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Nordic Role-Playing Research History, Changes and Challenges

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What?

Welcome to a somewhat systematic review of historical trends
in Nordic role-playing research.



Central Elements

- First in fanzines and guidebooks (90s)
 - Next in larp books
 - Slow emergence of material from game studies
 - Increasingly, appending
- Strong connection to arts
 - Later also education, but not usually to educational gaming research
 - Manifestos, still occasionally more
 - Master's theses, in waves



Corpus

- Most of it created by a handful of theorists – designers, artists and researchers
- Almost everyone has a larp connection
- Some semi-academic works now treated as academia
- Separate works on:
 - Tabletop
 - Digital (solo & online)
 - Larp
- Largely missing:
 - Service design; chat play studies

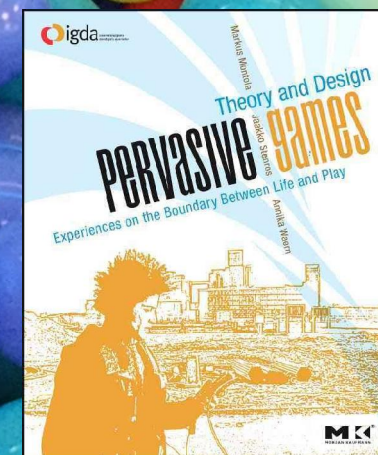
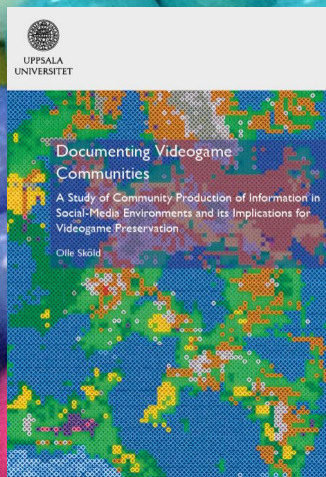
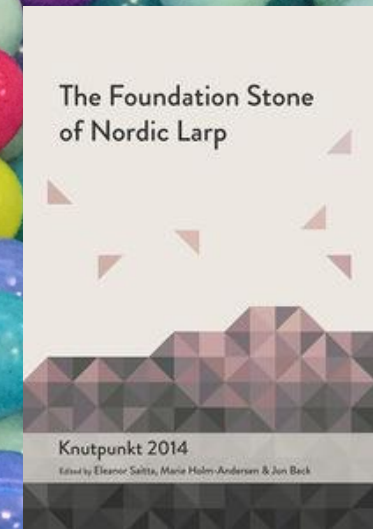
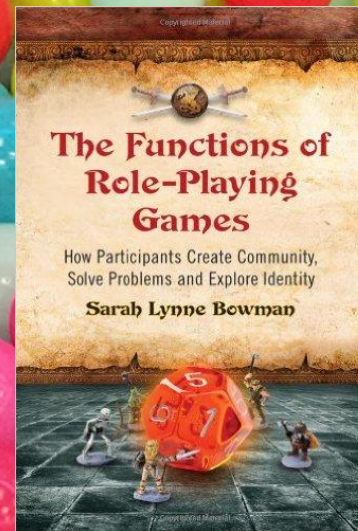
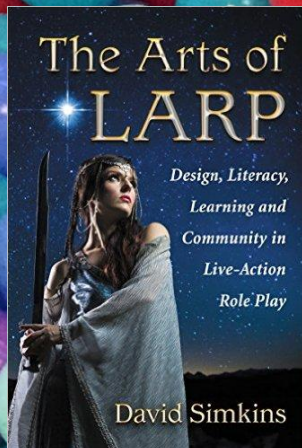


Key Academic Venues

- IJRP
 - Analog Game Studies
 - Other game journals
- Citations:
 - McFarland's books
 - Conferences like Mittelpunkt, Living Games, WyrdCon, Minsk



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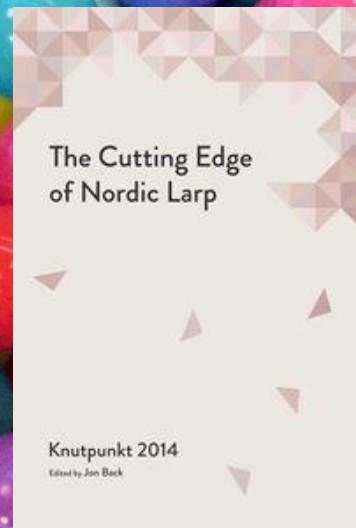
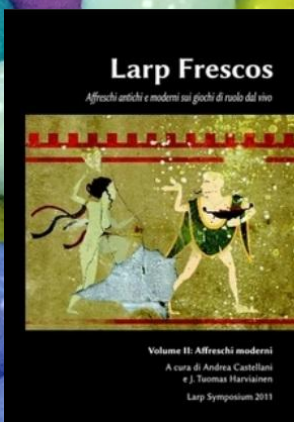
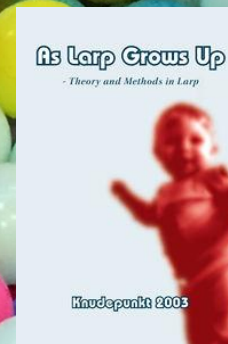
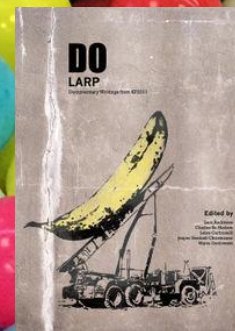


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The Wyrd Con Companion Book 2015



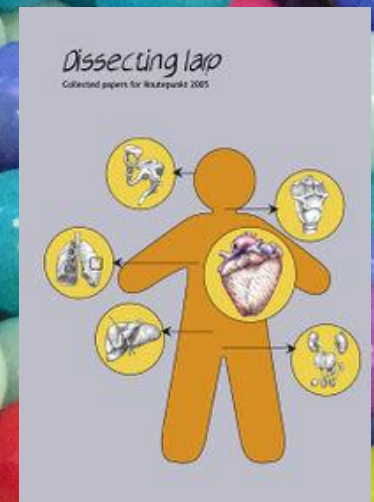
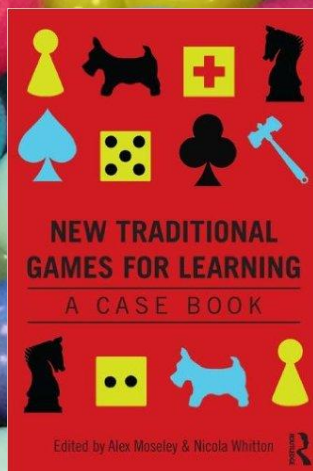
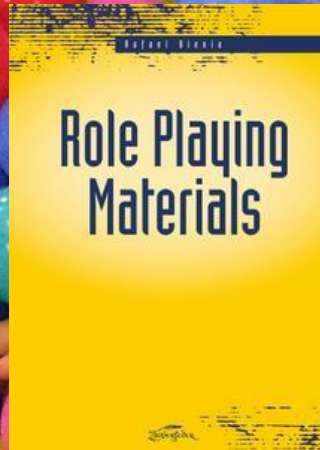
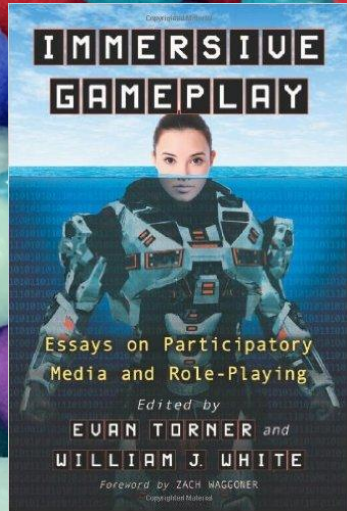
Edited by Sarah Lynne Bowman, Ph.D.



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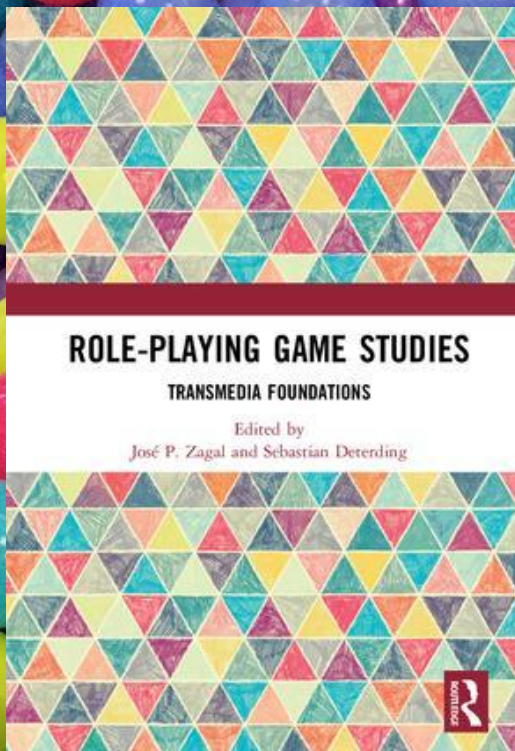


Challenges

- Role-playing is sometimes seen as a marginal subject in game studies
- Good research does not equal good design
- Role of the researchers in play always a problem, also for themselves
- Paradigmatic delineations



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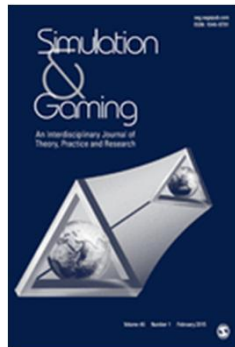


The Future

- Nordics are now too focused on documentation
- North America is taking over
- Canonic games are more high-priced
- Multiple venues, less incentive to coordinate
- Consistent wheel-reinvention
- Too many channels



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Questions?

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