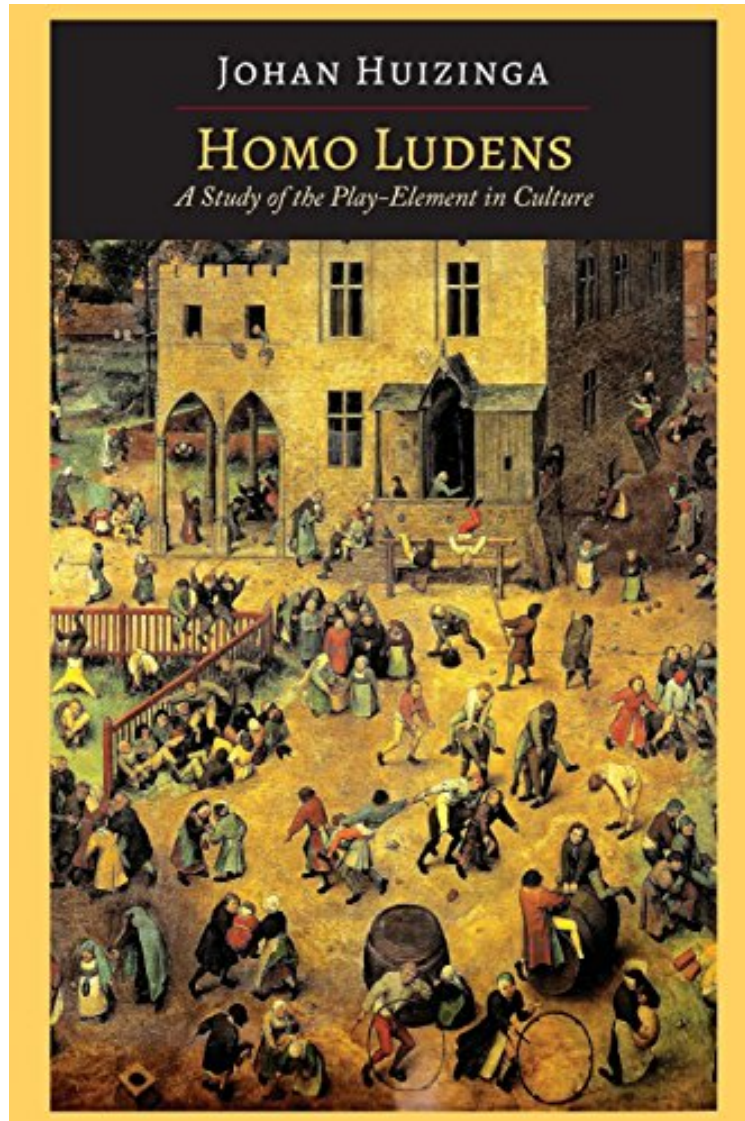


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# Homo Ludens: A Study of the Play-Element in Culture

Johan Huizinga

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**Johan Huizinga : Homo Ludens: A Study of the Play-Element in Culture** before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Homo Ludens: A Study of the Play-Element in Culture:

2 of 2 people found the following review helpful. A Playful Guide For Those Seeking The Craft of Ritual By Jonathan Cook In Homo Ludens, Johan Huizinga makes the case that the ability and appetite for play is a defining characteristic of humanity. Huizinga describes play as an essential pillar of civilization, present in our art, our law, and even in our war. He writes about the idea of play playfully, looking for common themes in the many meanings embedded in the

concept of play, rather than restricting himself to a single definition. The fluidity of play, as Huizinga sees it, allows it to course through theater, gambling and politics alike. It's all in the game. Present day game theorists may quibble with Huizinga's idea of the magic circle that encompasses play, saying that the circle is really a square, or that it is contained by more of a dotted line than by an absolute boundary, but these are the arguments of academics who themselves have forgotten how to play with ideas, and find themselves struggling to find anything of their own to say under the deadlines of publish-or-perish. In the competition between useful ideas, their critiques lose to Huizinga's vision without putting up much of a fight. Video game designers are among the most enthusiastic readers of *Homo Ludens* these days. They would do well to attend to Huizinga's link of play in general, and games in particular, to ritual. A ritual understanding of the player experience with video games could lead to surprising, entertaining, and profitable developments in the game industry.

5 of 5 people found the following review helpful. Play isn't just for fun  
By Laurence Chalem I don't know how anyone can read this book and think it is a terrible translation. This book was poetic and playful itself as it delved into the subject. I read it because it was recommended as the book on the subject by Robert Bellah in his compendious book entitled *RELIGION IN HUMAN EVOLUTION*. Well, Robert is correct, *HOMO LUDENS* is the authoritative read on the subject. And quite a fine example of writing too. Elegant, eloquent, and artful, though I did need to have a dictionary handy. Again, how anyone can think the translation is of poor quality is beyond my understanding because of the vocabulary used. It is definitely of high quality. This is one of those life-changing books that is hard to put down, and when it's over, you wish there was more. Play in its highest form for sure. Highly recommended... - lc0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Classic treatise  
By David R. Ewoldsen The book is dated but still a classic treatment of the role of play in culture. It still influences research on play and games despite its age.

2014 Reprint of 1955 Edition. Full facsimile of the original edition. Not reproduced with Optical Recognition Software. In "*Homo Ludens*," the classic evaluation of play that has become a "must-read" for those in game design, Dutch philosopher Johan Huizinga defines play as the central activity in flourishing societies. Like civilization, play requires structure and participants willing to create within limits. Starting with Plato, Huizinga traces the contribution of "*Homo Ludens*," or "Man the player" through Medieval Times, the Renaissance, and into our modern civilization. Huizinga defines play against a rich theoretical background, using cross-cultural examples from the humanities, business, and politics. "*Homo Ludens*" defines play for generations to come.