



Virtual
worlds are
(not)
folk music

Raph Koster
President, Metaplace Inc

These are the Spencer Yards





The only surviving functioning wheelhouse in
the US

The Wreck of the Old 97





The Wreck of the Old 97

- It was the first 1m selling record in the US.
- Vernon Dalhart, light opera singer

- It was also a folk remix
– the tune of an older
song, new words
- AND the first big
copyright case – stayed
in court so long on
appeal that the winner
never was able to
collect



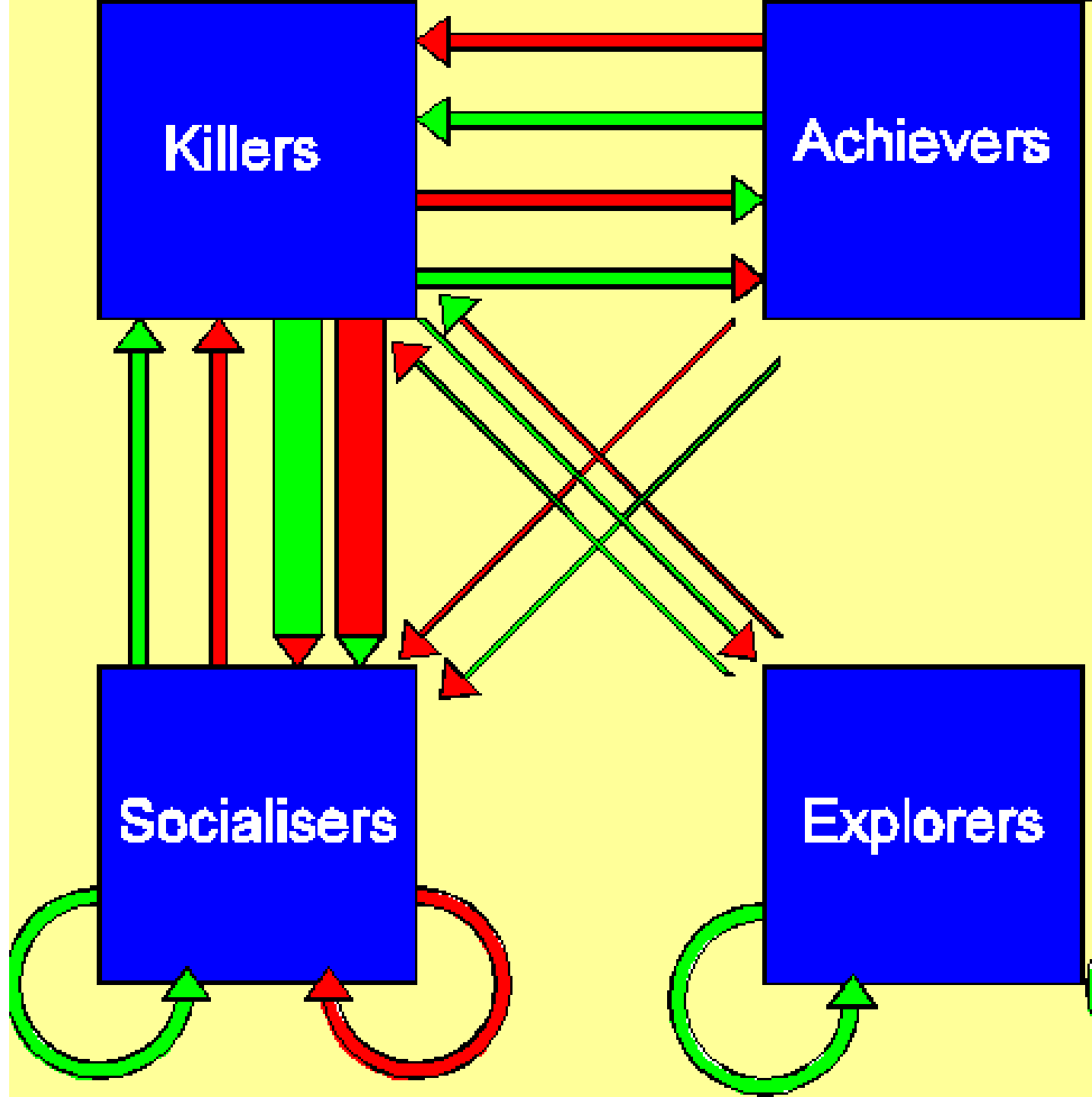
Centenary time capsule



Me



Bartle

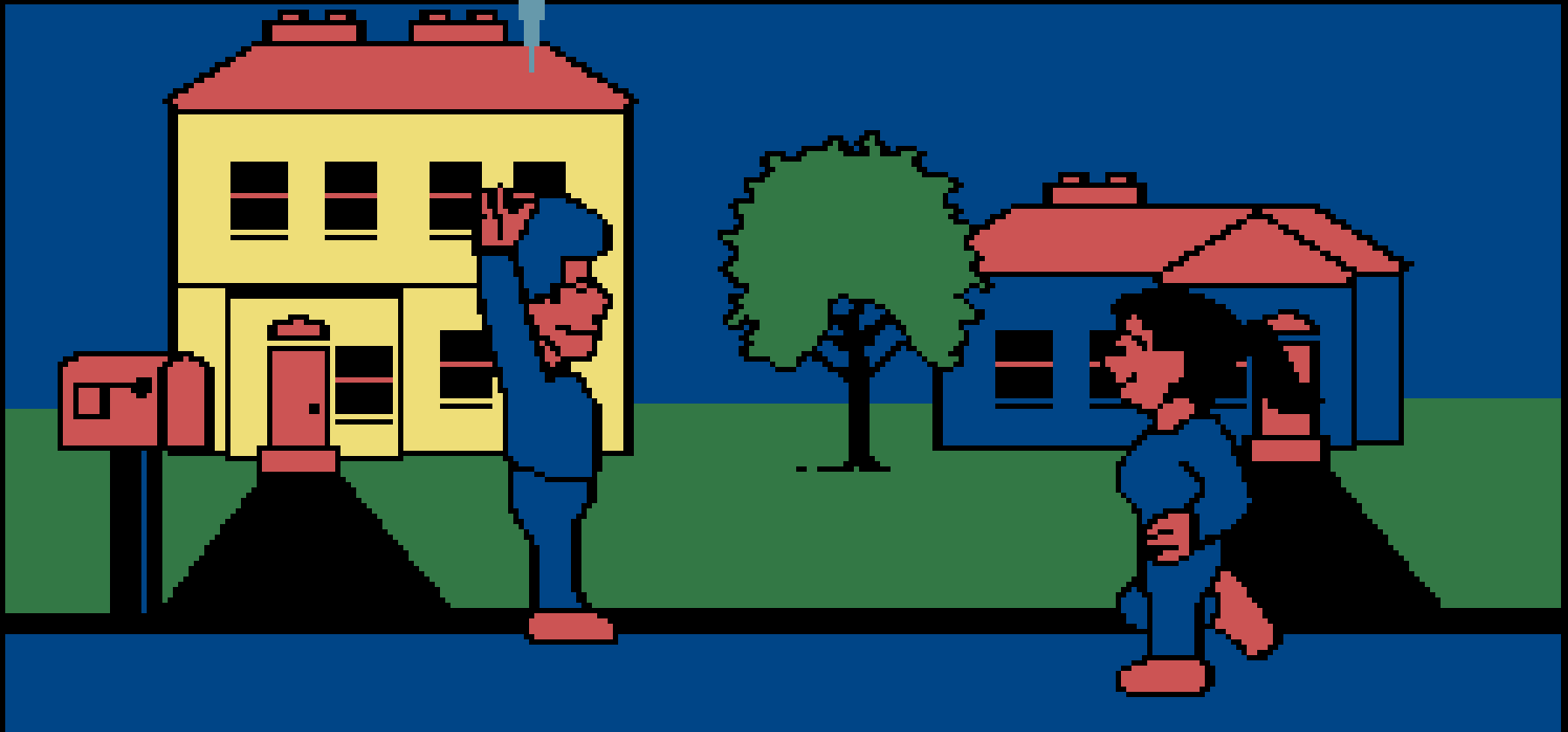


Hi Terry!

Hi Cathy.

Nice day for a quest!

It's always a nice day for treasure hunting.



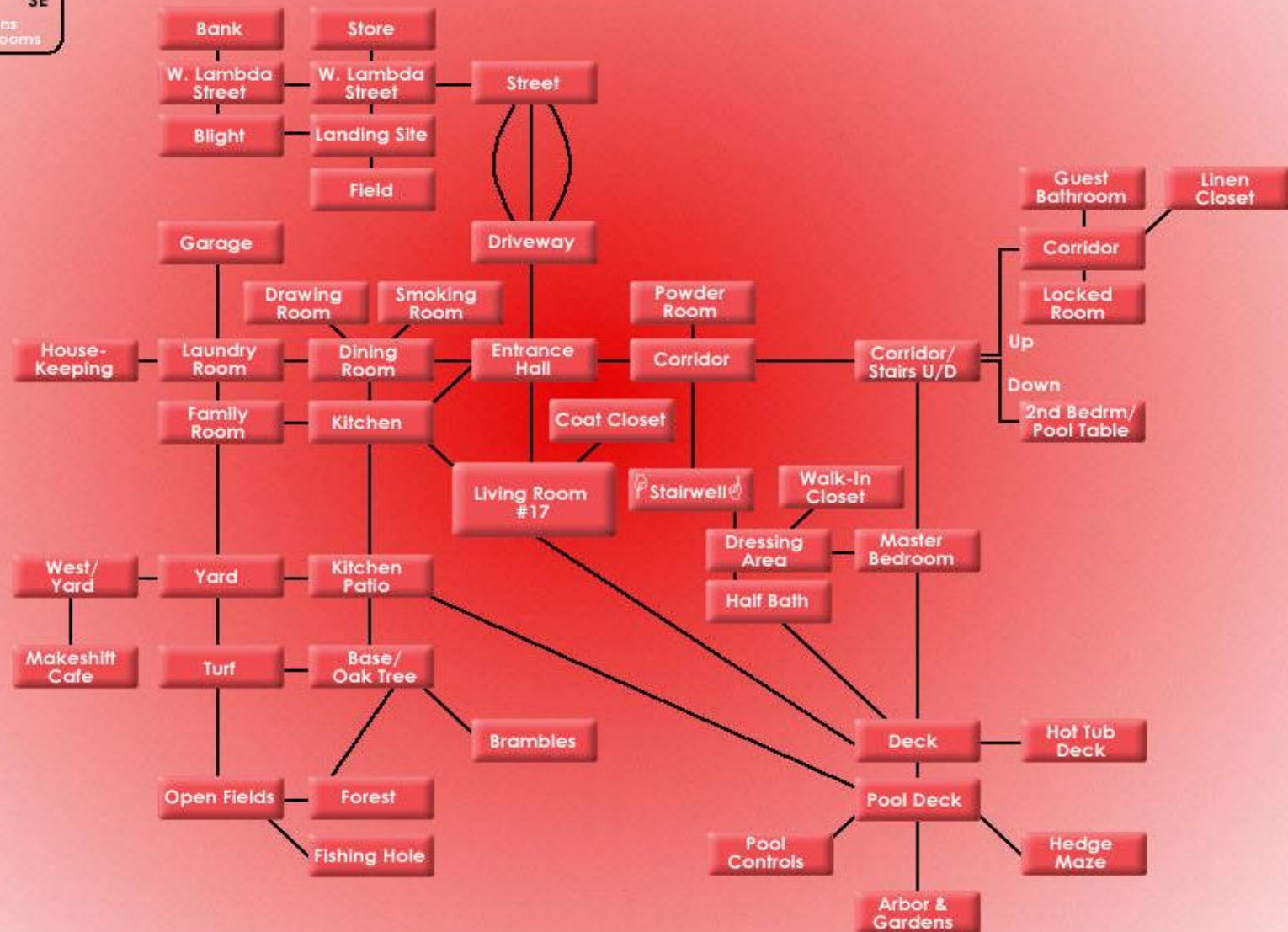
Farmer & Morningstar



LambdaMoo

House & Grounds*
Derived from HELP MAP

Curtis



The Laws

- Collected folk wisdom from the MUD-Dev mailing list

<http://www.raphkoster.com/gaming/lawsindex.shtml>

The industry is changing fast

- Screen size is dropping: Mobile devices of all sorts (netbooks, MIDs, etc) are spreading
- Costs have kept rising for AAA
- What used to be “casual” games are spreading

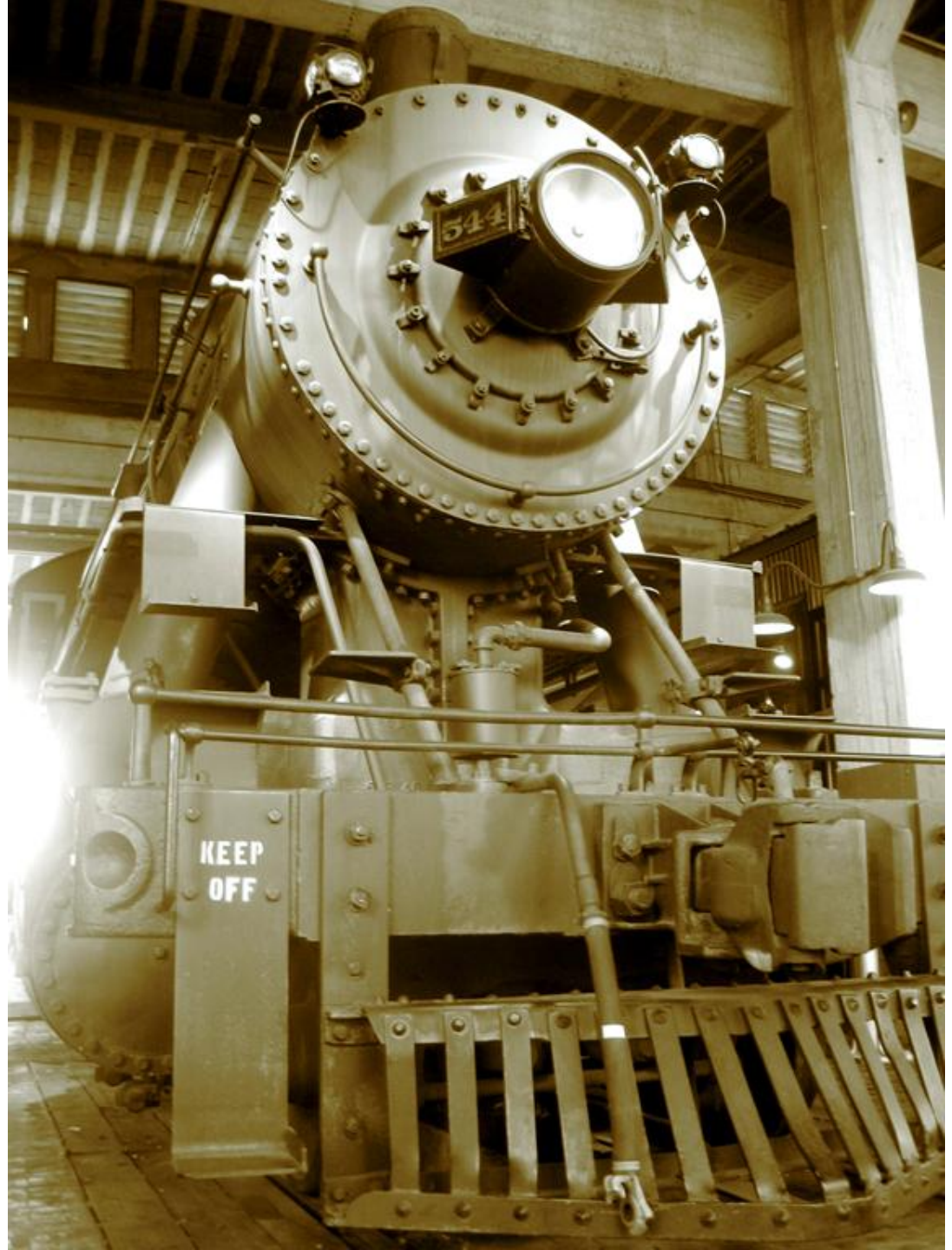


“Impostor” games

- What used to be university research projects are now mainstream



Dinosaurs?



Opera



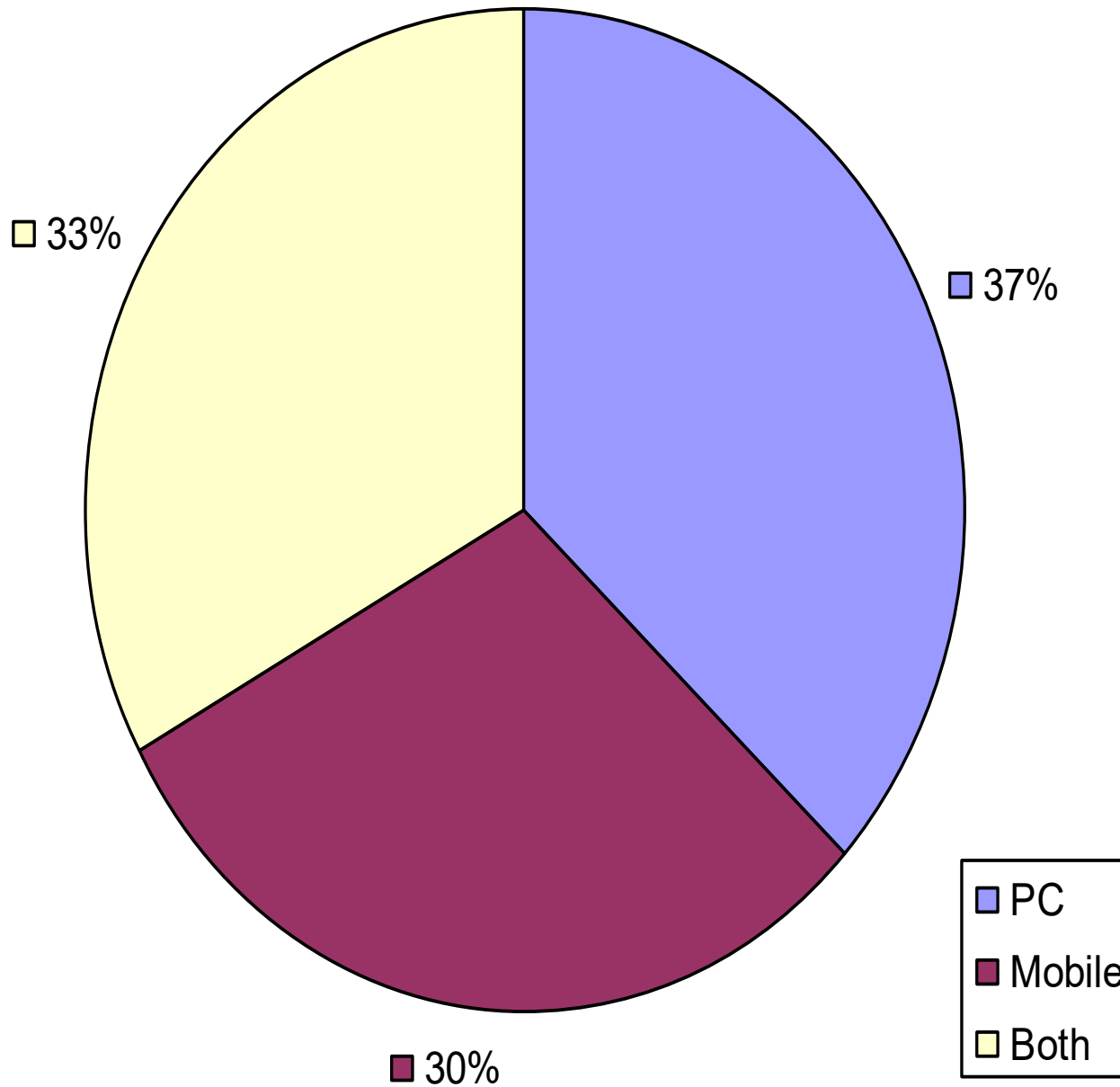
WoW



Lohengrin



How people access the Net



Advertising

ver

My Happy
Meal



Parents
Retreat

Create

CALLING ALL KIDS!
JOIN OUR FREE
**VIRTUAL
WORLD!**



PLAY NOW!

TAKARA
TOMY

お金を貯めて
武器を買え!

HP 153 03420g



ちょ きん ばこ
ロールプレイングゲーム貯金箱

ちょ きん でん せつ
貯金伝説

BANKQUEST

バンククエスト

たいしょうねんれい さいい いじょう
対象年齢6才以上

※写真やイラストは商品とは多少異なる場合がありますのでご了承ください。

単3形アルカリ乾電池3本使用(別売)
REQUIRES 3 LR6("AA" SIZE)
BATTERIES (NOT INCLUDED)

Pop songs



A small cartoon character riding a bicycle on top of the letter 'i' in 'Rider'. A speech bubble above the character says 'BETA 2'.

Line Rider

Because people like to dance.

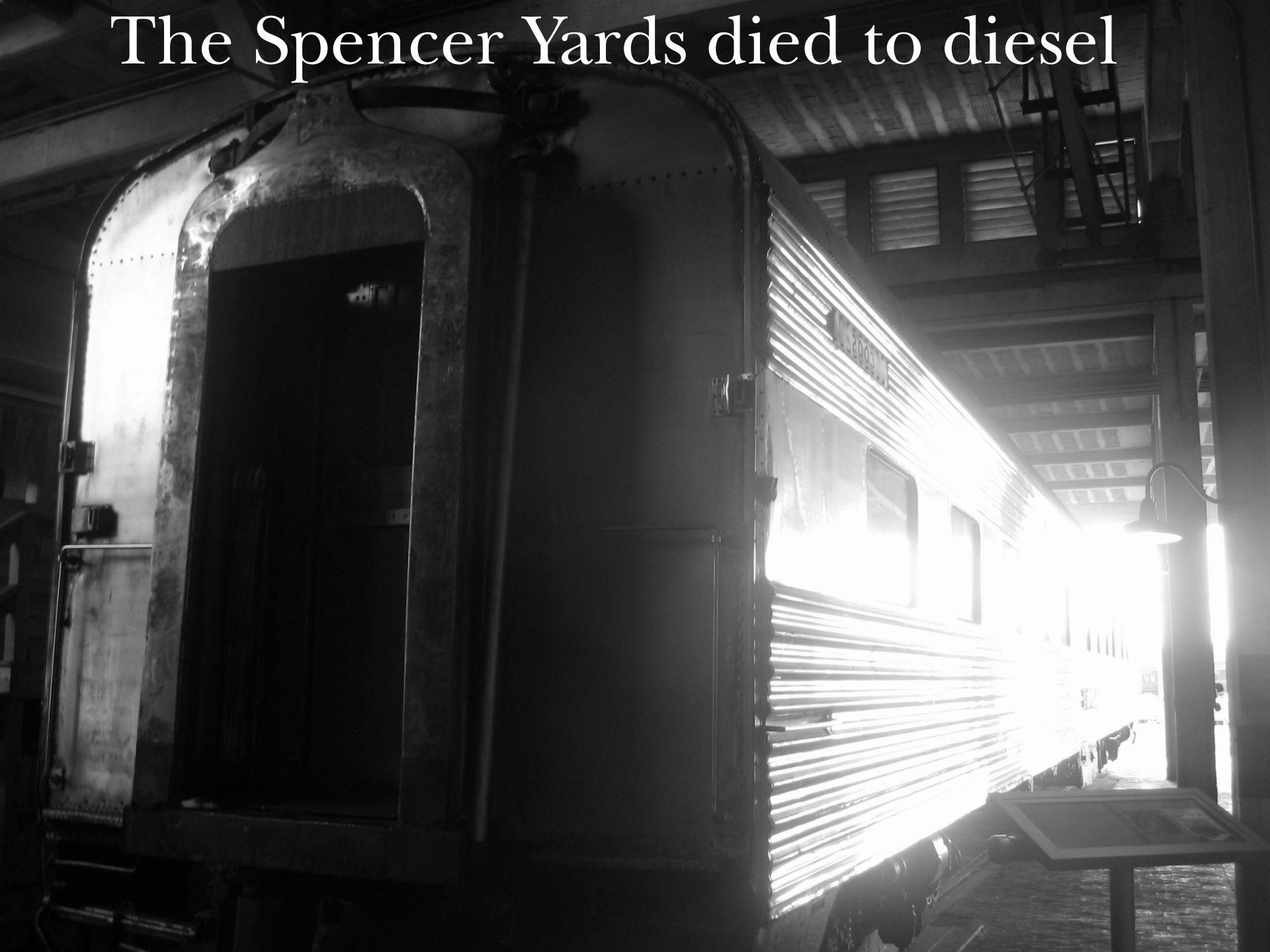


Are virtual worlds places?

Or are they fads?



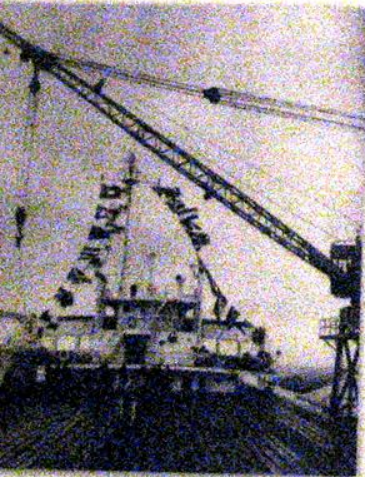
The Spencer Yards died to diesel







Above and below: The process of loading ships relied heavily on muscle and manpower before the advent of containerized shipping.



SeaLand's first container being stowed on the *Ideal X* in 1956.

Malcom McLean And The Magic Box

Malcom P. McLean, originally from Maxton, North Carolina, helped revolutionize the shipping industry by creating a "magic box." This box, also known as a unified cargo system, allowed the transfer of a single container from truck to rail or ship in a matter of minutes.

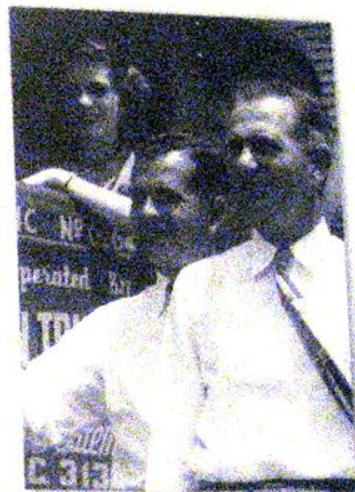
During the 1930s, McLean personally observed stevedores unloading truck cargo one piece at a time when he first thought of the unified cargo system. He could not act upon his ideas until the 1950s, after he developed and became president of McLean Trucking Company.

McLean purchased the Pan-Atlantic Steamship Company in the mid 1950s and renamed it SeaLand Industries. He also gave up control of McLean Trucking, selling seventy-five percent of his interest to satisfy the Interstate Commerce Commission, which ruled he could not own both companies at the same time.

The first container shipment made to his copyrighted designs was aboard the *Ideal-X* from Port Newark, New Jersey to Houston, Texas. Fifty-eight containers, all thirty-three feet in length, arrived safe and secure, before being transferred onto waiting trailers for ground shipment.

Gradually Malcom McLean helped alter the shipping business, as ports adapted to the new container needs with modern cranes and loading facilities. SeaLand became one of the world's largest container companies during the 1960s with 27,000 trailers and thirty-six container ships. As other companies joined the market, the sizes of containers became standardized to insure compatibility for trucks and ships.

In 1999, after a long series of corporate transitions, Maersk purchased the company and did away with the SeaLand name in 2006.



McLean Trucking was prospering when *Life Magazine* published this photo of Malcom McLean and sister Clara and brother James, middle, in 1949.



Pedestals on the bottoms of Pan-Atlantic's initial "sea-land service" containers had to be fixed into holes on special trailers.

Containerization

1. The process of aggressive standardization that made all shipping containers interchangeable across all transportation vehicles.
2. *see also* DikuMUD, World of Warcraft, Club Penguin.

Wax cylinders



Music used to be personal; then it became
commodity



POWER UP. LOG IN. GAME ON.

Prepay the fun with an online gaming card.





Joan Baez

In some ways,
Virtual worlds are
Hootenannies



MMOGs on 9/12/01



The line we jam around

I - I⁷ - IV - I - V⁷ - IV - I - I

Visual compositions are made of spaces



That are visual compositions



Some of this is Game Grammar stuff

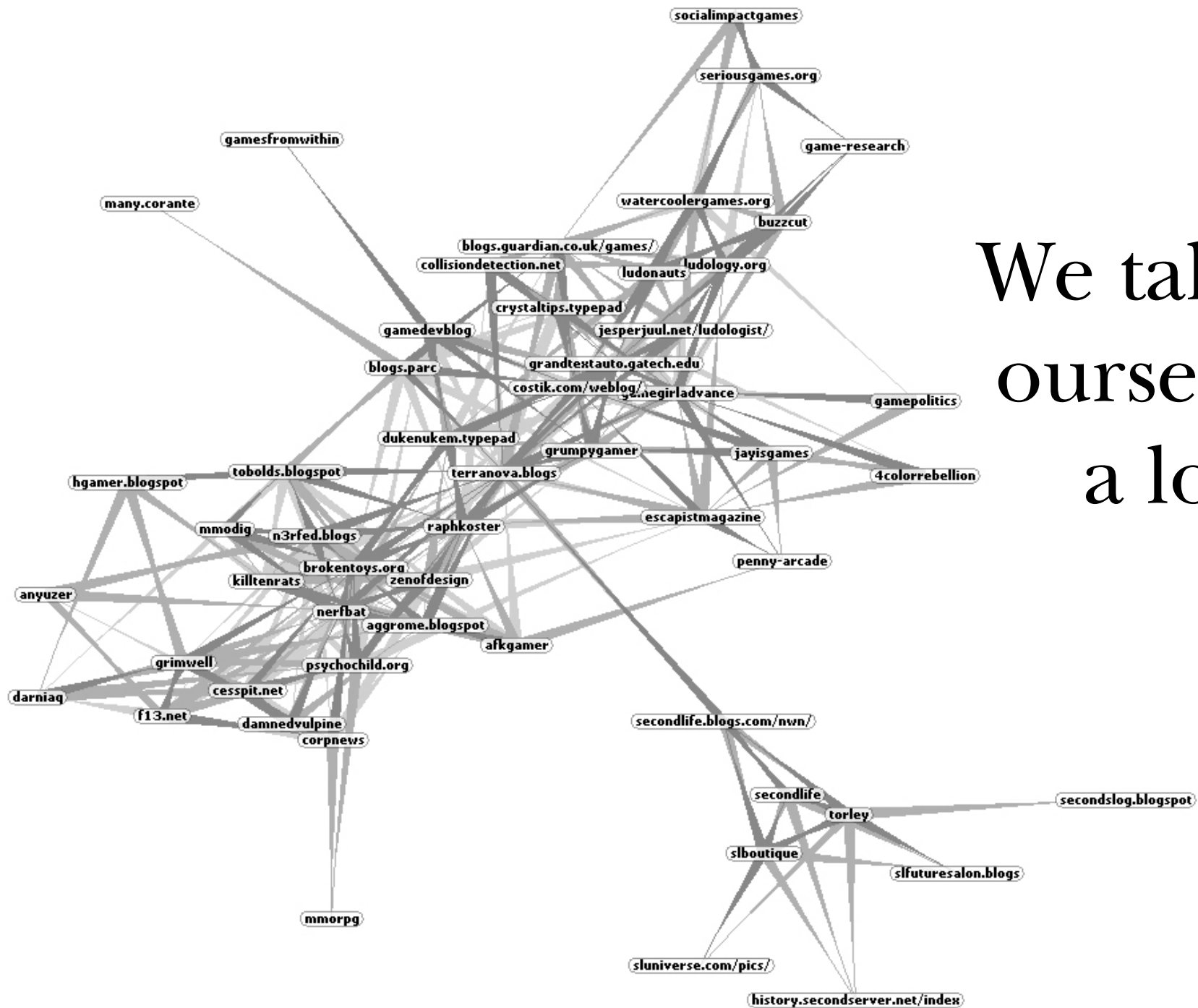
- Territory
- Preparation
- Core mechanic (skill required)
- Range of challenges
- Choice of abilities
- Variable feedback
- Bad return on investment
- Cost of failure

Some of this is Game Grammar stuff

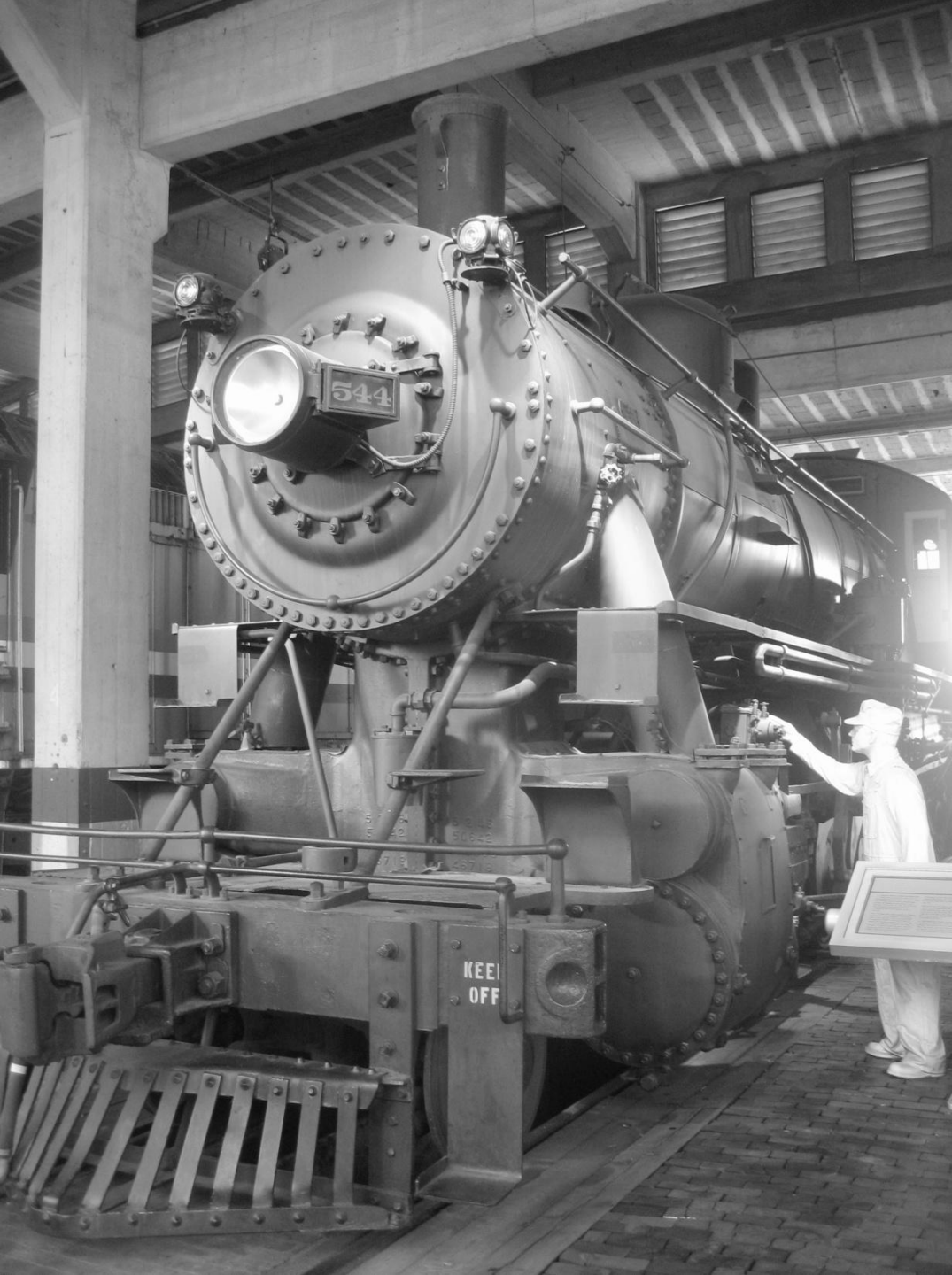
- *WHERE?*
- *WHEN?*
- *HOW?*
- *WHAT?*
- *WITH?*
- *FOR?*
- *FEW?*
- *PHOOEY.*

But games are also made of cultural structure





We talk to
ourselves
a lot



In some ways

We're all doing
cover versions
of the Old 97

Torn between commercialism

Did you know?

- VOIP makes us meet less strangers
- Real world discriminatory practices are evoked by avatars
- “Partial attention” and “multitasking” are physical impossibilities



And new realities



The NCRC, Rowan County



Opera



Cybercafe in Kenya



So... Metaplace. Why?



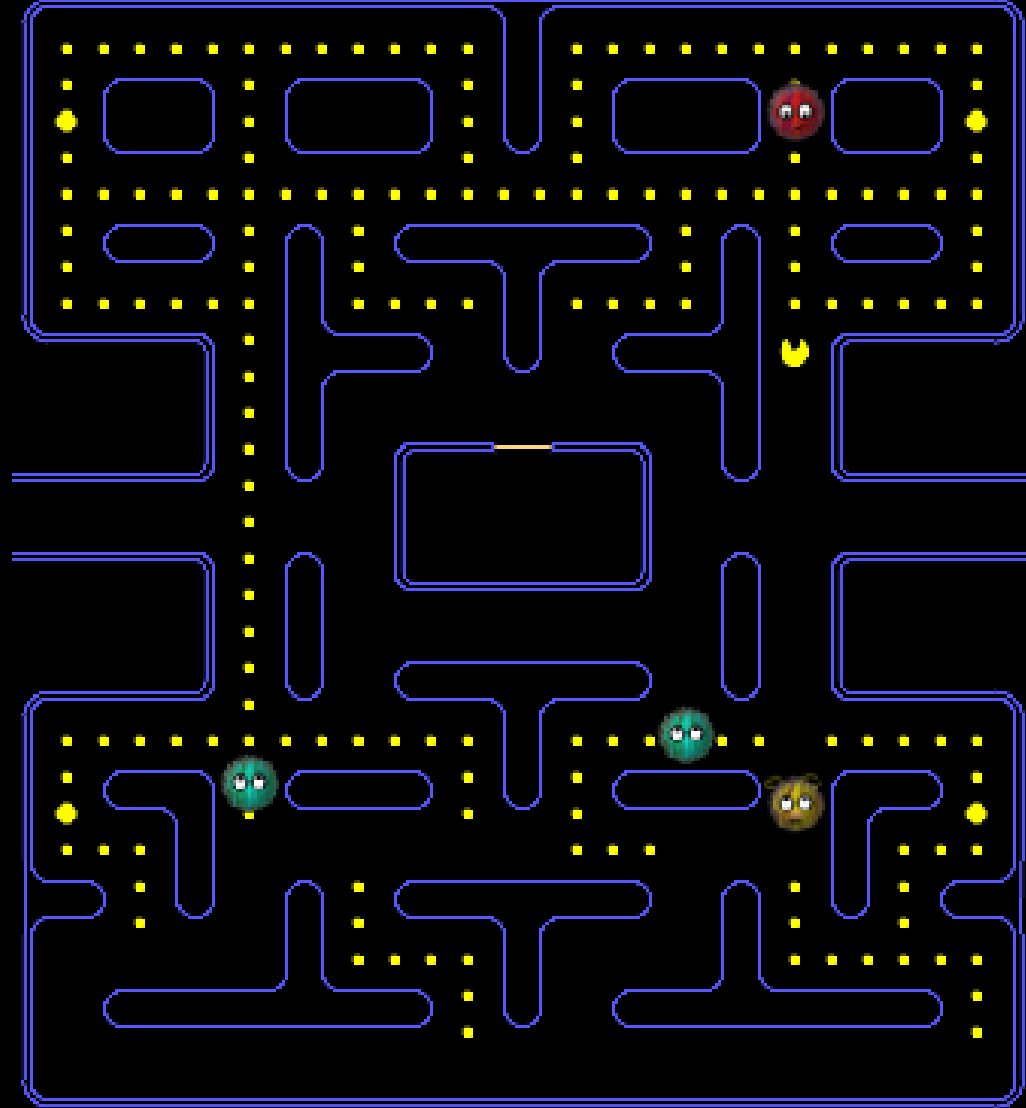
Some stats

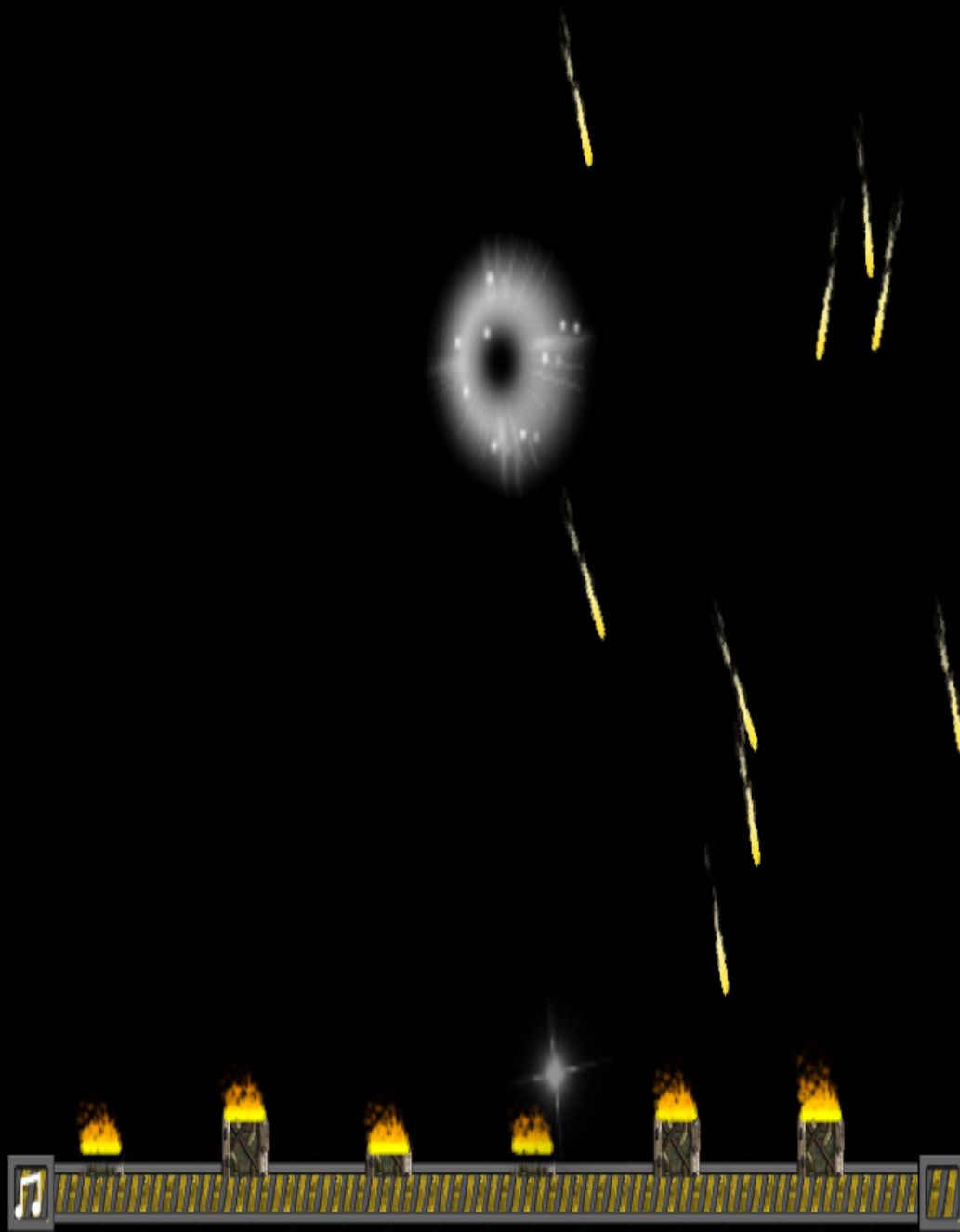
- Under 4000 users have been given access
- 20,000 worlds created
 - Most of which are empty, and crap
 - But some of which are amazing
- Most users make many worlds, not one

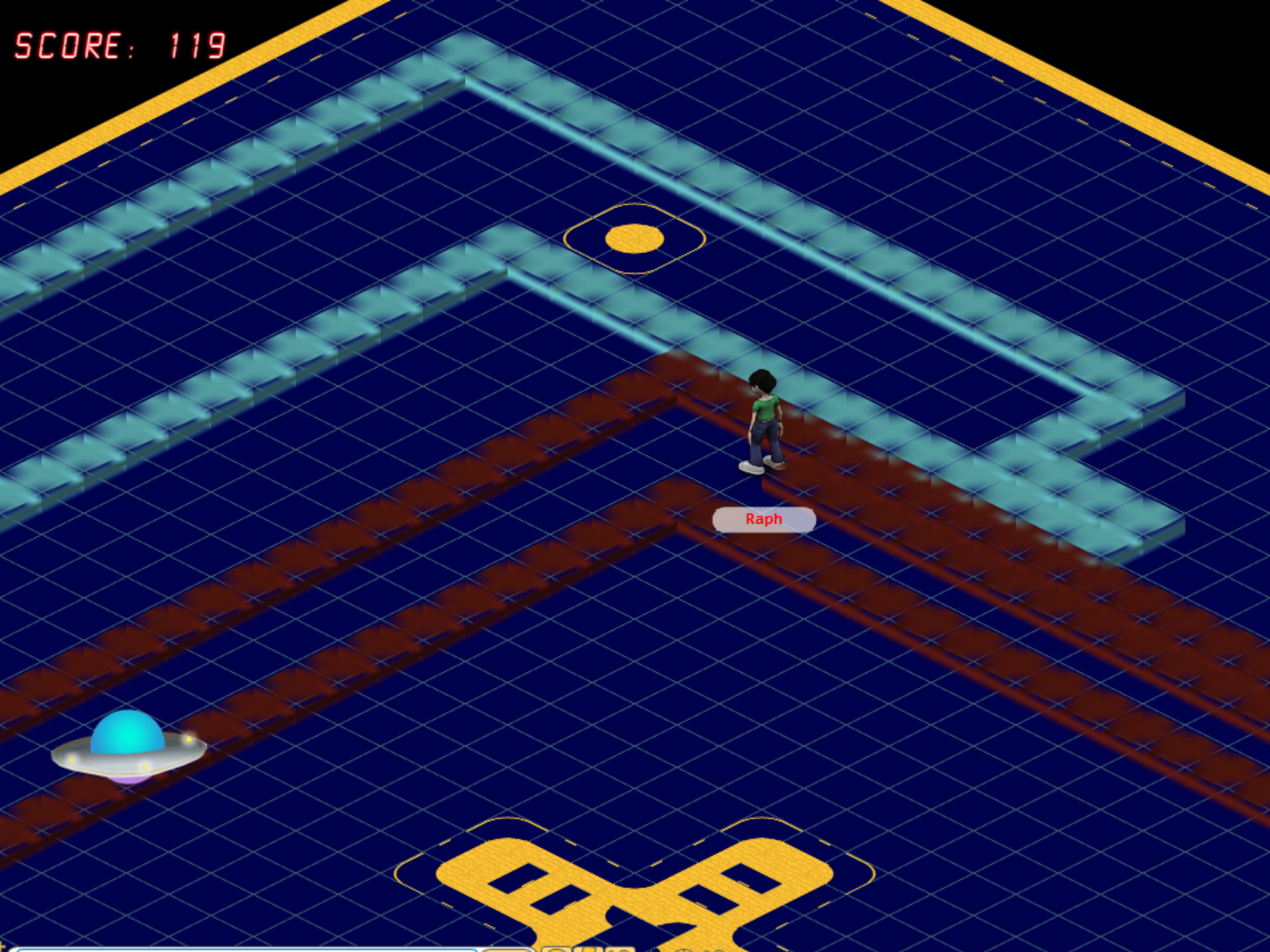
Cover songs

Score: 690

- | | |
|----------|--------------|
| 1) 26730 | lunarraid |
| 2) 22570 | HoneybeeRose |
| 3) 20430 | lunarraid |
| 4) 19350 | MonkeyKungFu |
| 5) 16210 | HoneybeeRose |
| 6) 13670 | adurna |
| 7) 12660 | RobH |
| 8) 12510 | Obo |
| 9) 11680 | HoneybeeRose |







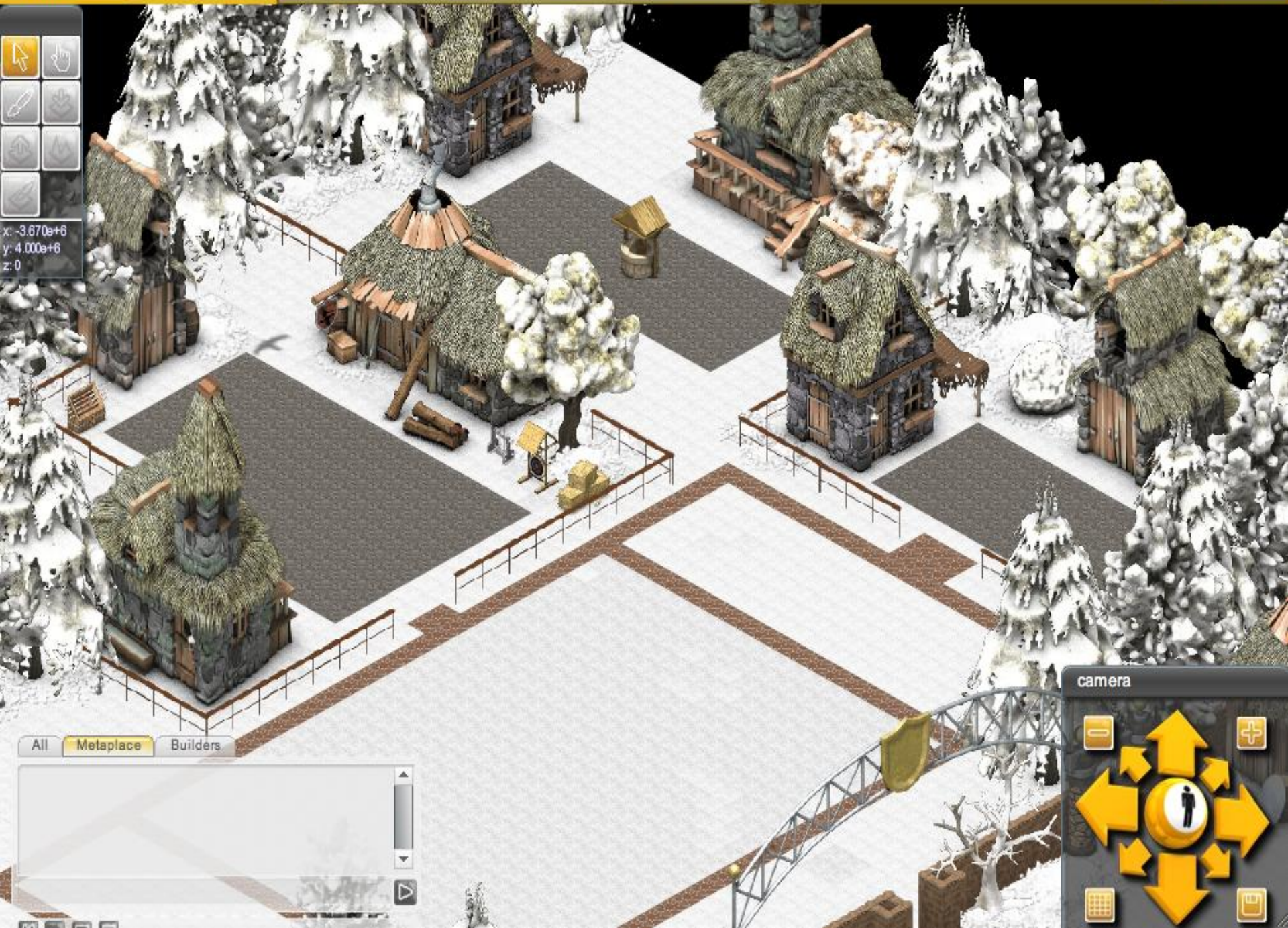
SCORE: 119

Raph

And originals







x: -3.670e+6
y: 4.000e+6
z: 0

All Metaplace Builders

camera



Killed! 0
Bombs: 1

x: -26.12
y: 4.577
z: 0

tools v0.90

play

save

build your world

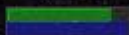
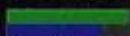
get more stuff

manage your world

Start Tutorial

camera

Kills 0
Deaths 0



send



Jason

(XW Metaplace) chooseareality. :)
(XW Metaplace) Cuppycake: I'm HERE
(XW Metaplace) chooseareality. yay
(XW Metaplace) Cuppycake: I'm probably not mentioning meteor
defender this time
(XW Metaplace) chooseareality. oh good

send





Raph

send





Jason

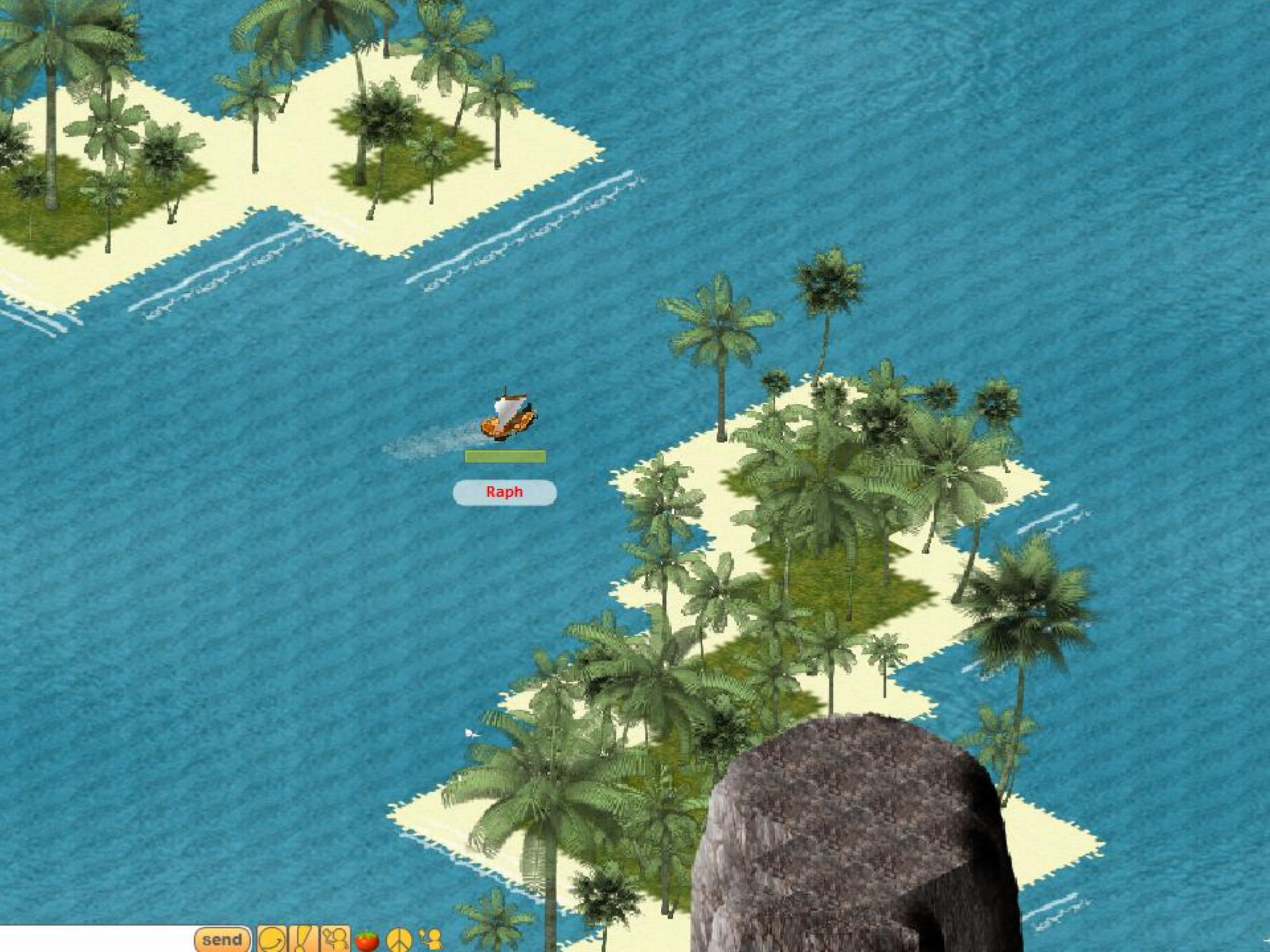
All

Metaplace

[10/29/08 11:38:31] (XW Metaplace) Crwth: "sighs"
[10/29/08 11:38:33] (XW Metaplace) Cuppycake: someone should
make a dragon warrior/dragon quest clone
[10/29/08 11:38:34] (XW Metaplace) MonkeyKungFu: lol
[10/29/08 11:38:44] (XW Metaplace) Cuppycake: (looks at Brooke)
[10/29/08 11:38:48] (XW Metaplace) chooseareality. hehe

send





Raph

send



English

French



Raph: test

Raph: Ce sont les temps les hommes qui tentent l'âme.

Raph: Si 'tis noble dans l'esprit de subir les élingues et les flèches de la fortune outrageante, ou à prendre les armes contre une mer de troubles, et en s'opposant, y mettre fin.

All

Metaplace

Builders



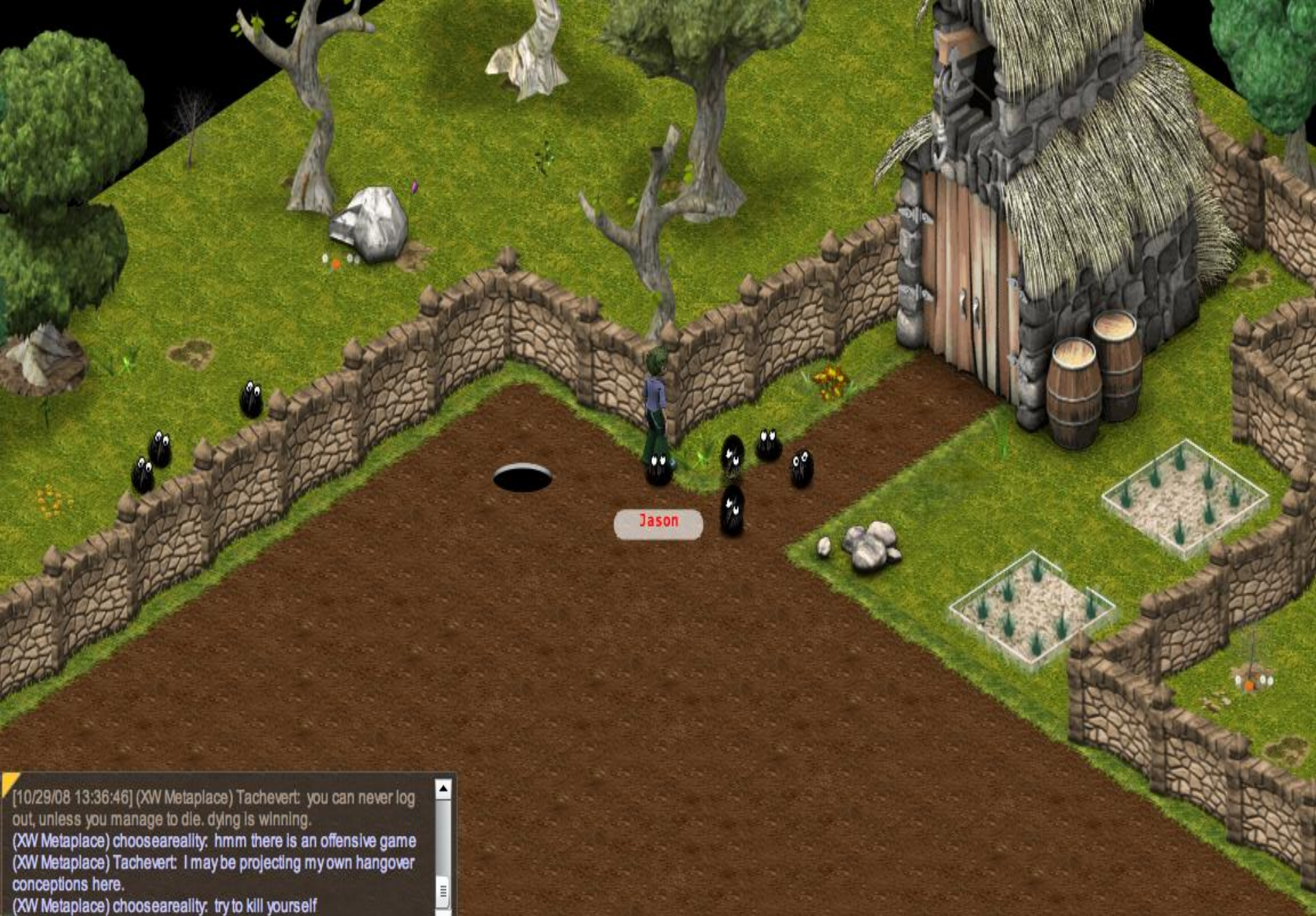
Raph: test

Raph: These are the times that try men's souls.

Raph: Whether 'tis nobler in the mind to suffer the slings and arrows of outrageous fortune, or to take arms against a sea of troubles, and by opposing, end them.

send





Jason

[10/29/08 13:36:46] (XW Metaplace) Tachevert: you can never log out, unless you manage to die. dying is winning.

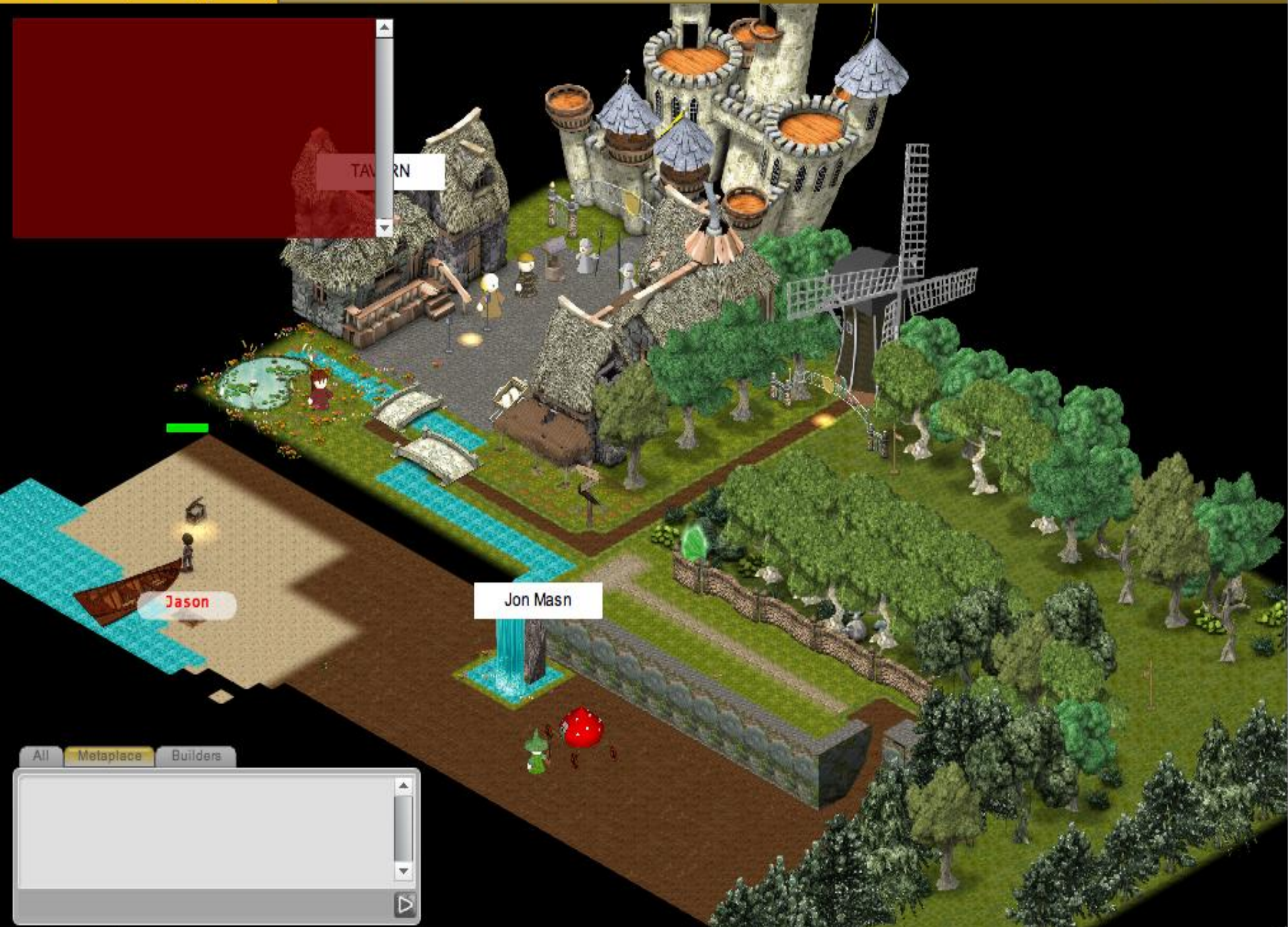
(XW Metaplace) chooseareality: hmm there is an offensive game

(XW Metaplace) Tachevert: I may be projecting my own hangover conceptions here.

(XW Metaplace) chooseareality: try to kill yourself

send





GATECH



