

# John Foxwell, PhD

Email: [johnfoxwell3@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:johnfoxwell3@hotmail.co.uk) · Portfolio: <https://fablewright.com/portfolio/>

Before transitioning to game development, I was an academic specialising in cognitive narratology. My particular area of research not only provided me with a solid grounding in the concepts underpinning narrative structure, character development, etc., but also gave me an understanding of the cognitive mechanisms behind perception, agency, and immersion, and how players create personal stories even in games that do not appear to provide a ready-made narrative.

I currently work as the Lead Game Content Designer on a historical grand strategy game. I am accustomed to working on interdisciplinary teams, and am practiced at writing and organising detailed documentation for game mechanics, features, and content. Finding solutions to problems – whether narrative- or mechanics-based – is what I love about working in this industry.

My favourite game genres by far are RPG and strategy: *Divinity: Original Sin 2*, *The Witcher 3*, and the *Total War* series all hold a special place in my heart. When it comes to RPGs, I am particularly fond of games that connect player choices with stakes that affect gameplay as well as narrative (Owlcat's *Pathfinder* games definitely deserve an honourable mention here). I also enjoy various TTRPGs, when I get the chance to play them; I am, of course, a 'forever DM'.

## Previous Projects

### INFINITE NIGHT: THE CUNNING PRINCESS

Adventure/mystery point & click game made in Unity. Entirely a solo project, with all art and music created from scratch. Sold to and published on armorgames.com in Dec 2022, with a current rating of 89% and over 38,000 plays. <<https://armorgames.com/infinite-night-the-cunning-princess-game/19314?fp=ng>>

## Employment

### 2024-PRESENT

#### LEAD GAME CONTENT DESIGNER, AQUILA INTERACTIVE

Managing the content design team in creating all game content, particularly branching event chains that interact with the game's systems; designing historically appropriate game mechanics and systems (notably Technology, Colonization, and Rebellions); liaising with the art and design teams to iterate on UI and UX designs.

### 2023-2024

#### GAME CONTENT DESIGNER, AQUILA INTERACTIVE

Wrote and implemented branching event chains for multiple countries; designed policy sets; edited the world map; assisted the art team in the design of in-game assets.

### 2023

#### RESEARCH ASSISTANT, INSTITUTE FOR MEDICAL HUMANITIES

Aided in study design, coding, and implementation; conducted market research; copyedited a collected volume of essays.

### 2021-22

#### EDITORIAL ASSISTANT, DURHAM UNIVERSITY

Copyedited and contributed to a multi-authored collection of essays; edited and produced content for an app for people who hear voices.

### 2018-20

#### POSTDOCTORAL RESEARCH AND ENGAGEMENT FELLOW, DURHAM UNIVERSITY

Conducted both independent and collaborative research with an interdisciplinary team; published several papers in high-profile journals; designed and co-hosted a series of creative writing events; edited and produced content for project websites, and served on the Editorial Board for [understandingvoices.com](http://understandingvoices.com).

2015-19

TEACHING ASSISTANT, DURHAM UNIVERSITY

Conducted first-year tutorials; assessed coursework and provided constructive feedback; marked exams.

### *Education*

2014-18

PHD, DURHAM UNIVERSITY

Interdisciplinary research into experiential modalities (perception, imagination, hallucination, dreaming, etc.), focusing on agency and immersion. Funded by Durham University as part of a Wellcome Trust project.

2013-14

MA IN ENGLISH LITERATURE, DURHAM UNIVERSITY

Distinction, with a dissertation on the narrative structure of detective fiction. Funded by Durham University.

2010-13

BA IN ENGLISH LITERATURE, DURHAM UNIVERSITY

First-Class Honours.

### *Skills*

- Basic C# and Unity; Git
- Krita, Adobe Photoshop, Corel Painter
- Cakewalk (DAW), Audacity
- MS Word, MS Excel, MS Powerpoint
- Experience of working with various productivity suites (Lark, Oracle, etc.)