Alice Symposium 2013
Program

June 19, 2013
Duke University
Durham, NC
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Message from Symposium Chairs

June 19, 2013

Welcome to the third Alice Symposium! This symposium focuses on the programming environment Alice, including teaching experience with Alice, interdisciplinary use of Alice, and other pedagogical uses of Alice. The program includes five papers, a panel, ten posters, our keynote speaker Tiffany Barnes from North Carolina State University, and some additional invited speakers. In addition we will announce the winners of the Alice Contest.

Here is some history about the Alice Symposium. The first Alice Symposium was held on June 19-21, 2006 at Duke University in Durham, NC. This symposium included invited speakers and two keynote speakers, Owen Astrachan of Duke University who spoke about social networks as a foundation for computer science and Caitlin Kelleher from Carnegie Mellon University who talked about a version of Alice she created called StoryTelling Alice, and how she had used it with middle school girls. This symposium included several workshops on Alice.

The second Alice Symposium was held June 17, 2009 at Duke University and included twenty-five papers and a keynote talk entitled "Are we all Cyborgs?" by Rachael Brady of Duke University. This symposium also included two-day pre- and post-workshops related to Alice.

This third Alice Symposium has fewer papers, but also has several new sessions including a poster session and an Alice contest. Like the second symposium, it also includes pre- and post-workshops, and is also being held at Duke University.

We hope you enjoy the program!

Symposium Co-Chairs: Susan Rodger, Stephen Cooper and Wanda Dann
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Committees

Symposium Chairs and Program Chairs
Susan Rodger, Duke University
Steve Cooper, Stanford University
Wanda Dann, Carnegie Mellon University

Additional Program Committee Members
Barbara Ericson, Georgia Tech College of Computing
Alka Harriger, Purdue University
Pam Lawhead, University of Mississippi

Program Coordinator
Kathy Menchaca, Stanford University

Alice Contest Committee
Madeleine Schep, Columbia College
Don Slater, Carnegie Mellon University
RoxAnn Stalvey, College of Charleston

Poster Chair
Brook Osborne, Duke University

Logistics Coordinators
Camelia Eaves, Duke University
Pam Spencer, Duke University

Web Design
Celeste Hodges, Duke University

Duke University Student Helpers
Daniel MacDonald
Elizabeth Onstwedder
Bella Onwumbiko
Edwin Ward
Keynote Speaker

Tiffany Barnes  
Computer Science Department  
North Carolina State University  
Raleigh, NC USA

Human-amplifying and Transformational Computing

Abstract
Human-centered computing has at its core the idea that humans are central to many of the things we create and use computers to do. On a recent trip to Haiti, I began to rethink my own perspective on computing - what, exactly, are computers and computing for? Computing is and should be about amplifying people - to be more of what we think of as "human". Not only can computing amplify intelligence - it can amplify compassion, communication, understanding, and creativity - and even transform people and our society. Programming languages like Alice, Scratch, and Snap and the creation of serious games highlight the importance of leveraging creativity to inspire the next wave of transformative innovation in computing. In this talk I'll lead in with this idea and give an overview of my work including: my new course on the Beauty and Joy of Computing, the STARS Alliance for broadening participation, creating games for education, exercise, and energy, and using data to personalize learning experiences.

Biography
Tiffany Barnes is an Associate Professor of Computer Science at NC State University and received her PhD from NC State in 2003. Dr. Barnes received an NSF CAREER Award for her novel work in using data to add intelligence to STEM learning environments. Dr. Barnes is co-PI on the $9 M NSF STARS Alliance grants that engage college students in outreach, research, and service. She has received ~$2 M in funds as PI from the National Science Foundation, NASA, and industry sources to research effective ways to build serious games for education, exercise, and environmental awareness; promote undergraduate research; and develop new ways to teach computing. Dr. Barnes serves on the ACM SIGCSE board, and has been on the organizing committees for several conferences including Educational Data Mining and Foundations of Digital Games, and has served as associate editor for the Journal of Educational Data Mining and was a guest editor for IEEE Computer Graphics and Applications.
Abstracts

Papers

*Piloting Alice in the Upper School*, Chari Distler - North Broward Preparatory School, Coconut Creek, FL

This paper describes a few challenges and many rewards of piloting the teaching of the programming language, Alice, in our Upper School consisting of middle school (grades 6-8) and high school (grades 9-12). We teach Alice as a stand-alone course at both levels. We originally planned on introducing the same curriculum into the middle school as we did the high school, but we knew we would need to approach the material with the younger students at a slower pace. Surprisingly, middle school students excelled in Alice and were able to keep up with their high school counterparts. Currently, we are considering providing our academic teachers with Alice training, so it can be used more at the middle school level. A goal in our department is to utilize Alice as a cross-curricular application. Alice is an ideal way for students to explore the world of computer programming, and we are eager to lay the foundation for a lifelong interest in computer programming for many of our students. Now that we have entered into the second half of this first year of Alice, we are finding that students are very excited about learning this valuable and enjoyable application that they view as "fun" and "cool."

*Alice in Virginia Beach, a Continuing Experiment*, John Harrison - Princess Anne High School, Virginia Beach, VA

To meet the needs of a more diverse group of students, Virginia Beach City Public Schools (VBCPS) developed an introductory computer programming curriculum using the Alice programming environment. Both the target student population and the curriculum have changed since introduction in the 2006 - 2007 school year. Many of the current students have weak mathematics backgrounds and need this course to meet Virginia State graduation requirements. Teachers continue to search for meaningful and interesting ways to introduce Java to these students while building on the computer science concepts developed in Alice. The specific experiences of Princess Anne High School are used to generalize to the nine other Virginia Beach high schools that also teach the Alice curriculum.

*Pragmatism and Production: Introductory Computing in an Undergraduate Business Curriculum*, W. Brett McKenzie - Roger Williams University, Bristol, RI

In general, computing in business is an applied activity with computing serving as a utility to provide leverage for business goals. This is in contrast to a computer science program where computing is more likely an end in itself. The former is pragmatic the latter is more theoretical. Similarly, in high schools computing resources are frequently found in the business departments where students use them purposefully for production rather than as objects of inquiry. Despite the differences, programming is essential to understanding and using computing. Students in business programs tend to be production oriented in that the courses often create artifacts, which are increasingly becoming the foundation for the course outcomes. Alice has demonstrated itself to be a good fit with the programming requirements for the business curriculum as it prepares students for programming in a scripting environment and exposes them to object oriented concepts. Additionally, Alice has the advantage of providing a product – a functioning world to specifications – accessible to a wide audience. Both the adaptability of Alice to a pragmatic approach and the creation of a product reinforce Alice as an introductory environment for computer programming in business.

*Software Engineering Java K12 Outreach Course with Alice and Cloud Computing*, Joseph Shanahan and Daniela Marghitu - Auburn University, Auburn, AL

Project Expression is a course designed to attract students into the field of computing. K-12 students, grades 6-12, are introduced to Java programming using Carnegie Mellon's Alice and the art of multimedia production. By implementing a wide range of apps they learn cloud communication techniques in a software environment. The course focuses on a digital film project and participants are challenged with creating a movie that expresses an idea, opinion, or belief relative to society. The film project is a landscape for learning cloud-computer-programming and reaches across the computer spectrum with engaging activities that stimulate creative design. This study examines the course's approach and measures its effectiveness to teach the
cloud-computing mentality. It emphasizes the importance of empathy in a technology-based society. Furthermore, it investigates whether or not such a course is an effective method for attracting students into the field of computing.

**DOROTHY: Integrating Graphical Programming with Robotics to Stimulate Interest in Computing,**
Mohan Sridharan, Stephanie Graham, Shiloh Huff, Sarah Rainge, Austin Ray, Mary Shuman, David South, Kevin Thomas, Joseph E. Urban, & Susan D. Urban - Texas Tech University, Lubbock, TX

This paper describes DOROTHY, a novel educational tool that enhances the Alice 3D programming environment to enable bidirectional communication of sensor data and commands with robots capable of autonomous operation. Users without any programming experience can quickly create graphical routines consisting of one or more simulated robots in virtual worlds. Command dictionaries and socket streams enable real-time translation of these routines to software for synchronous or asynchronous control of sensing and actuation on one or more mobile robots with on-board sensing, resulting in adaptive behavior in the real-world. Multiple execution scenarios are described to illustrate the capabilities of the educational tool. Furthermore, the paper outlines a curriculum that can be used with the tool to teach core concepts of computing, concurrent execution and real-world sensing to middle school and high school students, thus stimulating interest in computing.

**Invited Talks / Panels**

**How Alice 3D Models are Created,** Laura Paoletti - Alice Arts Team Director

In this session, the lead Character Artist on the Alice Team will present an overview of the process of building a 3D model for Alice, using models recently developed as examples. A short discussion of how Alice 2 and Alice 3 model building differs will be particular interest to attendees who have been using Alice 2 and are now learning about Alice 3.

**ATE Project: Community College Alice 2 to Alice 3**, Moderated by Wanda Dann - Carnegie Mellon University, Pittsburgh, PA

**Panel Presenters:** Tebring Daly – Collin County Community College, Plano, TX; Don Slater – Carnegie Mellon University, Pittsburgh, PA; William Taylor – Camden County College, Camden, NJ; Anita Wright – Camden County College, Camden, NJ; Eileen Wrigley – Community College of Allegheny County, Pittsburgh, PA

This panel presentation will include an overview of an NSF-sponsored project designed to provide professional development workshops for community college faculty and develop curricular materials for Alice 3 in community college courses. In addition, the project included a mentor plan for community college faculty who desire to take on leadership roles in Alice programming training and support “for community college faculty by community college faculty.” Co-PIs from each of the three participating community colleges in diverse (urban, rural, and Appalachian) regions will report on curricular development and evaluative results at their own campus.

**Posters**

**Poster 1: The Story of Echo and Narcissus,** Kathleen Dasho & Owen DeCleene - North Reading Middle School, North Reading, MA

I teach at the North Reading Middle School and have been teaching Alice for about 6 years now. The lesson that is being displayed is an interdisciplinary one integrating Language Arts and podcasting with programming in Alice. The Lesson Plan is displayed on the board and the objective is to have 7th graders research a Greek or Roman Myth and depict that myth using Alice to make the characters come alive and tell the story. Students first bring up the Internet and research myths to choose one that appeals to them. Then they use a hybrid form of Alice that I created by merging Alice 2.0 and Storytelling Alice to create their story. This lesson uses Alice as a digital storytelling tool to enhance students’ skills of learning to program with Alice and also their Language Arts skills in terms of formulating and retelling a story. The poster depicts scenes from this student’s selection: The Story of Echo and Narcissus. This student brought a sense of humor and creativity to his project which you can appreciate if you watch it. He recorded his voice to narrate the story, using Alice’s record feature. I then turned the program into a movie.
Poster 2: **Who Is Alice?**, Chari Distler - North Broward Preparatory School, Coconut Creek, FL

At my school, Alice is an elective class in middle school and high school and has provided a great opportunity for students to shine at many levels. After the first week of school this year I aside a seventh grade student if everyone liked Alice. She replied, “Who is Alice?” Six months later, my classroom is referred to as the “Alice Room.” The classes are made up of students interested in computer science, animation, and film. The first group of students to take Alice as a twelve-week elective class really enjoyed what they learned and applied their new skills and interests to their work.

Poster 3: **Computer Programming in Public Spaces for Digital Inclusion Using Alice 3D: Challenges and Opportunities**, André Schaeffer - Federal University of Fronteira Sul, Rio Grande do Sol, Brazil

This poster presents a study of the possibilities of using Alice 3D in Brazil’s public spaces for digital inclusion, in order to awaken and develop in children, young people and teachers, the desire for computer programming, making use of the intrinsic computer’s pragmatic to develop logical reasoning in these people. The work also aims to develop and experiment with different computer programming teaching methodologies, tailored to the realities of the target audience, considering different deficiencies in each one’s knowledge. The results are the fruit of work developed in the city of Erechim, southern Brazil, in a lab equipped with computers running Educational Linux 4.0 (Linux Brazilian distribution whose kernel is based in Ubuntu 10.04) widely distributed in Brazilian territory by the federal government alongside “computers in public” policies intended to spread the use of technology in education and promoting digital inclusion of people with less purchasing power. The presentation will highlight the difficulties faced on Alice installation, the assimilation of the skills needed to learn the programming language and possible suggestions made as to how this programming language can be used in association with the teacher’s lesson plan, challenging the children to build their own knowledge.

Poster 4: **Multimodal Machinema at the University of Aizu**, Michael Cohen - University of Aizu, Fukushima-ken, Japan

We introduce students to the basics of human interface technology and the virtual reality paradigm, especially through “desktop VR” (a.k.a. “fishtank VR”), a “hands-on” approach emphasizing creation of self-designed virtual worlds. The main vehicle of expression is Alice, used to contextualize segments on color models, image capture and compositing, computer graphics, graphic composition and 3D drawing, IBR (image-based rendering) & texture mapping, sound, audio, & music, as well as software engineering. Segments on stereoscopy and 360° panoramic and turnoramic imagery and image-based rendering are also included. We use Photo Booth, iPhoto, SumoPaint, Audacity, and GarageBand as support tools for multimedia content creation. Students use self-designed multimodal interfaces authored with object-oriented techniques to tell stories with virtual characters and cinematography (camera motion and gestures, “camerabatics”) for deterministic machinema and also dynamic environments such as games and digital stories.

Poster 5: **Alice Summer Camps: Evaluating Multiple Formats**, Robert Van Camp - Marietta College, Marietta, OH

During the summer of 2009, an Alice camp was taught to gifted students in our region. The following year our department secured an NSF CPATH Grant for Computational Thinking, grant number 0939106. In 2010 we hosted two weeks of our Adventures with Alice Programming and Computational Thinking camp, the first week with middle school students and the second with high school students. In both 2011 and 2012, we hosted one week of a combined middle school/high school camp. A general description of what we did in the camp will also be part of the poster presentation along with what we believe worked well and what could be improved.

Poster 6: **Career Achievement**, Joann Blanton - Massey Hill High School, Fayetteville, NC

We describe our vision of how we see students in a classroom, that, they will all achieve their goals of a career they were inspired to study. We envision our Alice scene as students in an understood discussion on career choices with their Teacher and fellow Students. We show a classroom with a Teacher observing students in a seminar discussion of what career they are inspiring to achieve. The Student seats are in a round table setting, with all desks in a circle, students facing each other. We used many maneuvers to turn the characters bodies so that they were all sitting in the desks, just as students would be. Their legs have been adjusted to bend at the knees and their feet are turned slightly. Two of the students have their arms/hands raised in order to ask a question to the Teacher. The characters chosen for the students are the following: Alice, Astronaut, Scuba Diver, Sherriff Deputy, Scientist and a Coach. The Scuba Diver and Alice have their hands raised and will have comments.
above their head saying what Career they are inspired to achieve. Alice’s comment will say, “I want to be a video game
designer” and the Scuba Diver will say, “I want to be an Oceanographer”.

Poster 7: The Squeak Defeat?, Jill Elberson - Southwest Middle School, Charlotte, NC & Elaine Witkowski -
Randleman High School, Randleman, NC

We were first introduced to Alice in 2007. We went to a workshop at Georgia Tech and tried to understand how Java worked
with Alice. This was just a little too much for us. We then attended first Adventures in Alice Programming Workshop offered at
Duke in 2008 for three weeks of training to learn Alice. We both worked in computer labs in Randolph County, different
schools, and began teaching Alice to our students. Witkowski had an afterschool Technology Club and Elberson had an AA class
in the mornings. Witkowski’s students made videos and games during her club time and also had a field trip to the Duke
immersive Virtual Environment (DiVE) at Duke University. Elberson’s groups were creating and learning from each other very
quickly and created wonderful animations also. We presented Alice at NCTIES. Two years ago, both our jobs changed and
Witkowski is back at her middle school and Elberson is in Onslow County and now addressing Alice 2.3 versus Squeak software.
Onslow County is working with UNCW in the Squeak Initiative. Students are using Squeak software, and now we are introducing
Alice to the same students. There is an equally distributed amount of boys to girls in this academically gifted class. There is also
a stronger interest and success rate with the girls than the boys. The project is to determine which software the students prefer
and also which gender prefers which software.

Poster 8: Alice at the Library, Donna Hoover - Brevard Middle School, Brevard, NC

I began teaching Alice in February of 2012 at the Transylvania County Library in Brevard, NC. I work with students ages 10
through 12, roughly 5th through 7th grade. The first classes were taught on Saturdays, one group from 10 until 1 and the
second from 2 until 5. We ran it for four Saturdays and then had a presentation on the following Saturday. I then taught a
second set of classes the following Summer for five days, Monday through Friday, using the same times of day with a
presentation the following Monday evening. The Summer classes were the most preferred method and I am scheduled to teach
two weeks this Summer, one in June and one in July. I used the tutorial from Duke to guide the students. They were invaluable
to us and the students learned quickly. The most successful class used children’s poetry from books the students chose in the
library. My favorite was "There Once Was a Farmer from Leeds". The student used texture maps to cover the main character
with grass, imported billboards for seed packets, and added special lighting.

Poster 9: Creating a Programming Camp – the Alice Workshop, Dana Murphy - Stanford University,
Stanford, CA

The Alice Workshop was created in 2011 at a Guilford College to provide girls with the tools and instruction to explore
programming at an earlier age. The goals of the workshop are to expose girls to programming and computer science, help them
to understand computer logic and algorithmic thinking, and support a potential interest the field. We founded and lead the
workshop, teaching computer science through the software Alice. Our roles as the creators and instructors of the workshop
have been to organize the lessons, gather interest, teach girls about Alice through lessons and sample worlds, and
provide encouragement for expanding and applying this new knowledge. Our poster will cover the workshop’s successes,
challenges, and plans for further expansion.

Poster 10: Forming a Club at a Middle School, Courtney Rudder - Dillard Drive Middle School, Raleigh, NC

The "Alice Animations" Club meets once a week at Dillard Drive Middle School, very informally, with students from grades 6-8.
Students meet for 75 minutes, working on laptop computers. We will show how students follow tutorials to learn the basics of
Alice. After several tutorials students are given assignments to create their own Alice Worlds with continued exploration that
includes specifics of what they have learned in the tutorials. The process continues with more advanced tutorials that the
students work through and save. Again, they create a world that includes specifics of what they have learned. Our goal is to
continue building this club, possibly creating an elective for a semester in Animations that include Alice along with other
animating programs.
Workshops

Alice 2.3 - Two-day workshop (Offered June 17-18, 2013)

PRESENTER: Steve Cooper – Stanford University
ROOM: Schiciano Auditorium Side A

Working with nationally recognized experts in Alice, teachers in these workshops will develop an understanding of Alice 2 and teaching methods suitable for introducing fundamental programming concepts using Alice 2. Workshop participants will receive a copy of the latest version of Alice 2 (2.3.3) as well as access to a wide variety of curricular support materials.

Alice 3.1 - Four-day workshop (Offered June 17-18, 20-21, 2013)

PRESENTERS: Wanda Dann and Don Slater – Carnegie Mellon University
ROOM: Schiciano Auditorium Side B

Working with nationally recognized experts in Alice, teachers in these workshops will develop an understanding of Alice 3 and teaching methods suitable for introducing programming with Alice in an introductory programming course. Workshop participants will receive a copy of the latest version of Alice 3.1 as well as curricular support materials (eBook, presentation slides, videos, etc.). Note: A participant can sign up for the first part of the workshop only (June 17-18) or the complete workshop (June 17-18 and June 20-21).

Exploring Wonderland: Alice 2.3 and Media Computation in Java- Two-day workshop (Offered June 20-21, 2013)

PRESENTER: Barbara Ericson – Georgia Tech College of Computing
ROOM: Schiciano Auditorium Side A

Alice is a great way to introduce students to computing concepts with drag-and-drop programming, but students need to be able to transfer their understanding to a textual language like Java. Since Alice is engaging the materials in Java should also be engaging. Media Computation fills this need since it introduces computing concepts by having students write programs to manipulate pictures, sounds, movies, and text. With Media Computation students stay in a movie making context and learn how to do special effects for their Alice movies in Java.

North Carolina Alice Follow-up Workshop - Five-day workshop (June 17-21, 2013)

PRESENTER: Susan Rodger – Duke University
ROOM: LSRC D106

This workshop is for teachers who previously attended a Duke Alice Workshop and includes the Alice Symposium on June 19.

South Carolina Alice Workshop - Four-day workshop (June 17-20, 2013)

PRESENTERS: Madeleine Schep – Columbia College & RoxAnn Stalvey – College of Charleston
ROOM: LSRC D344

This workshop is for teachers who have signed up for the South Carolina Alice Workshop and includes the Alice Symposium on June 19.

South Carolina Alice Follow-up Workshop - Two-day workshop (June 18-19, 2013)

PRESENTER: RoxAnn Stalvey – College of Charleston
ROOM: LSRC D309

This workshop is for teachers who previously took one of the South Carolina Alice Workshops and includes the Alice Symposium on June 19.
Contest Winners

K-8
1st: Gary’s Superstitious Friday, Evan V., North Broward Preparatory School
2nd: A Walk Towards Destruction, Evan S., North Broward Preparatory School
3rd: Superstition Music Video, William M., North Broward Preparatory School

High School
1st: Just Buck’s Luck, Michelle P., Academy of Our Lady of Good Counsel
2nd (tie): From Rags to Riches, Jared S., North Broward Preparatory School
2nd (tie): Candle Goes Out, Margaret M., Oak Knoll School

College
1st: Einstein at 11:11, Chelsea Green, Stanford University
2nd: Buffalo Brown Leather Jacket, Torsten Rotto, Stanford University
3rd: Superstitions, Kimmy Scheible, Stanford University
Supporters

The cost of the Alice Symposium is low thanks to funding provided by National Science Foundation ITEST grant DRL-1031351.

Additional funds have been provided by an IBM Faculty Award.

Conference facilities and other support provided from Duke University.