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2017 Game Development Conference at Newman University

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July 12-15, 2017

Click through now to register! (<http://www.regonline.com/builder/site/?eventid=1873506>)

Overview

College faculty and administrators are invited to register for the "Reacting to the Past" Game Development Conference at Newman University (<http://newmanu.edu/>) (Wichita, KS) July 12-15. This conference focuses on designing games for the pedagogical method "Reacting to the Past." At the conference, participants will play several Reacting-style games that are currently in development, discuss game design principles and processes, and work to expand and explore ideas for new games.

There is an optional Pre-Conference workshop, also known as "Newbie Day," for those new to "Reacting to the Past." Designed as an introduction to Reacting, the Pre-Conference Workshop takes place on Wednesday, July 12 and features *A 'Virtuous Woman'? The Abolition of Sati, India 1829*. You can attend "Newbie Day" along with the Game Development Conference, or you can attend the Pre-Conference Workshop or the Conference independent of one another.

Playtest Games

The July 12 "Newbie Day" game is ***A 'Virtuous Woman'? The Abolition of Sati, India 1829*, by Judy Walden**

Calcutta, 1829, is the prosperous and populous capital of Bengal, the epicenter of British rule in India. This is a time of transition, between the informal "Company rule" of the late 18th-early 19th centuries where profit was king to the more interventionist Raj (that would culminate in the incorporation of India as the "Crown jewel" of the British Empire in 1858). The issue under debate is sati, the self-immolation of a widow on her husband's funeral pyre. In the 1820s, the practice of sati was increasingly under attack, but banning sati, some British East India Company administrators feared, would antagonize Hindus, destabilize British control over Bengal, and thus threaten profits. Among Hindu reformers, the debate over sati involved issues of scholarship and tradition (what do the ancient texts really say about the practice?) and debates over cultural autonomy and authenticity. In addition to the historical debates of 1829, players today can also see the debate through the prisms of human rights, patriarchy, and cultural imperialism.

Game sessions are set in the Governor-General's residence in Calcutta, where Governor-General Bentinck has summoned advocates (Rammohun Roy and the Bengali Abolitionists) and opponents (Radhakanta Deb and the Bengali Anti-Abolitionists) of banning sati to hear their arguments (this setting is counterfactual). Indeterminates include upper-caste Bengalis undecided about abolition; East India Company employees, who are against sati but undecided about the wisdom of a complete ban; and Governor-General Bentinck and members of the Governing Council of Bengal, who want abolition but must keep Bengal pacified and the East India Company profits flowing.

During the Game Development Conference, participants will choose one game to participate in each day. Click on each game for a description.

Game Track I: Thursday, July 13

A Queen's Ransom: The Crisis of the Fourth Crusade

The Teapot Dome Scandal: Presidential Corruption, Power, and Reform in 1920s America

Game Track II: Friday, July 14

Peacemaking 1919: The Peace Conference at Versailles

The 13th Amendment

Game Track III: Saturday, July 15

Constitutionalism vs. Royal Absolutism: The Glorious Revolution in England, 1685-1688

Truman's Interim Committee and the Decision to Use the Bomb, 1945

Registration

The Game Development Conference fee includes materials and most meals. Housing is not included in the conference fee, but is available for an additional \$50 per night for a single, and \$25 per night for a double. Registration is divided into three main categories: "Newbie Day" only (July 12), Game Development Conference only (July 13-15), and "Newbie Day" plus Game Development Conference (July 12-15). When registering, please take note and register accordingly. Prices also differ based on Reacting Consortium Membership status. For more information regarding Reacting Consortium Membership, please see our membership page (<https://reacting.barnard.edu/about/consortium>). The prices for the conferece are as follows:

(/)	Member*	Non-Member*
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"Newbie Day" Only	\$40	\$50
Game Development Conference Only	\$150	\$180
"Newbie Day" + Game Development Conference	\$190	\$230

*Please observe that after June 30, 2017 there is an additional late fee of \$25.

Travel

For those of you travelling, Newman is 5 minutes from Eisenhower National Airport (ICT). You should be able to arrive 60-70 minutes before your flight and easily make it through security (at certain times of day security takes you 5-10 minutes). However--you ordinarily have to connect through a hub to get here.

The GDC will start at 9 AM on Thursday the 13th of July. Flying in the previous day is suggested if you desire to be on time (although we also encourage you to participate in the pre-conference workshop!) The conference will end at 2:30 PM on Saturday. However, the Saturday playtest will end at noon. So if you need to catch an early afternoon flight to get home, you should be able to stay through the playtest. If you have questions, contact Kelly McFall at mcfallk@newmanu.edu (<mailto:mcfallk@newmanu.edu>).

Housing

Housing will take place in the student dorms at Newman, Unviersity. Housing is available for an additional fee of \$50/night for a single and \$25/night for a double. Please see the below chart for housing availability based on registration category.

	Tues, June 11	Wed, June 12	Thurs, June 13	Fri, June 14	Sat, June 15
"Newbie Day" Only	Yes	Yes	No	No	No
GDC Only	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes

"Newbie Day" + GDC (/)	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Hello jworth (/user) Log out (/user/logout)
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Workshops

Information on workshop sessions is forthcoming. If you would like to apply for a playtesting or presentation slot, please refer to the Call for Proposals (<https://reacting.barnard.edu/gdc-2017-cfp>).

Game Descriptions

***A Queen's Ransom: The Crisis of the Fourth Crusade* by Kyle Lincoln and John Giebfried**

The Fourth Crusade is in chaos. Its leaders had hoped that by diverting to Constantinople that they would pay off their debts, secure Byzantine aid and win the obedience of the Greek Orthodox Church for the papacy. Now the emperor they installed on the throne has been brutally murdered and his killer sits on the Byzantine throne. The crusaders must now decide, should they let this crime go unpunished and continue on to Jerusalem, or should they dare to attack the largest, richest and most well-defended city in the Christian world? Students will play as crusaders from one of four historical factions, the Northern French, Imperial, Venetian or Clerical crusaders each with unique personal and faction goals. In the end they will reenact the moment that changed crusading and whole the relationship between the Eastern and Western Christian worlds forever.

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***The Teapot Dome Scandal: Presidential Corruption, Power, and Reform in 1920s America* by Elizabeth (Scout) Blum**

Warren Harding was a virtual unknown to the American public prior to the election of 1920. After a contentious and lengthy nomination process at the Republican National Convention, Harding swept into office in 1921. His cabinet selections reflected political debts owed and loyalty to close friends. And from the beginning, rumors swirled around the administration – of Harding's love affairs, of his racial background, and of unethical practices within the Republican party. Yet the extent and depth of corruption within the administration shocked even the most jaded of Americans.

This game centers on three factions: the Ohio Gang (Harding's supporters and political allies); the Reformers; and Reporters. The Reformers seek evidence on the Ohio Gang's transgressions (obtained through Senate hearings or subpoenas) to bring them to trial, where the Reporters serve as the jury and "Court of Public Opinion" in determining guilt or innocence.

More fundamentally, the game centers around the clash of old versus new ideas as the Progressive Era ran into the more modern 1920s. Characters have "Key Issues" they must develop, which center around some of the key debates and conflicts of the late Progressive Era and early 1920s. Characters must grapple with ideas of the benefits of political machine politics versus government efficiency and honesty; with the role of the United States in the world; with the issue of conservation of resources versus business interests; and with issues of the balance of power in American government – legislative versus executive control.

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Peacemaking is set in Paris, 1919, as world leaders descend upon the city to construct the treaty (primarily) with Germany ending the Great War. Players are tasked with creating a treaty to end the war with Germany (what will be the Treaty of Versailles) and some of the other ancillary issues that historically were dealt with in other treaties with the Central Powers.

Students are divided into national delegations representing the key players at the Paris Peace Conference – Great Britain, France, the United States, Italy – as well as Japan, Belgium, the British Dominions and other smaller nations with vested interests in the proceedings. Students will act as plenipotentiaries for their nations and attempt to advance their national interests in the game through persuasive speeches, debate and skillful negotiation both in and out of the conference room as well as taking into account what is happening across Europe.

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The 13th Amendment by David Carlson

In *The 13th Amendment*, the members of three political parties (Republicans, Democrats, and Unionists) and one special interest group (abolitionists) confront one another over a proposal to abolish slavery in all states and federal territories. Most gameplay takes place during the two sessions of the 38th Congress of the United States (1864-1865) and consists of thematic speeches presented by players followed by debates, lobbying, and votes. All players are tasked with converting members of the opposition factions to their way of thinking. They are also provided with tools by which opponents might be swayed, including several forms of lobbying, congressional censure, and party disciplinary action. As this game represents a time of war, it also allows for the context within which the debates occur to be affected by external events.

Players win the game by passing (or not passing as the case may be) an abolition amendment to the Constitution. The achievement of the primary goal is facilitated by success in achieving secondary goals such as gaining reelection to Congress in 1864, engaging in effective lobbying, and maximizing one's political influence.

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Constitutionalism vs. Royal Absolutism: The Glorious Revolution in England, 1685-1688 by Joseph Sramek

Between 1685 and 1688, the reign of King James II of England, Englishmen debated the meanings of political sovereignty. One political grouping, the Tories, argued that sovereignty was vested by God in the king, who ruled by divine right and by an indefeasible hereditary succession. The duty of subjects, under this framework, was to obey, through an active obedience ideally but, minimally, through passive obedience. A second political faction, the Whigs, argued, by contrast, that sovereignty was shared and that there was a contract between ruler and ruled: should rulers govern in a manner that threatened the rights of the governed, citizens had a right to depose their ruler and select a new one. Finally, a smaller third faction, "Trimmers" worried about the outbreak of a new civil war, and urged both Tories and Whigs to moderate their passions on political and constitutional issues. Other issues were debated as well, including the role of the State in religious matters. Should there be religious

uniformity, with penal laws against “Dissenters” and Catholic “recusants” as Tories generally argued for, or should there be greater religious tolerance, as many Whigs contended? Or perhaps a grand compromise on religious issues, as favored by some Tories?

Students engage these major political and religious issues through close readings of Hobbes, Filmer, Locke, and other contemporary writers. Each student’s ultimate goal is to facilitate his or her side being in control of England at the end of 1688. Characters also have personal goals (e.g., remaining in power, getting an adversary dismissed from office, gaining prestige over the course of the game). Winning requires the ability to master the high political and religious arguments for and against revolution as well as more lower political skills such as deal-making, bribery, spying, and intrigue. Military force often determines the winner, much to the surprise of students who concentrated merely on internal game politics.

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***Truman's Interim Committee and the Decision to Use the Bomb, 1945* by Todd Timmons**

In 1945, Secretary of War Henry L. Stimson organized a committee—called the Interim Committee—to advise President Truman on a variety of issues involving atomic energy and atomic weapons. The Interim Committee was composed of various cabinet officials and advisors (both scientific and political), each of whom were uniquely qualified to advise the President on the decision to use the new weapon referred to by the scientists as “The Gadget” and by government officials as “S-1.”

The arguments presented to, and by, the committee included:

- Should the bomb be used on Japanese targets?
- Should the Japanese be warned ahead of time?
- Should the targets be strictly military or should they include civilian populations?
- Should the Japanese be given the chance for an honor-saving surrender before the bomb is used?
- Should the Russians be included in the decision process?
- Should the secrets of the bomb be shared in a wider community after the war?
- And several other delicate and subtle questions of diplomacy.

The Reacting game takes place at the meetings of the Interim Committee and involves arguments made for and against each of these bulleted items. Each role in the game has been given specific outcomes that they wish to see the Interim Committee adopt and recommend to President Truman.

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