Teaching Learning Advisory Council (TLAC) Conference Grant Program 2018

19th Annual Reacting to the Past Faculty Conference
Barnard College, New York City
June 2019

A proposal submitted by

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Explanatory Essay

What is the Conference?

The 19th Reacting to the Past (RTTP) Faculty Conference will be hosted by Barnard College in New York in June 2019.

The conference brings together hundreds of professors and administrators from throughout the world who, over four days, gather and immerse themselves in the "highest" of high-impact pedagogies. The Institute offers intensive workshops on approximately twelve different games, as well as plenary and concurrent sessions that explore issues related to teaching and learning, faculty development, and the future of higher education more generally. As such, the conference is specifically targeted towards pedagogical professionals looking to incorporate an interactive and immersive pedagogy into their classroom.

The conference is sponsored by the Reacting Consortium, an alliance of colleges, universities, and individual faculty committed to developing and publishing the Reacting to the Past series of role playing games for higher education and providing programs for faculty development and curricular change. Through the main program office at Barnard, the Consortium provides programs for faculty development and curricular change, including a regular series of conferences and workshops, online instructor resources, and consulting services.

What is Reacting to the Past (RTTP)?

RTTP is a pedagogical series published by WW Norton in collaboration with the RTTP Consortium that consists of elaborate games, set in the past, in which students are assigned roles informed by classic texts in the history of ideas. Each game explores multiple academic disciplines – history, philosophy, literature – and some develop an additional focus on fields such as art history and various sciences. Indeed, part of the intellectual appeal of RTTP is that it transcends disciplinary structures. Class sessions are run entirely by students; instructors advise and guide students and grade their oral and written work. It seeks to draw students into the past.

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promote engagement with big ideas, and improve intellectual and academic skills.

The success of the pedagogy in engaging undergraduate students has been confirmed by faculty reports, student evaluations, and independent observations. The pedagogy has also been the subject of formal double-blind assessment studies conducted on multiple campuses. The studies show that RTTP students, when compared with those enrolled in other general education courses, improved in certain salient categories associated with learning, including the development of an appreciation of multiple points of view on controversial topics and a belief in the malleability of human characteristics over time and across contexts. Speaking skills also improved substantially.

RTTP received the 2004 Theodore Hesburgh Award for pedagogical innovation and has been awarded developmental support from the Christian A. Johnson Endeavor Foundation, the Teagle Foundation, and FIPSE (U.S. Department of Education). RTTP has also been featured in exclusively positive terms in Change Magazine, the Chronicle Review, the New York Times, the Chronicle of Higher Education; the Christian Science Monitor; and elsewhere.

Despite its success record, instead of looking for new pedagogical models universities and students are racing to create and take massive online courses to address myriad problems such as recruitment, retention, and learning outcomes. Yet, with online learning and economies of scale, we may be overlooking a basic cause of current dissatisfaction in academia: classes are all too often dull. Perhaps the answer is not simply to replicate teacher-centered pedagogies in massive online courses but instead to re-orient the system towards learner-centered delivery. Uploading an existing struggling model will have little to no positive impact on the actual process of learning (and thus on outcomes) since it fails to alter the underlying dynamic that proves so disengaging to our students. RTTP as one particular manifestation of an emergent trend towards gamification, however, breaks entirely with the assumption that the teacher-student relationship must rely on teacher control and students’ passive consumption.

Yes, the buzzword “active learning” has lost meaning due to overuse and abuse. Yet, research consistently reveals that teamwork, problem solving, and indeterminacy in expected results produce the highest degree of student engagement and consequent learning and retention. The RTTP model is not only built entirely on these premises, it also introduces two radical elements—competitive play and subversive identity cultures.

First, RTTP creates a climate of competitive play that pushes the student teams; the teams and individuals want to win the game and force themselves to master the necessary material to present their arguments in class. This competition is not about the grade since “winning” does not result in a higher grade; one can fail to reach one’s character’s victory objectives and still have played masterfully, earning the highest possible grade. Indeed, student’s quickly stop

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1 Details on the awards can be found at: http://reacting.barnard.edu/about/awards.
3 For the most recent trends in gamification in education see, Darina Dicheva, Christo Dichev, Gennady Agre and Galia Angelova, “Gamification in Education: A Systematic Mapping Study,” Journal of Educational Technology & Society 18, no. 3 (July 2015): 75-88
asking about their grade during the games (even though all of their work, from participation, to public speaking, to their mandatory writing is graded) and focus instead on how to win, which, not surprisingly, requires participation, public speaking, and writing in thesis-driven, evidence-based forms.

Second, RTTP replicates the subversive identity culture in which almost all contemporary students are immersed; they already socialize largely through their virtual identities and avatars in increasingly numerous and integrated on-line venues. RTTP uses this social reality and simply academicizes its content. It creates a subversive academic subculture in which students adopt roles, take over the classroom, and shape the outcomes, but all within the learning outcomes expectations of the professor.

Though rigorous (requiring students to read and analyze considerable amounts of primary historical documents) the game-like structure and student self-direction make the content fun and motivating. Students are competing with each other in a subversive play environment. And these elements are not just motivators but fundamental human desires – ones that do not disappear in adulthood. Oddly, though, competitive subversive play is everywhere on college campuses except the classroom, where grades are largely kept secret and relations are “collegial.” Our students live everywhere else in a world of sports, video games, social media, dorm-wide competitions of games such as “Assassins,” and the race to join Greek life. RTTP applies that kind of competition and play to the classroom. There, assuming various historical personae – from Mahatma Gandhi to George Washington – students can try on different identities in non-threatening ways and also compete to win – the historical outcome is determined by the way students handle the situation. Thus it is not reenacting but re-living history. And if history, the liberal arts and sciences, and the traditional university are to remain relevant, then innovative pedagogical strategies such as this will have to be developed.

Why Do I Want to Go and What Is in It for NMU?

The NMU history department has been enthusiastically integrating active pedagogies into our curriculum, and RTTP has been at the forefront. I have personally engaged heavily in bringing this pedagogy to NMU (see list of past activities) and actively sharing with my colleagues. Our annual workshops integrate current students, teaching assistants, faculty and administrators from across campus (we are actively in bringing the pedagogy to as many disciplines as possible). To that end I have also presented to the Board of Trustees, made a Faculty Focus Video on “Gamification in a History Class,” and led a CTL Learning Circle on gamification and RTTP. These activities are part of a conscious strategy by me and the entire History department to use the pedagogy as a recruitment and retention tool in collaboration with Admissions as a visible part of NMU.

I have used RTTP to provide students conference presentation opportunities nationally, regionally, and locally:

- Annika Peterson, RTTP Annual Faculty Conference at Barnard, 2013
- Robert Lawler, RTTP Regional Conference at EMU, 2016
- Erin Kilbourn, Great Lakes History Conference, 2018)
- ~ five students per year who present at the annual NMU RTTP workshops.

My integration of students in the pedagogy of gamification has most recently led to an

4 “Gamification in a History Class”. NMU Faculty Focus Video, 17 November 2017.
https://wildcast.nmu.edu/episode.php?id=C288EED3-9953-C98B-D8F0-D132953DE17E.
upcoming conference presentation at Grand Valley State University on “Gamification of Genocide? The Development of a Holocaust-based Expansion to T.I.M.E Stories”. The presentation explores the creation by myself and an NMU student, Erin Kilbourn, of a “decksploration” expansion module of an existing successful franchise, which we hope to publish.

I am also in the process of working on a multi-week RTTP module based on one of the central issues of the 20th century – the collapse of German democracy and the rise of Hitler’s Nazi Party in Germany in the early 1930s. Tentatively entitled Democracy in Crisis: Germany, 1929-1932, the game is available in beta-form on the RTTP Website.5

This conference thus contributes significantly to my sustained work at NMU in regards to teaching, scholarship and service, and I hope that this conference will enhance this on-going expansion of gamification for myself professionally, for our students in and outside the classroom, and for the university generally.

Plan to Present at Conference

I will be submitting my game for play testing at the conference; the game has been moved up to a pre-publication stage where a version is available on-line for use by consortium members (approximately 20 users at the moment). The Consortium intends to publish the game, and thus play testing at the annual conference is extremely likely (the conference has not been opened yet to proposals).

Budget (estimate):

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>RTTP Game Development Conference 2019 (four nights)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Travel – domestic airfare</td>
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<tr>
<td>Housing ($100/night)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Per Diem ($32)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Conference Fee</td>
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<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
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5 Reacting to the Past, “Democracy in Crisis: Germany, 1929-1932,” https://reacting.barnard.edu/node/93906. Access to game materials requires registration; a full bibliography is included in those materials.
Brief CV

Robert Goodrich
Professor, Department of History
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Marquette, MI 49855
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Education
2000 PhD – University of Wisconsin-Madison (European History)
   Dissertation: “Yes forwards, but first go back:” The Construction of Catholic Working-Class
   Identity in the Cologne, 1880-1914”
1994 MA – University of Wisconsin-Madison (European History)
   Thesis: “The Road to Wyden:” Johann Most and German Anarchism
1989 BA – Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University (History)
1989 BA – Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University (German)

Languages:  German (near native); Spanish (conversational); French (reading); Latin (reading)

Academic Employment
2001-present  Northern Michigan University, department of history
2000-2001  Augustana College, department of history

Reacting to the Past and Related Presentations
“Gamification of Genocide? The Development of a Holocaust-based Expansion to T.I.M.E.
   Stories.” Great Lakes History Conference, Grand Valley State University, 12-13 October
   2018.
“The Limits of Hurtful Discourse: A Roundtable,” RTTP Annual Faculty Conference, Barnard
   College, 8 June 2015.
“Weimar Democracy in Crisis: Germany, 1929-1932,” Reacting to the Past Game Development
“The End of Weimar Germany, 1932: How to Role Play Nazis?” Reacting to the Past Game
   Development Conference, Central Michigan University, 18-20 July 2013.

Other Select Publications and Papers
Austro-Hungarians in Michigan. Peoples of Michigan, Julie Loehr, series ed. (Michigan State
   University Press, under contract).
“Conflicted Loyalties: Austro-Hungarian Immigrants in Michigan in the Great War.” Armistice and
“The Curious Case of Mario Ruconich: Austro-Hungarians in Michigan and the Great War.”
   Beaumier UP Heritage Center Symposium on World War I, Northern Michigan University, 6
   April 2017.
“Habsburg Emigration Identity in Michigan,” Austria and America: Cross-Cultural Encounters,
   1865-1933, Universität Salzburg and the Stefan Zweig Centre, Salzburg, Austria, 7
   December 2012.
“Bishop Baraga and Habsburg Identity in the Upper Peninsula,” Sonderegger Symposium, Northern Michigan University, September 2011.


“Catholic Working-Class Masculinity in Wilhelmine Germany,” German Studies Association, 29 September - 1 October 2006, Pittsburgh, PA.

“The Ethical, Pedagogical and Scholarly Considerations of Placing the Holocaust in a Comparative and Global Perspective”, 26 February 2005, Documentation Center of Cambodia, Phnom Penh, Cambodia.

“Beginning in Honors”, 1 April 2005, Upper Midwest Honors Council, Drake University.


External Grants, Honors and Awards
Michigan Technological University Archive Travel Grant (2013)
Moravian Archives, German Script Course (2004)
Order of Omega Outstanding Teacher (2000-2001) – Augustana College, Greek Council Award
History Lectureship Competition Award for The History of the Second World War (1998) – UW-Madison,
Friedrich Ebert Foundation Doctoral Research Fellowship (1995-1997)
Fulbright Full-Maintenance Research Fellowship (1995)
Preliminary Examinations passed with distinction (1994) – UW-Madison
Midwest Association of Graduate Schools Distinguished Master’s Thesis History Department Nominee – UW-Madison (1994)
**Report of Previous Activities**

I have engaged in a number of activities directly related to gamification generally and RTTP specifically nationally, regionally, and locally.

**Publications in Development**


**Presentations**


“The Limits of Hurtful Discourse: A Roundtable,” RTTP Annual Faculty Conference, Barnard College, 8 June 2015.


“The End of Weimar Germany, 1932: How to Role Play Nazis?” Reacting to the Past Game Development Conference, Central Michigan University, 18-20 July 2013.

**Conference Attendance**

Great Lakes History Conference, Grand Valley State University, 2018.

RTTP Regional Conference, Eastern Michigan University, 2016

RTTP Annual Faculty Conference, Barnard College, 2015.

RTTP Game Development Conference, Simpson College, 2014.

RTTP Game Development Conference, Central Michigan University, 2013.

RTTP Annual Faculty Conference, Barnard College, 2013.

**Local Activities**

RTTP workshops (annually 2015-present)

Faculty Focus Video, “Gamification” (2017)

CTL Learning Circle on RTTP (2015)

Board of Trustees presentation, “Meet the Faculty” (2015)

Integration into Classroom (2012 – present)

- HS 110: History and Popular Culture
  - “The Second Crusade: The War Council of Acre, 1148”
  - “Democracy in Crisis: Germany, 1929-1932”

- HS 202: World History since 1400
  - “Defining a Nation: India on the Eve of Independence, 1945”

- HS 251: Latin American History
  - “Mexico in Revolution, 1910-1920”

- HS 307: Topics in History: Historical Role Play
  - “The Threshold of Democracy: Athens in 403 BC”
  - “Rousseau, Burke, and the Revolution in France, 1791”
“Democracy in Crisis: Germany, 1929-1932”
HS 307: Topics in History: The French Revolution
“Rousseau, Burke, and the Revolution in France, 1791”
HS 308: Topics in Modern History: Modern Germany
“Democracy in Crisis: Germany, 1929-1932”
HS 308: Topics in Modern History: The Russian Revolution
“The Petrograd Soviet, 1917”

Past TLAC Grants

I have used a past TLAC grant awarded Fall 2013 to attend a related RTTP “Game Development Conference” in 2014, where I first presented the idea of my game. That conference proved an essential early step in the process of moving my individual project towards publication as well as setting me up to create workshops at NMU.
Appendix: RTTP Bibliography

Peer Reviewed Articles, Papers, and Assessment Reports Relevant to RTTP

Davison, Ann and Sue Lantz Goldhaber. "Integration, Socialization, Collaboration: Inviting Native and Non-Native English Speakers into the Academy through ‘Reacting to the Past’", in Reclaiming the Public University: Conversations on General & Liberal Education (2007).
Olwell, Russell and Azibo Stevens. "’I had to double check my thoughts’: How the Reacting to the Past Methodology Impacts First-Year College Student Engagement, Retention, and Historical Thinking” in The History Teacher 48, No. 3 (May 2015), pp 561-572.

Slater, Niall W. "Re-Inventing the Trivium: Debate, Dialogue--and Empathy." LiberalArtsOnline Volume 5, Number 5, May 2005.


Weston, Anthony. "From Guide on the Side to Impresario with a Scenario" in College Teaching 63, No. 3 (June 2015), pp 99-104.

**Essays and National Media Coverage of RTTP**


"Five Points on Change in the College Classroom." Ed Policy Group, December 9, 2014.


"News of the Profession: Reacting to the Past Wins Award." OAH Newsletter. Organization of American Historians


Carnes, Mark C. "Juan Winthrop - A Crime against History?" Perspectives on History, American Historical Association, October 2013.


Carnes, Mark C. "Inciting Speech." Change magazine, March/April 2005. (Winner of the 2005 William Gilbert Award (AHA) for the best article on teaching history.)


Houle, Amanda. "Listening to Students: Reacting to 'Reacting'." Change magazine, July/August 2006.


Ramsdell, Catherine. "Do College Classrooms Really Need to Be More Like Video Games?" Popmatters, December 1, 2014.

Rubin Museum of Art’s Review of Reacting to the Past’s June 2011 Institute, June 24, 2011.

Schaller, Peggy. “Can (Role-) Playing the French Revolution En Français Also Teach the Eighteenth Century?” Digital Defoe, Fall, 2014.

Shapiro, Judith. "‘Civil’ Wars, "Inside Higher Ed, September 8, 2014.

Watson, Keri. "There’s a Game for That: Teaching Art History with 'Reacting to the Past'." Art History Teaching Resources, April 17, 2015.

Campus Spotlights and Local Coverage of RTTP


"Faculty Introduced to Innovative Teaching Methods at Workshop." News @ AUC, March 2, 2008.


"Students Act Out History, Giving It Their Own Twist." Boston Globe, December 14, 2003


"Students Immerse Themselves In History." BGSU News, October 2014.

"Students Inhabit History: Emergence of Law in Society Brings Learning to Life." Kean XChange, November 2011.


"Undergraduate Science: Engaging the Big Questions and Increasing Achievement." AAC&U Member Innovations, March 2008.


Reis, Elizabeth. "Crafting Womanhood." Nursing Clio, December 4, 2014
Sides, Melynda. "Role-Playing Games Enliven History Lessons at UM." Fox 6 WBRC-TV, October 18, 2011.
Walsh, David A. "Can "Reacting to the Past" Help Students Learn About the Israel/Palestine Conflict?" History NewsNetwork (2010).