



postcard

NAVIGATING TIME AND PLACE

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PostCard is an iPad game designed to encourage players to explore the city and gain an appreciation for the changing nature of the urban landscape. The gameplay encourages players to understand the layout and makeup of previous incarnations of the city and the relationship between those cities' past and the city present.



During the game, players take turns navigating the city using a historical map. The iPad on the right shows an example game featuring a map from 1901. Players compete to collect postcards from that era featuring historical structures and events, as well as images of imagined or never-completed structures.

RESEARCH GOALS

We hope that players of the game will be captivated by the central idea of navigating a place with a map of a different era that might or might not be familiar to the participants. In addition, we hope the game can spark enough curiosity so that the interest in the game will not be just a prototype with historical maps of U.C. Berkeley but also can be a game model to be played in any urban areas throughout the world.

METHODS

Because of the personal interest in the way we approach our immediate urban environments, we began to look at different ways we personally navigate the central campus of U.C. Berkeley. We determined not only how uniformed we were about the urban history and morphology surrounding us but how willing we are to understand and know more about it. Hence, our intent was to create a game that both allowed for a combination of collaboration, play and urban detection

based on the idea of navigating a place by means of outdated maps. The historical information and maps were gathered from databases such as Online Archive of California (OAC), David Ramsey Historical Map Collection, Days of: A Virtual Tour Through UC Berkeley's History (A project by The Bancroft Library) and maps from the Earth Science and Maps Library. In addition we also walked around campus with a physical outdated map to see, understand and envision what the campus looked like or potentially could have looked.

CONCLUSION

In the first series of test play we were excited to see that participants become enthralled by using the outdated map that we provided to navigate an area that to player seemed familiar. Participants quickly understood that although the map they were looking at was of U.C. Berkeley, they became confused, curious and excited about what was and wasn't in their path while navigating from point to point.