
Introduction

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On 2 April 2016, the DiGRA Australia chapter held its inaugural regional symposium in Brisbane, Queensland. The goal of this symposium, in part, was to highlight and identify the broader scholarship happening on games beyond the usual geographic scope of Australia's other east-coast capital cities, and beyond the usual conceptual frames of game studies. The theme of 'wayfinding' was chosen to both guide paper submissions and the exploratory philosophy of the symposium itself. This journal issue presents a selection of extended and reworked papers initially presented at the symposium, representing authors from a range of disciplinary backgrounds, from across Australia and overseas.

'Wayfinding' is a concept popularised by Kevin Lynch in *The Image of the City* (1960). It refers to how we find our way, how we navigate

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spaces like streets and parks and roads. The methods we use are also employed in videogames and websites and any ‘place’ where there are choices and chosen destinations. When we are finding our way, we usually are in at least one of the following states: orienting ourselves to figure out where we are, making route decisions about where to go next, monitoring our route to make sure we are going where we intend to; and recognising our destination to ensure we know when we’ve reached it. (Lidwell et al. 2010, 260). Being a regionally located symposium, the theme of ‘wayfinding’ was offered to frame the experience of those residing, working, and creating in the fringes. These are not mutually bound. Some may reside in the fringes but create observably mainstream games. Some may reside in regional cities, but work with those in the adorned hubs of the world. Wayfinding then refers more to the desire to keep moving and reach a destination, whether that destination can be reached by flight or insight. It offers an opportunity to ask not just ‘where are we going?’ but ‘how are we getting there?’.

These are questions that have never ceased being relevant to the academic study of games, which has always been less of a discipline and more of a disciplinary convergence of interests in a similar topic. Tensions have always existed in our discourse as we come to terms with the fact that not all of us who study games are travelling by the same means, nor are we trying to get to the same place. We see this broader issue of wayfinding arise throughout this issue, especially in regard to the tangible tensions inherent in videogame design: between player and game, between game and story, between player and developer, between developer and scholar. The papers presented at this symposium provided a varied constellation of perspectives on what it is to study games, but also shared a consistent concern for the phenomenological, of the feeling of being located and coming alive through interacts and movements with those around you—which itself feels relevant for the very experience of studying games scholarly.

The Queensland Symposium was a small, informal event to which potential presenters submitted abstracts. After the event, all the

presenters were invited to submit full papers that elaborated on their presentations for consideration in this journal issue, and the submissions then underwent a blind peer-review process. As one of the co-editors of the issue, Christy Dena, has an article in this issue, the review process was managed by Brendan Keogh to ensure anonymity was consistent across submissions. In total, four of the initial presentations are published here as full papers.

Steven Conway and **Troy Innocent** analyse their own approach to pervasive game design in *Urban Codemakers* through Heideggerian phenomenology, emphasising the importance of the player’s “thereness” in design. Conway and Innocent speak of the weight of the city, and how its history, markings, and functions resist the designer’s attempts to rework and reframe the space for the player. **Christy Dena** details a similar rub of concrete glimpsed in Conway and Innocent’s article. Rather than a physical space as the starting point, however, the surface is that of the narrative designer’s page. Dena argues that lingering tensions between narrative and game design are not due to any inherent traits of these modes but are instead the result of siloed design schemas. **Julian Novitz** approaches wayfinding in his article from a more traditional perspective of game criticism, with an analysis of the economy of survival horror title *Pathologic*. Whereas in-game economies of multiplayer games have received much attention in the past, Novitz looks at the economy of a single player game, and how it is used for affective means. Finally, **Pilar Lacasa**, **Sara Cortés**, and **María Ruth García-Pernia** provide an ethnographic report of their study into game design in the classroom, and the pedagogical potentials of game literacy.

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