Roles and Worlds in the Hybrid RPG Game of Oblivion. There are few grounded theories in computer game studies on how role-playing works in sustaining and augmenting a thematic "world", there are few clear descriptions of what "world" means in this context, and the social versus cultural dimensions of both roles and worlds are seldom delineated. I suggest that the cultural and social dimensions of both real world and virtual world playing are important, and that commercial computer role-playing games (CRPGs) offer more opportunities to support deeper cultural aspects of role-playing. Designing Virtual Worlds is a book about the practice of virtual world development by Richard Bartle. It has been noted as an authoritative source regarding the history of world-based online games.[1] Its coverage of the virtual world design process has been called "a step further than most [books] in game design instruction".[2] College courses have been taught using it.[3][4][5][6] Contents. 1 Contents. The purpose of virtual worlds is the player's exploration of self,[9] as well as for its expansion of the earlier 4-type Bartle gamer style taxonomy into an 8-type model[10] and its focus on the practicalities of its subject.[11]. Reception. Designing Virtual Worlds brings a rich, well-developed approach to the design concepts behind virtual worlds. It is grounded in the earliest approaches to such designs, but the examples discussed in the book run the gamut from the earliest MUDs to the present-day MMORPG games mentioned above. It teaches the reader the actual, underlying design principles that many designers do not understand when they borrow or build from previous games. There is no other design book on the market in the area of online games and virtual worlds that provides the rich detail, historical context, and conceptual d