

Powered by the Apocalypse

*Using Apocalypse World to Outline
and Draft Your Own RPG*



**POWERED BY THE
APOCALYPSE**
apocalypse-world.com

Here's What

Apocalypse World offers a powerful, flexible framework you can use to outline, draft, and potentially finish your own role playing games. Dozens of creators, both experienced designers and first-timers, have used it with great success, and you can too. It's not a game system, it's an easy approach to game system design, a reliable way to get your creative vision quickly into a playable form. I'll lay out Apocalypse World's philosophy and foundation, describe the fit and purpose of each of its systems, and point out fruitful ways to build on them, contradict them, repurpose them, subvert them, and go far beyond them. The other panelists will share their experiences of using Apocalypse World to create their games: what to do, what to watch out for, what to avoid.

Goal: Create a Playable Outline



- Game design means iteration.
- The first step is to create something you can try.
- Is PbtA your final goal? Could be, could be not.

“An Approach to System Design”?

B14

DUNGEONS & DRAGONS® CHARACTER RECORD SHEET

Player's Name: MOREAN IRONWOLF Character's Name: LAWFUL Alignment: LAWFUL

FIGHTER Class 1ST Level

Armor Class: 3 Hit Points: 6

ABILITIES:

16	STRENGTH	+2 adjustment
7	INTELLIGENCE	— adjustment
9	WISDOM	— adjustment
13	DEXTERITY	+1 AC adjustment
14	CONSTITUTION	+1/HD adjustment
8	CHARISMA	-1 REACTION adjustment

SAVING THROWS:

12	POISON or DEATH RAY
13	MAGIC WAND
14	TURN TO STONE or PARALYSIS
15	DRAGON BREATH
16	SPELLS or MAGIC STAFF

SPECIAL ABILITIES: NONE

SPECIAL SKILLS: Spells, Thief's abilities, Cleric's turning, etc.

AC: 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1 0

TO HIT ROLL NEEDED: 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17

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GURPS CHARACTER SHEET

Name: _____ Date Created: _____ Sequence: _____

Appearance: _____ Budget Points: _____ Point Total: _____

ST	DX	IQ	HT	MOVIE	SWIM	ENCUMBRANCE	ACTIVE DEFENSES	ADVANTAGES, DISADVANTAGES, and QUIRS

SKILLS: _____ Point Cost: _____ Level: _____

SKILLS: _____ Point Cost: _____ Level: _____

SUMMARY: _____ Point Total: _____

Attributes: _____ Advantages: _____ Disadvantages: _____ Quirks: _____ Skills: _____ Traits: _____

NAME - SNOW

LOOK: WOMAN, DISPLAY WEAR, SHARP FACE, GORGEOUS BODY, FROSTY EYES

STATS - MOVES - HARM

+2 COOL	do something under fire (p2)	countdown 12
-2 HARD	make a break, go aggro (p2-3)	9 6 3
+1 HOT	try to win someone over (p3)	shattered -1cool
+1 SHARP	read a sitch, read a person (p3-4)	crippled -1hard
+1 WEIRD	open your brain (p4)	disfigured -1hot

Improvement (P11) ○○○○○○ >>>improve

HX help, interfere, session end (p4-5)

GEAR

CUSTOM SWORD: ORNATE, HEAVY BLADE (S-HARM HAND VALUABLE)

CUSTOM HANDGUN: ORNATE, BIG (S-HARM CLOSE RELOAD LOW VALUABLE)

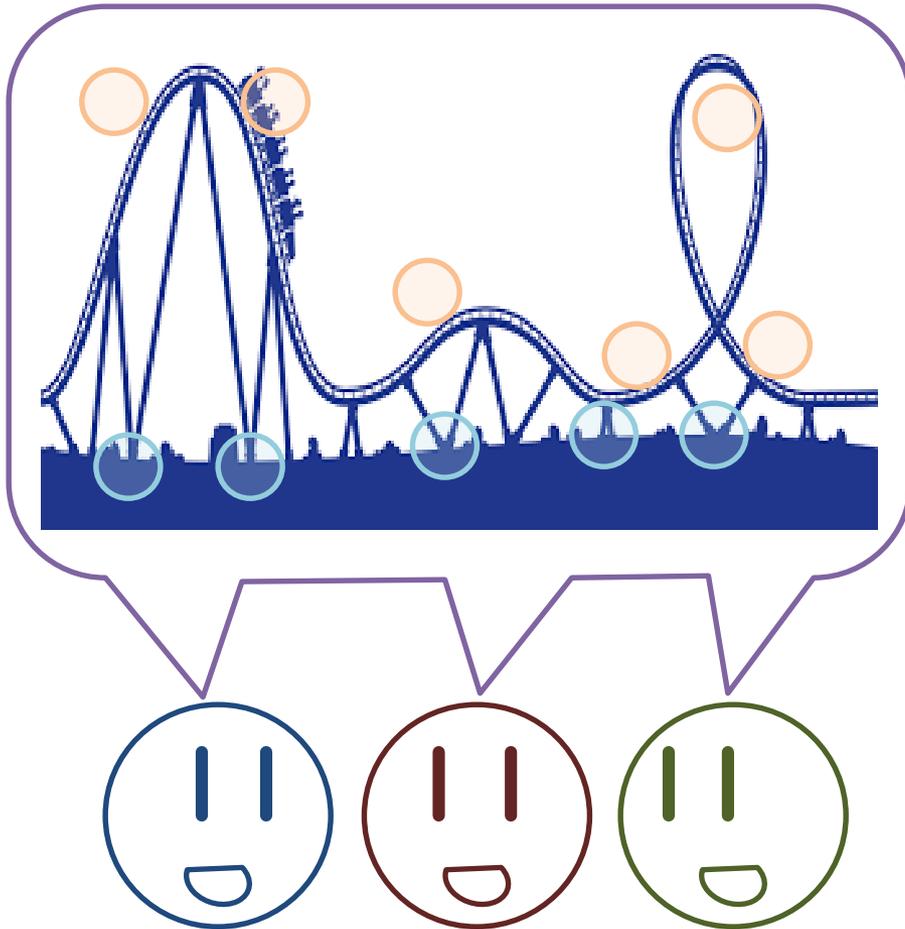
BEST THINKERS WORTH 2-3BARTER

SIMPLY FASHION

BATTLEBABE

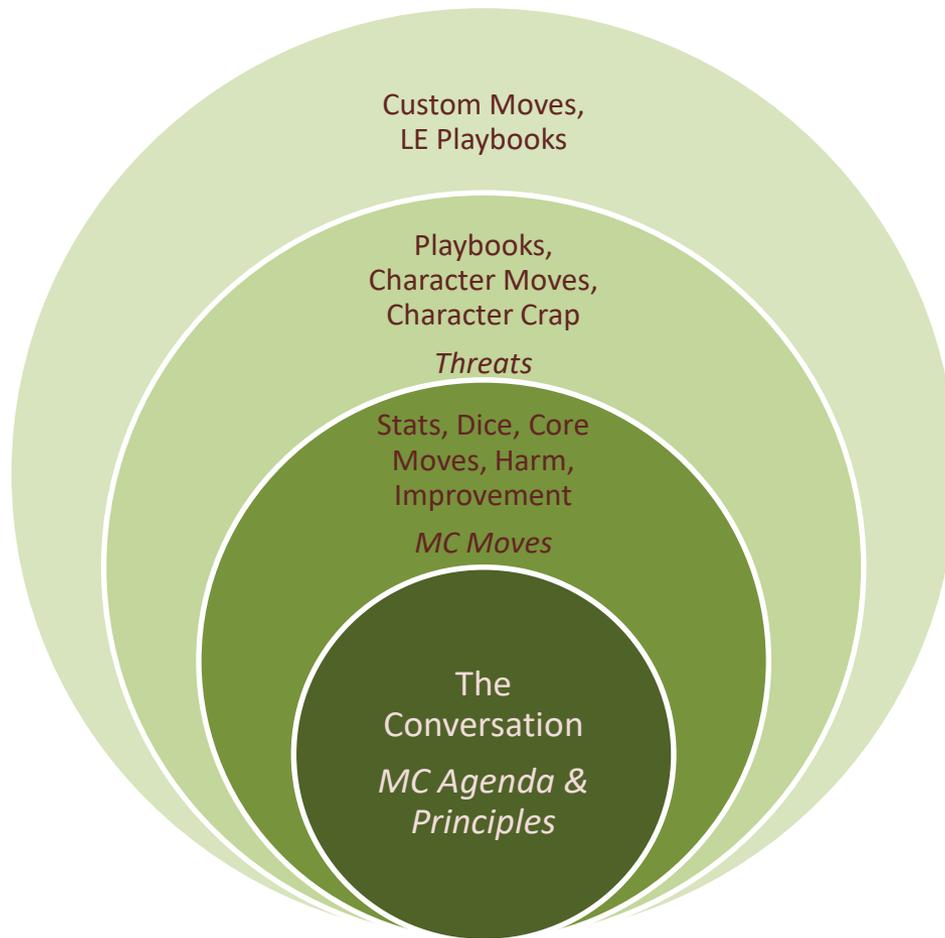
DEPEND ON THE OTHER PLAYERS & CHARACTERS (HIGHLIGHTED STATS TOO)

Apocalypse World's Philosophy



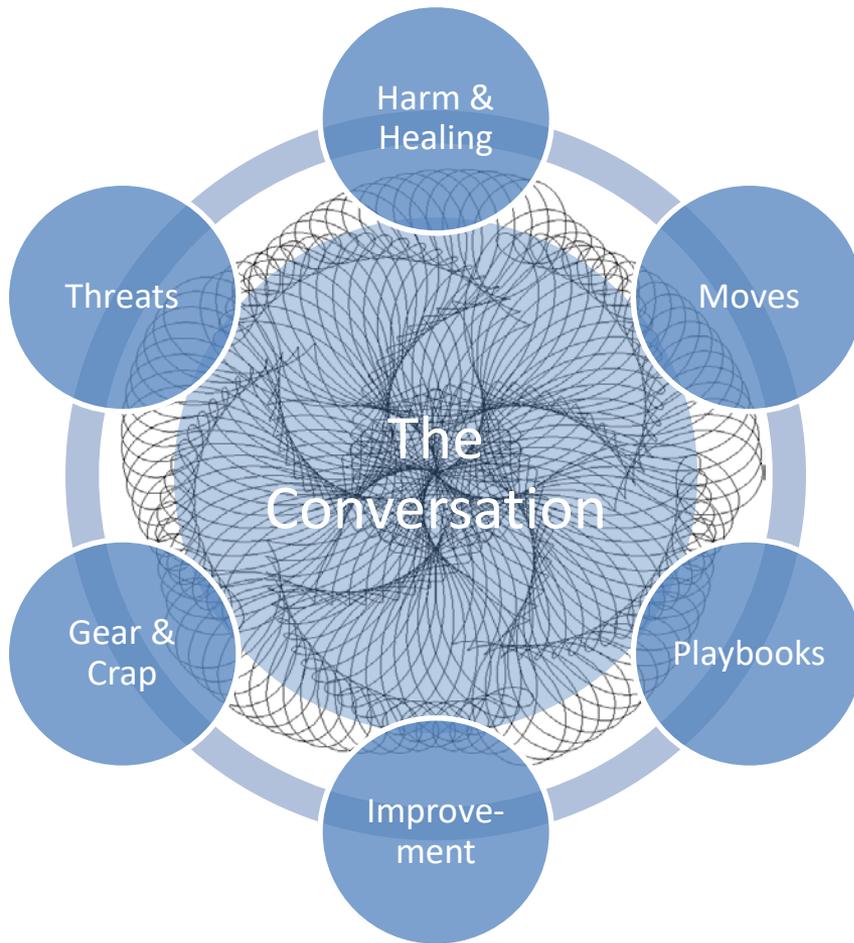
- For example:
 - “Dremmer throws you off a building!”
 - “Want to make out?” “Absolutely!”
 - “Some kind of unpleasant cough is wracking your population, and Mice has joined Tum Tum’s water cult.”
 - “I go find Burroughs.”
 - “Is she lying?” “Absolutely!”
- For example:
 - Roll dice, add a stat.
 - 6 or less, 7-9, 10+.
 - 3-harm minus 1-armor = 2 harm.
 - Mark experience & improve.
 - At the beginning of the session, at the end of the session.

Apocalypse World's Structure



- Each system elaborates upon the systems underlying it.
- Play collapses toward, not away from, the conversation.
- “Deep hacks.”

Apocalypse World's Systems



- Timeframe: Right now. This evening. Over the course of the game.
- Structure: Fictional causes have real effects. Real causes have fictional effects. What and what?
- Handoffs: Calling upon. Backing up. Disclaiming. Drawing in.
- Consequences: Scope & scale. Limitations. Effectiveness. Options.
- Permissions and expectations.

“Accidents” of the System

Hx

There's
a GM

Stat
High-
lights

2d6
+Stat

Play-
books

“Special”
Moves

GM
never
rolls

Marking
XP

GM
Doesn't
Name
Moves

Threats
&
Types

Character
Moves

Harm
Count-
down

Etc.

Some Games to Consider

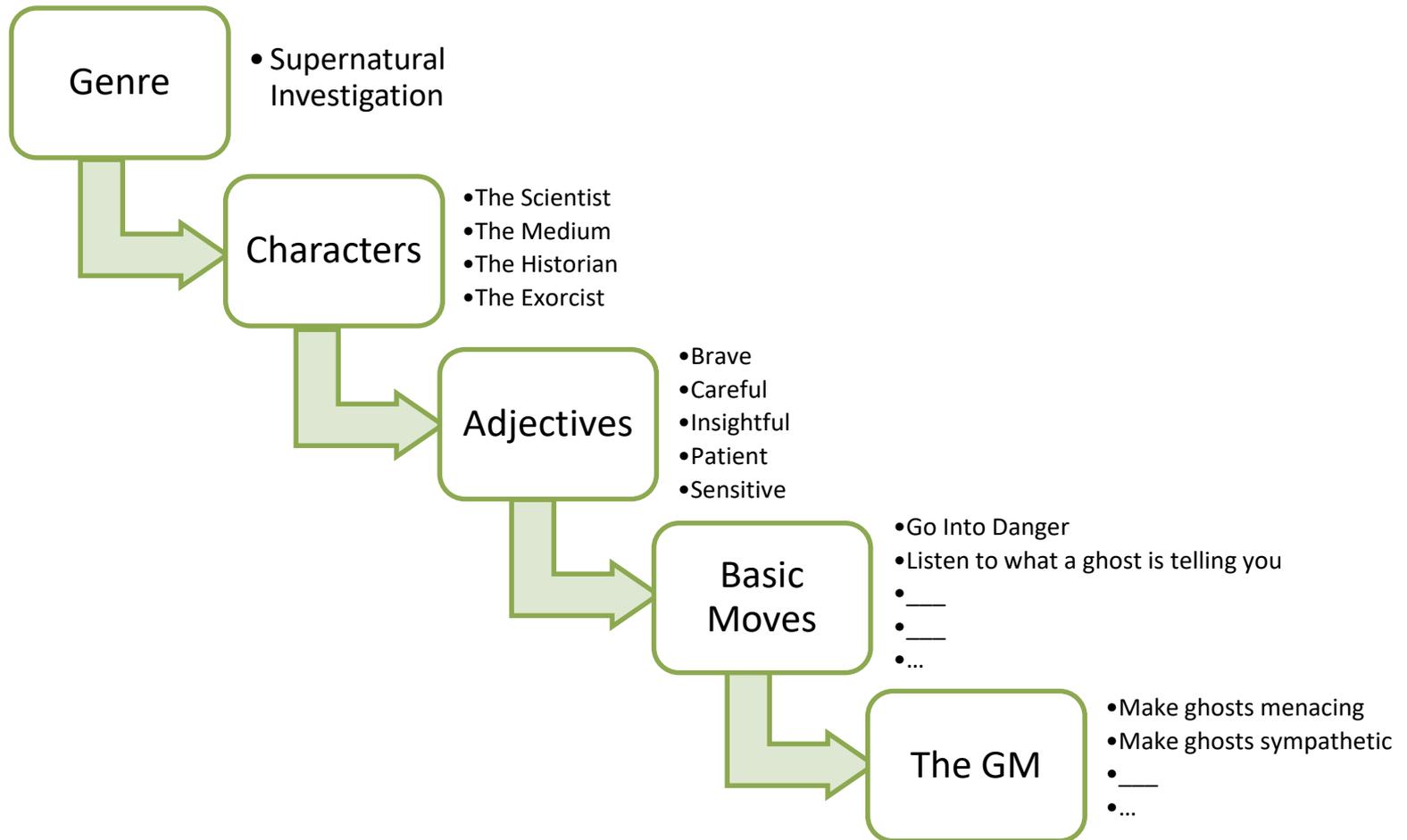


WORLD OF DUNGEONS

NAME		CLASS	LEVEL		
ATTRIBUTES		SKILLS		SPECIAL ABILITIES	
<input type="checkbox"/> STR	<input type="checkbox"/> INT	ATHLETICS	BLESS	CURE	
<input type="checkbox"/> DEX	<input type="checkbox"/> WIS	AWARENESS	TURN	VISION	
<input type="checkbox"/> CON	<input type="checkbox"/> CHA	DECEPTION	HARDY	SKIRMISH	
		HEAL	SLAY	TOUGH	
		LEADERSHIP	BACKSTAB	LUCKY	
		LORE	REFLEXES	TRICKER	
		STEALTH	CANTRIES	COMMAND	
		SURVIVAL	RETUAL	SUMMON	
			VOLLEY	SCOUT	
				WILD	
WEAPONS		EQUIPMENT			
ARMOR & SPEED		HIT DICE		HIT POINTS	
None <input type="radio"/>	Light <input type="radio"/>	Full <input type="radio"/>	Shield <input type="radio"/>	Total <input type="text"/>	Armor <input type="text"/>
Fast <input type="radio"/>	Normal <input type="radio"/>	Slow <input type="radio"/>			
NOTES					
COIN <input type="text"/>		NEEDED FOR NEXT LEVEL <input type="text"/>		XP <input type="text"/>	

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Getting Started



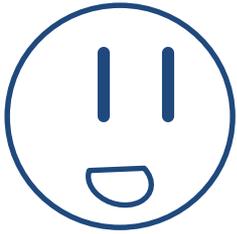
Drafting a Move

- When you **listen to what a ghost is trying to tell you**, roll your Sensitive. On a 10+, ask 3. On a 7-9, ask 2:
 - *What letter does your name start with?*
 - *What emotion do you still carry?*
 - *What would you do to me if you could?*
 - *Who would you have here if you could?*On a miss, ask 1 anyway, and be prepared for the worst.
- When you **listen to what a ghost is trying to tell you**, roll your Sensitive. On a 10+, you hear the ghost; ask the GM what it whispers to you. On a 7-9, choose 1:
 - *You provoke the ghost to an extreme reaction.*
 - *You feel the emotion the ghost still carries.*
 - *You can't hear the ghost, but see it.*
 - *The ghost directs you to examine something.*... And ask the GM what it is.
On a miss, be prepared for the worst.
- When you **listen to what a ghost is trying to tell you**, roll your Sensitive. On a 10+, choose 1. On a 7-9, the GM chooses 1:
 - *The ghost whispers to you about its life.*
 - *The ghost whispers to you about its death.*
 - *The ghost whispers to you about its sorrow.*
 - *The ghost whispers to you about its hate.*On a miss, be prepared for the worst.

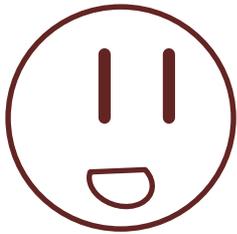


Which? Why?

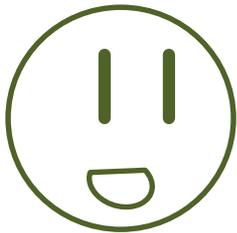
Power, Decision & Consent



Poison'd: *"I'm winning. You have to choose: I draw first blood and you cede the matter, or else we ignore first blood and fight on to a deadly wound. Which do you choose?"*



Apocalypse World: *"I've got the drop on you. You have to choose: cave and do what I want, or force my hand and suck it up. Which do you choose?"*



A Doomed Pilgrim: *"I might be able to overpower it. I catch it by its horns and throw my whole weight over it, trying to drag it down onto its side. Does it fall?"*

Amazons: *"I strike you; your peril stands at 2. Which bad experience do you choose?" "I choose: I'm pressed into desperate retreat."*

The King is Dead: *"I overreach and you have the opportunity for a dirty little blow, a kick to the knee or an elbow to the ear. Do you take it?"*

Publishing, Super Briefly:

- “Powered by the Apocalypse” doesn’t have a technical definition.
- If you use somebody’s *words or work*, you need their permission.
- If you use somebody’s *ideas*, you should credit them.
- If you want to publish your game, you should!



And, To Reiterate...



- Game design means iteration.
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Thanks!



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