

**Research Space**  
Conference paper

**Reading Obsidian Portal wikis as literature**

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## Reading Obsidian Portal wikis as literature

TRPG campaign wikis of the type found on Obsidianportal.com, WorldAnvil.com and numerous other sites have proliferated over the years. Initially conceived as a means of turning game notes into a convenient shared hypertext, these wikis have evolved into what I argue is a literary art form in their own right, remediating, transforming and intertextualising the story-world of the game and presenting it to the world. This transformation emanates out from the tabletop raises the question of how the ideas 'authorship' as currently applied to play (*Hammer*) change as the story-world expands and continues after play has finished. Like fanfiction, (*Edrei*) to which they are arguably a cousin, these wikis challenge conceptions of what we see as literature, floating in the liminal space between differing definitions of cybertext, (*Aarseth*) digital fiction (Bell et al) and literary game (*Ensslin*) In taking a literary approach to wikis this research participates in the academic efforts to refine and define the idea of literature and authorship in the digital age and the debate on how it applies to roleplaying games. (*Jara and Torner*) In terms of game studies, reading wikis represents a window into an idealisation of a game's story, one stripped of the social layer of gameplay. Such idealisation has a role in understanding the cultural influence of TRPG story-worlds. (*Carbonell*) A literary approach also incentivises the preservation of wikis for academic purposes, since as digital artefacts they are potentially ephemeral.

The core of my research method is a practice-led exploration of wiki creation, an autoethnographic approach rooted in the position that how and what I've played are irrevocably intertwined with how I approach and understand the theory. As well as my own practice, I will look at the works of other creators via interviews focused on their practice and motivations

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