

Finding Aid to the Bruce C. Shelley Papers, 1975-2010

Summary Information

Title: Bruce C. Shelley papers

Creator: Bruce C. Shelley (primary)

ID: 116.5468

Date: 1975-2010 (inclusive); 1982-2000 (bulk)

Extent: .5 linear feet

Language: The materials in this collection are in English.

Abstract: The Bruce C. Shelley papers are a compilation of game rules, correspondence, strategy guide notes, design documents, and more, relating to Shelley's career in both the board and video games industries. The bulk of the materials are dated between 1982 and 2000.

Repository:

Brian Sutton-Smith Library and Archives of Play at The Strong
One Manhattan Square
Rochester, New York 14607
585.263.2700
library@museumofplay.org

Administrative Information

Conditions Governing Use: This collection is open for research use by staff of The Strong and by users of its library and archives. Though the donor has not transferred intellectual property rights (including, but not limited to any copyright, trademark, and associated rights therein) to The Strong, he has given permission for The Strong to make copies in all media for museum, educational, and research purposes.

Conditions Governing Access: VHS tapes in this collection will need to be acclimated to the temperature of the room they will be viewed in prior to watching (about two hours). Some documents in the collection contain pages that are printed out of order and/or are missing pages. 3.5" floppy disks and CDs require advance notice to access and are limited to on-site researchers only.

Custodial History: The Bruce C. Shelley papers were donated to The Strong in September 2016 as a gift of Bruce C. Shelley. The papers were accessioned by The Strong under Object ID 116.5468. The papers were received from Shelley in one box.

Preferred citation for publication: Bruce C. Shelley papers, Brian Sutton-Smith Library and Archives of Play at The Strong.

Processed by: Nicole Pease, July 2017

Controlled Access Terms

Personal Names

- Goodman, Rick
- Hollis, Andy
- Meier, Sid
- Pottinger, Dave
- Reynolds, Brian
- Shelley, Bruce C.

Corporate Names

- Avalon Hill Game Company
- Ensemble Studios
- MicroProse Software, Inc.
- Simulations Publications, Incorporated
- Zynga (Firm)

Subjects

- Age of Empires
- Age of Empires II
- Age of Mythology
- Board game industry--United States
- CastleVille
- Civilization (Computer file)
- Colonization (Computer file)
- Computer games industry
- Computer games--Design
- Computer games--Development
- Computer games--Handbooks, manuals, etc
- Dick, Philip K. Game-players of Titan
- GAMES / Video & Electronic
- Gaming Conference
- Personal papers
- Railroad Tycoon (Game)
- Renaissance of Infantry
- Titan
- Video games--Design
- Video games--Development
- Video games--Handbooks, manuals, etc.
- War games

Biographical Note

Bruce Campbell Shelley began his games career testing war board games by mail for free. In 1980, he was one of the founding members of game company Iron Crown Enterprises (ICE) along with several friends from the University of Virginia. Simulations Publications provided him with his first job as a professional game designer in the summer of 1981. Shelley joined Avalon Hill in 1982, where he developed board games such as 1830: The Game of Railroads and Robber Barons and Titan. In 1987, Avalon Hill prompted Shelley to switch his focus from board games to computer games. Shelley worked alongside Sid Meier and Andy Hollis at MicroProse Software Inc., learning the philosophy of game design; there, Shelley co-designed *Railroad Tycoon* (1990) and *Civilization* (1991) —the games for which he is best known.

Shelley started at Ensemble Studios in 1995, joining two fellow gamers he knew from college. As Senior Designer at Ensemble, Shelley helped to structure the company and influenced the development methodology. He contributed to *Age of Empires* (1997) and *Age of Empires II: Age of Kings* (1999), real-time action games with historical depth. Shelley moved to Zynga in 2009 as a Senior Design Director on *CastleVille* (2011) alongside Brian Reynolds and Dave Pottinger. As of 2017, Shelley continues to be active in the gaming community.

Shelley's methodologies in developing games include targeting broad audiences, working with prototypes early in the process, keeping the development process fun and fast-paced, drawing inspiration from existing games, and focusing on creating an enjoyable, quality, and best-selling game. His accomplishments include being inducted into the Academy of Interactive Arts and Sciences Hall of Fame in 2008 as well as being elected to its Board of Directors.

Collection Scope and Content Note

This collection contains materials relating to Bruce C. Shelley's time in both the board/strategy game and video game industry. These include digital materials, game rules, correspondence, strategy guide notes, conference materials, articles, magazine clippings, design documents, outlines, order forms, prototype specs, inserts, and reviews. The bulk of the materials are dated between 1982 and 2000.

The Bruce Shelley papers have been arranged into three series, each of which has been further divided into subseries. The collection is housed in four archival document boxes.

System of Arrangement

Series I: Analog game-related, c. 1975-1984

Subseries A: Simulations Publications, Inc.

Subseries B: Avalon Hill Games, Inc.

Subseries C: Miscellaneous wargaming materials

Series II: Digital game-related, 1993-2010

Subseries A: MicroProse Software Inc.

Subseries B: Ensemble Studios

Subseries C: Zynga

Series III: Personal papers, 1978-2009

Subseries A: Personal papers

Subseries B: Conference materials

Contents List

Series I: Analog game-related, c. 1975-1984

Scope and Content Note: This series contains game rules, order forms, correspondence, magazine inserts, newsletters, notes, a questionnaire, membership flier, and brochure which relate to Shelley's work with analog games (non-electronic games such as board games, card games, etc.).

Subseries A: Simulations Publications, Inc., c. 1978-1980

Scope and Content Note: This subseries contains game rules, newsletters, catalog, and order form related to Simulation Publications, Inc.

Box 1

- Folder 1 Renaissance of Infantry, n.d.
Folder 2 Simulations Publications, Inc. newsletters and catalog, 1978-1980

Subseries B: Avalon Hill Games, Inc., c. 1976-1984

Scope and Content Note: This subseries contains order forms, game rules, correspondence with game designers and typesetter (Colonial Composition), and magazine inserts documenting Shelley's work on games including *Wooden Ships* and *Iron Men* and *Titan* while employed at Avalon Hill Games, Inc.

Box 1

- Folder 3 Avalon Hill Games, Inc.-related, c. 1978
Folder 4 *The Avalon Hill General* inserts, c. 1976-1979
Folder 5 *Wooden Ships* and *Iron Men*, 1984
Folder 6 *Titan* – Correspondence, April 1981-September 1982
Folder 7 *Titan* – Revisions to Rules, c. 1981-1982

Subseries C: Miscellaneous wargaming materials, c. 1975-1979

Scope and Content Note: This subseries contains newsletters, notes, order forms, a questionnaire, membership flier, and brochure related to various wargames and wargaming groups.

Box 1

- Folder 8 Miscellaneous wargaming materials, c. 1975-1979

Series II: Digital game-related, 1993-2010

Scope and Content Note: This series contains articles, notes, strategy guide drafts, questionnaires, outlines, correspondence, presentation slides, contact list, design documents, story notes, and a game manual which relate to Shelley's work on digital games.

Subseries A: MicroProse Software Inc., 1993-1994

Scope and Content Note: This subseries contains an article, notes, strategy guide drafts, questionnaires, outlines, floppy disks, and correspondence relating to Shelley's work at MicroProse and his work on the strategy guide for *Sid Meier's Colonization* (1994).

Box 1

Folder 9 MicroProse-related, February 1993
Folder 10 *Sid Meier's Colonization*, 1994

Box 2

Object 1 "Railroad Tycoon" 3.5" floppy disk, n.d.
Object 2 "Civilization" 3.5" floppy disk, n.d.

Subseries B: Ensemble Studios, c. 1995-2002

Scope and Content Note: This subseries contains outlines, presentation slides, correspondence, articles, contact list, design documents, floppy disks, CDs, and a game manual for *The Conquerors* expansion for *Age of Empires II*. Note that due to the way some of the pages are printed in the Age of Mythology folder, some pages do not appear in order. In its early stages, *Age of Empires* was called "Dawn of Man" (or "DoM") on documentation.

Box 1

Folder 11 Ensemble Studios-related, 1999-2000
Folder 12 *Age of Empires I* ("Dawn of Man"/ "DOM"), c. 1995-1997
Folder 13 *Age of Empires II: Age of Kings*, c. 1997-2000
Folder 14 *Age of Mythology* ("RTS3"), c. 2000-2002

Box 2

Objects 3-4 Ensemble Studios-related CDs (2)
Objects 5-7 "Dawn of Man"/ *Age of Empires I* 3.5" floppy disks (3)
Object 8 *Age of Empires I* 3.5" floppy disk
Objects 9-13 *Age of Empires I* CDs (5)
Objects 14-19 *Age of Empires II* 3.5" floppy disks (5)
Objects 20-40 *Age of Empires II* CDs (20)
Object 41 *Age of Mythology* 3.5" floppy disk
Objects 42-46 *Age of Mythology* CDs (5)

Box 4

Object 69 *Age of Empires* - Product trailers VHS, 1998

Subseries C: Zynga, 2010

Scope and Content Note: This subseries contains story notes and correspondence related to Shelley's work on *CastleVille*.

Box 1

Folder 15 *CastleVille*, 2010

Series III: Personal papers, 1978-2009

Scope and Content Note: This series contains program books, schedules and registration information, directions, receipts, questionnaires, game fliers, an invitation, holiday card, floppy disks, CDs, and DVDs that document Shelley's personal and conference-related activities.

Subseries A: Personal papers, c. 1994-2009

Scope and Content Note: This subseries contains 3.5" floppy disks, CDs, and a DVD that contain documents relating to Shelley's accomplishments and projects.

Box 3

Object 47 Hall of Fame 2009 DVD
Objects 48-61 Misc. 3.5" floppy disks (14)
Objects 62-67 Misc. CDs (6)

Subseries B: Conference materials, 1978-2000

Scope and Content Note: This subseries contains program books, schedules and registration information, directions, receipts, questionnaires, game fliers, an invitation, and holiday card, all relating to the Origins 1978 Conference and additional conferences as attended by Shelley.

Box 1

Folder 16 Origins 1978 Conference
Folder 17 Other conferences, 1978, 1979, 2000, 2001

Box 3

Object 68 Korea Conference 3.5" floppy disk, 2000