

Special points of interest:

"In social transactions, rackets are to be distinguished from games. A game is a social activity which regulates intimacy. Of and in themselves (contrary to some doctrinaires), games are not bad; are OK."



Inside this issue:

A Game has five moves Hook, Angle, Con, Gimmick, Payoff	1
<u>The Encounterer</u> Vol. 1, No.10 Game Moves Unraveled	2
Games are different from Rackets (Coercive Feelings)	3
Coercive Feelings (Psychological Rackets)	3
Game of "Stupid"	4

A Game has five moves: a Hook, Angle, Con, Gimmick, Payoff

Games are made up of five moves: Hook, Angle, Con, Gimmick, and Payoff. The Gimmick move is the name of the game. For example "Cool It," "Why Is This Always Happening to Me," "Stupid," "Father's Always Right," and others. Games are not bad. It's in the payoff, the conclusion of a game that defines the OK'ness. Saying or implying that a gimmick, wrinkle, or trick is not OK may in fact be a give away that the user does not know what he is talking about. Or that they like the spiffy sound of the term and use it to sound cool. Could be the user is playing the game of "Intellectual."

Playing games is not a bad thing, as if playing were a bad thing. Children play. People play with each other. The payoff of every game, the consequences, can conclude in of four ways: Get-on-with each other, get-away-from a person, get-rid-of a person, get-nowhere-with a person.

Most people loose track of the payoff, because their Child is in control. This does not have to be. The payoff can be decided on ahead of time with Adult programmed precision, allowing for Child satisfaction (and without loosing your friends).

Understanding games is crucial for overcoming many of the handicaps we as humans deal with every day, with

ourselves and with others. Games are OK.

Games are OK. Eric Berne wrote "The most gratifying forms of social contact, whether or not they are embedded in the matrix of activity, are games and intimacy ...; significant social intercourse most commonly takes the form of games" Berne's studies dealt mostly with games played with each other at the unconscious level. He writes "What we are concerned with here, however, are the unconscious games played by innocent people engaged in duplex transactions of which they are not fully aware, and which form the most important aspect of social life all over the world. Because of their dynamic qualities, games are easy to distinguish from mere static attitudes, which arise from taking a position."

Dr. Ernst's studies were a follow on to assist in bringing games into the conscious level of activity. He shows what's happening in the paper titled "The Game Diagram." He writes "A game is a recurring set of ulterior transactions. At some point in his sequenced (ulterior) transactions the player becomes committed to fully playing out his game. Before this commitment, the player can back himself off from playing his game, discontinue playing his game."

If we are to reach for the stars, to travel to distant stars, without mankind destroying itself first, we must be AWARE of ourselves, and the games people play. The tools are here and they are now.

- Game Moves: Hook, Angle, Con, Gimmick, Payoff.
- Recycling of Game Moves
- Payoff Options
- Racket Payoffs
- Payoff and Intensity (Degree) of a Game.

Ernst writes: "the first time a person has played the Gimmick move of his game, it is very unlikely he will forsake the search for one of the four qualities of payoff event. Each pre-payoff move of a game, whether Hook, the Angle, the Con, or the Gimmick move may be played through any number of times prior to payoff. Once a commitment to duplicity is made by a person, the other person (whether patient, therapist, or social acquaintance) does well to take note of this fact and then see if events can be influenced in order to regulate the quality and intensity of that reciprocated payoff event conducive to his own reasoned objectives." See "The Game Diagram."



The Encounterer Vol. 1, No. 10 : Game Moves Unraveled

The following is an early presentation of game moves in Vol. 1, No. 10 of The Encounterer, edited by FH Ernst Jr., M.D.

FORMULATION: GAME MOVES UNRAVELED: SEQUENTIAL, PREDICTABLE, LOGICAL, TEACHABLE. Original Contribution to the Theory and Practice of Transactional Analysis. Those who have read "Games People Play" by E. Berne will recognize that various terms have been used in that text to describe different classes of moves in games; each term is well defined. The complexity not previously unraveled has been in learning what, if any, sequential nature was inherent to a game from player to player and from game to game. As a game spotter recognizes, a name presented by a new player in a group will have complexities that at first almost defy description. Up to this reporting no one has been able to define how these moves of games are related, i.e. so that a "student" of games could, with the encoded information, then as a proprietor of his own therapy shop, decode and interpret a game for his own patient.

There are four major categories of moves in a game and as played in games, these moves in sequence are:

1. The Hook Come on, Engagement
2. The Maneuver - Con, Artful Play, Angling procedure
3. The Gimmick - Trick, Wrinkle

4. The PayOff - Ulterior (Hidden) motive, Jackpot, Reward.

The complexities of games are explained here by what is termed "The Recycling Phenomenon." This means that any one move or any sequence of moves can be and often is repeated. TO SCHEMATIZE: see diagram below

If the Hook does not hook it can be repeated. If the Gimmick does not get a Payoff, the Gimmick alone or the Maneuver-Gimmick sequence or the Hook-Maneuver-Gimmick sequence can be repeated, etc.

In the two-sided game "Why don't you...?" (one side), "Yes, but..." (the other) the "Yes, but" player usually offers as his HOOK "I gotta (troubling) problem." This is followed by the would be "Why don't you..." player's responsive counter-HOOK (eg, "Oh: What is it?") The "Yes, but..." then gives a statement ending with a pause. This statement-pause MANEUVER, has more than one part (as do most game MANEUVERS). The first part is the agreeable statement ("Yes" is agreeable), the 2nd part is the pause. Once "Why don't you...?" is coming or, the "Yes, but..."er is seen fielding the suggestions with agreeable sounding "Yes...."s and a slight pause (replay of MANEUVER), followed by the GIMMICK of sitting out the offering with a "but" (or "however" or "although," etc). Ref the pause: these two words, "Yes, But," are not slurred by players. The "but" may be hidden in the midst

of other words after the "Yes." The "but" (word) is differently toned from the "Yes" and the "yes, but" player is changing posture across the comma between the "yes" and the "but." The "but" trick is often accompanied with a smile. The PAYOFF does not occur until everybody gives-up and that "give-up" by others is the PAYOFF. Another "Why don't you?" regularly initiates a recycling of the Maneuver to Gimmick sequence.

It may take 5 or 500 recyclings before the PAYOFF.

To teach the logic of game moves means to teach that the patient in a group uses different postures, gestures, tones, word cadence for each category of move in his game.

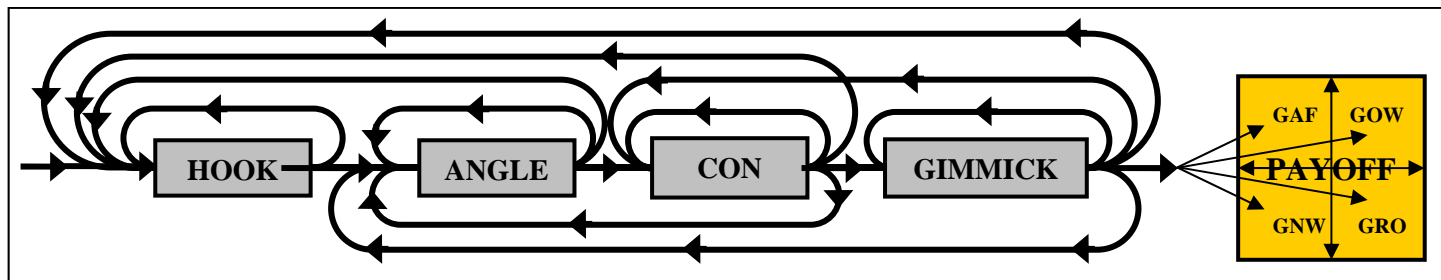
To summarize: A people-game, as played, proceeds through a sequential series of steps: HOOK > MANEUVER > GIMMICK > PAYOFF

It is not a game until a PAY-OFF is forthcoming. At any step of the way (interruption, delay, etc) the move sequence can be back-spaced one, two or three steps in the sequence and recycling (re)initiated. A GIMMICK directly precedes a PAYOFF, a MANEUVER precedes the GIMMICK and a HOOK has preceded them all: "A HOOK WAS THE START OF IT ALL!"

"The Game Diagram" by F.H. Ernst Jr., M.D.



"Games People Play" by Eric Berne, M.D.



Games are different from Rackets (Coercive Feelings)

In social transactions, rackets are to be distinguished from games. A game is a social activity which regulates intimacy. It is one of the six ways of structuring time. Repetitively carried out, its elements are a seemingly reasonable opening objective, concealed motivation, ulterior transactions, gimmick (with a switch as part of this artful stratagem) ending with a payoff. A payoff is a bright, vivid

"moment of truth" when another one of your inside selves gets to come alive, when another set of feelings AND physiology gets to be exercised. Of and in themselves (contrary to some doctrinaires), games are not bad, are OK (see "TA Bulletin" 9:35, 84-86, July 1970, edited by E. Berne, MD), the payoff being the element to selectively control. The strokes of games furnish the psychological bread of life

and games structure between 30% and 60% of people's lives. The payoffs of games, the denouements, can be classified into four varieties: Get-On-With, Get-Away-From, Get-Rid-Of and Get-Nowhere-With.

RACKETS are different.

Racketeers are recognized by the techniques and skills they have developed. Racketeers can easily turn on and off their non-authentic displays of dramatic emotional (feeling) behavior. Racketeers bring themselves to the center of attention (on stage) while all other activities and social action pale into insignificance. Also characteristic of a psychological racketeer (while displaying his coercive feelings) is the skill he/she has for recruiting allies and intimidating others.

Coercive Feelings (Psychological Rackets)



"Coercive Feelings, Psychological Rackets in the OK Corral" by F.H. Ernst Jr., M.D.

A "coercive feeling" is one which places a burden, (blame for the feeling) on the other person, for example: "You make me feel guilty." Feelings which can be used for coercive purposes include: Tears, Rage, Anger, Guilt, Desperation, Anxiety, Helpless, Tired, Confused, Scared, and Hurt. Eric Berne M.D. called coercive feelings "rackets." "Coercive Feelings - Psychological Feelings in the OK Corral" describes how to understand, diagram, and handle psychological rackets, i.e. emotional blackmail, coercive feelings.

A psychological racket is a repetitively displayed, coercive emotion with fraudulent and intimidating qualities which is designed to bring about the outward consent of the other person.

A racket may be defined phenomenologically, operationally, and pragmatically.

Phenomenologically a psychological

racket is better termed as a coercive feeling.

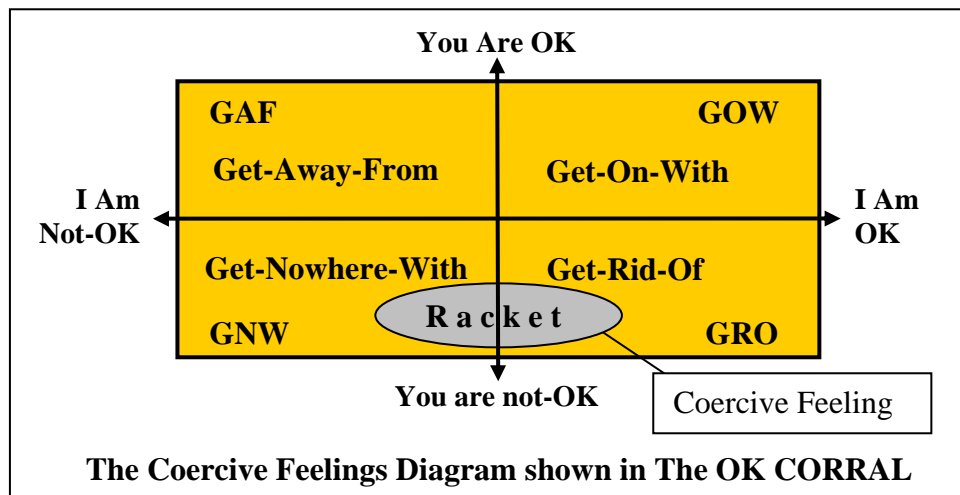
Operationally a psychological racket is a repetitive emotional display lacking authenticity which also prevents emotional displays by other parties in the vicinity, victimizing the recipient (victim) and restricting the responder's choices to either inaction or avoidance.

Pragmatically a psychological racket is the display of a coercive emotion which places a burden on the party at whom it is directed.

Note: Social encounters progress through a series of transactions. They are concluded by one of the four

methods of resolving social encounters:

- 1) Get-Away-From (GAF) which results from concluding the particular encounter with I Am Not-OK and You Are OK;
- 2) Get-On-With (GOW) which results from the encounter concluding with I Am OK and You Are OK;
- 3) Get-Nowhere-With (GNW) which comes from concluding a social event with I Am Not-OK and You Are Not-OK; or
- 4) Get-Rid-Of (GRO) which comes from closing an encounter with an I Am OK and You Are Not-OK.





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Franklin "Harry" Ernst III, Editor

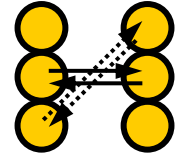
P.O. Box 3009

Vallejo, California 94590

Phone: 707/643-5100

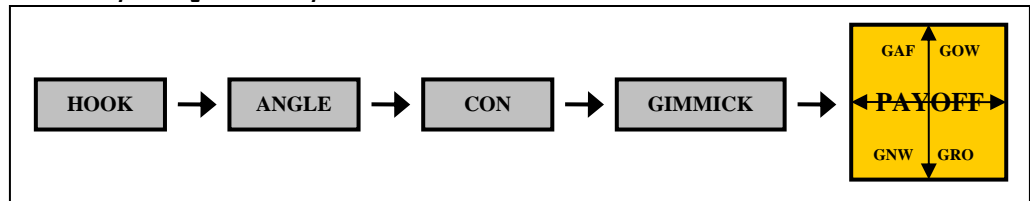
Fax: 707/644-6358

E-mail: harryernst@a03news.cnc.net



A game is defined as a recurring set of transactions with ulterior transactions, concealed motivation, a gimmick, and a payoff. Eric Berne, M.D. used a particular variation of the duplex transactional diagram to represent the ulterior aspects of a game. Berne added the concept of switch in 1966 and introduced "The Game Formula." $\text{Con} + \text{Gimmick} = \text{Response} > \text{Switch} > \text{Payoff}$

The "Ernst Game Diagram" as described by Franklin H. Ernst Jr., M.D. in his paper "The Game Diagram" shows the phenomena of the variableness of a game and number of variations without contradicting "Berne's Game Formula." The Game Diagram has five moves: Move #1-Hook, Move #2-Angle, Move #3-Con, Move #4-Gimmick, Move #5-Payoff. Diagrammatically it looks like this:



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"Mastery of the universe is proportional to the symbols man has by which to represent his universe."

The Game of "Stupid"

The moves of the game of "Stupid" are (1) full bright, (2) half bright, (3) quarter bright, (4) blank out, (5) payoff.

Some people play the game to frustrate teachers, some to avoid giving an answer, and some use it as a means of political expediency. It is inadvisable for an accountant to play this game with his client.

A friend of mine described an encounter where he went in to see his accountant about getting a California Income Tax return finalized. The reason the accountant gave for signing the return is that "according to the 1978 tax law" he reads he must sign it. My friend commented that his previous accountant had not felt required to sign it. "That must have been before 1978." My friend denied that, couldn't

recall what the name of the firm was but it was one of the "Big 8." My friend's accountant named all of them except the one that counted, Price-Waterhouse. "This was the first play of stupid and I stayed with being confused, stupid myself also. My next procedure was to move the conversation over onto local politics. He 'did not go to City Hall, either, last night.' Then I recalled City Hall was not last night, but the night before, to which he also promptly corrected himself. (This was highly reminiscent of another acquaintance play with me some 5 years ago reference not seeing him for so long, oh dear my mistake, just three days ago, with him agreeing in return correspondence to each step of my play.) Next the accountant moved the conversation over to Mike Gage, reference redistricting. I let this

go. He brought up McQuaide, Sebastiani. I brought up Asera-Sebastiani race and let him continue. Then he brought up Vic Fazio as our previous representative. Eventually when he ran out of 'things to say' on that I gently corrected him that Hannigan is our current representative in the Assembly. He started to argue, but in just enough intensity so as to encourage me to be challenged and correct him, which I did."

"During this set of transactions he was tighter faced, a tinge red-eyed. I thought to myself that these actions on his part were truly unbelievable. Here was a guy who on previous occasions had been so very up to date on just the very widest assortment of political events, without fail, never in error on anything. I did collect a \$99

(To be continued)

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