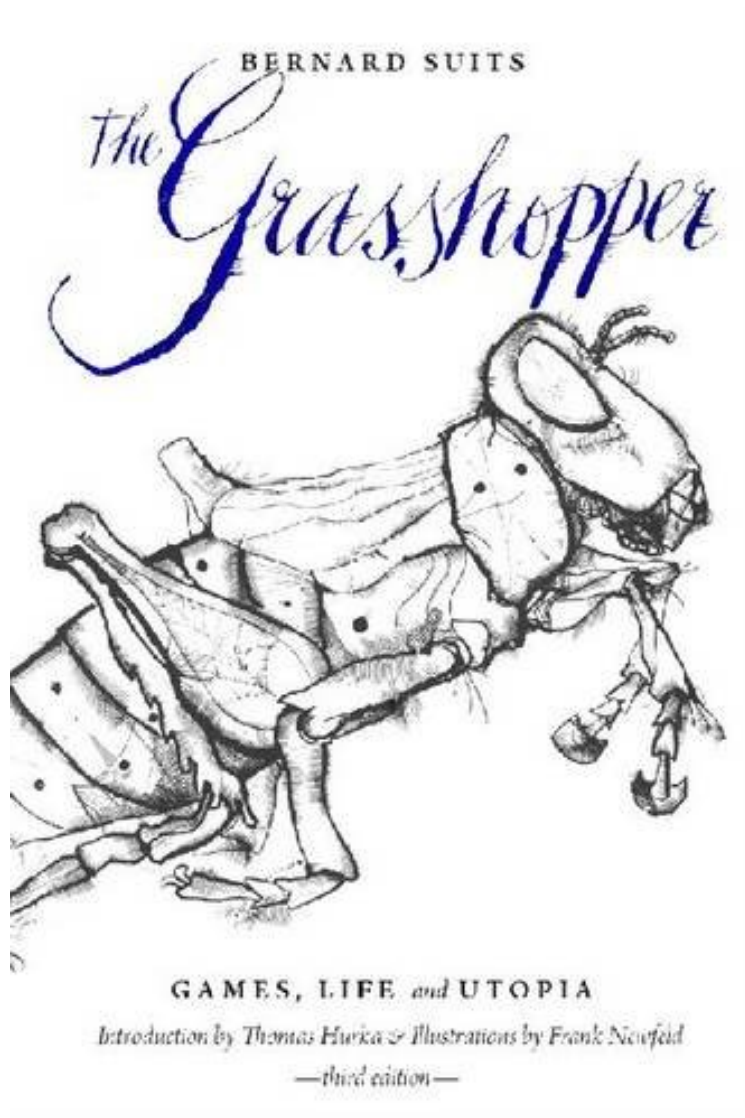


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## The Grasshopper - Third Edition: Games, Life and Utopia

*Bernard Suits*

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**Bernard Suits : The Grasshopper - Third Edition: Games, Life and Utopia** before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised The Grasshopper - Third Edition: Games, Life and Utopia:

4 of 4 people found the following review helpful. As Profound as FunnyBy Tyron GThis books is amazing in every way, the substance, the style. I have no idea why it's not widely regarded as a philosophical classic and read by all philosophy students. It's a dialogue between a grasshopper and his disciples about games, life and utopia--and especially the games part. As profound as it is funny, and a model of penetrating philosophical debate.0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. It does not assume any background specialized philosophical knowledge to

understand and enjoy this book however if you enjoy philosophy an entertaining read and lots of philosophical insights into the nature of GAMES. This I would take as an allegory to life, what is life but a play, a game and what are the goals and what are the rules and can we bend the rules to achieve our aims or goals. Does that still constitute a game? There are games to most things we do though the famous one is from Ludwig Wittgenstein and his views on the Language Game (Alice in wonderland is full of such games). The format of the book is engaging and delightful but beware that it will take a few readings to understand some of the concepts. It does not assume any background specialized philosophical knowledge to understand and enjoy this book however if you enjoy philosophy then it will enhance your experience of it.

In the mid twentieth century the philosopher Ludwig Wittgenstein famously asserted that games are indefinable; there are no common threads that link them all. Nonsense, said the sensible Bernard Suits: playing a game is a voluntary attempt to overcome unnecessary obstacles. The short book Suits wrote demonstrating precisely that is as playful as it is insightful, as stimulating as it is delightful. Through the jocular voice of Aesop's Grasshopper, a shiftless but thoughtful practitioner of applied entomology, Suits not only argues that games can be meaningfully defined; he also suggests that playing games is a central part of the ideal of human existence, and so games belong at the heart of any vision of Utopia. This new edition of *The Grasshopper* includes illustrations from Frank Newfeld created for the book's original publication, as well as an introduction by Thomas Hurka and a new appendix on the meaning of play.

Like Erasmus's *Praise of Folly* and Diderot's *Rameau's Nephew*, Suits's *The Grasshopper* sparkles with wit and fun; and outranks those wonderful works in clear, firm philosophical conclusions. Defying certain discouragements, Suits constructs an illuminating definition of games, which he defends in lively dialogues, amusing parables, and cascades of subtle analytical distinctions. That is achievement enough to make a new classic in the history of philosophy. Suits offers more: an application of his definition in a discussion of how much we may have to rely on games deliberately using relatively inefficient means to reach freely stipulated goals if life is to continue to have meaning. We may be able to regain thereby the meaning lost as advances in technology enable us to escape one by one the tasks that necessity used to impose on humankind. David Braybrooke, Dalhousie University / The University of Texas at Austin *The Grasshopper* is an amazing book. Philosophically profound, yet genuinely funny. While primarily an articulation and defense of a highly plausible definition of games (and we all know what Wittgenstein said about that), it also manages to raise some of the deepest and most challenging questions about the meaning of life. All in the form of dialogues between an insect and his disciples! There is simply nothing else like it. Shelly Kagan, Yale University Philosophers are not generally known for fine writing, but once in a generation or two a book appears out of nowhere, unclassifiable, inspired, amazing, mesmerizing, wonderful, classic Philosophy and Literature From the Back Cover In the mid twentieth century the philosopher Ludwig Wittgenstein famously asserted that games are indefinable; there are no common threads that link them all. Nonsense, said the sensible Bernard Suits: playing a game is a voluntary attempt to overcome unnecessary obstacles. The short book Suits wrote demonstrating precisely that is as playful as it is insightful, as stimulating as it is delightful. Through the jocular voice of Aesop's Grasshopper, a shiftless but thoughtful practitioner of applied entomology, Suits not only argues that games can be meaningfully defined; he also suggests that playing games is a central part of the ideal of human existence, and so games belong at the heart of any vision of Utopia. This new edition of *The Grasshopper* includes illustrations from Frank Newfeld created for the book's original publication, as well as an introduction by Thomas Hurka and a new appendix on the meaning of play. About the Author The late Bernard Suits was Distinguished Emeritus Professor of Philosophy at the University of Waterloo.