

I. Introduction: A Personal Context

Originally, I had decided to write this as a devotional piece on my birthday—which is July 13. I wrote to all the Gods, not knowing who would answer, and then—which came in fragments of looking at words and ideas in suspicion... I got entropy instead. It's been nearly a year since then, two months now likely until then; much has happened and I'm a slightly different person now than I was before. Depression is something that I still feel occasionally even when things are going well. This will be a bit of high domain but I've dipped into signal processing, information theory, and learning about entropy. I used to be a game designer; now, I am more a systems architect with specialist knowledge of how entropy behaves.

Whereupon reflecting on many things in the past now makes sense, and I've learned to trust my intuition. Which has been hard because it's a matter of: what's learned trauma, what's risk, and what is crippling anxiety? These three things feel distinctively different where intuition is just knowing and trusting in the self. Anxiety clouds the mind and drives fears, and risk is something to be reflected upon before and after. Wherein depression is a type of trauma and a shade that is deeply ingrained.

The entropy that answered was not the chaos in the world, though it has been much apparent and senseless, but a glimpse and then a plunge into the entropy that governs and drives us. A more universal need, what came after Khaos and settled in Eris. Is (likely) a higher-order of Eris.

II. Happiness and the Presence of Divinity

Some weeks ago I was reading this piece on "[The divine are happy: appropriate attitudes to worshipping divinity](#)", which got me into learning a bit more about the history of the word ludic and well, I'm a Game Designer. In the essay they are arguing that similar to Judaism, happiness is key to receiving the presence of divinity in Hellenic religion. The mindstate of being happy is essential, and that the gods are always happy. Unlike in myths where it's depicted that Hera is always upset or Zeus is always wrathful. Although – going by the stories it's much easier to infer that lightning means Zeus is throwing his thunder bolts so therefore he is upset or wrathful towards someone or something. Which is more the case

Soul of Science: Homo-ludens, play & the theoi
Datorien Anderson

of taking a myth literally. As that is Zeus having his domain being over electricity.

Using evidence of Pax Deorum, where people were made to be happy to be in the mood to worship the gods. Christians who were hostile to Graeco-Roman polytheism used anti-pagan propaganda to discredit religious traditions in Rome. Festivals and other like events were associated with Graeco-Roman Gods and coincided with holidays—serving as the purpose to make the populace happy as a means of getting them into the proper attitudes to worship the Gods.

“This is alluded to in Augustine’s *The City of God*. Here, while writing against the Pagan author Cornelius Labeo, Augustine tells us that “now Labeo thinks . . . good deities [are to be propitiated] with plays, and all other things which are associated with joyfulness” (August. *De civitate Dei*, VIII.13). The Christian saint Isidore of Seville, meanwhile, reinforces this when he tries to speculate that the etymology of ludus is from *luses*, amusement, as they were festival days where performers would entertain the populace “with the excitement of games” (Isidore. *Orig.*, XVIII.xvi). It is “the amusement of young people in connection with festival days, temples, and religious ceremonies” (Isidore. *Orig.*, XVIII.xvi), and hence the origin of these spectacles, aimed at exciting and making a populace happy, was “idolatry” (Isidore. *Orig.*, XVIII.xvi). These spectacles are fundamentally connected to paganism, as a synonym for them are Liberalia, in honor of the God Liber (i.e., Dionysos) (Isidore. *Orig.*, XVIII.xvi). “For this reason,” Isidore claims, “you should take note of the stain of the origin of spectacles, so that you may not consider as good what took its origin from evil” (Isidore. *Orig.*, XVIII.xvi), which from his point of view was Hellenic polytheism. He then goes over four categories of spectacle that are connected to paganism: gymnastic, circuses, gladiatorial games, and theatrical performances. It is important to note that Isidore of Seville is drawing these claims from actual pagan sources such as Marcus Terentius Varro (Isidore. *Orig.*, XVIII.xvi). We can thus conclude that spectacles such as ludi were aimed at amusing a populace during times of religious festivities to put them in the right collective mindset for worship, which would be essential for maintaining the Pax Deorum.”

AzoresHeliokles. (2021, August 9). *The divine are happy: Appropriate attitudes to worshipping divinity*. Hellenic Faith.

<https://hellenicfaith.com/2021/08/09/the-divine-are-happy-appropriate-attitudes-to-worshipping-divinity/>

When designing video games—as that is a central idea and going to be the next topic in a meaningful way, it’s important that while yes—a game should be “fun” but the type of fun needed is dependent on the genre and what the intended goal of the game is—how the rules align to achieving that goal, the harmony–flow state. Like Pax Decorum is when getting the populace ready to worship and be the correct mindset.

Being a game designer, learning about this has allowed me to freely think differently about how different spaces of worship curate the mindset of people when they are actively worshipping. The most powerful is when people are happy and productive (though productive doesn’t mean working to the bone), but happy and productive to themselves and then to the faith when they partake in the festivities or ritual worship.

I believe it is important to understand and comprehend the way that joy is therein taken away in modern worship, usually for submission. If happiness allows for the most receptive mind then it’s the truest input and output of whether the faith feels right and is being received correctly is therein with happiness. If it’s not then, that means the mind wasn’t as receptive so, it was only partially or somewhat received. Think of a signal losing fidelity from interference.

Here’s an anecdote: as weird as it sounds when I had done something that I finally felt proud of myself to do. I wanted to run and tell Apollo as if he were a constant that I literally talk too—the first person, I wanted to tell in my joy of creation. Though I did feel odd because that was my first instinct? I haven’t thought of the Sunflower boy seriously in over months. I remember I just sunk further in the chair like dammit. It wasn’t Eros, Aphrodite, or Athena or Hephaestus if I had to pick one. But importantly, it wasn’t a living, tangible person I wanted to tell first.

III. The Ludic Dimension: Play as Essential

While the emphasis on suffering in certain Abrahamic traditions has undeniably inspired remarkable art—take the Sistine Chapel, for instance—I find myself drawn instead to Johan Huizinga’s concept of *Homo Ludens*, which posits that play is fundamental not only to learning but also to our spiritual lives. This view aligns with Hellenic practices, where happiness was considered essential to communing with the gods. Life is suffering enough at points, why compound the terror and anguish? Are we matching religion to what we

Soul of Science: Homo-ludens, play & the theoi
Datorien Anderson

endure as humans, or to what we are capable of becoming? What does it do to a mind when play is subverted or cast aside? What happens to the mind when play is subverted, cast aside, or ritualized only in suffering? Joy and Play must be permitted to speak.

Several years ago, I encountered Huizinga's *Homo Ludens* (1938) and, more recently, Gordon Calleja's essay on "Ludic identities and the magic circle," both of which deepen our understanding of how play shapes identity, creativity, and social bonds. Around the same time, I also dabbled in Ergodic Literature—though that's less relevant here—and found the same underlying message: nearly all living beings engage in play, especially those with higher intelligence.

In *Homo Ludens*, Huizinga speaks of language, myth, and ritual as extensions of this ludic impulse. He famously states, "Play cannot be denied. You can deny, if you like, nearly all abstractions: justice, beauty, truth, goodness, mind, God. You can deny seriousness, but not play." This statement underscores that even something like video games—often dismissed as "just entertainment"—is in fact a serious endeavor in its own right. With the proper *ludic circle* in place, we can teach and learn without dire real-world consequences, much like theater or mythological stories did in ancient times. In those tales, the gods' flaws or "faults" served as moral lessons, illustrating the consequences when play—whether philosophical, spiritual, or literal—goes absent or astray.

Such moral lessons are delivered through larger-than-life figures who are, paradoxically, made relatable enough to guide us. Most importantly, these mythical authorities often command more attention than everyday voices. After all, if someone won't heed advice from neighbors or family, they might listen to a divinity or hero who stands outside their immediate community—especially when that authority speaks through a memorable story rather than direct admonition.

Interestingly, this drive toward play—whether in humans, ravens, dolphins, or other highly intelligent species—relies on energy. Virtually every living organism uses ATP (adenosine triphosphate) to power its cells, including the physical and mental exertion involved in play. As intelligence increases, so does the complexity and frequency of playful behaviors. Observing these animals reminds us how integral play is for cognitive and social development, and how its role in human culture may be rooted in something as fundamental as the energy that underlies all life.

IV. Worship, Miasma, and Serious Play

One actionable—I believe that the focus on worship and bettering the self comes even greater with how technology is—we are Homo ludens sapien. Play becomes an outlet for ideas such as Miasma—a catharsis for negativity that latches. Abreaction for miasma. Fulfillment for delusions and megalomania. Play can become our “consecrated spot” or game-space, to learn more about life and have understanding in life itself (in terms of the atheist) and with how the gods may operate.

That said, as mentioned, being happy is a “receptive” state where we are more inclined to learn novel ideas and are receptive to truths. This is why a good trip is euphoric and can lead to life-changing results at times. Joy serves as a catalyst for curiosity—personally, if I’m happy I’m more likely to explore, experience, and question. In that way, I can understand why being happy is important because something such as ‘Pax Deorum’ puts worshippers in the right frame of mind for honoring the gods—ritual worship is a serious play endeavor. In learning to worship and learning how, we incorporate truths to our teaching such as not eating pork—(not me)—poorly cooked pork contains extremely harmful parasites that can thrive in the human body. But also, play is important – it’s how boundaries can be tested, skills are refined and when we seek to create meaning.

In a more historical sense -- what we have as "science" was once seen as "magic". Alchemy, astrology and early medicine were seen as magical. Similarly, game design can be viewed as a form of applied metaphysics. The meaning of metaphysics is "beyond physics" -- it deals with questions about existence, reality, and the nature of the universe. When designing games, we create a “magic circle”, a purposeful boundary where players (or participants) enter a mindset that makes learning and discovery feel as natural as hunger.

Interesting to note for the sake of Game Design being applied metaphysics. When creating a game engine that involves physics it requires making an extremely accurate to mostly-accurate simulated mathematical model of how the physics should work according to space-time of that magic circle, and the constraints of what space in ‘existence’ that the game has intended. How physics works in an simulated FPS that’s not hitscan such as using instanced projectiles (to simulate bullet drop, wind resistance, et cetera), a game like Human Fall-Flat, Dying Light 2, and a game such as Forza are all different types of magic circles where the physics are tweaked.

Soul of Science: Homo-ludens, play & the theoi
Datorien Anderson

Within this magic circle, play becomes a sacred or “consecrated spot” that can serve as an outlet for handling negativity (miasma) or for testing out big ideas like delusions or megalomania in a safe space. This is a glimpse of Homo ludens sapiens: humans who learn, explore, and grow through play. If happiness is divine, then ensuring that play is possible—in its many forms—helps us become more receptive to love, care, and whatever truths the world (or the gods) might reveal.

This is why a happy or euphoric state is so often a catalyst for curiosity—when we’re happy, we’re more inclined to explore, experiment, and ask daring questions. We can understand, then, why “being in the right frame of mind” matters in worship contexts—Pax Deorum put worshippers in a joyful mood to honor the gods, making ritual worship a form of serious play. Through such practices, people internalize truths that can even have practical benefits—like avoiding poorly cooked pork due to parasites—while also enjoying the playful aspect of communal festival life.

Similarly, science itself can be seen as a ludic or playful mindset—a meticulous system built around questioning, experimentation, and learning through trial and error. Lab experiments or thought experiments become controlled environments, a modern-day “magic circle” where hypotheses can be tested without catastrophic real-world consequences. In that sense, science *thrives* on playfulness: allowing tangents, hunches, and creative leaps. This is how aletheia (uncovered truth) emerges: by giving ourselves the freedom to try new things, rather than clinging too tightly to a rigid, Cartesian division between material and spiritual.

In an effort to understand what it could be that the Erote does in a more literal sense—the main Erote—Eros. As an act of unintended devotion, once, I had tried to make a matching pairs game where the player plays as an Erotus and they have to match pairs based on gender and sexual orientation. It’s interesting—it actually works—but creating the flying controls is what messed me up most. I might turn it into some type of... ‘modern, sneak’ type of thing thematically.

V. The Personal Journey: Science and Spirituality

Growing up in life, I’ve always been a misunderstood person and not for a lack of talking. Because I’m someone who is used to using logic and reason for understanding things. People I’ve called friends have only seen me as a person of science. But I’ve always been a

Soul of Science: Homo-ludens, play & the theoi
Datorien Anderson

spiritual person. Not inherently religious, most religions make me uncomfortable for safety reasons. I was born in a baptist community and have never been baptized. Going to church made me uncomfortable and I didn't like it. I became an atheist and being an atheist is the shortest period. Then most of my life I've been agnostic (but also ping-ponging between atheism and agnosticism) but I've found my home in Hellenism. I have never been a purely empirical person.

And this person who **was** my friend, couldn't comprehend that I called my ship in a game "Soul of Science". Like MY GUY Hephaestus, Hekate, Thoth, Hermes, Athena, Bridget, et cetera. Just because he's catholic and I guess only things of science and religion / spirituality are separate. Hephaestus created a machine of man whose name is Talos.

My ship's name is Helldiver's 2 and it is Soul of Science. It's perfectly Hellenistic. In such, I don't like modern Western dualism and the separation of spirituality and science due to the enlightenment period. In Hellenism, science is a gift of the gods -- it's sacred too. —science has a soul when it is pursued with curiosity, reverence for the unknown, and a desire to connect with something greater.

- Science explains how; spirituality explores why.
- Both seek truth but approach it from different angles.

So in the defense of the soul of science it's complementary. It annoys me in the same way that people I've met don't like it or find it iffy when fantasy magic and hard science especially coexists in the same realm. When in reality, magic would just be another discipline of science that's more of the study of metaphysics, the soul, and the illusions of reality.

It's like: Are you not driven by curiosity and wonders? Do you seek to understand the nature of the world? The soul of science is magic.

Before Hellenism and even during it, I've had moments where I seriously asked. Never got an answer. But I knew I wouldn't get an answer because that's irrational. I did have a serious moment some months ago (e.g, it's May 2025) where I was just rightly annoyed due to all the issues, and I remember going: "Where the hell are the gods?", "Why fuck did Zeus tell everyone to ditch the mortals? What's the purpose? This sucks." More being an annoyed, upset person due to recent events at the time more than anything.

Soul of Science: Homo-ludens, play & the theoi
Datorien Anderson

Yet... while I didn't get a thunderbolt—in my desire for learning and play I got something else. The desire to learn and understand non-deterministic probability. The word, “signal processing” kept catching my eye. I was curious as to what it was but never looked up because I didn't have time to learn new stuff at the moment. But once I was aware, it became recurring, then next thing I knew—I was deep into what I didn't realize was Information System Theory and Signal Processing. In some way, I could say that ‘a’ answer or thereof and rightly planted itself until it sprouted.

Then next thing I knew Eris was calling my randomness generator, just RNG, then along the way. I just decided Eris as a placeholder because it fits. I eventually pivoted from cryptography to... signal processing and chaos theory. Though, it became more than that. At some point, I woke up going, “Eris?!” then went back to sleep while making the better version of it. I challenged the gods with the audacity to abandon them like they went to go get milk, and what I got instead was a deep dive into entropy and math.

In short, now? Things are just weird math-levels. I woke up from a dream recently, in the intermission at the dream end and before waking up. I heard a voice (myself or a dream voice) say, “THIS... is a hypercore structure.” with a slight old vinyl feel. Then, I looked in the dream and saw an equation, immediately wrote it down as soon as I woke up. And yes, the math does check out, work and is very usable. The equation feels wishbone shaped.

In writing this I've realized something profound. So, as I mentioned earlier the soul of science is magic (changing the title to this), I've also mentioned in a previous writing piece I wrote some months ago that: Magic is just entropy modulation.¹ This means that... Magic is entropy modulation, science is entropy comprehension. The soul of science is intuitive entropy modulation. The soul part is the ability to recognize and guide entropy with intent. The intuitive, emergent intelligence capable of entropy modulation within a system-conscious context.

When I speak of entropy, I don't only mean it in the thermodynamic sense—though that's part of it. I mean entropy as it appears in information theory: uncertainty, variation, the collapse of perfect order into something interpretable. In that context, both magic and science become systems of entropy modulation—one intuitive, the other structured. The soul of science isn't just logic. It's curiosity navigating uncertainty. That's entropy, too. That's also where Eris comes in... despite me not actively going to spaces or finding her.

¹ For those who've read my other work: yes, this all loops back to entropy. No, I didn't mean to. Yes, I accept my fate.

VI. From Mythic Creation to the “Music of the Spheres”

In Hellenism, it doesn't start with just the Earth being created– it's starts far beyond that where only there was Chaos; in a more poetic sense this can relate to entropy, but chaos is preternatural and what existed before all else and with chaos was the 'empty' expanse of space.² “Empty” as in what the number zero represents; zero isn't just nothing or an emptyset.

From that comes darkness and night; then light and day, this would be describing the creation of the stars that glitter in the night sky, planetary bodies that most of all cosmologically inhabits. Then after enough rotations from the spheres of existence comes love, the nothingness and the celestial bodies that are interconnected with it. Rotation of spheres is meant more poetically as an indiscernible amount of time it takes for the chemical reactions, celestial objects to gain enough mass to become spheres and for the seeds of chaos to erupt with the next: being Love, Gaia and Tartarus.

The celestial dance of these spheres creates what Pythagoras called the Music of the Spheres – this is where the mathematical relationships between planetary motions produce cosmic harmonies. Much like how musical notes come from vibrating strings through mathematical ratios, Pythagoras reasoned that celestial bodies in their orbits must produce their own divine music based on their distances and movements. It represents the deep mathematical principles underlying both music and celestial mechanics. “There is geometry in the humming of the strings, there is music in the spacing of the spheres”. The physical universe operates according to these mathematical harmonies, demonstrating how science itself contains an inherent beauty and music that transcends mere mechanical description. This mathematical-musical harmony of the cosmos perfectly exemplifies how scientific understanding enhances rather than diminishes spiritual appreciation of the universe's underlying order.

³(May 2025) In hindsight, this is vastly interesting once I've realized how important pink noise is to systems. Pink noise is specifically a fractal noise that is found in almost all of livings things. Fractals are almost always ratios, and Pythagoras' work makes more sense that it used to, and is quite appreciated.

² This was written months before the who entropy stuff, and while it made sense at the time.

³ Pink noise is found in nearly all complex, self-organizing systems; from quasars and oceans, to veins.

VII. Enlightenment, Dualism, and a Return to Harmony

I've recently learned that it's because of the enlightenment period and dualism. Basically, being berated for naming a ship in a game "Soul of Science", it annoys me in the same way that people I've met don't like it or find it iffy when fantasy magic and hard science especially coexists in the same realm. When in reality, magic would just be another discipline of science that's more of the study of metaphysics, the soul, and the illusions of reality. What's interesting that I've found is that Materialism doesn't reject spirituality, otherwise, that would reject the self and emergent phenomena.

The Enlightenment period (late 17th century) is an intellectual movement that brought a lot of changes to how we, as a species, viewed science, religion, and the nature of reality. The unfortunate casualty of this is how we've gotten to the point today where spirituality is seen as incompatible with science. It ended up shifting Europe into a more secular worldview. It is based on questioning traditional authority (religious institutions) and promoting the individual understanding of the world. It's either the complete separation of knowledge from religious authority, or a harmony between reform and traditional faith systems. The modern impact that lasted from this is the Cartesian split that emerged through Descartes' philosophy, that is an artificial separation of material and spiritual.

This separation neglects ancient Greek wisdom that logos (reason) and pneuma (spirit) are complementary forces, which nurturing both leads to aletheia (truth). Just as these forces work in harmony rather than opposition, science and spirituality should be viewed as complementary paths to understanding reality, not competing worldviews.

Instead, Descartes' artificial separation of mind and matter (or of science and spirit) can stifle creativity and hamper real breakthroughs. Nurturing both logos (reason) and pneuma (spirit) leads to a more holistic path toward truth. Science and spirituality should be complementary, not competing paths to understanding reality. Humanity thrives when it embraces its shared intellectual heritage—myths, rationality, revelatory experiences, and structured methodologies—instead of discarding or isolating any one aspect.

VIII. Embracing Our Homo Ludens Sapien Identity

Humanity thrives when it embraces its shared intellectual heritage rather than discarding or isolating it. That means being at least open-minded and able to communicate clearly what you want and need. Due to this -- illiteracy and reduction of play is harmful to the soul.

In all of this, illiteracy—both literal and metaphoric (like a lack of exposure to new ideas or a refusal to engage in playful, open-minded dialogue)—and the reduction of play are fundamentally harmful to the soul. To play is to engage in discovery, to approach life with curiosity. And to remain curious, joyful, and eager to learn is to stay connected to our deepest roots: we are, after all, Homo ludens sapien, ever-seeking new horizons in both science and spirit, reasoning and reverence—letting happiness, play, and wisdom guide us toward genuine understanding.

Just going by perspective and pattern. The soul certainly exists as a separate entity while the mind, body and gut work together. Qualia is the method in which reality is observed, a conduit between soul & body. This establishes a singular entity: you in this lifetime.

Reject: either-or, and embrace both or neither. Nihilism ;) but in the actual way.