

## ATRA 2019 Conference Presentation Proposal

Presenter: Hawke Robinson with RPG Therapeutics LLC and non-profit 501(c)3 RPG Research.

Co-presenters: John Welker & Danielle Whitworth.

Title: Therapeutic Recreation Professionals Evidence-based Use of Role-Playing Games as Intervention Modalities to Achieve Specific Measurable Goals For Toddlers, Youth, Adults, & Senior Adults.

Overview: Includes history, applicable theories, relevant research, evidence-supported practice, hands-on experiential training workshops, specific population applications, and important professional considerations.

Maximum number of participants: No limit to audience size, though see limits to post/end of session hands-on activities participation (drum circle 50, RPGs 24).

Schedule overview, Saturday, September 14<sup>th</sup>, 2019.

- 8:30 am – 10:00 am – Part 1: RPG Intro, History, Theory, Research, & Hands-on Examples.
- 10:00 am – 10:30 am – Break
- 10:30 am – 12:00 pm – Part 2a: RPG for Toddlers, Youth, Adults, & Seniors.
- 12:00 pm – 1:30 pm – Lunch and Open Tour of Wheelchair Accessible RPG Bus & RPG Trailer
- 1:30 pm – 3:00 pm – Part 2b: RPG for Specific Population Needs & Considerations.
- 3:00 pm – 3:30 pm – Break
- 3:30 pm – 5:00 pm Part 3: RPG & TR Professional Issues & Development.

Session 1: Short Title: Intro to Role-Playing Games (RPGs) As Intervention Modalities in TR Practice.  
Full Title: Part 1: Introduction to Role-Playing Games (RPGs) as Intervention Modalities in Therapeutic Recreation: History, Theory, Research Evidence, Evidence-in-practice, & Hands-on Examples.

Overview: Introductory history, relevant applicable TR theories, RPG Model, and RPG Theory about all 4 role-playing game (RPG) formats: tabletop (TRPG), live-action (LRPG & Larp), electronic (ERPG), & hybrid (HRPG). Also includes format subtypes considerations for variants such as computer-based (CRPG), offline and online, virtual reality (VR), augmented reality (AR), mobile devices, etc. Includes brief audience participation experience with each format in their standard diversionary applications, and then introductory general discussion about their potential application in educational and therapeutic recreation settings.

Session 2:

Short Title: TR & RPG For Toddlers, Young Children, Youth, Adolescents, Adults, & Senior Adults.

Full Title: Part 2a: Specific Therapeutic Recreation Program Plan Examples & Evidence-in-practice Using Role-Playing Games For Various Developmental Age Groups to Achieve Measurable Results With Toddlers, Young Children, Youth, Adults, & Senior Adults, with additional information on relevant assessment tools, accessibility, and inclusiveness considerations.

Overview: Includes specific program plan examples using Therapeutic Recreation guided RPGs with considerations for toddlers, young children, adolescents, young adults, adults, & senior adults. Various developmental considerations, social skills development for many populations, and many other related topics.

### Session 3:

Short Title: Specific Examples of TR RPG for At-risk, Special Needs, Social Skills Dev, & Many Other Populations.

Full Title: Part 2b: Specific Therapeutic Recreation Program Plan Examples & Evidence-in-practice Using Role-Playing Games to Achieve Measurable Results & Adaptive Considerations for At-risk Populations (Youth and Adult), ADHD, Anxiety disorders, Aphantasia, ASD/PDD, Brain Injuries, Deaf & Hard of Hearing, Learning Disorders (Dyscalculia, Dysgraphia, Dyslexia, & others), Muscular Dystrophy & Cerebral Palsy, visually impaired, social phobias, and social skills development for many populations.

Overview: Includes specific program plan examples using Therapeutic Recreation guided RPGs to achieve specific measurable goals including accessibility considerations, at-risk populations, ADHD, anxiety disorders, ASD/PDD, brain Injuries, Deaf & Hard of Hearing, Muscular Dystrophy & Cerebral Palsy, social phobias, & social skills development for many populations.

### Session 4:

Short Title: Professional Development & Considerations for TRSs Using RPGs.

Part 3: Professional Development, Issues, & Considerations When Integrating Role-Playing Games into Therapeutic Recreation Facilities or Independent Contractor Private Practice.

Overview: Specific guidance on options for TR RPG related skills development, professional training, certification, market, financial, logistical, legal, and related professional considerations for Therapeutic Recreation Specialists wishing to integrate role-playing games into their facilities or private practice. Also discussion of logistical, legal, and other considerations related to independent TR contracting and independent TR researchers, as well as mobile facilities development and use, including a tour of the wheelchair accessible RPG Trailer and RPG Bus mobile TR facilities that are designed to address many of the issues discussed in all 3 sessions. Includes optional (challenge by choice) end of session participation in hands-on activities with facilitated drum circle (maximum 50 participants) and RPG sessions (maximum 21 participants).

### Instructional Methods For All 4 Sessions

- Lecture
- Interactive
- Discussion
- Initial lecture with slide show, video, audio, and physical objects presentation.
- Array of example adaptive and RPG-related materials (dice, miniatures, maps, modules, books, boffer, and other equipment).
- Interactive discussions and examples shared with audience participants
- Short interactive audience verbal quizzes
- Hands-on workshops introducing all 4 RPG formats and facilitated drum circles.
- Open audience Q&A.

### Target Audience

- Students
- New Graduates/New Professionals

- Educators/Researchers
- Mid-Career Professionals
- Seasoned Professionals

#### Facility needs:

- Projector/screen for slideshow, audio, and video necessary.
- Power for 8+ laptops, VR equipment, space for VR movement, space for live-action activities.
- Somewhere to park (and display for public tours) RPG Bus & RPG Trailer (75' L x 15+' W x 12' H)
- Optional space for drum circle (up to 50 participants)

#### Example facility applications include:

- Clinical to community transitions
- Community centers
- Independent skills development programs
- In-school and after-school programs
- Libraries
- Mobile facilities
- Parks
- Rehabilitation facilities
- Mental health
- Therapeutic settings
- University community support programs
- Camps (day, overnight, summer, etc.)

#### Presentation Tracks

- Behavioral Health
- Child and Adolescent
- Community
- Management
- Military/Veterans
- Older Adult
- Higher Education
- Physical Rehabilitation and Medicine
- Schools
- Other

## Detailed Sessions Outline

Session 1: Part 1: Introduction to Role-Playing Games (RPGs) as Intervention Modalities in Therapeutic Recreation: History, Theory, Research Evidence, Evidence-in-practice, & Hands-on Examples.

### Session Description

Provides introductory history, relevant applicable TR theories, Game Theory, RPG Model and RPG Theories, about all 4 role-playing game (RPG) formats:

- Tabletop (TRPG)
- Live-action (LRPG & Larp)
- Electronic (ERPG) (including audio, computer/console based, solo, offline, online, multiplayer, virtual reality (VR), & augmented reality (AR) variants.
- Hybrid (HRPG) including Solo Adventure Books & Modules (SABM).

Includes brief demonstrations and (optional) audience participation experiences with each format in their standard diversionary applications, and then introductory general discussion about their potential application in recreational, educational, & therapeutic settings.

- Presents the history, evolution, popular culture concepts, inculcated myths, relevant theories and research. Addresses many inculcated concepts in popular culture regarding role-playing games and gamers, and presents the existing relevant research about the potential benefits and caveats.
- Provides examples of each game format in a typical diversionary recreation setting.
- Introduces the existing research using RPGs in various recreational, entertainment, educational, professional, and therapeutic settings from various other disciplines (neurosciences, psychiatry, psychology, education, sociology, cognitive, behavioral, etc.).
- Covers the TR theories strongly relevant to RPGs (immersion, flow, Avedon interaction patterns, group formation and communication, etc.)
- Illustrates how the application of TR methodologies are an excellent fit for these activities as an intervention modality for many populations in group and individual settings.
- Presents information about the RPG Model and RPG Theories (bleed, player & GM styles, player archetypes, gamer floater, etc.)

### Learning Outcomes

Upon completion of this session, participants will be able to:

- Identify and explain existing research indicating the benefits and caveats of diversionary use of RPG in all major formats.
- Identify and explain the applicable TR theories relevant to RPGs.
- Identify and explain examples of specific areas that standard diversionary use of RPGs can directly achieve TR-related client goals.
- Identify and illustrate examples of specific areas that applying TR methodologies to RPG sessions can achieve specific client outcomes.
- Specify areas still needing further research for future use of TR-based RPG.

### Session Outline (90 minutes total)

- Introduction (5)
- RPG history and inculcated concepts about RPG and gamers. (15)
- Research about RPGs and gamers. (10)
- Research overview of RPG in Educational settings, regular, gifted & talented, & alternative students (10)
- Research overview of RPG in Therapeutic settings (10)
- Brief overview and explanation of key components of a role-playing game (10)
- Differences between RPG formats: electronic (ERPG), hybrid (HRPG) including solo adventure books and modules (SABM), live-action (LRPG/Larp), and the original tabletop (TRPG). (15)
- Inherent assessment implications of RPGs (5)
- Additional resources information. (5)
- Summary and interactive audience Q&A. (5)

### NCTRC Job Analysis Areas

- Foundational Knowledge: Theories and concepts, Practice Guidelines.
- Assessment Process: Selections and implementation of assessment, assessment domains and tools.
- Implementation: Selection of programs, modalities and/or interventions

Session 2: Part 2a: Specific Therapeutic Recreation Program Plan Examples & Evidence-in-practice Using Role-Playing Games For Various Developmental Age Groups to Achieve Measurable Results With Toddlers, Young Children, Youth, Adults, & Senior Adults, with additional information on relevant assessment tools, accessibility, and inclusiveness considerations.

### Learning Outcomes

Upon completion of this session, participants will be able to:

- List 3+ populations, by developmental age group, that can benefit from TR-based RPG, including specific benefits and adaptations.
- List 3+ facility types where TR-based RPGs can be utilized effectively for these developmental age groups.
- Describe how to address the needs, and any recommended adaptations, of each developmental age group, using TR-based RPG.
- List 3+ recommended assessment tools for these populations and these modalities.

### Session Description

Summaries of some key challenges for different developmental age groups faced by the following populations when utilizing role-playing games in a therapeutic recreation program setting:

- Toddlers (Ages 2-5)
- Youth (ages 6-10)
- Adolescents (ages 11-17)
- Young Adults (18-25)
- Adults (25-59)
- Senior Adults (60+)

Provide brief summary background and research information about the effects of programs for these populations using role-playing games (RPGs). Important theory and research information supporting the applicability and usefulness of these intervention modalities.

Includes listing the pros and cons and specific examples of the benefits for these populations from participation in various RPG formats.

Key discussion areas include:

- Affect
- Behavioral
- Cognitive
- Competence
- Emotional
- Physical
- Resilience, perseverance, grit
- Self-confidence
- Social
- Behavioral Health
- Child and Adolescent
- Community

- Management
- Military/Veterans
- Older Adult
- Higher Education
- Physical Rehabilitation and Medicine
- Schools

Recommended assessment tools for baseline and progress evaluations.

Upon completion of this session, participants will be able to:

- Specify at least 3 specific developmental age populations that can benefit from a TR-based RPG intervention program.
- Identify and explain the 4 different RPG formats, and elaborate on the pros and cons of each format for the specified populations.
- Specify key adaptive and accessibility considerations.
- Identify and illustrate examples of specific areas that applying TR methodologies to adapted RPG can achieve specific client outcomes.

Session Schedule Outline (90 minutes total)

- Introduction (5)
- Applicable theories (15)
- TR RPG application for toddlers (10)
- TR RPG application for young children (10)
- TR RPG application for adolescents (10)
- TR RPG application for young adults (10)
- TR RPG application for adults (10)
- TR RPG application for senior adults (10)
- Recommended assessment tools. (5)
- Q&A (5)

NCTRC Job Analysis

- Foundational Knowledge: theories and concepts, practice guidelines, diagnostic groupings
- Assessment Process: Selections and implementation of assessment, Assessment domains and tools
- Implementation: Selection of programs, Modalities and/or interventions
- Practice of TR/RT

## Session 3

Part 2b: Specific Therapeutic Recreation Program Plan Examples & Evidence-in-practice Using Role-Playing Games to Achieve Measurable Results & Adaptive Considerations for At-risk Populations (Youth and Adult), ADHD, Anxiety disorders, Aphantasia, ASD/PDD, Brain Injuries, Deaf & Hard of Hearing, Incarcerated Populations, Learning Disorders (Dyscalculia, Dysgraphia, Dyslexia, & others), Muscular Dystrophy & Cerebral Palsy, visually impaired, social phobias, and social skills development for many populations.

### Learning Goals

Upon completion of this session, participants will be able to:

- List 3+ populations that can benefit from a TR-based RPG intervention program, including specific benefits and adaptations for those populations.
- List 3+ facility types where TR-based RPGs can be utilized effectively for these developmental age groups.
- Specify 3+ key adaptive and accessibility considerations for 3 or more of these populations.
- Identify and illustrate examples of specific areas that applying TR methodologies to adapted RPG can achieve specific client outcomes.
- Identify and illustrate inclusiveness considerations for 1 or more populations and these modalities.

### Session Description

Summaries of some key targeted goals and/or challenges for the following populations when utilizing role-playing games in a therapeutic recreation program setting:

- At-risk Youth & Adults
- ADHD
- Anxiety disorders
- Aphantasia
- ASD/PDD
- Brain injuries
- Deaf & Hard of Hearing
- Incarcerated Populations
- Learning Disorders (Dyscalculia, Dysgraphia, Dyslexia, & others)
- Muscular Dystrophy and Cerebral Palsy
- Social phobias
- Social skills development for many populations

Important theory and research information supporting the applicability and usefulness of these intervention modalities for these populations.

### Session Schedule Outline (90 minutes total)

- Introduction (5)
- Applicable theories (10)
- Recommended assessment tools. (10)
- TR RPG application for at-risk youth and adults (5)
- TR RPG application for ADHD (5)
- TR RPG considerations for clients with Aphantasia (5)



- TR RPG application for ASD/PDD (5)
- TR RPG application for anxiety related disorders (5)
- TR RPG application for brain injuries & neuroplasticity-related applications (5)
- TR RPG application for Deaf and Hard of Hearing (5)
- TR RPG application for Incarcerated Populations (5)
- TR RPG application for people with learning disabilities (5)
- TR RPG application for MD & CP (5)
- TR RPG application for Social phobias (5)
- TR RPG application for social skills development goals with many populations (5)
- Q&A (5)

#### NCTRRC Job Analysis

- Foundational Knowledge: Theories and concepts, Practice Guidelines, Diagnostic groupings
- Assessment Process: Selections and implementation of assessment, assessment domains and tools
- Documentation: Individualized intervention plan, Discharge/transition plan
- Implementation: Selection of programs, modalities and/or interventions
- Practice of TR/RT

## Session 4: Part 3: Professional Development, Issues, & Considerations When Integrating Role-Playing Games into Therapeutic Recreation Facilities or Independent Contractor Private Practice.

### Title of Session

Professional Development, Issues, & Considerations Integrating Role-Playing Games into Therapeutic Recreation Practice.

### Session Description

At previous WSTRA/PNWTRA presentations many asked: “I now see how clients benefit from RPGs, but how do I integrate them into my programs? How can I acquire the knowledge, skills, and experience to facilitate these activities?”.

Learning to play an RPG is easy, however running them well can take years to develop the necessary skills with many trial & error experiences. Plus adaptations for specific population needs to achieve client therapeutic and educational goals can be even more daunting. But there are other options to quickly develop these skills.

### This session covers:

- Professional standards
- Self-training options
- Formal training options
- Facilities considerations, including mobile options
- Professional issues and considerations
- Where to find additional resources

Specific program plans for TRSs interested in integrating RPGs into their programs, including a skill development road map.

### Example facility applications include:

- Community centers
- Rehabilitation
- Mental health
- Summer camps
- Clinical to community transitions
- Many others

### Learning Outcomes

Upon completion of this session, participants be able to:

- Explain the first steps to integrating RPGs into a TR program.
- Identify the resources available for TRS professionals to develop RPG Facilitation skills, and the steps for a TR professional to utilize those resources.
- Summarize a typical Therapeutic Recreation Specialist Game Master (TRS GM) road map for skill development.
- Explain the basic steps necessary to integrate TR-based RPGs in compliance with APIED/R.

### Session Schedule Outline (90 minutes total)

- Introduction (5)
- Specific steps for a TRS to begin learning RPGs as a player. (15)
- Specific steps for a TRS to develop RPG Game Master (GM) facilitator skills. (15)
- Several specific TR RPG program plan examples following APIED/R standards. (20)
- Key resources available for self-guided learning. (10)
- Options available for professional formal training and certification, and how to acquire it. (10)
- Q&A. (5)
- End of session audience interactive drum circle and RPG activities. (10+)

### NCTRC Job Analysis Areas

- Practice of TR/RT
- Foundational Knowledge (FKW): Theories and concepts, Practice Guidelines, Diagnostic groupings
- Administration of RT Service: Personnel/intern/volunteer management, Budgeting/fiscal management
- Assessment Process: Selections and implementation of assessment, assessment domains and tools
- Documentation: Individualized intervention plan, Discharge/transition plan
- Implementation: Selection of programs, Modalities and/or interventions
- Advancement of the Profession: Professionalism, Credential maintenance/Professional competencies, Marketing and promotions

#### Primary Presenter Information

Name: W. A. Hawkes-Robinson (“Hawke Robinson”)

Title: President 501(c)3 RPG Research, CEO RPG Therapeutics LLC, Student at EWU.

Agency: RPG Research and RPG Therapeutics LLC.

Mailing Address: 1312 N. Monroe, Suite #114

City, State & Zip: Spokane, WA, 99201

Phone/Text: (509) 481-5437

<http://www.rpgresearch.com>

<http://www.rpgtherapy.com>

[hawke@rpgtherapy.com](mailto:hawke@rpgtherapy.com)

Qualifications: Washington State Department of Health Registered Recreational Therapist since 2014 (#RE60526204), with a background in Therapeutic Recreation, Recreation & Music Therapy, Neuroscience, & Research Psychology. Involved with RPGs in recreational settings since 1977, research since 1983, application in educational settings since 1985, and in therapeutic settings since 2004.

Aggregate of news coverage and publications: <https://www.rpgresearch.com/about/media/previous-amalgamation>

Speaker biography: <https://www.rpgtherapy.com/about/our-staff/hawke-robinson>

Earlier versions of portions of these presentations, approved for CEUs were:

- WSTRA Conference 16 (April 2015) Seattle Children's Hospital, Seattle, WA.
- PNWTRA (January 2016), Portland, OR.
- WSTRA (April 2016) Eastern Washington University, Cheney, WA.
- WSTRA (May 2017) Western Washington University, Bellingham, WA.
- WSTRA (May 2018) Wenatchee, WA.

We believe ATRA may want to consider our presentation this year because:

- So far the audience has been limited to the Northwest USA. Presenting at the greater ATRA conference, at a different location will provide the opportunity for more practitioners, educators, and students to have a chance to learn about the potential of these modalities in TR.
- Each year we have updated the research information from a rapidly growing body of work.
- There is exceptional industry growth and client demand related to these modalities.

#### Co-Presenters

John Welker, Vice-president RPG Research

Organization: RPG Research

Credentials: Washington State Department of Health Registered Recreational Therapist (#RE60526204). LPN, B.S.

Email Address: [john@rpgresearch.com](mailto:john@rpgresearch.com)

Danielle Whitworth, RPG Advocate & GM, RPG Research

Organization: RPG Research

Credentials: Therapeutic Recreation, B.A., Eastern Washington University.

Email Address: [danielle@rpgresearch.com](mailto:danielle@rpgresearch.com)