

NHT'22: Narrative and Hypertext 2022

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NHT is a continuing workshop series associated with the ACM Hypertext conference. The workshop acts as forum of discussion for the narrative systems community within the wider audience of the Hypertext conference. The workshop includes presentations from authors of accepted short research papers, invited talks, and QA and debate to provide a venue for important discussions of challenges and opportunities for members of the narrative and hypertext community. Since 2017 it has had a sister workshop in the form of Authoring for Interactive Storytelling (AIS) which runs at the International Conference on Interactive Digital Storytelling. This year NHT has 'The Authoring Problem' as a special theme. The NHT website on this workshop series can be found at <http://nht.ecs.soton.ac.uk>

CCS Concepts: • **Human-centered computing** → **Hypertext / hypermedia**.

Additional Key Words and Phrases: Narrative, Hypertext, Digital Storytelling, Authoring Tools, Narrative Games, Interactive Narrative

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1 INTRODUCTION

The Narrative and Hypertext (NHT) workshops aim to provide an interdisciplinary forum to bring together individuals from the humanities and technological communities to share work and discuss state-of-the-art research on narrative from both a technical and aesthetic perspective. It is the longest running workshop series at ACM Hypertext – running since 2011 – and has fostered numerous collaborations which have led to work published in the main conference as well as serving as an important discussion point for issues facing the community. NHT has worked hard to serve as a focus point for the wider narrative and hypertext community and with NHT's sister workshop AIS (Authoring for Interactive Storytelling) the intention is to act as a bridge to increase collaboration between the interactive narrative and hypertext research communities.

AIS2020 kickstarted work on a new edited volume focused on the Authoring Problem for Interactive Digital Narratives (IDNs), this is now in production, and this year NHT22 invited open contributions related to the topics within the book, concerned with the technical and craft difficulties of writing complex interactive texts, and designing and building the software to support that process.

Researchers and practitioners working with hypertext or narrative are invited to attend this workshop. Participants are asked to submit a short (between 2 and 5 pages) position paper on their current work. The authors of the volume were also invited to present their chapters directly. The planned event is a half day virtual workshop with sessions based around short presentations of the paper submissions from attendees, and the invited talks, with emphasis on QA and discussion.

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2 MOTIVATION

Hypertext and Interactive Digital Narratives offer many exciting possibilities to readers in the form of interactive literature where the reader has agency over the Syuzhet and/or Fabula of the narrative, leading to increased dramatic engagement [3]. Narrative games also have a hypertextual core, and expand the set of mechanics through which reader (or players) can interact with the story [2].

But creating these interactive narratives is very challenging, not only must characters be developed and plot supported, but this must be done in the face of player agency, and authors need to create dramatic tension even though readers can change the experience [1]. Setting up these interactive elements also requires a wide set of skills beyond creative writing, both in terms of designing the narrative structure, and realising it through software tools.

This is 'The Authoring Problem', how can we enable as wide a set of people as possible to conceptualise, create, and publish interactive stories? It matters because as digital narratives move to become one of the primary art forms of our culture we need to ensure that the barriers to being part of that art form are low, and that as many different stories and voices are heard as possible. It is also about realising the full potential of this art form, by enabling the creation of sophisticated interactive works that have not been seen before.

The edited volume is structured around four broad areas, and these are reflected in our four top level topics. *Authors and Processes* is concerned with the authoring experience, what it means for people to create interactive narratives in real world contexts and how they reach an audience; *Content* is concerned with what is produced, the interactive structures and behaviours, and how they are conceived and visualised; *Forms* describes the differences in creating the broad genres of IDN: emergent, locative, generative, or ludic narratives; and *Research Issues*, the challenges facing the community in conducting research in this area, from interdisciplinary working to effective evaluations.

The goal of NHT this year is to provide a venue for book authors to preview their chapters and share their ideas with the HT community, and also provide a mechanism to report on supplementary work related to those chapters.

3 SCOPE

This year NHT22 invites open contributions related to the topics within the book, these are concerned with the technical and craft difficulties of writing complex interactive texts, and designing and building the software to support that process. The areas and topics are:

- Authors and Processes:
 - The process of HT authoring
 - The authoring burden
 - Pedagogy of HT authoring
 - The publishing problem
- Content:
 - Actions in HT
 - Narrative Interactive Design
 - Replay
 - Patterns of HT
 - Mapping and Visualisations
- Forms:
 - Emergent Narratives

- Locative Narrative and Games
- Game Mechanics as Narrative
- Intelligent Narrative Technologies
- Research Issues:
 - Interdisciplinary Research
 - The Evaluation Problem
 - Analysis of Emergent Narratives
 - Ethical Dimensions in HT authoring

4 WORKSHOP FORMAT

The workshop will run two types of activity:

- Traditional research presentation sessions where authors will present their short paper submissions to the workshop on issues around their chapters. These submissions are 2-5 pages, in ACM format, and peer reviewed by the workshop programme committee.
- Invited talks where authors will summarise their book chapters and take part in a Q&A about the issues raised.

Both will have an emphasis on Q&A and debate. Between them these sessions provide an opportunity for authors to present their work from their chapters to the community, and provide a discussion and feedback space for the community to consider the issues raised by the book.

5 COMMITTEE MEMBERS

NHT is made up of organisers who scope and run the event and a wider programme committee who review research paper submissions and offer steerage to the workshop series.

Organisers:

- Charlie Hargood (Bournemouth University, UK)
- David Millard (University of Southampton, UK)

Programme Committee:

- Mark Bernstein (Eastgate Systems)
- Valentina Nisi (IST, University of Lisbon)
- John Murray (University of Central Florida)
- Sam Brooker (Richmond, the American International University, London)

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