well known example is the Lord of the Rings by J.R.R. Tolkien.

Because role-playing actions are observable actions they can be studied, learned from, and improved upon. Taking role-playing actions therefore becomes a skill. Viola Spolin's (1999) view is that games are not only useful for the teaching of dramatic skills but also in developing people. She also says that people learn to play games by playing the game. Spolin's games are separate entities that do not work together to form a story line and are thus focussed on actor development. However, to learn role-playing is to learn by doing or experiential learning. It is, however, not the learning of an acting method or style because the acts are embedded in the role and specific to each role. This does not mean that the skills of role-playing are not transferable. It does mean, however, that a person could only learn role-playing through role-playing.

The narrative frame forms, according to Mackay, part of the game or player frame and the game-world or character frame. This is because the players play their character with knowledge of the game structure. It is also because the knowledge of the game structure is shared with the other players. Mackay (2001:56) states that numerous possible story and character options are neglected because of the prescriptive conventions of the game. Players operate not in terms what is realistically possible according to their primary frame but according to what is possible based on the allowances and conventions of the game. The fantasy genre basis of most RPGs is relevant here. Even supposed universals systems such as the GURPS⁸ system have an emphasis on fantastical genres. Fantasy genres do not interest most people and subsequently fewer people than possible are exposed to RPGs.

A clear distinction between player knowledge and character knowledge is an important requirement in the RPG. It is necessary that the game system determines causality and as final authority also enforces it.

...what matters is that within the system, causality is clear, handled without metagame intrusion and without confusion on anyone's part (Edwards, 2004:4).

For *The Foreshadowing* one of the main metagame intrusions was the awareness of the future audience and the re-enacted performance that would follow. This had the effect that I manipulated the playing process consciously and subconsciously.

⁸ GURPS or *Generic Universal Role Playing System* is a product of Steve Jackson Games.

It is normally a rule of thumb for a party of adventuring characters to stay together. In practical terms it makes it easier for the DM to respond accurately and effectively because all the characters are in the same time and space. Splitting the party splits the DM's attention and creates two or more spaces of action that need to be dealt with.

In *The Foreshadowing* this was also the case but because of directorial decisions it was more evident. I had for instance already decided that for the performance I would want all the players on stage all the time with no physical scene changes and entrances or exits. I therefore made sure that the players stayed together as much as possible. One successful instance was when Liandrin (Bistra) wanted to leave Prospero's cave I stopped her by making her 'bump' into the king. One instance that I did not prevent successfully was Liandrin (Bistra) and Fortune's (Avershree) swim out to the shipwreck. This had to be 'solved' during rehearsal. I would say that I, as DM player, did not separate my player knowledge, as director, from my character knowledge, as window on the imaginary world. As DM in *The Foreshadowing*, using the D&D system, and being constantly aware of the forthcoming re-enactment, I placed emphasis on the narrative aspects of the game. This inhibited the players' efficacy in controlling each character's own narrative as well as the collaborative narrative overall.

4.5 Concluding remarks

The provisional conclusions for a *Let's Pretend* game concerning an imaginary world, character creation, and story or plot are highlighted below. The emphasis on player efficacy would prevent a DM from determining the plot. This means that a narrative agenda need to be limited. It would be preferable if the plot or script is developed from character interactions, through dramatic moves. For this to be possible the basis of the script needs to be codified in the role. This means that the aspects of the role such as *readymades* and player input need to be integrated in the character creation process. The player needs to know the role as well-known *script*, but the role must also have existence independently of the player. This is primarily so that the role can develop and grow through the interaction with other roles. The independent development of the role is essential for role performance maximization.

The interactions between roles are the most important actions in a *Let's Pretend* game. With the role being central, the *energy*, as cost or sacrifice, becomes the focus for the resolution of actions. Furthermore, it appears that a Karma system, as the resolution through comparison of fixed values, with limited elements of a Drama system would be the first choice for a *Let's Pretend* game. The fixed values for a Karma system again would have to be codified into roles during character creation, but would need to leave scope for development. A *Let's Pretend* game also requires a game system that encourages dramatic moves as reactions to preceding actions without the layering of actions by different characters at the same time.

One layer that cannot be eliminated is the simultaneous presence of participants as both players and audience. This foregrounds the Theatre and Script spheres where the players/characters as roles are dominant. These two spheres only require three of the five frames of meaning (p. 84) namely:

- the narrative where events are narrated as storytellers
- the constative where events are described as observers, and
- the performative where events are enacted as characters.

Because of frame shifting and rule confusion it is difficult to keep the integrity of make-believe play. Frame shifting in a *Let's Pretend Game* needs to be limited and kept as clear as possible in order to aid the suspension of the imaginary environment. Stepping out of the performance during frame shifting means that players step out of character (character here would mean the role in action in the performative frame). The clarity of the role is therefore important so that stepping back into character is simplified.

Lastly it seemed as if a simulationist agenda agrees most with the idea of a *Let's Pretend* game. This agenda needs to be adapted mostly in terms of the resolution of actions as codified in the roles during character creation. A simulationist agenda is concerned with the fidelity to the structure of the game world, which is emphasised here in the development of the role. The purpose of the rules would be to model these roles accurately. The next chapter continues to explore possible guidelines for a *Let's Pretend* game by focussing on the aspect of rules.

5

Play at all Fairly

Rules as Means of Collaborative and Self-directed Play

"I don't think they play at all fairly," Alice began, in rather a complaining tone, "and they all quarrel so dreadfully one can't hear oneself speak—and they don't seem to have any rules in particular: at least, if there are, nobody attends to them..."

Alice in Wonderland - Lewis Carroll (Gardner ed. 1970:113)

Alice makes the above remark in the context of animated playing cards playing croquet with flamingos as hammers and hedgehogs as balls. In such circumstances the chaotic fun of only attempting to play would be entertaining in itself. Yet, Alice was frustrated because she had no power to play well, or in other words she had no efficacy. In the devised theatre workshop there seems to be a similar tension between efficacy and entertainment (Schechner, 1993). Efficacy as explained Chapter 1, page *, is essential for the players to implement the plan of play. Efficacy is also dependent on the players' ability to take meaningful actions. Entertainment focuses on the fun aspects of the game.

Game-play is paradoxical in that it is simultaneously governed by rules *and* dependant on freedom of action (Lantz & Zimmerman, 1999). Game-play can be defined as the ludic interaction of players in a rule structure where 'ludic' refers to the free, improvisational and *voluntary enjoyment of play*, and the 'rule structure' to the system and conventions that shape the game (Caspi, 1992:302). If the freedom of action relates to the enjoyment of play and thus the entertainment then the efficacy relates to the rule structure.

The double-movement of game-play acknowledges the tension between rules (efficacy) and freedom (entertainment) but does not see the two sides as irreconcilable, but rather as necessary aspects of the same system. Free play in a game is only possible if specific and restricting rules are in evidence. The power structure of the rules frees the player to play by creating a safety net in which action is allowed. Within strict conventions, it is therefore the safest place to be creative. The power structures of the

playing processes – structures of events in which play occurrences and game activities are combined (Caspi, 1992:301) – are dependent on rules.

The ostensible purpose of RPGs, as entertainment activity, is to have ‘fun’. In this, the rules become a secondary aspect in the game. It is, however, the rules that create the structure within which the players can be engrossed in play, and therefore the rules become the means towards the end of having ‘fun’ (Fine, 1983:233-236). The rules create a structure for the narrative of role-play. This is firstly through the fact that the rules allow the simulation of reality. An example of this is the way in which the rules quantify character attributes in terms of character creation in the RPG (Mackay, 2001:7 & 66). After a structure has been created the players feel free to adapt the rules to suit their needs (Mackay, 2001:50).

In *The Foreshadowing* workshop the D&D game system was used as a structuring device for the theatre workshop. Instead of using only theatrical conventions and negotiated working relations, the RPG system provided a method of play that had to be navigated. This system aided in making the process of the workshop fun. It also directed the activities, allowing certain actions, while prohibiting others. However, the tensions of creating a performance product prohibited players from engaging with the game only for fun. The question is to what extent the system allowed the players to develop their self efficacy by enabling them to collaborate and direct their own, and imaginary characters’, actions.

In RPG’s, the existence of rules is not restricted to the game at hand but is also a form of social convention and control. The rules and conventions formalise the power structures used by the DM and the players. Mackay (2001) highlights the importance of *power* in his work on the RPG as performance art. Mackay (2001:92) discusses the “insinuation of imposed systems of power” that affects all participants in the RPG. He suggests that the RPG replicates power structures operating in general culture in the social world of the game. From Mackay’s discussion on power, three important structures of power are identifiable:

- Directorial control,
- Collaborative force,
- Rules and conventions.

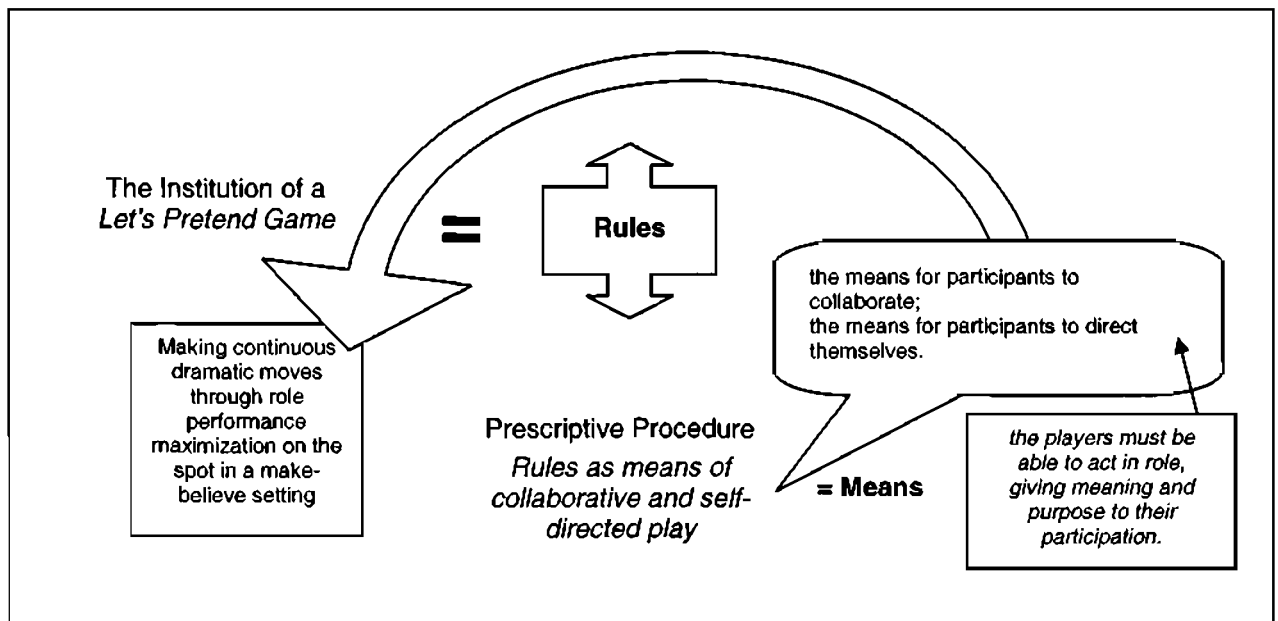
These power structures are also evident in *The Foreshadowing* workshop. As DM I had ultimate directorial control over the actions in the game. I shared control with, and was controlled by, the designers of the game through the game system. Yet, my control of the process was worthless without the co-operation of the players. Through their tacit agreement they played along and accepted the rules of the system and my directorial control. They also kept a measure of individual control because each one directed their own individual character. Through these characters' actions they also influenced the direction of the process and narrative. Lastly, the whole workshop was situated in a *rule* structure. This rule structure was only partly the D&D game system. It was also the conventions and house rules we developed collaboratively through our interactions in the process.

I have shown in **Chapter 4** that the structure of the role and the imaginary world are important aspects of pretend play. For all role-playing activities such as the RPG the skill and experience of the players have an effect on their performance and participation. This again affects their enjoyment and the possibility of free play. I have indicated that the role functions as a codified script for role performance. The necessary means for codifying the role is a rule system. The players' ability to play the role then is dependent on their ability to navigate the rules that constitute the role. In this sense role-playing skills are less dependent on interpretative acting skills and more on interpretative rule system use.

In the previous chapter the focus fell on the aspects pertaining to entertainment, answering the question of how the players add to their own participation and enjoyment in the game through active imaginings. In *The Foreshadowing* workshop, the players exercised their collaborative efficacy strongest in renaming the non-player characters. The players changed Oinotna, the Duke of Selpan (Antonio, Duke of Naples) to Dukey-Pooh and his servant Onafets (Stefano) was changed to Fetsy. Renaming the characters, with which they had oppositional relationships, created a sort of slang. I believe this is one aspect that helped create a stronger idioculture. Unfortunately, it was not utilised during rehearsal, where we returned to the complicated names of the characters. The ability of the players and their characters to name other characters and in so doing create their own language and labels aided in their efficacy. They were able to have a handle on

the cast of non-player characters that aided their involvement and participation. The naming of characters was part of the dramatic moves taken during *The Foreshadowing* workshop. This power was, however, too restricted and needs to be expanded in the construction of a *Let's Pretend* game. This chapter considers aspects in the idioculture that can either make the actions and activities of the players meaningful and efficacious or disenfranchise the players. These activities are discussed in this Chapter as the means of collaboration and self-direction as determined by the rules and illustrated in **Figure 5.1**.

Figure 5.1 Rules as Means of Collaborative and Self-directed Play



5.1 Structure and Play

Game play, as opposed to free play, is dependent on the construction of a discrete activity, through the application of rules. A structured system of play determines the boundaries of play. These boundaries determine the limits of the imaginary world, the acceptable play behaviour, the extent of playtime, and the actions allowed for successful play. Garvey (1991:104) states that:

Games...are more formal, conventionalised events than are the incidents of spontaneous play. And Rules are the essence of games.

Game play is only possible when specific and restricting rules are in evidence. The playing processes need to combine play occurrences and game activities (Caspi, 1992). It is necessary to know which pretend play activities show aspects of game-like structure and rules in order to discover which aspects may be transferable to different contexts so that they can be useful for constructing a *Let's Pretend* game. I have shown in **Chapter 3** (p. 70) that the rules are pivotal in the institution of the game, and it is this institution that makes the game system transferable. I now highlight different kinds of play activities, with make-believe aspects, to eliminate inapplicable and identify possible rule systems.

In Simulation Gaming the nature of the simulation is normally dependent on strict game structures. Simulation Gaming uses game structures as a cross-disciplinary educational tool for teaching a variety of skills (Wolfe & Crookall, 1998). The rules for these simulations are clear and easily translatable to other environments. Simulation Games, however, often use abstracted simulations far removed from pretend play. The emphasis in Simulation Gaming is not on a certain type of game but on the applicability of that game to the simulated content and experiences. GERONTOLOGY is for instance an adapted game on the theme of growing old, getting sick, and dying (Christopher, 1995). The game structure and design of simulation games is therefore very diverse. Because of this, only a small number of simulation games relate to pretend playing. In addition, these games are the most like Drama-in-Education and devised theatre exercises.

Drama-in-Education provides a minimally structured system of play (Morgan & Saxton, 1987). The structured system in DIE is dependent on the lesson plan and intended learning experiences. The rule setting is specific to the intended learning. A set of techniques exists to be employed, but each facilitator uses and combines these as necessary. Some of these techniques include hot seating, role-play, and teacher-in-role.

LARPing (live action role-playing), as a derivative of RPGs, is structured by a system of play. LARPing is the physical as opposed to verbal enactment of role-playing scenarios. A couple of systems have been developed specifically for this genre of play. Where individual designers develop their own scenarios for play, they also frequently develop the system of play that accompanies the scenario. MAVERICK 365¹ uses a system of conflict resolution that is dependent on the game of rock-paper-scissors. This means that LARPing tends to be more individualised in terms of game systems and mechanics. LARPing also tends to be 'light' on rules. Players are not able to walk around with heavy rulebooks or do a lot of background reading before play begins. LARP designers tend to condense the rules to one or two pages of text. These structures are, however, limited. They are not easily translated to other settings because they are usually designed for a specific setting.

The most typical structure for a Murder Mystery party is to have a group of six to twelve people assemble at the host's house for a dinner party. The guests improvise most of the evening's conversation based on minimal information provided. At an appointed time each player is given the opportunity to accuse a possible murderer after which the true killer, as determined prior to the event, is revealed. For a Murder Mystery evening, each scenario requires some type of structure to interact with. MURDER ON THE STAGE (1997) provides each player with a character booklet. DEATH IN THE RING (1997) provides the players with role cards and audio taped recorded narratives. Both these Murder Mystery games use a turn structure to progress through an evening. These systems are, however, severely limited and cannot easily be adapted to another session of play.

¹ MAVERICK 365, a 21 player LARP, was developed by myself and used by my wife, Petro Janse van Vuuren, as part of her intervention during her PhD research.

Theatre Sports too have a well-constructed system of play. The Theatre Sports phenomenon follows a quite clearly defined system that easily allows for a number of variations. Theatre Sport teams such as *Whose Line is it Anyway?*² and *Lagnes*³ follow a set repertoire, which is easily transferable to other groups (Foreman & Martini, 1995).

Gary Izzo (1997) introduces and explains Interactive Theatre as a theatrical form that employs aspects of rule systems. In Interactive Theatre, actors develop characters for a certain scenario. These characters then involve an audience (guests), in improvised scenes, in the scenario. The rehearsal process for Interactive Theatre focuses on character development and the practising of improvisational skills and techniques. Gary Izzo describes a way of working that is a structured system of play. There is, however, no indication of how this system of play transfers to other contexts where Izzo does not lead the process.

In devised theatre every director and devising group develop their own system of improvisation. These systems are often not translatable because they are tied to the interests and skills of the group members, or intricately linked with the content of the piece. They all draw on and add to a storehouse of techniques (including games) to focus the process. Devised theatre processes are not systemised and every workshop process frequently reinvents the wheel.

Clive Barker (1977) views games in terms of improvisation. For him improvisational games are explorations of aspects of a scripted play. Games are used specifically to tackle physical problems (Barker, 1977:64). He is critical of improvisational games, though, because they do not transfer back to the rehearsal process. Barker (1977:89-90) also does not consider improvisational games as the sole source for the creation of a theatrical script or performance text. Other writers on improvisation such as Keith Johnstone (1979) also use games to develop spontaneity and 'freshness' in performers. These practitioners, however, do not use the game as the structuring component for the devising workshop as a whole.

² *Whose Line is it Anyway?* is a popular television programme led by the American comedian Drew Carey.

³ *Lagnes* is a Theatre Sports group who are all students from the Potchefstroom University of Christian Higher Education. They use their comedy performances as entertainment for Christian youth groups.

Augusto Boal (1995) in *Rainbow of Desire* is the closest to developing a systemised theatre game. *Forum Theatre* provides a clear system of rules or conventions that can be used by the actors or non-actors. What is significant about Boal is that his techniques are focussed on non-theatre practitioners. Because of this, his process is heavily dependent on the role of the facilitator, or *Joker* (Boal, 1995). Forum Theatre is quite easily transferable to different contexts but the success of the process is very dependent on the facilitating skills of the Joker, and success is measured through parameters set through social activism not 'game'.

Of course, every RPG is also dependent on some explicit rule system normally contained in rulebooks. The rulebook describes the method of play although it is not the game itself. Role-playing gamers identify specific game adventures by the system used. RPGs, despite the available systems, hybridise easily and any system can be adapted to alter the tone or focus.

In conclusion, then, structured systems of play as aspects of game play are the most evident in the make-believe play found in Simulation Gaming, Theatre Sports, Forum Theatre and the RPG. The RPG uses a clearly structured system of play or game systems, for example DUNGEONS & DRAGONS, and these are easily adapted to and used in different circumstances and with different participants. This was done in particular with the participants of *The Foreshadowing* workshop. One of the reasons why an RPG system can be played in different parts of the world while staying recognizable as belonging to the system is because of the clearly codified rule system.

5.2 Rules in Particular

The concept of rules is integrally part of the concept of the *game*. This is described by Bernard Suits as the constitutive rules, a basic element of any game. According to Suits (1967) “I obey the rules just because such obedience is a necessary condition for my engaging in the activity such obedience makes possible.” As was shown in **Chapter 3**, the lusory attitude is the attitude that accepts the rules just so that a certain activity can take place. The constitutive rules create the circumstances and circumscribe the activities to be accepted. The rules create the ‘big lie’ and the imaginary environment. During the game it is the rules that make play possible, delimiting and ordering the boundaries of the game (Mackay, 2001: 3 and 4).

According to Twining and Miers (1982:142), explaining from a legal standpoint, say that the notion of a rule is so important because: “there is hardly any aspect of human behaviour that is not in some way governed or at least guided by rules.” Even activities that do not seem to be rule governed, such as kissing, still rely on tacit conventions. These rules may be vague and general but that is only because they reflect the society in which they operate. To function freely as a member of society, with efficacy, a person needs to be able to interpret and navigate these rules and conventions.

This navigation can be very similar to game-play. It is also these social rules that are employed in the construction of pretend play (Garvey, 1991:82). In actual games and in the ‘game’ of living the sense of efficacy is dependent on the sense players have that they are free to play the game, and this in turn is dependent on the rule structure. This rule structure, however, either inhibits or aids the game-play depending on:

- the rigidity of the rules,
- their openness to interpretation, and
- any possible misunderstanding of the rules.

In his article on the discretionary power of umpires in interpreting and applying game rules J.S. Russell states that rules are the authority that settles terms for co-operation and competition. He identifies what he calls ‘the ideology of games’, that relates to a popular view of rules in sport. He later relates the ideology of games to legal formalism.

Legal formalism is the view that the law consists of a body of rules and nothing more, and that judges are merely to find and apply correct rules in a syllogistic fashion to the facts of particular cases (Russell, 1999: 31).

The ideology of games includes the belief that “games as rule-governed institutions...have been designed to be especially orderly and predictable” (Russell, 1999: 27). The appeal of rigid rules lies in the security it brings in being able to have things under control. Russell (1999:27) states that:

Games ... represent a refuge from the distressing uncertainty and grayness of institutions that govern our real lives and real choices.

According to Russell (1999) this optimistic view obscures the fact that rules, whether in institutions or real life, are messy. Similarly in pretend play and make-believe games the rules can be messy, and if they are strictly applied with no messiness they frequently restrict the play, making the game no fun at all. The strict application of combat rules, to the last encounter of *The Foreshadowing* workshop, restricted the intended actions of the players. Following the intended actions of the players could have led to a more engaging play experience for the players rather than the frustrating experience it was. The D&D system rules, especially in terms of combat, are very prescriptive, and do not allow for a lot of discretion. When too much discretion is used the players tend to lose faith in the DM rather than the system.

Discretionary powers are only relevant in the measure in which rules are open to interpretation. According to Russell (1999:32), legal formalism is mistaken about the application of rules. Rules can guide human conduct but cannot be definitive guides for at least three related reasons.

1. Firstly, rules must have some agreed upon meaning, but the nature of language is imprecise resulting in the breakdown of meaning. H.L.A. Hart calls this the open texture of rules.
2. Related to the meaning of rules there are also secondly uncertainties about the purposes that rules serve or the intent for which they were created.
3. Thirdly, both the meaning and purpose could bring the scope of a rule in question. This is because not all circumstances in which a rule could be applied can be predicted.

In terms of meaning, the first thing to *agree upon* is what constitutes rules and what not. Frederick Schauer (1991) refers to the problems surrounding rules as concepts in critical thinking. He gives examples of writers substituting rules with other words but accepts that the function underlying the ‘rule’ is still similar no matter what the terms used.

Examples of other words that are used are norm, principle, law, prescription, precept, and maxim. Schauer (Schauer, 1991:15) defines rules when he describes rule-based decision-making as “a form of decision-making characterized by its reliance on entrenched but potentially under- and over-inclusive generalizations.” A rule, in his terms then, is an entrenched generalisation. When an action has to be taken, and the only reason for action is based on a generalised compulsion, and not on any particular reasons, then the generalised compulsion is a rule. If, for example, there is a generalised compulsion that walking underneath ladders is unlucky without supporting evidence for or against it, then someone who walks under a ladder breaks a rule, or an entrenched generalisation that has the status of a rule (Schauer, 1991:76&112). A rule can also be described as “a general norm guiding conduct or action in a given type of situation” (Twining and Miers, 1982: 127).

In terms of the *functions* of rules Schauer also distinguishes rules as being descriptive or prescriptive. A descriptive rule reports on a regularity or uniformity and presupposes a multiplicity of instances. There are no rules for particular or singular events. An example of a descriptive rule would be that as a rule National Rugby matches are played on Saturday afternoons. A descriptive rule for a RPG is that it is a game played without an audience. Prescriptive rules embody a particular limitation, prohibition, or command. It is therefore a prescriptive rule that each rugby team may only field fifteen players at a time. A prescriptive rule in an RPG is that the players play only their own characters while the DM controls the monsters and other non-player characters. Prescriptive and descriptive rules both refer to a type of rule rather than particular rules (Schauer, 1991:17-18).

When something in an RPG becomes treated like a rule when it is not a rule, or when a descriptive rule becomes treated as a prescriptive rule the *scope* of the rules is altered. The difficulties of interpreting rules in any social situation, including game-play, create conditions of doubt (Twining and Miers, 1982:1). These conditions of doubt would inhibit play, and my argument is that the rules and clarity about the rules is necessary before effective play is possible. Ignoring the rules, or having no rules, results in having no game to play.

As has already been shown in **Chapter 4**, a *Let's Pretend* game would be dependent on situational rules, which means that a formalist view of rules would not be acceptable. The freedom of play also includes the unpredictability of such play that again negates a formalist approach to rules. This then means that the rules cannot be rigid and must be open to interpretation and must allow for discretionary powers, which means that the meaning of the rules will stay messy.

Russell offers in his article a counter argument to the ideology of games using examples from baseball. Partly his argument is based on the idea that umpires have discretionary powers that they need to exercise instead of always deferring to the rules.

“I shall argue that umpires can legitimately use their authority to clarify and resolve ambiguities in rules, to add rules, and even at times to overturn or ignore certain rules, and that the exercise of such discretion is governed by principles underlying the games themselves and by an ideal of the integrity of games” (Russell, 1999:28).

Terms he uses to clarify the integrity of games include good conduct, integrity, intent, and spirit. The activity that Russell describes above is typically the activity in which a DM would engage. During *The Foreshadowing* workshop I clarified ambiguities in the rules where players for example failed to understand combat actions. I added rules by not allowing the players to choose characters from a different age, gender, or race (human) than themselves. I also ignored certain rules especially where these impacted negatively on the players, player characters and the forming story. During the encounter with the *Deck of Many Things*, I did all of these at the same time in order to ensure that the outcome of the encounter would allow the player characters to continue with my planned scenario.

A blind worship of the rules can kill the purpose and integrity of the game. Because rules are messy, they force us to make choices. For those who hold to the integrity of the game, their discretionary power becomes a “practical and moral necessity” (Russell, 1999). This is related to R.M. Dworkin’s analysis that principles form part of a legal system with the rules (Russell, 1999: 33). In other words, there are in any game not only the rules that govern actions, but also underlying principles. Because of these underlying principles, decisions in games are not just a question of practicality but also of morality.

Russell (1999:34-35) refers to Dworkin to explain limited discretion in decision making. Discretion is limited because the decision-makers are bound by background principles and integrity and therefore cannot act arbitrarily. This is based on two points of criticism Dworkin developed in his critique on legal formalism. These are,

(a) that a body of moral principles is part of law in addition to its rules, and (b) that such principles must be applied in hard cases to resolve them in ways that best reflect the point of those principles and to justify and bring coherence to the rules among themselves and within that body of principles (Russell, 1999:34).

According to Russell, the supreme virtue of law for Dworkin is integrity, requiring that the law is coherent and principled. This idea of morality seems to conflict with Suit's idea that the constitutive rules do not have a moral basis (Chapter 3, page 55). Accepting moral principles as part of the constitutive factor of a role-playing game means that there is a goal before the prelusory goal. Before accepting this I first consider that Russell proposes four principles⁴ for the adjudication in sport (to answer Dworkin's call for moral principles), which could be applied to make-believe games.

- Firstly Russell states that: "*Rules should be interpreted in such a manner that the excellences embodied in achieving the lusory goal of the game are not undermined but are maintained and fostered.*" (1999:35). In make-believe game terms that means that the rules must be interpreted to allow players the lusory means to make dramatic moves on the spot.
- Secondly, Russell asserts that "*Rules should be interpreted to achieve an appropriate competitive balance.*" (1999:35). In make-believe game terms it means that rules should not be interpreted to eliminate inefficiency for some players but not for others. The role of the DM is allowed a script (efficient means) while the players are not – this is discussed shortly in Section 5.4.
- Russell's third principle is that "*Rules should be interpreted according to principles of fair play and sportsmanship.*" (1999:36). In make-believe game terms it means that rules must be interpreted to foster a lusory attitude.

⁴ The reasons for Russell's last three principles are summarised in the following quote:

Perhaps it will be argued that part of the obstacles that are to be overcome in some games is the strategizing that may be employed to come up with picayune rule interpretations that would give one participant an advantage over another...employment of such stratagems amounts, in effect, to an anti-game – a sort of meta-game that is played with the rules of the game as a way of circumventing the lusory goal of the game. Such stratagems should rarely, if ever, be given serious weight, since their aim is to evade facing the obstacles and related excellences that define a game and without which there would be no game at all. Such stratagems aim, in effect, to succeed in a game by not playing it, attempting a sort of free-ride to the game's goal (Russell, 1999: 37).

- Lastly, Russell asks that “*Rules should be interpreted to preserve the good conduct of games.*” (1999:36). In make-believe game terms it means rules must be interpreted in respect of the prelusory goal of the game, to make dramatic moves on the spot.

Russell’s principles are already included in the definition and elements of a make-believe game. It is clear then that the principles, which Russell wants to apply, are only applicable after the prelusory goal, determined by the constitutive rules, has already been accepted. This means that Russell’s principles are not a necessary requirement for determining the rules of a *Let’s Pretend* game.

The constitutive rules for a make-believe game are not morality based. The rules are not to set up a morality, but to set up a play space. Within the play space, the rules have a rationality of their own that is simple and harmonious. Although legal formalism is discounted as an approach to rules, Russell and Dworkin’s alternative of underlying moral principles is not appropriate to the make-believe game.

Izzo emphasises the fact that the rules exist because there is an agreement about their existence (1997: 11). The reason for following the rules is because it is fun and the agreement assist in understanding a shared play reality (Izzo, 1997: 12). What is important is that the constitutive rules create the means through which this *sharing* is made possible.

5.3 The means for participants to collaborate

Players can only sustain pretend play when all participants share in the act of pretending.

“Of course you agree to have a battle?” Tweedledum said in a calmer tone. “I suppose so,” the other sulkily replied, as he crawled out of the umbrella: only she must help us to dress up, you know.” *Through the Looking Glass* - Lewis Carroll (Gardner ed. 1970:241).

Tweedledee has to agree to do battle with Tweedledum. Their farce will only work, however, when Alice also participates and dresses them up. The Tweedle brothers pretend to be fierce warriors, and Alice pretends to believe them and collaboratively they create the narrative.

Rule interpretation and clarification would have a co-operative effect making the DM and the players collaborators and resulting in a clearer understanding of the game and the play. This means of course that both the players and the DM need to negotiate and make concessions to the game and the game structure.

In order to make a concerted and collaborative effort it would seem beneficial that all agree on the rules of play through rule clarification. In the RPG, this is easy because a specific rule system such as D&D is chosen as a basic framework. With the devised theatre workshop it is, however, problematic because improvisation attempts to simulate situations and thus creates a resemblance to the complexity of social life. Yet, even social life depends largely on rules (Twining & Miers, 1982). Thus, rules clarification would be a beneficial first step in the fluid situation of the devised theatre workshop. When the participants are part of a homogenous cultural group, it should be easier to assume an agreement on unstated rules. With a multicultural cast, however, unstated rules might become inhibiting or even downright alienating. If the group is a multicultural group the rules need to be stated much more clearly and carefully in order to ensure the most applicable interpretation, but also to eliminate bias that would make it difficult for players of one culture or another to participate. Cultural bias was most obvious during *The Foreshadowing* casting process since fantasy, as used in D&D, is a Western concept. When I asked players to choose a fantasy hero and name, for instance, one candidate chose Nelson Mandela. This cultural interpretation of what fantasy encompasses made me eliminate these candidates from the casting. Had these players

been allowed into the process more time would have had to be spent on clarifying the concepts of fantasy and a fantasy world.

Clearly stating the rules at play in the make-believe game would aid in the collaboration as well as in the interpretation of problems, thus empowering participants to evaluate their own actions. This has implications for any situation where the clarification of unstated rules can aid in the empowered collaboration of participants. The construction of the rules should encourage useful game-play. Things that would sideline players, either in the game or with irrelevant social conventions, should be taken into account. One social convention that functioned during *The Foreshadowing* process was that the players submitted to my authority as final arbiter of actions.

After all, the director is like our Boss and what he says we are obliged to do, unless we think we have a better idea. (Amy's Journal, 2002)

I cannot say whether this was due to my role as DM/director, my gender as male, or to me being older. In the repeat of such a process I would prefer to state, clarify, and thus alter, this convention because it inhibited efficacious collaboration.

Daniel Mackay (2001:50) indicates that it is the rules, which form the drama of the RPG, which also then create a safe space in which to play. Without rules, play can be haphazard and dangerous. The familiarity of the players with the rules is similar to actors unknown to each other but performing from the same text. This brings the group together and makes them able to work and perform together. For example if a cast comes together to perform *The Tempest* by William Shakespeare, they may not know each other but because they are working from the same text, they are able to create the performance. In the same way, a diverse group of role-players brought together knowing the D&D role-playing system, can work together to create a performance because they are working from the same game text.

In the instance of *The Foreshadowing*, the cast brought together did not share a familiarity with the rules or text of the RPG.

...the whole idea of role-playing was a brand new experience for me, so nothing in my past could help me out there...I had no idea what role-playing was and had to discover that through the process. That kept me, hindered me from giving of my best and contributing fully to the process. (Amy's Journal, 2002)

Therefore, the first part of the workshop (Introductory Sessions 1 and 2, Chapter 2, pp. 32 – 33) focussed on educating the players in the *text* or rules of the RPG.

The RPG rules do not normally prohibit any changes to the rules, but make it clear that such changes would be inadvisable. Any long standing gaming group does, however, develop conventions, or house rules, that differ from the official rulebook (Fannon, 1999:94). Mackay (2001:50) shows that once a gaming group has formed, they make changes to the basic text or rules to accommodate the specific requirements of the group. This is similar to a rehearsal process of Shakespeare's *The Tempest*, whereby certain sections of the script are cut for brevity's sake, or a particular doubling of characters is decided upon, to accommodate scene changes. In the theatrical process, this would be decided upon during the rehearsal phase. In the RPG, this continuous process could possibly happen during the performance of a certain playing session or during discussions before or after. Alternatively, some of these changes can be the result of the unconscious forming of habitual rules or through the misinterpretation of certain rules. In *The Foreshadowing* process the group did not play together long enough to form any discernible house rules.

Group cohesion, that is partly dependent on friendship, is one factor that makes it easier for a group to collaborate. *The Foreshadowing* cast indicated that the process was an enjoyable experience, and attributed much of the fun to the friendships that were formed during play. From their journal entries it is clear there was a commonality between the group members that made them like each other and bond easily. These friendships happened although they did not know each other well, or at all, before the process started. These friendships have carried on into other working areas. Their friendship aided in their cohesion and thus collaboration as a team.

There was a specific point where the players moved over from a disparate group to a functioning team. Before the storm in *The Foreshadowing* workshop, the player characters were not functioning as a team. During their conversations with the Duke and his party, each one steered the conversation towards their own concerns.

Liandrin (Bistra): "*I ask the Duke why he has been scrying us all year, for what purposes?*" (*The Foreshadowing* Audiotape no. 5 side B)

Liandrin had a nagging curiosity to see the inside of the Duke's cabin. Fortune (Avershree) was fishing desperately for information concerning her brother.⁵ Each of the players also had different aims at this stage. After the storm encounter, these individual goals were neglected in order to concentrate fully on the mystery at hand. During and after the storm the characters were up against the same enemies and mysteries, forging them into a team. When the imaginary player characters became a team, it had a positive effect on the players as a group. Cohesion formed because the players were concerned with the same issues and therefore playing on the same side. This indicates that if the *plan* for pretend play is to encourage collaboration it should clearly state a shared goal. This goal could be the prelusory goal, but *The Foreshadowing* workshop indicates that it can also be a make-believe goal in the imaginary world.

In *The Foreshadowing* the players worked together, not only because of a shared goal, but also because of the RPG conventions. Through the game, because the rules are made apparent, the inexperienced gain quick and easy exposure to the correct conventions. Because the game could also have built into the rules the requirement of collaboration, it fosters collaboration. In other words, because the set-up for *The Foreshadowing* was collaborative, namely a group of adventurers together, it made it easier for the people to collaborate.⁶

⁵ There was no information concerning her brother. Avershree created Fortune's brother as a plot theme when she wrote her character's back-story. My intention was not to incorporate these elements and for the most part I ignored allusions to them or else pleaded ignorance on behalf of the non-player characters.

⁶ In *The House*, another play I improvised, the set-up was confrontational and this flowed through into the way of working. In other words, the theme and approach to the play could foster certain behavioural patterns in the group dynamics of the group itself. In devising *The House*, I attempted to correct some of the problems of *The Foreshadowing*. Totally new and different problems however surfaced.

The methodology to empower collaboration would be an explicit agreement on the rules and conventions that apply as has been explained above. The rule system should be an empowering power structure creating a game-like or playful environment that would be the correct or sufficient circumstances for success (Bogart, 2001:124-126). Success is understood as the creation of a workshop environment with the free flow of play in order to construct a comprehensive make-believe world. In addition the make-believe world should present a unifying goal to the players. The set-up and rule structure for the make-believe game must also foster collaboration rather than confrontation and should be included in the theme and the rule system.

5.4 The means for participants to direct themselves

A self-directed narrative is the possibility for players to play without outside direction. This section explores the possibility of players in a make-believe game being able to direct themselves. RPGs provide the means to create collaborative narratives. These collaborative narratives take place in imaginary environments or fantasy worlds. The RPG also provides the framework to develop these imaginary worlds. What the RPG does not do is provide the means for a self-directed narrative. The RPG is by nature a process that results from the interaction between the players and the DM. In this interaction, the DM acts as directorial authority. It will also be shown that the DM is not an audience of one but can be viewed in at least two ways; the first is as part of the rule structure and game system. In the second way, the DM is seen as a participating player.

As alternative the directorial function can be shared amongst the players providing all participants with an efficacious position. Viola Spolin's attitude on games is in support of efficacy building as seen in the following quote.

With no outside authority imposing itself upon the players, telling them what to do, when to do it, and how to do it, each player freely chooses self-discipline by accepting the *rules of the game* ("it's more fun that way") and enters into the group decisions with enthusiasm and trust (Spolin, 1999:6).

The question of outside authority imposing on the players refers to the function of direction and the role of the director. A *director* refers to the directive power being vested, exclusively or predominantly in one person. The debate about the nature of the theatre director is a vibrant and vast field of discussion that is not relevant to this dissertation (Panovski, 1993). In terms of this argument, directing is the power to

influence the development of the narrative and the imaginary world. In theatre, this person is the director, but in other forms, it could be a game designer, a teacher-in-role, a Joker, or a Dungeon Master (DM). With directorial control, one person holds the most power, determining rewards and consequences, and normalising the behaviour of the players and player characters (Mackay, 2001:94–96). Richard Schechner has the most insightful view on the directive power.

As a theatre director (manipulator of playing) I know that we all live in mirror-mazes, or echo chambers: playing the game is learning how to shut out some of the multiplicity of converging, convecting actualities in order to “make sense” (Schechner, 1993: 26).

It is not only in the theatre workshop, but also in the RPG that the director/DM is a *manipulator of playing*. The director or DM plays various and sometimes conflicting roles during the process, specifically using role shifting to manipulate and control the process (Fannon, 1999 and Panovski, 1993). In the power structure of directorial control, the director (function) as director (role) prescribes the make-believe structure within which the process takes place. I question the authoritative power relation of the roles that the DM plays.

The players are not without power in the make-believe game. *Power* is understood as the network of influences available to each participant (Foucault, 1979). This includes traditional authoritarian views on the director or rules but also subversive views on the players and the freedom of play. The players, in the case of disputes with the DM on certain disagreements in the game, have four ways of recourse.

- Firstly, they can use the internal game logic of the game to justify a concern;
- secondly, they can use the game rules specifically;
- thirdly they can rely on the compassion of the DM; and if none of these work,
- they can threaten withdrawal from the game (Fine, 1982:106-114).

The players' power of control then lies in voluntary participation, *limited surveillance* in withholding information from the DM, and in legitimate authority with recourse to the rules (Fine, 1982:122). Ultimately the players' contributions are however mediated by the DM (Mackay, 2001:51). The DM on the other hand also has three points of control.

- Firstly, the social expectations placed on the players as participants;
- secondly in using a legitimate position of authority;
- thirdly, the DM can use game events to control the players.

These game events are using non-player characters, punishing or rewarding the character, using statements as players, and using *compassion of the structural position* (Fine, 1982:114-122).

If there is a problem between DM expectations and player actions it might be ascribed to the fact that the players are playing a different game than that which the DM intends, rather than that the players are playing the DM's game wrong. In order to *correct* this the DM can either force the players to play his game, ignore the situation, or negotiate the rules and collaboratively clarify them so that the players and the DM agree on what game is to be played.

If the same game is not played it will be obvious that expectations will not be met and both the players and the DM will be disappointed in the process. The various outcomes are then as follows:

1. The players and the DM have the same expectations and are playing the same game — because of a similar understanding of the game rules or because of the same prelusory goal.
2. The players and the DM have different expectations of the game because of various reasons (such as differing Gamist/Narrativist/Simulationist agendas) and are thus not playing the same game but different games. There are a few responses to this situation:
 - The DM can blame the players for playing the game incorrectly and try to resort to force and authority in order to make them comply with the correct game.
 - The DM can capitulate to the players' game and let them continue playing in their manner but may not understand or appreciate it and therefore not support them fully.
 - The DM can negotiate the game and the rules making compromises and coming to a collaborative understanding of what game should be played. This solution will not result in exactly the game that either the DM or the players envisioned, but in my opinion, this is the only fair response in a multicultural context.

The Foreshadowing workshop had problems as a make-believe game not because D&D does not have a strong enough narrative system but mainly because of directorial control. When I told Avershree that I would prefer her to play a monk than a fighter, I did this to align the characters to a similar point of departure in the fantasy world we would simulate. In this instance, I functioned from a simulationist and gamist agenda overriding possible dramatist influences. The emphasis on the employment of a classical⁷ view of

⁷ The classical view of fantasy is exemplified in the high fantasy of J.R.R. Tolkien and codified in the rule structure of D&D.

fantasy and the retention of game balance as defined by the D&D system put me in a position of authority. Avershree could have had more to give in a role that she had freely chosen. As DM, I also let the players' individual chosen positions remain, for example Bistra, whose player character cleric *Liandrin* chose the deity, *Olidamarra* – the god of thieves. In terms of role-play, it meant that her character and Amy's bard (*Zak*) were very similar. It also meant that the specific clerical abilities did not come to the fore. I was never happy with Bistra's choice but made no comment on it or try to effect any change in the matter. Taking an authoritative position (with Avershree) led to a player having an unsatisfactory game, while conscious neglect (with Bistra) led to me, as DM, having an unsatisfactory game.

The use of a directive power is the manipulation of playing at the cost of the efficacy of the individual participants. When the nature of playing is dependent on one person, that person has to be a manipulator in order to elicit co-operation. Where co-operation is the effect of manipulation no true collaboration is possible and the personal efficacy of each participant is encroached upon. The construction of an imaginary world is contingent upon agreement between the participants. The construction of an imaginary or other world, that should be a collaborative act, should enforce and use collaborative power structures in the game.

The directive power need not be situated in one person. The DM could either be seen as part of the rule structure as enforcer or interpreter of the rules or as part of the player collective as collaborator. In terms of the first the DM is part of the rule structure when the rules prescribe a referee as part of the structure and defines his function in terms of the rules. However, different players can share this position at different times. In the game of MONOPOLY, for example, a specific player normally plays the bank, but there are no reasons why any other, or no player in particular, can control the bank. The rules of the game MONOPOLY are clear enough to guide all game behaviour. Such clear and self-regulating rules are not present in the RPG or other forms of make-believe play.

An example of a referee as free player is in the Murder Mystery where the host can play any one of the six characters without any restrictions and where any refereeing is open to interpretation. The control of the play in DEATH IN THE RING (1997) is in the hands of the game designer through the use of audio taped instructions. The rules for devised

theatre workshops are created during and for them specifically and are based on intuition and freedom of interpretation. The director is therefore much more of a player/participant than in other games. This suggests a centrality of the director/DM in the playing (rehearsal/gaming) process.

Most games can be played without a referee because the players willingly submit to the rules of the game in order to enjoy the game. It is easy to play touch rugby or cricket without a referee because rules are standardised and known. Make-believe play such as in the RPG is, however, still dependent on a referee. RPGs are heavily dependent on a DM (playing NPC's and interpreting rules) and players are often limited in the power to change the plot or tone of the adventure. The DM exerts control over the game process, being the main interpreter and arbiter of rules. It is not possible for the game to be played without a DM and with everybody being players.

I suggest an answer for the problem of self-direction using the concept of the *game* as *institution*. The institution of the game provides a possible answer for the problem of self-direction, through the identification of triflers, cheats, and spoilsports. When any player in the game can identify triflers, cheats, and spoilsports, players would be able to regulate the game themselves. This would also give them the ability to direct themselves.

Rules can be seen as functional in the allocation of power (Schauer, 1991:98). The directorial concept may explicitly state the rules and conventions that apply. Frequently, however, they are implicit, in relation to the genre and style or to theatre conventions and techniques. The question then becomes: in what way do rules allocate power to those who make decisions and in what way might rules structures be power structures per se without anybody enforcing them? This refers to the idea of *cop-in-the-head* but also to the director as authoritarian figure (Boal, 1995). It is possible to talk in terms of creative and playful activity of the *rule of law* (Schauer, 1991:167), meaning that the rules are the arbiters of conduct, and that even the most power hungry director must submit to the rules.

The construction of the game is dependent on the agreement between the participants to co-operate and to concede authority and therefore restrict their own freedom. This authority is picked up by the *director*, who is also part of, embodies, and

interprets and applies the rules. By submitting, however, the players become an implicit force functioning within the game. They can take their power back at any time and they are not at all powerless to control the direction of the game. Power does, however, not have to be conceded to an individual. This power can be conceded to the game through the elements of the game and the acceptance of the prelusory goal.

5.5 Concluding remarks

The plan for pretend play defines a *Let's Pretend* game as a structured system of play that provides the means for participants to create a *collaborative* and *self-directed* narrative in an *imaginary environment*. In the previous Chapter, I indicated how the imaginary environment (including role and narrative structure) is to be achieved. In this Chapter, the means for collaboration and self-direction were investigated. The approach suggested to aid in self-direction and collaboration is in the incorporation of these aspects into the rule system.

A *Let's Pretend* game needs to structure the directorial function into the rule system. The directorial function needs to be available to any and all players to take on when needed and to leave off when not. In this and in other rule formulation a collaborative structure must be chosen over an oppositional one. The rule system also needs to be of such a nature that all players can understand the rules, and play by the conventions of the rules. This means that the institution of the *Let's Pretend* game needs to be effective but simple, and easily learnt and transferred. The rule structure must furthermore allow for a system of interpretation and clarification because pretend play is necessarily *messy*.

It therefore seems that although the constitutive or prelusory rules of the *Let's Pretend* game would prohibit efficient means the lusory or game rules would have to ensure some kind of efficiency. This efficiency would be in negotiating the *inexactness* of pretend play so that each player is not playing by their own rules but by collaboratively agreed upon rules.

6

Explaining Afterwards

Concluding Remarks

“But it wouldn’t look at it,” she said, when she was explaining the thing afterwards to her sister: “it turned away its head, and pretended not to see it: but it looked a little ashamed of itself, so I think it must have been the Red Queen.”

Alice through the Looking Glass - Lewis Carroll (Gardner ed. 1970:342)

Pretend play and the make-believe game, as proposed in this dissertation, are experiential activities. As in anything that is better experienced, rather than explained, it loses a lot in the explanation. According to Lantz and Zimmerman (1999), it is impossible to understand the full meaning of the game without taking the broader context into account, the cultural milieu of the players, what kind of people they are, why they play and what play means to them. However, these have not been analysed in this dissertation.

This dissertation set out to formulate guidelines for a *Let’s Pretend* game. These guidelines are referred to as the *plan* for pretend play. There are three aspects, which are proposed to form the basis of this *plan*. These are:

- The imaginary environment (consisting of the world, role, and plot),
- Collaborative participation, and
- Self-direction.

I defined a *Let’s Pretend* game as:

a structured system of play that provides the means for participants to create a *collaborative* and *self-directed* narrative in an *imaginary environment*.

The framework used as basis is the elements of games extracted from the definition and theory of games by Bernard Suits (1967 & 1978). These state that the basic elements of games are the prelusory goal, the lusory attitude, the lusory means and the constitutive rules. Combining these elements with the idea of make-believe games described a make-believe game as the:

Making continuous dramatic moves through role performance maximization on the spot in a make-believe setting.

The form of make-believe play that seems the closest related to the requirements of a *Let's Pretend* game is the popular entertainment form of the RPG. In this genre D&D is a well-known game system. These elements are found in instances of make-believe play such as in RPGs and devised theatre workshops. These have been combined into one process for *The Foreshadowing* workshop. In this process the elements of games of make-believe can be identified which means that the guidelines for a *Let's Pretend* game can be derived from the conventions of both these forms. From an analysis of this process the following guidelines are formulated to meet the requirements of a *Let's Pretend* game.

A *Let's Pretend* game in terms of a structured system of play, and the structure for narrative in an imaginary environment, should provide:

- A simulationist agenda concerned with the fidelity to the structure of the game world, emphasised in the development of the role.
- A game system that models these roles accurately.
- A simulationist agenda that needs to be adapted in terms of the resolution of actions as codified in the roles during character creation.
- A Karma system, as the resolution through comparison of fixed values.
- A character creation process that integrates *readymades* and player input into a clear codified role.
- Fixed values for a Karma system codified into roles during character creation.
- A determination of the *energy*, as cost or sacrifice to the role as the focus for the resolution of actions.
- The independent (from players) existence and development of role for role performance maximization
- Role development and growth through the interaction with other roles.
- A game system that facilitates dramatic moves as reactions to preceding actions.
- Narrative plot or script development from character interactions, through dramatic moves.

A *Let's Pretend* game in terms of the means for participants to collaborate, and to direct themselves, should provide:

- A collaborative structure.
- A clear simple system of play and game conventions easily learnt and transferred.
- A system for negotiating disagreements on rules and for collaborative agreement to be reached.
- A structure for a directorial function available to any and all players.

There are many attempts at structuring make-believe play in RPGs, theatre workshops, DIE lessons, simulation games and Murder Mystery Parties. I propose here another alternative in a *Let's Pretend* game.

The intention for this dissertation is not to present the plan for a *Let's Pretend* game but only to determine the guidelines for such a plan. I will here only hint at possible implementations of these guidelines. With the given guidelines I would most likely attempt a character system based on role-cards. These role cards would each present a set of basic elements for each character such as for example dominant personality trait and character flaw. Each player would draw cards equal to the number of traits and individually or collectively decide on which to use from which card as character elements. These cards would also be used to determine the roles and identities of non-player characters. I accept that non-player characters would be used in a *Let's Pretend* game just as in the RPG, although I have not investigated alternatives in this dissertation.

In terms of plot and goal development I would also propose a card-based system. With a deck with various plot elements I would attempt to create a type of plot bidding system, similar to contract bidding in bridge. Various scenes or encounters would be determined by playing plot sets. Each player would choose one plot card to contribute to the scene and the player that plays the strongest card would be the protagonist of the scene.

In terms of initiative players would be making dramatic moves according to dice rolls, only rolled by player characters present at the encounter. The only players that would be awarded initiative bonuses would be those that have been appointed as protagonist and antagonist for that encounter, through plot bidding.

In terms of the directorial function, when the players sit in a circle each player would act as DM to the player second to the left. This is of course only for situations where a directorial intervention is required or when a player needs to exchange dramatic moves with a non-player character. These ideas are of course speculative and would have to be implemented and tested. As for *The Foreshadowing* workshop, the RPG as devising method has been implemented, tested, scripted and re-enacted. The script exists,

but the role-playing process only lingers on as a memory like any other make-believe experience.

DM: ... Oh, but we are bound to this ordinary world. What if we could float away to another world. Come let's all close our eyes and imagine that we are floating away drifting up right through the ceiling and right into space (Houselights down, stage lights up)

(The Foreshadowing Script, Addendum A).

Imagine a group of players coming together to play a make-believe game. Together they decide on the setting and environment for the play. Collaboratively they determine their basic roles and the unifying goal that will set the tone. Individually they each create a character, developing the script from which they will perform. And then they play, not knowing where the story will take them, not being controlled by any manipulative force except the actions of others and their reactions to these actions. Through their playing of the game, the players exercise their power, or efficacy, in the imaginary world. Hopefully this efficacy can be translated to the real world, but even if it cannot, the imaginary world and pretend play can still make magic.

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Addendum A

The Foreshadowing

(Lighting Script)

DM: Ladies and Gentlemen could I please ask you to switch off your cellphones. A sword, sorcery, magic. Oh, but we are bound to this ordinary world. What if we could float away to another world? Come let's all close our eyes and imagine that we are floating away drifting up right through the ceiling and right into space. (Houselights down, stage lights up) We are flying to another world and we see this world. Everything is brighter, sharper and anything is possible. Let's call this world Rugua. And as we get closer we see a country, Selpa. And then closer still we see a coastal village called Breen. And in the bay as we are drifting down we can see a grand sailing ship anchored. Imagine a place in this village, an inn, called the Black Pig inn. And as you open your eyes you notice five distinct people waiting in this inn. Feydin O'dal, a mercenary called Fortune. She does things by herself and has not much need of other people. Erin Zakula, Zak to friend and foe. She is an apprentice Bard. Not yet skillful enough to tell this tale. The oldest, Lia Maja, an orphaned elf – she is looking for her place in this world. The wanderer of the forest, Annataya, another orphan, but from a royal bloodline. She does not know this but she does know that sorcery also flows through her veins. And then, Liandrin, I think, she changes her name as easily as her allegiance. Priestess of Olidamara, god of thieves. They have all been called here to wait for the Duke. Invited by a mysterious, magical letter.

Scene 1:

Lia: I have no real identity but somehow, somebody tracked me and sent me a letter. At first I wanted to tear it up but then, maybe not.
Dear Lia Maja...

Fort: Dear Feydin O'Dal, also called Fortune...

Lian: Dear Liandrin, priestess of Olidamara...

Zak: Dear Erin Zakula, also known as Zak...

Anna: Dear Annataya, wanderer of the forest...

All: You do not know me but for some time now I have been scrying you. You have great potential...

Lian: ...and trickery...

Anna: ...and destiny...

All: ...and may be very useful to me in the future.

Anna: The personal rewards for you may also be great.

Lian: The rewards for you may also be great.

Zak: ...and might include gains in wisdom.

Lia: ...might include a healing of the heart.

All: I humbly request that you proceed to the coastal village of Breen and in The Black Pig Inn await the Duke.

Lia: Signed: P.

Anna: A shiver down my spine, half dread, half excitement.

Fort: I trust nothing and no one, a hoax.

Anna: I feel as though a invisible but physical thread is pulling me from deep inside, pulling me towards...What?

Zak: I have no drud in this dingy town to stay for.

Anna: I need to leave. I need to explore the world outside the one I've always known. Perhaps I'll find a place where I really and truly belong.

Zak: I feel...it is such a loora feeling. My baldy heart listens to this.

Fort: Born into a family that is land rich and cash poor. The only way to get what you want is to have the money or the means to get it.

Zak: I feel palsy walsy to lots of druds, I have something to give them.

Lian: A reward – I need that. I am tired of stealing. Earning money for a change, wonder what that feels like?

Anna: Perhaps I'll fulfil my destiny. I can be certain that if I don't go, something inside me will wither and die.

Lian: Scrying - You could say a taste of my own medicine. Intriguing, might be someone worth meeting. I'm worth it, why wouldn't someone scry me?

Anna: I should follow my instincts above my head.

Fort: As long as I get paid I might as well...

Lian: I'm in the mood for fun, I haven't had much fun lately.

Lia: We met. We waited. We wiled away the time.

DM: The Duke sent a servant, Ona Fets ahead of him and he has also arrived in the Black Pig Inn: 'Dear ladies, his Grace, the Duke of Limona would like to employ you for companionship and protection on his journey home on his ship the Nodna Limona. The Nodna Limona has thrown anchor in the bay and his Grace, the Duke is expecting your arrival.'

Lian: What is the worst that can happen on a ship. This should be a breeze.

Lia: I am suspicious of Ona Fets. I don't trust him or like him very much. I am not too thrilled about the ship either. Maybe this will help me forget my past and move towards the future. These girls are my only family.

DM: Come, you take Ona Fets.

Fets: You know of course that it is an honour being employed by the Duke. His Grace does not normally mingle with commoners.
Everybody board the ship. (Lighting change)

Fets: Stay out of the way of the sailors. Please do not disturb the other guest in the adjoining stateroom.

Lia: When shall we meet the supposed Duke?

Fets: You will not be seeing the Duke today but it is my privilege to invite you to join the Duke and other guest for supper tonight.

Anna: Who will we all meet tonight?

Fets: All your questions will be answered tonight. I need to meet with the Duke, please excuse me.

Lian: I want to see the Duke...?

Fets: The Duke is busy at the moment. He will talk to you tonight.

Lian: Busy with what? Playing with the galley wench?

Fets: Affairs of state, but it does not concern you.

Zak: You just want to google a Dook.

Lian: No, I don't. I just want to know what's going on. Anyway, what's wrong with a little google?

DM: The other guest on board is the crown prince of Selpan, the country in which Limona, which the Duke governs, is a province. The crown prince Idref is

travelling with the Duke in order to get to know the kingdom he will reign over one day. To see how the common man lives, thinks, works and loves.

Zak: Ooh, a palsy walsy prince.

Anna: Come girls, let's keep some restraint.

Zak: Why is a King's son travelling on a Duke's ship?

Fort: Maybe we are here not only as companions to Duke but also too the crown prince.

Scene 2:

DM: Dusk. **(Bring up blue)** Our companions have rested and explored the ship. Now they will meet the Duke. In a lavish stateroom they are introduced not only to his grace, the Duke of Limona, but also to the crown prince of Selpan, prince Idref.

Lian: Your Grace, lovely to meet you finally. Maybe you know who we are, as you have been scrying us, but...

Duke: Scrying? I don't know anything about scrying.

Fort: What about this? How do you know about us? *Shows him the letter.*

Lia: You probably heard your father and the Duke speak about us?

Idref: No I did not know anything about you. I wasn't even aware that you are on board.

Duke: I have never seen this in my life. I do not know where it comes from.

Fort: We all got these letters and considering it bears your name...

Duke: Bears my name, it does not bear my name in any form whatsoever.

Fort: It says the Duke...

Duke: *Laughs.* I am not the only Duke that exists.

Lian: How did you know about us?

Duke: I gathered from Ona Fets that you had quite a reputation.

Fort: We were waiting for you.

Duke: I gave Ona Fets instruction to employ companions and travelling through Breen he heard about your adventures.

Lia: Do you know of any enemies your father or the Duke has?

Idref: There was something about ten or twelve years ago. There was the Duke of Limona. Not the present Duke, there was another Duke then and he was threatening my father.

Fort: We had these adventures because of the letter...

Duke: Happenstance.

Lian: We were asked to wait for you.

Duke: I cannot explain that.

Lia: What happened to the previous Duke.

Idref: My father with the present Duke removed him from power.

Lia: And where is he now?

Idref: I really don't know what happened to him.

Fort: Did Ona Fets then send us these letters?

Duke: No, I do not think so.

Lian: But your Grace, what do you want from us?

Duke: Company, a sea voyage tends to get quite boring and good conversation over supper is always welcome.

Fort: But why did Ona Fets talk about protection?

Duke: Well you are obviously quite able to defend yourself and I find this thing of female warriors quite interesting.

Lia: So, why are we here?

Idref: Oh why, you are here because my father and the Duke obviously wants me to show an interest. Which I unfortunately do not. I have to be honest. You are all lovely ladies but...

Lian: Why us, complete strangers?

Duke: I believe he is a good judge of character.

Fort: What kind of protection do you need?

Duke: Well pirates and...

Lia: What are you thinking?

Idref: I don't know, my mind just wanders sometimes.

Lia: Why?

Idref: Huh, you were saying?

Duke: Ladies, I've got something here that might interest you – It's a deck of cards. These cards tests the fates. The chance of a lifetime, maybe to find out what the future has in store. You pick one card and some part of your destiny is revealed or changed. It may be for good or it may be for ill.

Anna: You draw a card and something good or bad might happen to you?

DM: Thank you. Something will happen.

Lian: So, you change fate?

DM: Yes, it is scary. I have seen bad things happen to some. I do not take these out often but I do think you might be interested in this.

Anna: Why us?

DM: It seems as if all of you are looking for something in life. This might be something that aids you or not.

Lian: I'll play. I like playing, I always win, but before we start, about the previous Duke...

DM: This Duke will not talk about the previous Duke, his brother.

Lian: Why, was there a fight?

DM: He just will not talk about his brother.

Fort: It's just a prediction...

DM: No, it really is testing the fates.
Fortune draws first, drops sword.

Fort: What magic is this.

DM: You merely received from the fates. I gather that the fates gave you increased power in the sword you yield. But I also suspect you have lost part of, how shall I put this...your ability to reason.

Fort: Where did you get these cards from?

DM: I got it from a powerful wizard.

Fort: What is his name?

DM: Long time ago...

Fort: You don't have something like this and not remember.

DM: It is difficult to explain how these got to be in my hands.
Liandrin draws a card.

DM: You are in front of a choice. You must choose now to follow good or evil. You cannot be neutral any longer.
Annataya draws a card.

DM: You are graced with a great power. Once in the future, at some point, when something happens that you don't want to happen, you can make it unhappy.

Anna: Once?

DM: Only once.

Zak draws a card.

DM: *(Laugh)* Luck has changed against you, Zak.

Lia draws a card.

Lia: When the Duke presented us with the deck of cards it seemed very exciting, scary. We all thought 'why not?' and me with not much mystery in my life wasn't afraid. I first felt nothing but suddenly I was covered in a long cloak. I felt special and gifted although I had no idea how it would come to be used.

DM: Wait, let me see that card again. No...this card will not be used during this adventure. I will have to take this one back. You decided not to draw a card. The night is late. We have had enough adventure for this night. Let us all now retire. **(Lights lower)**

Scene 3:

DM: What starts as a beautiful, clear night develops into something quite different. The swell begins to rise. The wind pick up suddenly. The ship shudders and rocks under the power of the sea. Horrific screams pierce through the night. **(Lightning)** I want you to remember!

Lia: Did you hear that?

DM: Tie down that sail. All hands on deck.

Fort: What is it?

Lia: Sounds like the sailors are dismantling the ship. Listen.

DM: Heigh, my hearts. Cheerly, cheerly. Batten down the hatches.

Fort: Wake the others.

Lian: What's happening?

Lia: Something's up on deck.

Fort: I'll check on the Duke, the others...

DM: Tend to the master's whistle. Blow till you burst wind – if there is room enough.

(Lightning)

Zak: It's a swanked storm! Out squashed, you druds!

Wet. Rain pouring down as if the gods are weeping. Waves like houses. Wind from all sides!

Annataya casts detect magic.

DM: Man overboard!

(lightning)

Fort: Idref!

Anna: Wait!

Fort: Man overboard! Let go of me.

Ana: Wait, there's magic...

Fort: I'm going after him.

Ana: There are forces at work. Wind, water, dark clouds swirling. Idref standing on the forelock. Something sweeps down and carries him away into the abyss of clouds. **(lightning)** This is an unnatural storm!

Zak: Where's the Duke?

Lia: What's going on with your ship? So much panic, so much chaos.

DM: I pray now, keep below. You mar our labour.

Lian: Where's the King's son?

Lia: Captain, this storm's unnatural. You have to get your ship away.

DM: Keep to your cabins, you do assist the storm. **(lightning)** Down with the topsail! Bring her to try with main course!

Lian: Open up, open up! Your grace.
 DM: Idref! I command you to save him. Come, get this boat in the water. Do I have to get to him myself?
 Anna: What's to be done?
 Fort: Watch out, the wave!
Annataya falls in and screams.
Fortune dives in.
 Zak: Come! Fog swank the Duke.
 Lian: Open up now! Let us in!
 Zak: Cram back, I'll swank it.
 Lia: This tickling the door takes too long. Let me have a go at it.
 DM: Behind the door, Ona Fets.
 Fets: *Pushing Lia overboard.* What the hell are you doing? Get out of here!
 Lia: I am shocked. I see my parents, my life. Afraid, alone, isolated. I feel wrong, angry, frightened.
Zak casts a daze spell on Ona Fets.
 Zak: Blab to me you drud! Ah swank, here goes the bucket. *Dives overboard.*
 Lian: What's going on Duke.
 DM: The Duke does not respond well.
 Lian: Tell me or I'll haul and hang you over the side like a gutted fish. Was it the cards?
 Duke: No it's not the cards. It's my brother, he has come for me...protect me!
Duke falls unconscious.
 Lian: Oh man, he's so heavy. *Drag Duke and both fall overboard.*
 Anna: Dark. It's been so long. My arms ache, burn. Where's the ship. Can anybody hear me! Can't, can't keep this up. My head is barely above water. I can't ...scared...
 Fort: Annataya! Can't see anybody. They should not have drifted too far. How long have I been in the water. Can't remember. I beginning to tire, must be longer than an hour. How long can I keep this up? The ship was pushed fast by the storm. There should be land close by. If I could see the stars I might get some direction. Losing track of time.
 DM: In the dark night, in a cold sea they lose their way, lose the ship and eventually lose their consciousness.
(lights down to blackout)

Scene 4:

(Bring up yellow)

Lian: I'm alive. Water and sand everywhere. I thought that was the end. Annataya, Zak, Lia, Fortune, they are all here, alive. Strange storm last night...now everyone alive here. What forces are at work here? Where are the others? Why just us on this beach.
 Anna: Out to sea our ship, wrecked on a reef. Fortune and Liandrin swimming towards it. Behind me a forest and beyond that a mountain. To the other side a lagoon. *Pause.* A desolate place. Does anyone live here? A lonely place. Could we survive here?
 Lian: Swimming goes great until...I get a cramp. Fortune is a good swimmer, and has to drag me along. But the ship. Two images swirling across each other. The one a wreck, the other a whole ship with nothing wrecked. And yet all feels solid.

DM: A very powerful illusion. From the outside it looks like a convincing and very real shipwreck. But, from the inside the ship is unharmed – not a nail out of place, but magically anchored, unmovable.

Lian: The crew are all aboard. Lost in sleep and we cannot wake them. All are here except the Duke, the King, Idref and Ona Fets. The answers are back on that island. We leave a note pinned to the captain.

Lia: Zak, look what the vultures dropped, Ona Fets and the Duke.

Zak: I think the daw-yaw Duke and Ona Fets think we caused the storm.

Lia: Should we drag them back or wait for the others?

Zak: Call Annataya.

Lia: I think Fets works for the Duke's brother as a spy.

Anna: Did the Duke's brother send the letters?

Zak: I think Ona Fets sent the bilgy letters.

Lian: Ona Fets was spooked when we broke down the door.

Anna: Something is seriously wrong with Idref, the Kin's son.

Fets: Wha...why...?

Duke: Ha...How did I get here. Ona Fets?

Fets: I remember the cabin.

Lian: Tell me, I don't care about you anymore. What's with your brother last night?

Duke: No, I must have been mistaken. Where...what happened?

Lian: We don't know.

Duke: Idref?

Anna: Has disappeared.

Scene 5:

DM: Where do they go? What do they do now? To sea, an unmovable ship. To the sides of the beach. Dangerous rocks and cliffs. The only way open is straight into the forest. **(Bring up blue)**

Fort: We are walking into the forest to make a straight way for the mountain. Anywhere we can get more information.

Lian: Hacking our way, not easy going.

Lia: Starting to sweat like a blue frog.

Anna: To the side a clearing.

Fort: Trying to get close, quietly.

Zak: Crammed noisy when there are buckets of trees.

Fort: I have a weird feeling...Excuse me, where are you going? Are you just being men or what?

Lian: Duke and Fets don't stop. They walk straight out to her. Damn.

Ana: Who are you?

Dryad: Do you like me?

Anna: You are very beautiful but who are you, what is this place?

Dryad: This is my forest. I live here.

Anna: Are there any other people who lives here?

Dryad: Only me, others yes, not here.

Anna: Where, can you show us?

Dryad: I don't know, I just stay here, play here. Is a big one - ugly. *To Zak.* Why don't you like me?

Anna: Is he human?

Dryad: What's human?

Anna: Does he look like him?

Dryad: No, bigger. Two others look like him, and you. They don't come here often.

Zak: I feel loora. I'm totally swanked with this woman, a woman. Glee. I'm not like this. Daw-yaw. She's a glee drud. I feel suck the mop...odd.

Anna: What's wrong with my friend?

Dryad: She likes me. Why don't you like me?

Anna: I like you but why do they like you so much. What do you do?

Dryad: Play, come play with me.

Anna: She's a goddess. The most exquisite creature I've ever seen. She's a bird of paradise, a beautiful creature.

Dryad: Why don't you like me?

Fort: Why do you ask me that?

Dryad: Everybody likes me. She likes me.

Fort: What are you doing, get away from her.

Lian: What's wrong with you people?

Fort: Of course I like you.

Dryad: Oh you lie.

Lian: Oh yeah, sure. We like you.

Dryad: Come play with me.

DM: Exhausting all options they are forced to extreme measures. The only way to remove those charmed from the spell is to knock them unconscious, tie them up, drag them away.

Scene 6:

(Go to red)

Lian: Get out of the forest! The edge of the lagoon. How long would this woman's effect last? Are you back in control of yourselves? Ona Fets still seems bewildered, best to leave him still tied up. I'm not really fond of him any way.

Nab: Why you make noise? Why you wake Nabilak?

Anna: We're terribly sorry, it was completely unintentional. We did not know you were here.

Nab: Who are you?

Lia: Our ship was wrecked, we were washed up on this island.

Nab: Why you wake Nabilak?

Anna: We are trying to get away from a lady in the woods, some sort of temptress.

Zak: I feel so blah. It's so revolting. I can't even think of looking at it. Feeling sick. My knees are baldy...oh, I sit down...down on the floor. Bilgy.

Lian: Urgh, so ugly so repulsive...I cannot bear to look at it. Green and scaly and stinking...of fish...my stomach. I cannot look...Agh...step back...away from it...

Anna: Where are we? What is this place?

Nab: Here lagoon.

Anna: Yes, but what is this place?

Lia: Does this island have a name?

Nab: Mother's island.

Anna: How did you get here?

Nab: Home, born here.

Lia: Do you know of other people on this island?

Nab: Yes, Prospero, strong man, make Nabilak work. Not work. Prospero say come sit lagoon.

Anna: What work do you have to do?

Nab: Chop wood, lots of wood. Not work. Sit.
 Anna: Do you know this woman in the forest?
 Nab: Not go forest, laughs at me. But not other one.
 Lia: Which other one?
 Nab: Pretty...with Prospero. Daugh...daughter.
 Anna: Is the daughter nice?
 Nab: Prospero stole mother's island.
 Lia: *Whisper to Annataya.* Ask where they can be found.
 Anna: Where can we find them? Where do they live?
 Nab: Over there by mountain.
 Lia: Where by the mountain?
 Nab: In cave.
 Anna: Do you know how to get to this cave?
 Nab: Follow path.
 Anna: Can you show us how to get there?
 Nab: Follow Nabilak, Nabilak show you. What wrong with this one.

Scene 7:

Zak: Ah, Fortune. *Tap Fortune on the shoulder.*
 DM: **(Fade to green)** Suspicion about the Duke is growing. Can he be trusted? Is he telling the truth? Who is this Prospero? Zak suspects something but Nabilak's effect on her is still too strong. She cannot deal with this.
 Zak: The daw-yaw Duke is lagging behind.
 Fort: Your Grace, could you walk any faster? You will soon lose sight of us if you don't keep up.
 Duke: I will not.
 Fort: We cannot afford to split up, your Grace, please keep up.
 Duke: Do not propose to speak so informal to me madam. I will go nowhere that I do not wish.
 Fort: Your Grace...
 Duke: No, I am the Duke. You are in my employ. I shall remain here with Ona Fets. You all must go ahead.
 Fort: Listen your Grace, you hired us to protect you and we cannot do that...
 Duke: At the moment you are not doing a good job. Lead on!
 Fort: Ona Fets won't be of much use. We cannot do our job if you do not stay close.
 Lian: What in the name of Olidamara is going on. We're going to lose you if you don't keep up.
 Fort: The Duke refuses to go to the mountain.
 Lian: Huh, he does? I wonder why? Do you know this Prospero?
 Duke: I am a Duke. I refuse to go where I don't want to. Mark me, I shall not go.
 Lian; Look, I'm tired of all this market haggling. Why won't you go?
 Duke: I don't have to explain myself.
 Lian: What are you scared of?
 Duke: Scared madam? I am afraid of nothing.
 Fort: There is obviously something at the end of this path that you do not want to meet. What is it?
 Lian: Listen here. I don't care if you want to or not but you are coming now! If you do not come there will be no one to protect you.

Duke: Know this, Prospero is my enemy. You need to protect me from him. He was the Duke before me but plotted against the King. Protect me from my brother, he is my enemy.

Lia: Well we are here, so maybe we should visit your lost brother for a late lunch. I mean some food wouldn't kill anybody, would it?

Fort: We are still here to protect you. Do you think we will not do our job?

DM: The path ends at a cave entrance. A huge pile of wood stacked at the one side. Nabilak points them in but refuses to enter himself.

Scene 8:

(fade to red and blue)

DM: On entering Prospero's cave they are met by Idref and Prospero's daughter, Adnarim. They are surprised to be greeted by Adnarim: 'Welcome, you must be friends of my beloved Idref. My father is expecting you. This way to his study. Everybody enters Prospero's study cautiously. The Duke and Ona Fets stay at the back. Prospero greets the new arrivals: Dear friends, I have been expecting you. You have many questions to ask of me... At this point the Duke suddenly draws his sword and charges at Prospero. *(Annataya knocked over by Duke.)*

Duke: This is the end Prospero!
(Lia get in between Duke and Prospero. Fortune corners Duke from behind. Fortune and Lia try to tie the Duke up.)

Fort: What is going on?

Lia: Why do you attack your brother?

DM: Wait! This is not the planned ending. This is not dangerous adventure. Do it my way.
(Pull Zak be up) You be Prospero, I'll be the Duke, places! (everybody back in position.)

Prosp: Dear friends, I have been expecting you. You have many questions to ask of me...
(DM charges at Prospero, Annataya knocked over by Duke.)

Duke: This is the end Prospero!
(Lia stop DM/Duke with sword/grab and tie up cloak. DM and Zak runs to back.)

DM: Prospero casts a spell of darkness! **(Blackout)**

Zak: Where's Prospero? Ouch, damn

DM: Annataya and Liandrin casts spells of light! **(Lights on)**

Lian: Prospero! Points up. Stay!
Stop this. This can't go on.

DM: Ona Fets attacks Fortune from behind.

Fort: Coward!
(Fortune defends herself and kills Ona Fets.)

DM: He dies. *(Rush up to cue Idref.)* Idref enters unexpectedly and panics!

Lia: Idref! What is happe...
(Idref wound Lia)

DM: Nabilak suddenly enters the cave and attacks Idref! The unlucky Zak tries her best.
(Nabilak beats Zak up) Annataya casts a sleep spell on Nabilak. (Nabilak falls asleep)

The Duke has wriggled himself loose and tries to get at Prospero again.
(Liandrin gets in the way, is tripped by the Duke.)

Lian: This is not working!
(Fortune tries to stop the Duke.)

DM: Prospero takes control and a powerful spell of destruction fells the Duke.

Anna: Prospero, stop this!

DM: 'This is the end, no more, please.' Pleads Adnarim with her father. With loving eyes he turns to her: 'My precious. I did not want to hurt you. I can heal your beloved.'

Fort: The Duke and Ona Fets?

DM: They are beyond my powers.

Lian: What's happening?

DM: Prospero and his daughter were banished by an evil brother to this island where they were kept by magic and isolation. Now we can leave. All of us, but this island demands to hold all magic back.

Lian: How can we leave then?

DM: Exhaust all the powers you have and leave all else behind and then depart quickly.

Lia: Do we go then?

DM: *(To Zak.)* Speak as Prospero.

Prosp: Now my magic charms are all overthrown and I have only my own strength left. But I cannot be confined here anymore. I must go back to Limona to take possession of my Dukedom. The deceiver has been revealed by the spell of this barren island. But I am released from here where I was bound with the help of your good hands. Your gentle breath will fill our sails. Let us leave all mystical power and let us be gone from here.

Anna: Once, one thing to unhappen. Is it worth a small item of magic? Or does the future hold greater need and more adventure?

DM: Come, let us leave all mystical power behind in the world of Rugua. Let us return to the reality of our own world.

(Houselights up)
 Let us be gone from here. *(Simultaneously actors de-role, bow and walk out.)*

Addendum B

Adventure 2

Trouble from the guest in room 9 in The Black Pig Inn

Chronology of events:

In the middle of the night a strange guest (a Tiefling Mage Level 4) arrives.

In the early morning hours the Mage summons a number of monsters (3 Flamebrother Salamanders) who knocks him unconscious and goes on a rampage through the Inn.

Flamebrother (Tom) proceed to the washroom and surprises an unsuspecting merchant who is killed.

Dawn and the PC's awake with a start.

Flamebrother (Dick) proceed to the kitchen where he kills the cook.

Flamebrother (Harry) proceed to the tavern where he kills the stable boy who was busy mopping the floor.

Jermin barricades himself in his quarters.

Enter the Adventure when all the PC's are sleeping. Make an alertness check against Wisdom to see who would wake up (DC 15). If a PC wakes up and looks into the courtyard they will see the following.

A coach have pulled into the courtyard. Quite a few lanterns are lit so you can see the scene quite clearly. Jermin is running around in a night shirt and boots and the stable boy is busy unhitching four black horses. The coach driver is busy unloading luggage from the coach and carrying it to one of the rooms. In the light from the spilling from the room you can see the silhouette of a tall figure.

If the PC's approach Jermin he will shoo them back to bed and tell them not to bother important guests. If they approach the guest he will close the door and not open it again.

The stable boy knows nothing and the coach driver knows a lot but is a mute. If the PC's make a noise the other guest, a merchant, will wake up and complain and Jermin will threaten them back to bed.

At dawn when they awake the PC's are aware of the following:

Something awakes you suddenly (The merchant's scream) The atmosphere seems still. Normally you can hear activity in the courtyard but this morning everything seems strangely quiet. As you wait you hear two screams shortly after one another. The screams don't last very long.

The door of room 9 is broken and shows scorch marks. Inside the room the furniture has been move to the walls and a magical diagram is drawn on the floor. In the corner is the unconscious body of Belu Tatbo a Tiefling Mage. He has been knocked unconscious by a magical whiplash and will regain consciousness in one hour. His spellbook is lying next to him on the ground, badly burned. The only spell left that is readable is Flare.

Belu Tatbo (7 feet tall, dark reddish skin colour, no hair)
Wizard level 4, Chaotic Evil, HP 19, Initiative +1, Str 10, Dex 13, Con, 10, Int, 13, Wis 11, Cha 8, Bluff +1, Hide +3, Move Silently +2, Pick Pocket +3, Weapon Finesse Rapier, Resistance to fire, cold, electricity, Attack bonus +2, Fortitude +3, Reflex +4, Will +6, Spells: **Darkness**, **Ray of Frost**, Detect Magic, Read Magic, **Flare**, Summon Monster I, Unseen Servant, **Obscuring Mist**, Hold Portal, Summon Monster II, **Summon Swarm**, XP 1350. Only the spells in bold are available to Belu.

Possessions: Sneaking Potion, Detect Thoughts Potion, Aid Potion, Ring of Protection (+1 AC), Magic Missile Wand, Detect Secret Doors Wand, Hand of the Mage and 150 GP.

The Flamebrother (Tom) in the washroom will stay there and meet the PC's first. If they go somewhere else he will make his way from room 8 to room 1 and also end up in the Tavern.

Flamebrother (Dick) will stay in the kitchen, making small fires and eating raw food. If the PC's takes long getting to him he will start ransacking the store rooms and might eventually end up in the stable where he will scare the horses into a panic.

Flamebrother (Harry) will stay in the Tavern and start drinking from the beer in the Tavern.

Flamebrother (Tom):

Chaotic evil, HP 16, Init. +1, Speed 20, AC 19, Attacks: Halfspear +5/1d6+1 and fire 1d6, Tail slap +3/1d4 and fire 1d6, Fort +4, Ref, +4, Will +5, Hide +9, Listen +7, Search +7, Spot +7, Treasure: none. XP 600 each.

Flamebrother (Dick):

Chaotic evil, HP 12, Init. +1, Speed 20, AC 19, Attacks: Halfspear +5/1d6+1 and fire 1d6, Tail slap +3/1d4 and fire 1d6, Fort +4, Ref, +4, Will +5, Hide +9, Listen +7, Search +7, Spot +7, Treasure: none. XP 600 each.

Flamebrother (Harry):

Chaotic evil, HP 14, Init. +1, Speed 20, AC 19, Attacks: Halfspear +5/1d6+1 and fire 1d6, Tail slap +3/1d4 and fire 1d6, Fort +4, Ref, +4, Will +5, Hide +9, Listen +7, Search +7, Spot +7, Treasure: none. XP 600 each.

Mute Coach Driver

Commoner, XP 100

Addendum C

1

CAMPAIGN		SPELLS			
<div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between;"> 1000 EXPERIENCE POINTS </div>		<div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between;"> <div> SPELL SAVE <input type="checkbox"/> DC MOD </div> <div> NUMBER OF SPELLS KNOWN (BARD & SORCERERS ONLY) 1st 2 3rd 4th 5th </div> </div>			
GEAR		SPELLS			
ITEM	ITEM	SPELL SAVE DC	LEVEL	SPELLS PER DAY	BONUS SPELLS
			0	6	0
			1ST	4	1
			2ND		
			3RD		
			4TH		
			5TH		
			6TH		
			7TH		
			8TH		
			9TH		
		Read Magic ✓✓ Detect Magic ✓✓ Fly or Float ✓✓ Light ✓✓ Sleep ✓✓ Shield ✓✓ Flame ✓✓			
MONEY		LANGUAGES			
gold pieces 16 + 20 advance +5 silver pieces 160					
		SPECIAL ABILITIES/FEATS Toughness Maximise spell Owl - familiar			
		NOTES Smoking potion Acid potion Magic missile wand detect secret doors wand 1/2 burnt spellbook (1 spell = darkness) Anything that happens in future (can whoppen it)			

Addendum D

date: ____/____/2002

Questionnaire 1: BASIC DETAILS of PLAYER CHARACTER

(for MA research in Drama Studies by GPB Janse van Vuuren, 201504950,
University of Natal, Pietermaritzburg)

Name: _____

Gender: _____ Age: _____

Birth date: (day) _____ (month) _____ (year) _____

Matriculation year: _____ School: _____

University courses registered for:

major: _____ major: _____

Previous qualifications: _____

Give details of recent drama experience: _____

What types of fiction do you read (Tick all applicable types):

___ Fantasy

___ Horror

___ Mystery

___ Historical

___ Science Fiction

___ Action/Adventure

___ Romance

___ Classical Literature

___ Other (specify): _____

Name your three current favourite television programs:

Name your three favourite films of all times:

Do you have any role-playing game experience: _____

If yes give details: _____

Addendum D

Combat Basics

ROUNDS

Combat is broken up into rounds. Each round, each combatant gets to do something. A round represents 6 seconds in the game world.

INITIATIVE

Before the first round, each player makes an initiative check for her character. The DM makes initiative checks for the monsters or foes. An initiative check is a Dexterity check ($1d20 + \text{Dexterity modifier}$). Characters act in order from highest initiative result to lowest, with the check applying to all rounds of the combat (unless a combatant takes an action that changes her initiative).

ATTACKS

You can move and make a single attack. Making a ranged attack provokes attacks of opportunity from threatening enemies (see below).

Attack Roll

To score a hit that deals damage on your attack roll, you must roll the target's Armor Class (AC) or better.

Melee Attack Roll: $1d20 + \text{base attack bonus} + \text{Strength modifier} + \text{size modifier} = \text{AC hit}$

Ranged Attack Roll: $1d20 + \text{base attack bonus} + \text{Dexterity modifier} + \text{size modifier} + \text{range penalty} = \text{AC hit}$

Damage

If you score a hit, roll damage and deduct it from the target's current hit points. Add your Strength modifier to damage from melee and thrown weapons. If you have a Strength penalty (not a bonus), add it to damage from bows and slings (but not crossbows). If you're using a weapon in your off hand, add half your Strength modifier (if it's a bonus). If you're wielding a weapon with both hands, add one and a half times your Strength modifier to the damage (if it's a bonus).

Armor Class (AC)

A character's Armor Class (AC) is the result you need to get on your attack roll to hit that character in combat.

Armor Class: $10 + \text{armor bonus} + \text{shield bonus} + \text{Dexterity modifier} + \text{size modifier}$

Hit Points

Hit points represent how much damage a character can take before falling unconscious or dying.

Attack Options

When attacking, you have several basic options:

Attack: You can move and make a single attack, or attack and move.

Charge: When making a charge, you move in a straight line for up to double your speed and then make one attack with a +2 charge bonus on the attack roll. You suffer a -2 charge penalty to your AC until your next action.

Full Attack: Some characters can strike more than once each melee round, but only when making a full attack. Other than taking a 5-foot step, you can't move when you make a full attack.

SPILLS

You can move and cast a single 1-action spell. Casting a spell provokes attacks of opportunity from threatening enemies (see below).

SAVING THROWS

When you are subject to an unusual or magical attack, you generally get a saving throw to negate or reduce its effect. To succeed at a saving throw, you roll a result equal to or higher than its Difficulty Class. Saving throws come in three kinds: Fortitude, Reflex, and Will.

Fortitude Saving Throw: $1d20 + \text{base save bonus} + \text{Constitution modifier}$

Reflex Saving Throw: $1d20 + \text{base save bonus} + \text{Dexterity modifier}$

Will Saving Throw: $1d20 + \text{base save bonus} + \text{Wisdom modifier}$

MOVEMENT

Each character has a speed measured in feet. You can move that distance as well as attack or cast a 1-action spell, and you can move before or after attacking or casting.

You can also make a double move, which lets you move double your speed, or a run, which lets you move quadruple your speed.

When you move in or away from an area that an enemy threatens, you provoke an attack of opportunity (see below) from that enemy.

Exceptions to these conditions for attacks of opportunity due to moving in or away from a threatened area include the following:

- If all that you do is move (but not run) during your turn, the space (generally about 5 feet across) that you start out in is not considered threatened, and therefore enemies do not get attacks of opportunity for you moving from that space. If you move into another threatened space, however, enemies get attacks of opportunity for you leaving it.
- If your entire move for the round is 5 feet (a 5-foot step), enemies do not get attacks of opportunity for you moving.

ATTACKS OF OPPORTUNITY

You threaten the area next to you, even when it's not your action. An enemy that takes certain actions while in a threatened area provokes an attack of opportunity from you. An attack of opportunity is a single attack, and you can only make one per round. Actions that provoke attacks of opportunity include moving (except as noted above in the Movement section), casting a spell, and attacking with a ranged weapon.

DEATH, DYING, AND HEALING

Your hit points represent how much damage you can take before being disabled, knocked unconscious, or killed.

0 Hit Points: If your hit points drop to 0, you are disabled. You can only take partial actions, and you take 1 point of damage after completing an action.

-1 to -9 Hit Points: If your hit points drop to from -1 to -9 hit points, you're unconscious and dying, and you lose 1 hit point per round. Each round, before losing that hit point, you have a 10% chance to stabilize. While stabilized, you're still unconscious. Each hour you have a 10% chance to regain consciousness, and if you don't, you lose 1 hit point instead.

-10 Hit Points: If your hit points fall to -10 or below, you're dead.

Healing: You can stop a dying character's loss of hit points with a successful Heal check (DC 15) or with even 1 point of magical healing. If healing raises a character's hit points to 1 or more, he can resume acting as normal.

MINIATURES

When you use miniatures to keep track of where the characters and monsters are, use a scale of 1 inch = 5 feet.