

## Deep Learning with Reacting-to-the-Past Role-Immersion Games

Lilly Conference – Anaheim, CA

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Welcome to this interactive presentation about the *Reacting to the Past* pedagogy. For the next 50 minutes, we will experience a micro version of a Reacting game and discuss how to implement this pedagogy in classes.

The pedagogy was developed by History Professor Mark C. Carnes at Barnard College more than 20 years ago. Starting in 2001, he began to disseminate the pedagogy to other colleges and university; by 2018, the pedagogy has been implemented at more than 500 schools. More info can be found at <https://reacting.barnard.edu/>.

Reacting-to-the-Past (RTTP) games are academically rigorous, face-to-face, role-playing simulations, designed for college classrooms. RTTP is based around a serious game situated at key decisions points throughout history. Students assume historical roles and develop carefully argued positions based on original texts. They usually take two or three weeks of class time. Reacting games produce highly interactive college classrooms, across a range of disciplines and topics, and are suitable for almost any type of college classroom. RTTP works best in courses with 15-40 students, but can be scaled-up to larger class sizes.

Students receive game books and individual role sheets. Role sheets include individual background, instructions, reading suggestions, and victory objectives; some roles have secret powers and goals. Class sessions are run by students as per their role instructions, with instructors guiding and advising students from the sidelines. Reacting games are not simulations; they do not have fixed outcomes. While students are expected to explore and adhere to the beliefs of the historical figures they have been assigned, they must devise their own means of expressing those ideas persuasively, in papers and public presentations. Students must also devise a course of action, usually in consultation and collaboration with others, that they think will help them meet their victory objectives.

Students engage in close readings of original sources, deep discussions of controversial and diverse opinions, thoughtful informed writing about big questions, public speaking, compromise seeking and building, collaboration and strategizing, ownership of topics, fun, and disciplinary learning.

Starting in 2012, a coalition of colleges and university established the Reacting Consortium. This consortium promote the development and dissemination of Reacting to the Past role playing games, and provide support for faculty and institutions in curriculum and pedagogical development. Individual and institutional memberships in the Reacting Consortium supports the pedagogy, and provides access to the Instructor Manuals.

RTTP was honored with the 2004 Theodore Hesburgh Award for pedagogical innovation. The project has received developmental support from the Carnegie Corporation of New York, Christian A. Johnson Endeavor Foundation, Spencer Foundation, National Science Foundation, Teagle Foundation, and FIPSE, U.S. Department of Education. RTTP has also been featured in *Change magazine*, the *Chronicle Review*, the *New York Times*, the *Chronicle of Higher Education*, the *Christian Science Monitor*; and elsewhere.

### Books about the pedagogy:

- Carnes, M.C. (2014), *Minds on Fire: How Role-Immersion Games Transform College*, Harvard University Press.
- Watson, C.E., Hagood, T.C. (2018), *Playing to Learn with Reacting to the Past: Research on High Impact, Active Learning Practices*, Palgrave Macmillan.

**The following 16 games are published in the "Reacting to the Past" Series published by Norton:**

- *Charles Darwin, the Copley Medal and the Rise of Naturalism, 1861-64*
- *Confucianism and the Succession Crisis of the Wanli Emperor, 1587*
- *The Constitutional Convention of 1787: Constructing the American Republic*
- *Defining a Nation: India on the Eve of Independence, 1945*
- *Forest Diplomacy: Cultures in Conflict on the Pennsylvania Frontier, 1757*
- *Frederick Douglass, Slavery, Abolitionism, and the Constitution: 1845* (publication in 2019)
- *Greenwich Village, 1913: Suffrage, Labor, and the New Woman*
- *Henry VIII and the Reformation Parliament*
- *Kentucky, 1861: Loyalty, State, and Nation*
- *Patriots, Loyalists and Revolution in New York City, 1775-76*
- *Red Clay, 1835: Cherokee Removal and the Meaning of Sovereignty*
- *Rousseau, Burke, and Revolution in France, 1791*
- *The Needs of Others: Human Rights, International Organizations and Intervention in Rwanda, 1994*
- *The Threshold of Democracy: Athens in 403 B.C.*
- *The Trial of Anne Hutchinson: Liberty, Law, and Intolerance in Puritan New England*
- *The Trial of Galileo: Aristotelianism, the "New Cosmology," and the Catholic Church, 1616-33*

**In addition, there are five titles available for adoption through the Reacting Consortium Press, an imprint of University of North Carolina Press.**

- *The Collapse of Apartheid and the Dawn of Democracy in South Africa, 1993*
- *Constantine and the Council of Nicaea: Defining Orthodoxy and Heresy in Christianity, 325 CE*
- *Environmental Science and International Politics: Acid Rain in Europe, 1979-1989 & Climate Change in Copenhagen, 2009*
- *Modernism vs. Traditionalism: Art in Paris 1888-1889*
- *Stages of Power: Marlowe and Shakespeare, 1592*

**And the following games are in the final stages of development, and can be used by novice instructors**

- *Changing the Game: Title IX, Gender, and Athletics in American Universities* (publication in 2019)
- *Il Duomo di Santa Maria del Fiore: Florence, 1418*
- *Food Fight: Challenging the USDA Food Pyramid, 1991*
- *Mexico in Revolution, 1912-1920*

**An additional 20+ games are in the final stages of development, and can be used by more experienced instructors. This includes games about:**

"Argentina 1985," "The Ides of March: Rome, 44 BCE," "Chemistry at Karlsruhe, 1860," "Chicago 1968," "The Crisis of Catiline: Rome 63 BCE," "Democracy in Crisis: Germany, 1929-1932," "Diet and Killer Diseases in Congressional Debate, 1976," "European Response to Pollution, 1984," "Feeding Africa: GMOs or Starvation?" "Guerrilla Girls in Our Midst: 1984-1987," "Harlem 1919," "Japan, Pan-Asianism, and the West, 1940-1941," "The Josianic Reform," "July Crisis, 1914," "Kansas, 1999: Evolution and Creation Science," "Korea at the Crossroads of Civilizations in 1894," "The Vietnam Veterans Memorial, 1981-8," "Paterson 1913: The Silk Strike," "The Peace Conference at Versailles," "The Pluto Debate," "Technology, Rebellion, and the Industrial Revolution," "The Second Crusade," "Ways and Means, 1935," "Yalta, 1945," ...

**Many games in earlier stages of development on wide variety of topics and different length.**

**New shorter type of games: Flashpoint Games forthcoming at Norton.**