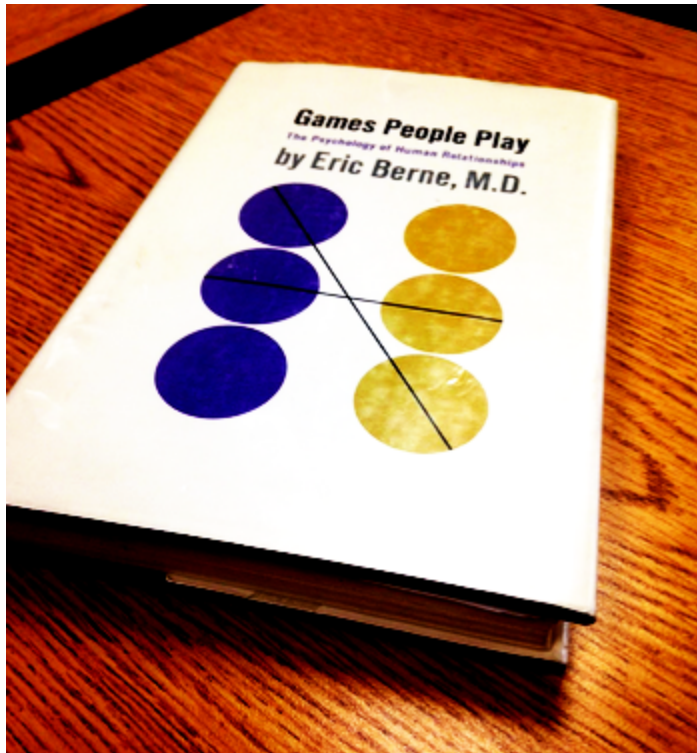


## RESEARCH ASSESSMENT 2: GAMES PEOPLE PLAY

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DATE: 09/15/16

SOURCES: Berne, Eric, MD. Games People Play; the Psychology of Human Relationships. New York: Grove, 1964. Print.



### ANALYSIS:

This 1964 novel revolutionized the way we look at and understand even the most rudimentary social interactions. Games People Play: The Psychology of Human Relationships by Dr. Eric Berne, "exposes the secret ploys and unconscious maneuvers that rule our lives." When it was first released, Games People Play made a lasting impression. Now, Dr. Berne's bestseller is widely recognized as one of the most influential and popular psychology books. Since it was released, five million copies have been sold. So what exactly is the book about? Games People Play details dysfunctional and

functional social interactions in the following two main ways. First, he describes the Parent, the Adult, and the Child, our three egos as well as transactional analysis. In the second part, he discusses various psychological games, a total of thirty six, that individuals engage in on a day to day basis.

A main aspect of the Games People Play is the concept of transactional analysis in psychotherapy. Transactional analysis is a psychoanalytic theory that Dr. Eric Berne created and proposed in 1957. The theory was influenced by psychologist Sigmund Freud but is still quite different. In fact, Berne challenged various Freudian concepts in other writings. In a book written before Games People Play called Transactional Analysis in Psychotherapy, Berne "introduced a unified system of individual and social psychiatry, using group therapy as the basic method and the analysis of games as a major element in treatment." In much simpler terms, transactional analysis is a method of therapy where social interactions, or 'games' are analyzed thoroughly as a way to understand human behavior. Transactions are defined as a

unit of social intercourse, and transactional analysis of that unit. In clinical therapy, patients are taught to alter their ego state as a method to solving emotional problems. In *Games People Play*, Dr. Berne discusses this concept in relation to games and allows people to attain a degree of self-awareness by teaching them how to analyze their own behavior. It is important to note that, there are three major concepts in transactional analysis; structural analysis, and game analysis.

As mentioned earlier, the first part of transactional analysis is understanding the structural analysis or the three egos. The three ego states are the following: the Adult, the Parent, and the Child. The technical names for these three states are neopsychic, extero-psychic, and archaopsychic respectively. Each individual has these three ego states though everyone's is varied to some degree. The Adult ego state is geared toward objective appraisal of reality. The Adult state is needed for survival because it processes data and interprets probabilities which are essential for dealing with the outside world. This state is a learned state, and draws mostly from observation. The next ego state, the Parent, is when an individual unconsciously thinks and behaves like their parents or how they interpret their parental figure(s) would have acted. This state is taught by parental figures and is not innate. The ego state has two forms, direct and indirect. The Parent allows individuals to function as an actual parent to a child and allows for automatic responses. Example: Things are done a specific way because that is how it's done. The last state is the Child state and is when a person behaves, feels, and thinks how they did when they were younger, in their childhood. The Child also has two forms, adapted Child and natural Child. Creativity, intuition, enjoyment, and spontaneity stem from the Child state. Comprehending each ego state is important to the next step of structural analysis which is to understand and be able to identify when different ego states are being utilized. If an individual understands which of their ego states emerges during specific life interactions, they can make changes to dispose of unwanted patterns of behavior and address their own behavior. To make more sense of this concept, here is a basic example from the book.

Salesman: "This one is better, but you can't afford it."

Housewife: "That's the one I'll take."

As you can see through this interaction, the salesman stated two facts as an Adult. The housewife's Adult response would be to agree with both statements. However, the Child has taken over and influences the housewife to "show that arrogant fellow I'm as good as any of his customers."

The next section describes the fascinating concept of game analysis. According to Dr. Berne, "people tend to live their lives by consistently playing out certain "games" in their interpersonal relationships. These games- if they are not destructive- are both desirable and necessary." Berne describes up to thirty six game and even more past times. It's important to note that new games are constantly appearing and old games disappearing. There are seven types of games: life games, marital games, party

games, sexual games, underworld games, consulting room games, and good games. The following table provides type of game, name and a brief description of my favorite three games.

Name	Description
IF IT WEREN'T FOR YOU	A woman marries a domineering man so that the man will restrict her activities and keep her from getting into situations that frighten her.
AIN'T IT AWFUL	A person talks about how a misfortune has occurred to an acquaintance without really caring too much.
WHY DON'T YOU - YES BUT	Original stimulus for concept of games. Making excuses when presented a solution by others.

\_\_\_Marital Game\_\_\_

\_\_\_Party Game\_\_\_