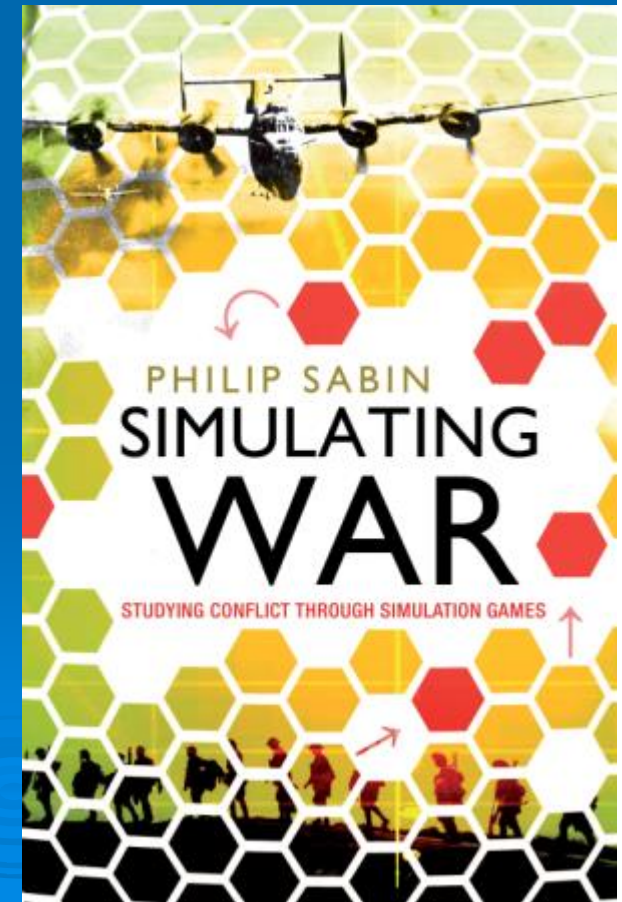


WARGAME MODELLING OF PAST CONFLICTS: ITS UTILITY IN PREPARING FOR FUTURE CONTINGENCIES

Professor Philip Sabin
Department of War Studies
King's College London



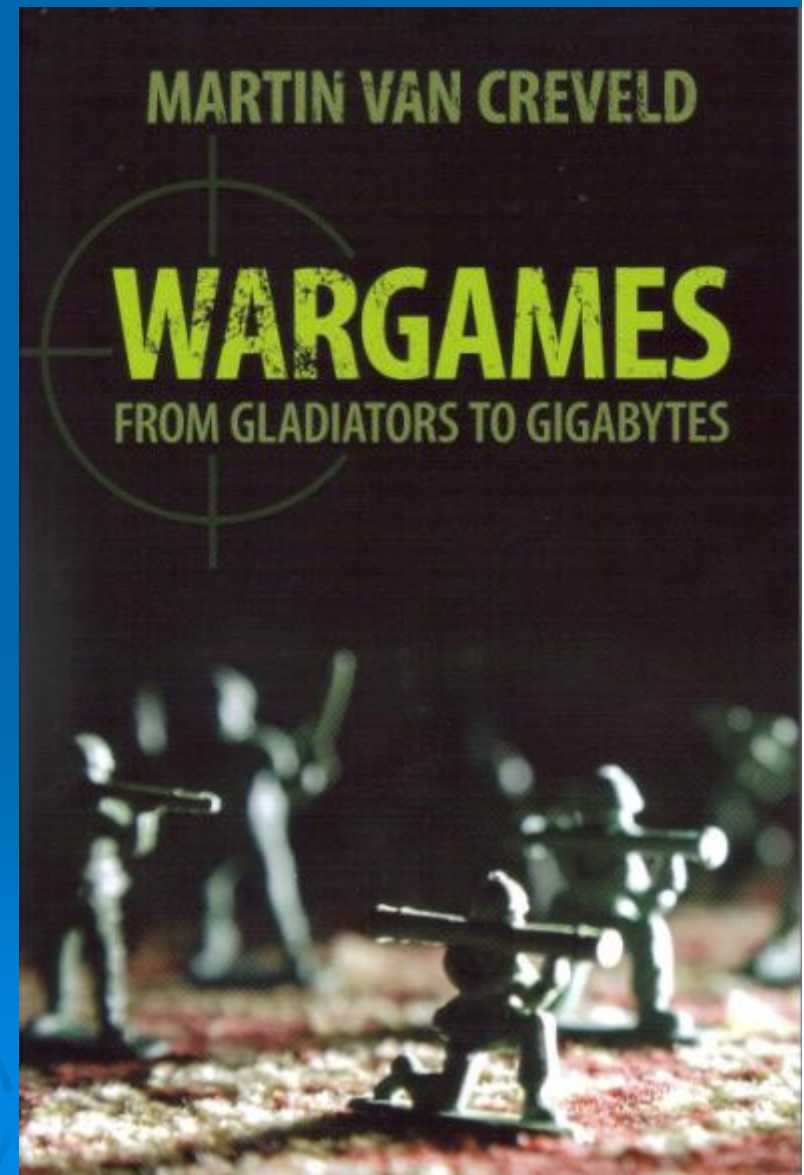
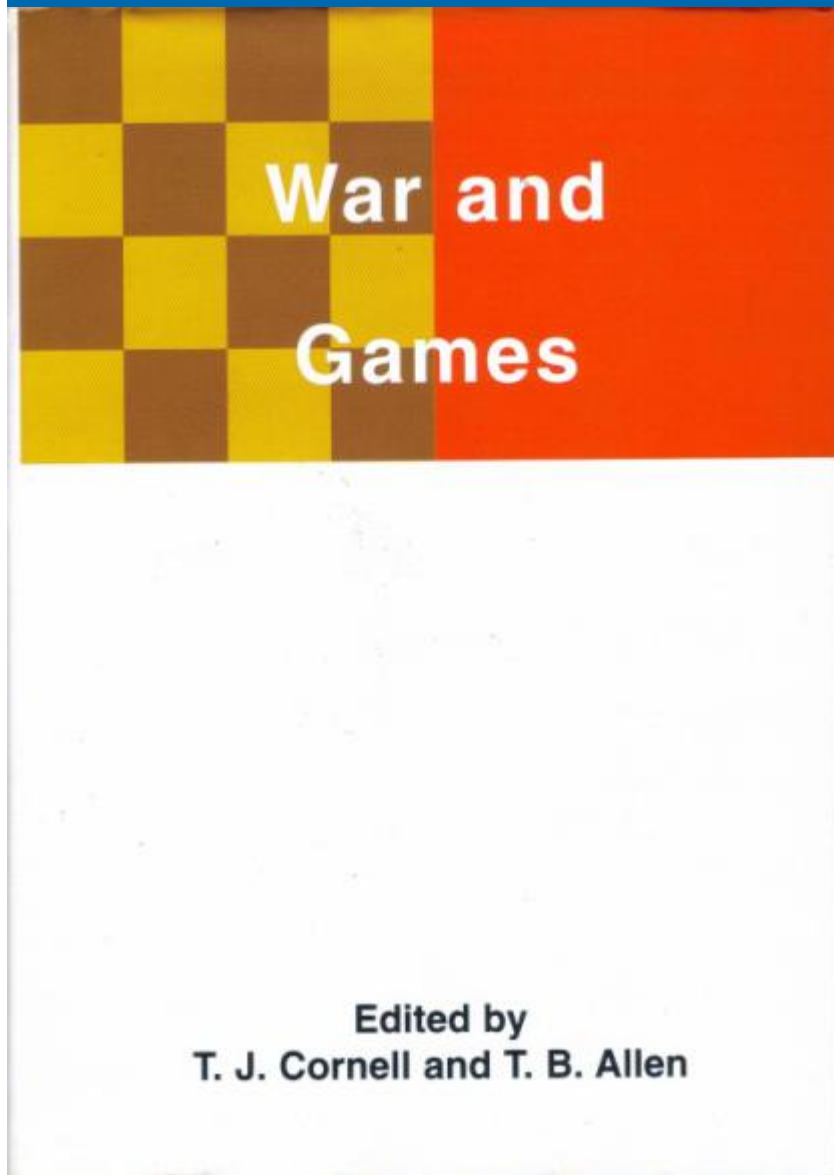
WARGAME MODELLING OF PAST CONFLICTS: ITS UTILITY IN PREPARING FOR FUTURE CONTINGENCIES

- What Are Wargames?
- What Use Are Historical Wargames?
- Why is Wargaming Problematic?

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What Are Wargames?



What Are Wargames?


- 'A wargame is a combination of "game," history and science. It is a paper time machine.' (Dunnigan)
- 'a wargame is a warfare model or simulation whose operation does not involve the activities of actual military forces, and whose sequence of events affects and is, in turn, affected by the decisions made by players representing the opposing sides.' (Perla)

What Are Wargames?

- 'All conflict simulations contain two essential elements. The first is an underlying mathematical model that provides the framework for troop manoeuvres and combat resolution... The second, equally important element consists of constant decision inputs by the opposing players, which reflect the essence of war as a battle of wits as much as a blind collision of armed masses.'
(Sabin)

What Are Wargames?

Forms of Conflict Modelling

- Mathematical Modelling
 - Operational Research
 - Game Theory
 - Role Playing
 - Verbal Analysis
 - Wargaming
- 

What Are Wargames?

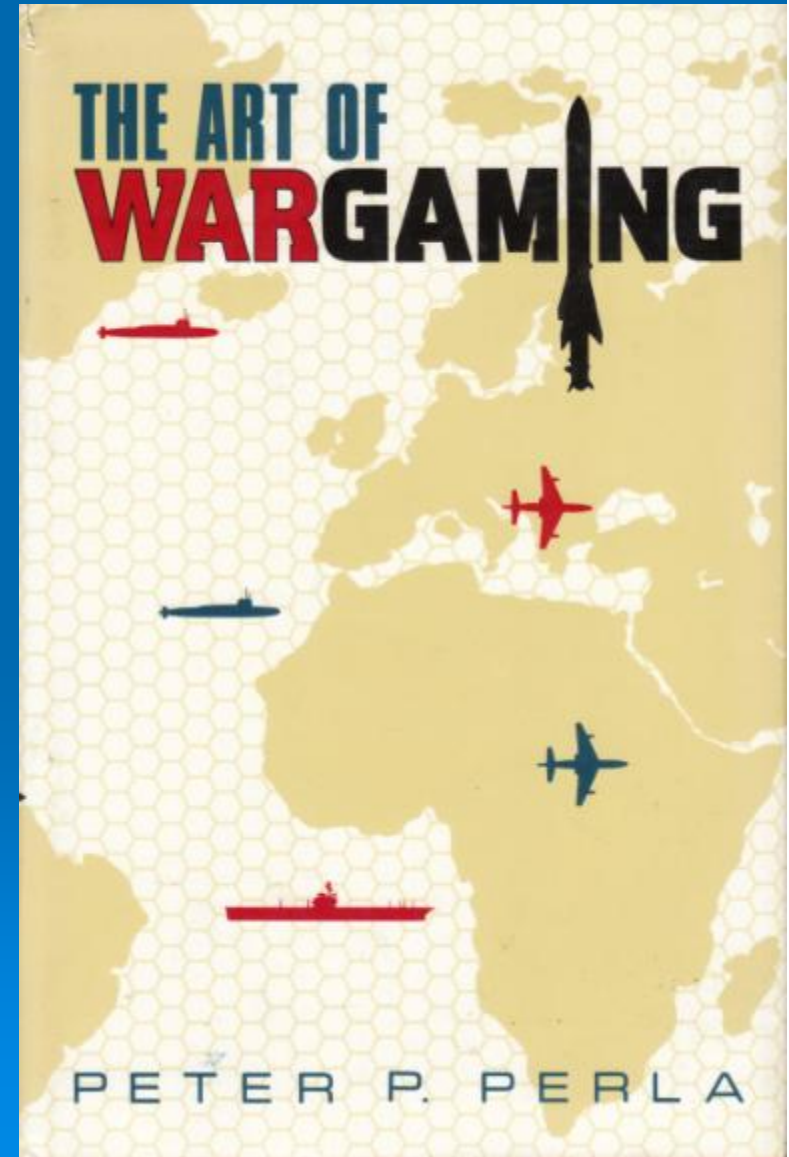
Forms of Conflict Modelling



What Are Wargames?

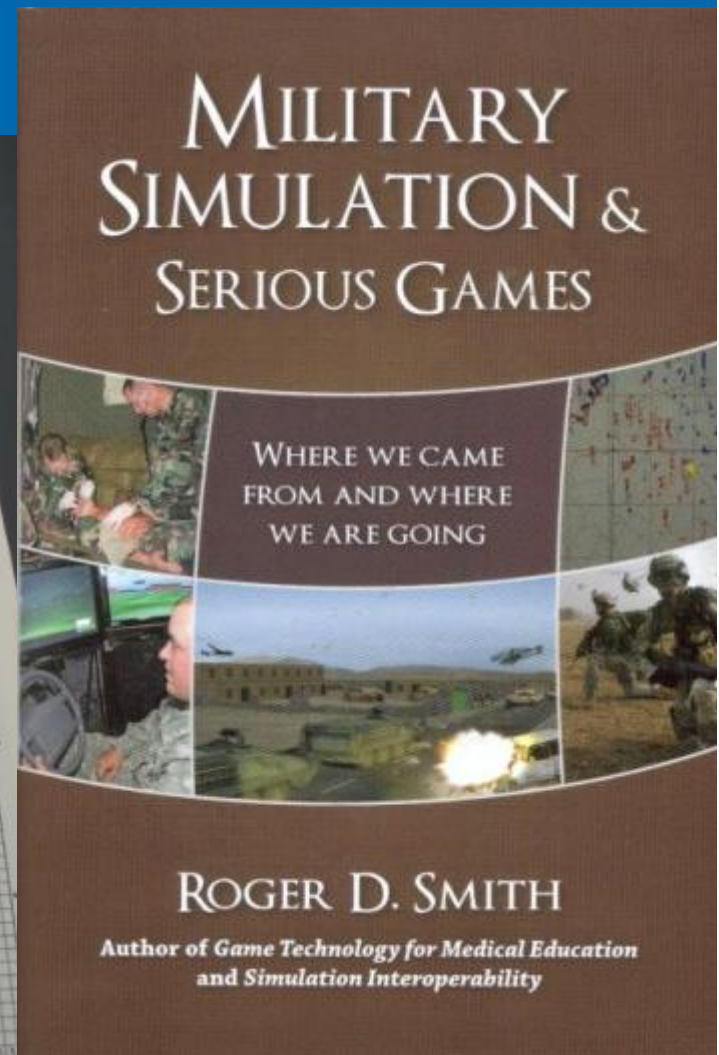
Variable Elements

- Codification of Rules
- Number of Participants
- Size & Complexity
- Form of Representation



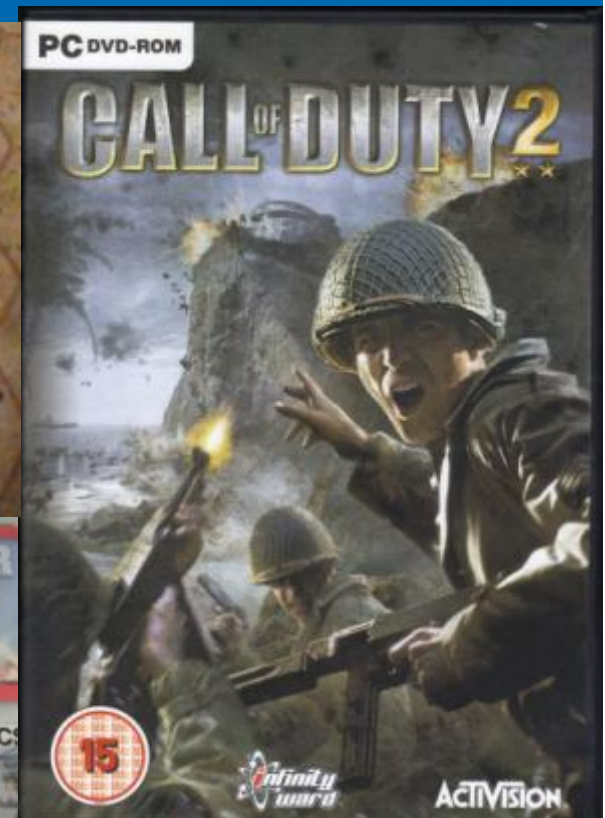
What Are Wargames?

Military Wargaming



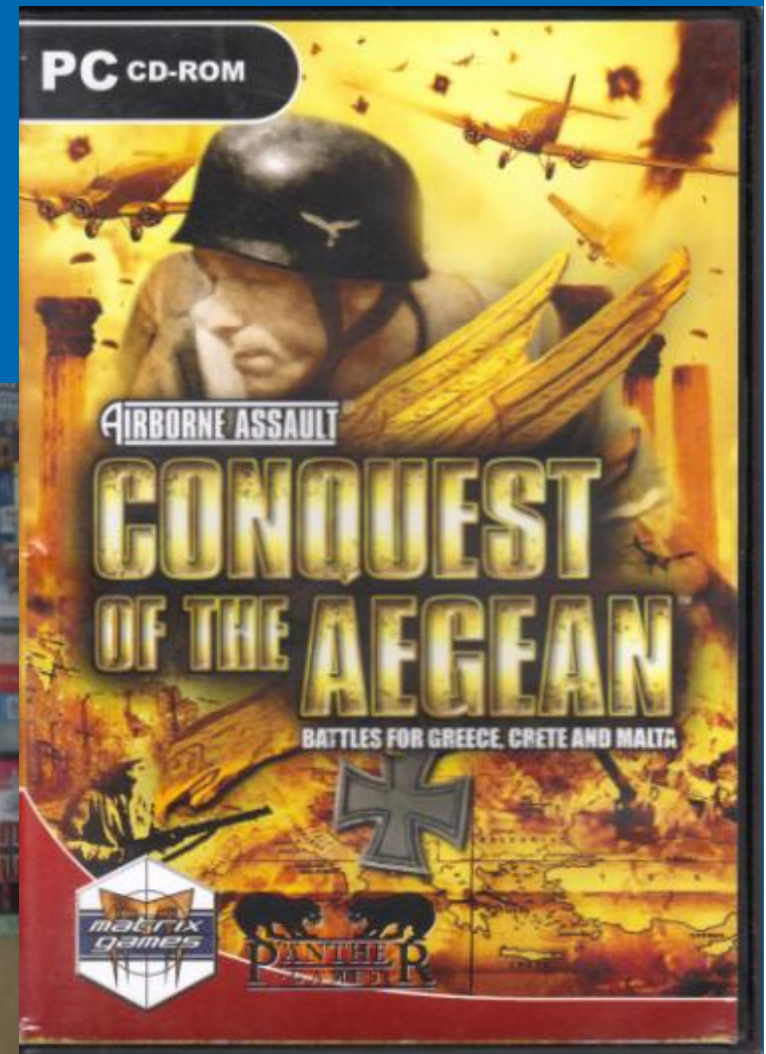
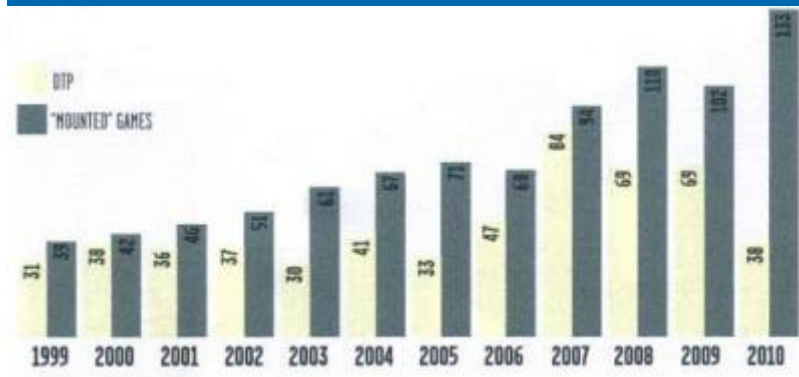
What Are Wargames?

Recreational Wargaming



What Are Wargames?

A Growing Corpus of Historical Wargames



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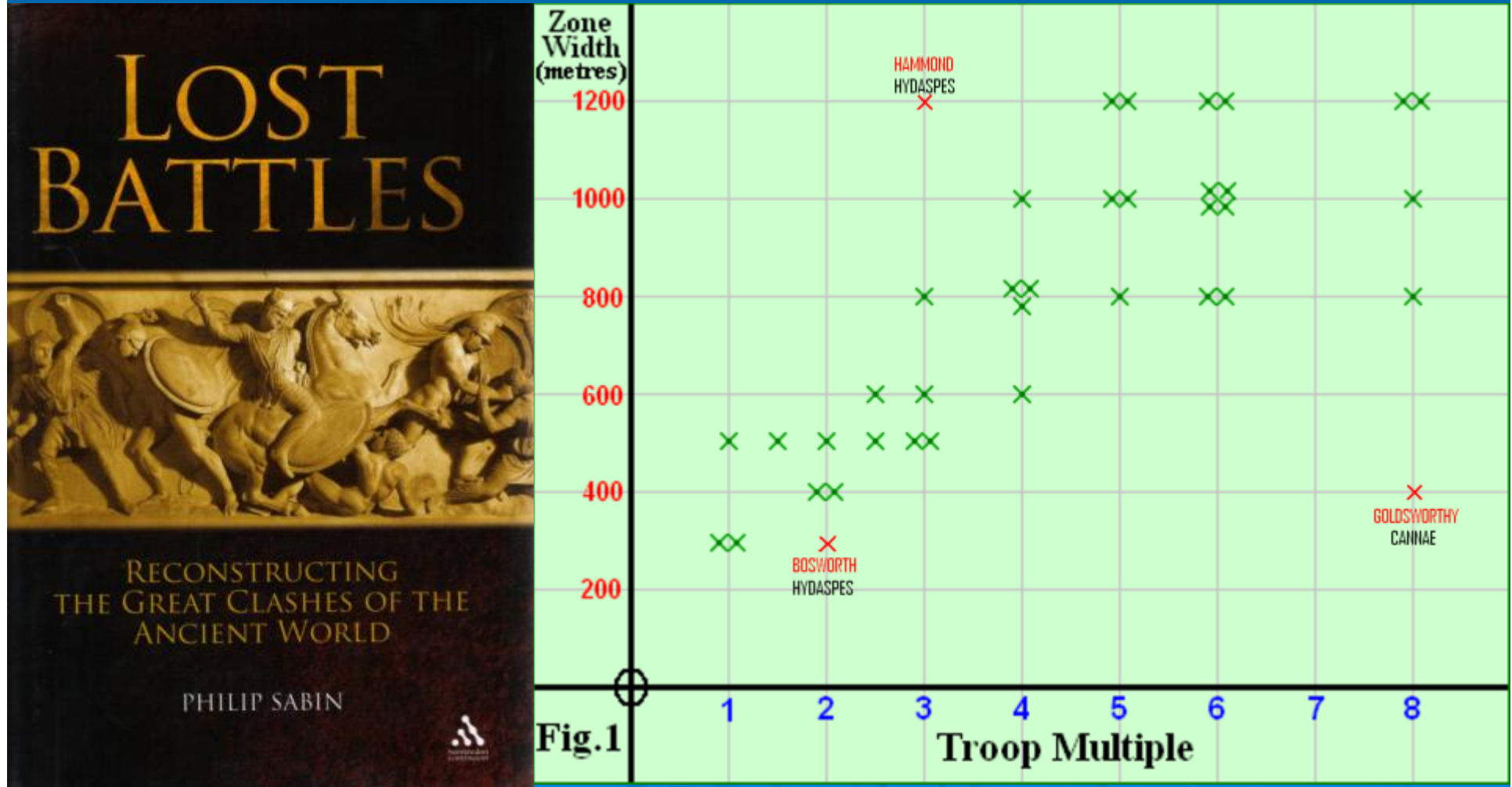
What Use Are Historical Wargames?

Understanding Conflict Dynamics



What Use Are Historical Wargames?

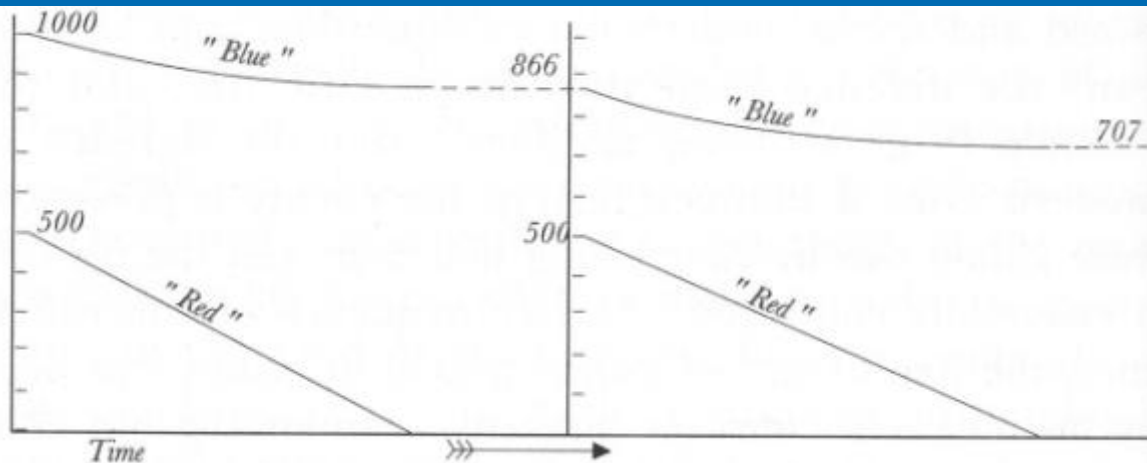
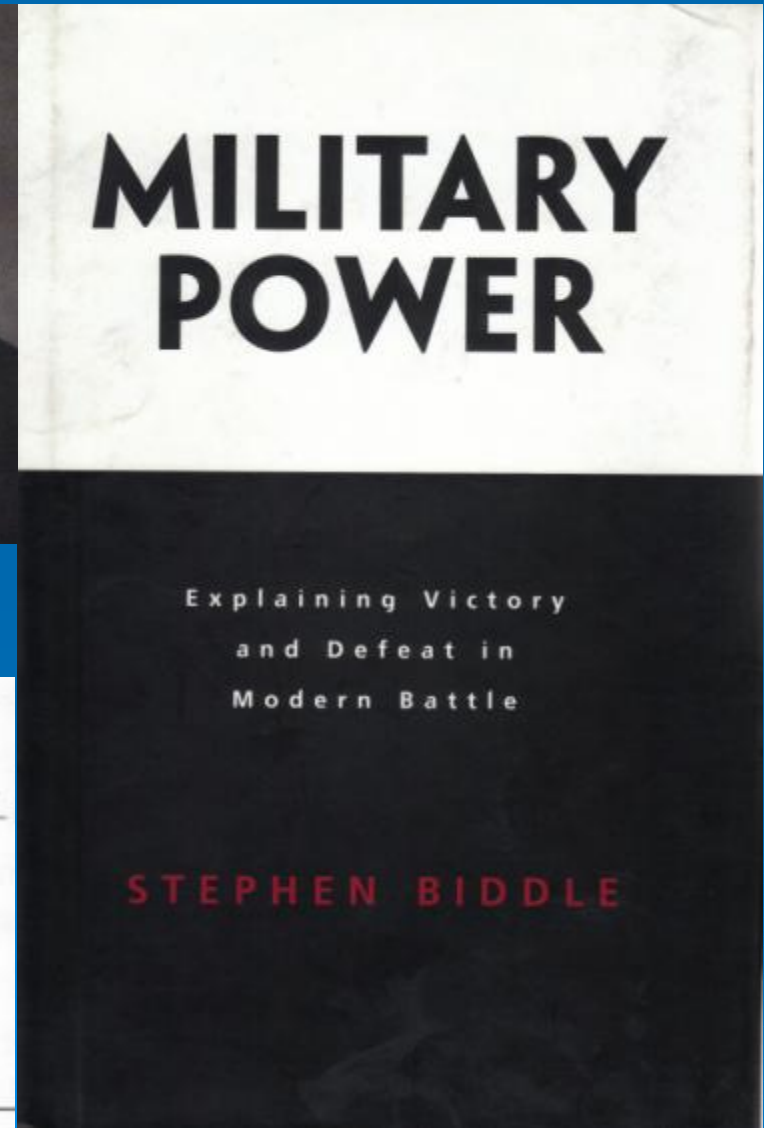
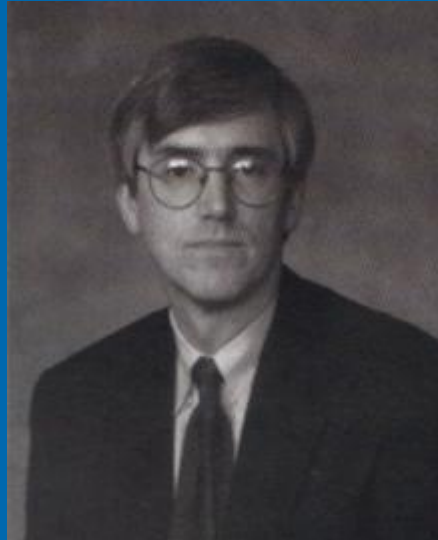
Understanding Conflict Dynamics



Army Frontage \approx Troop Quality $\times \sqrt{\text{Troop Numbers}}$

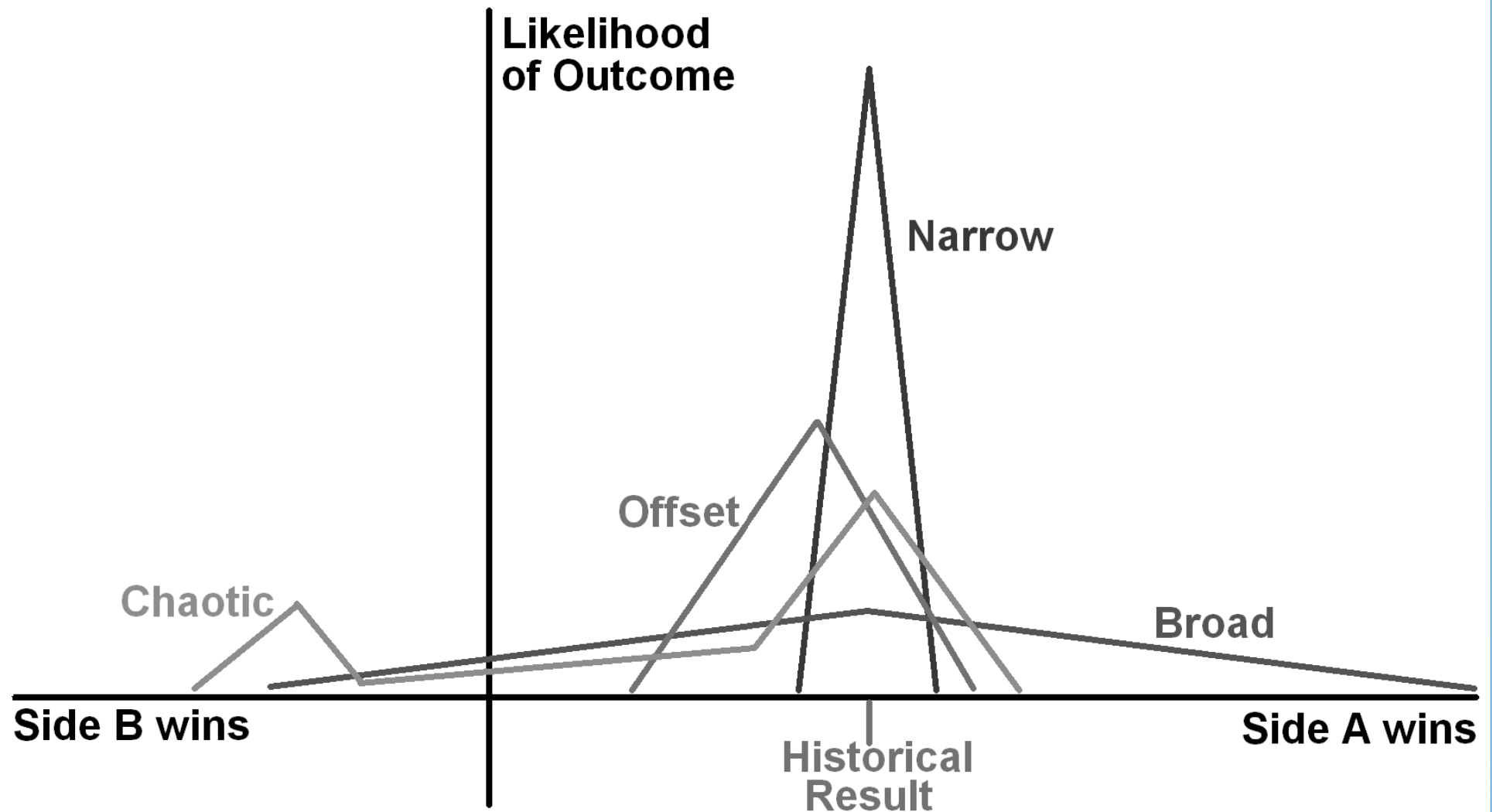
What Use Are Historical Wargames?

Validating Conflict Models



What Use Are Historical Wargames?

Validating Conflict Models



What Use Are Historical Wargames?

Learning Modelling Techniques



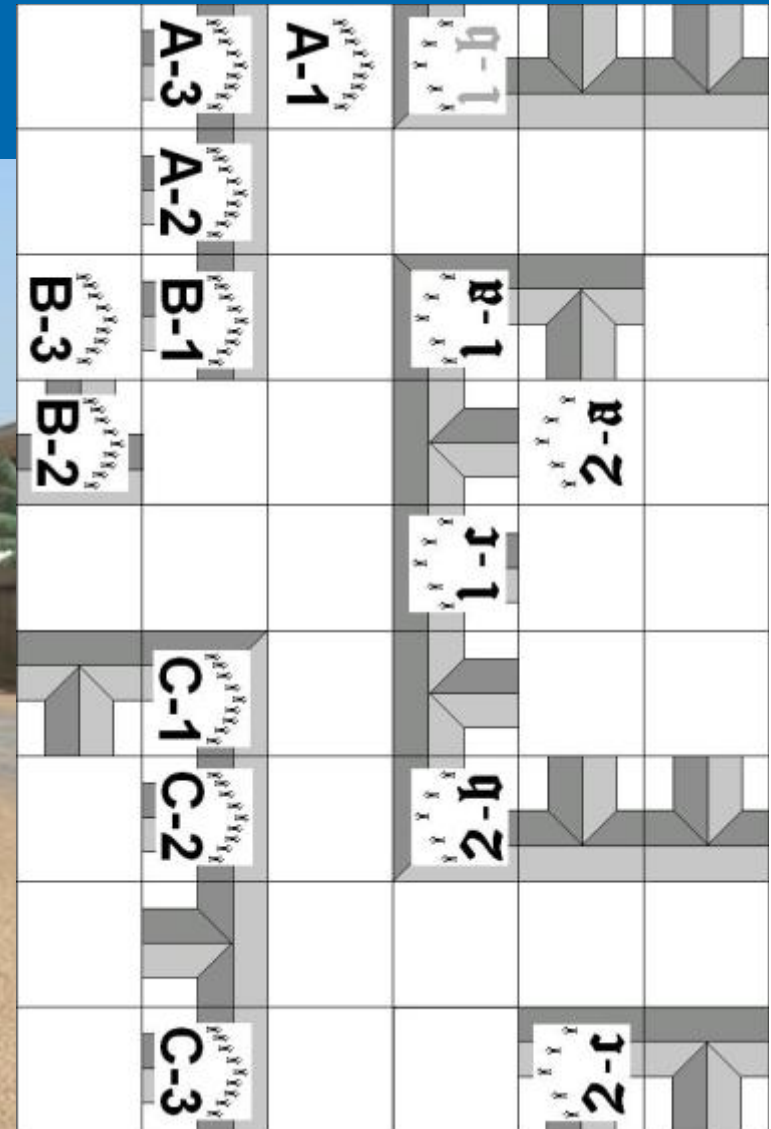
What Use Are Historical Wargames?

Developing Leadership Skills



What Use Are Historical Wargames?

Manual vs Computer Systems



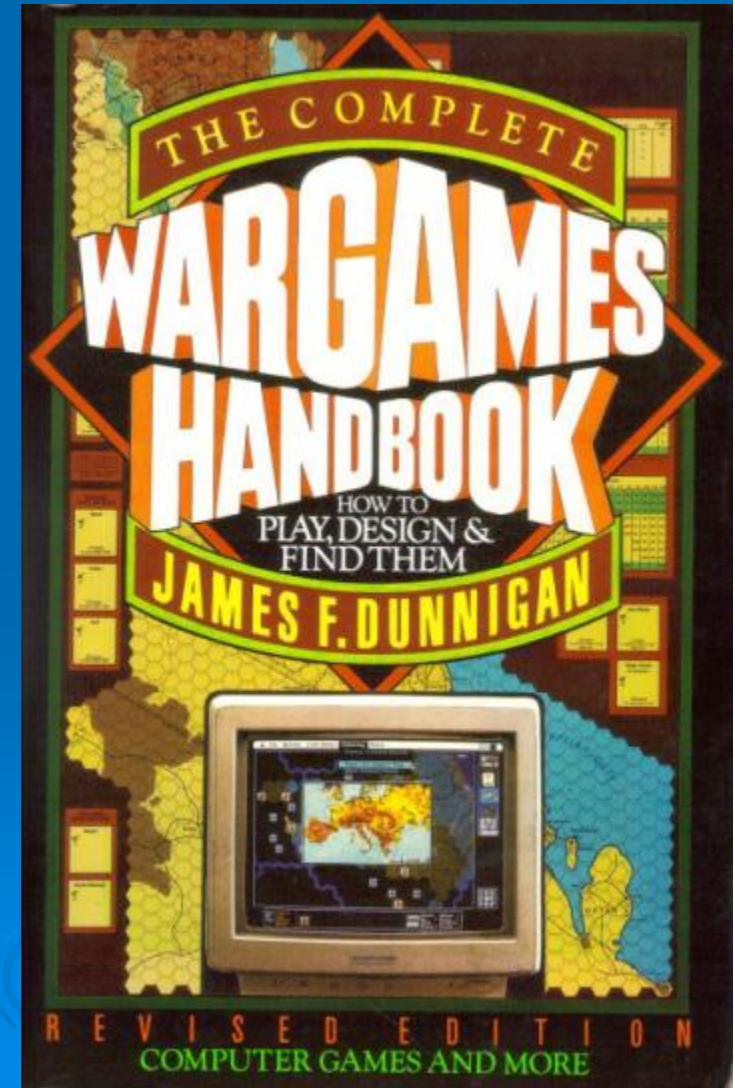
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Why is Wargaming Problematic?

The Stigma of Gaming

- 'A wargame is a playable simulation. A conflict simulation is another name for wargame, one that leaves out the two unsavory terms “war” and “game”.' (Dunnigan)

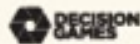


Why is Wargaming Problematic?

Fun and Recreation

Patton's First Victory

Tunisia



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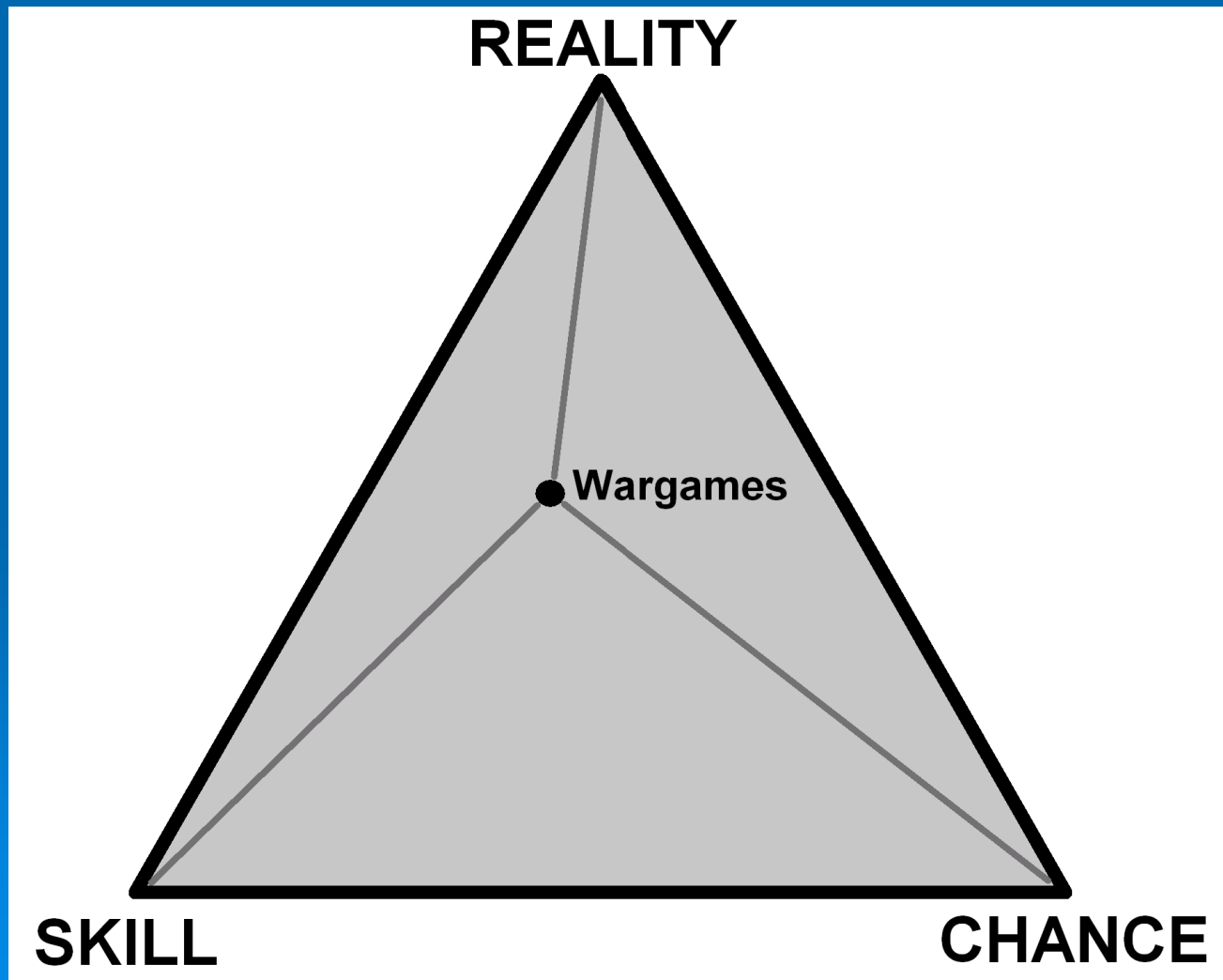
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Why is Wargaming Problematic?

The Luck of the Dice



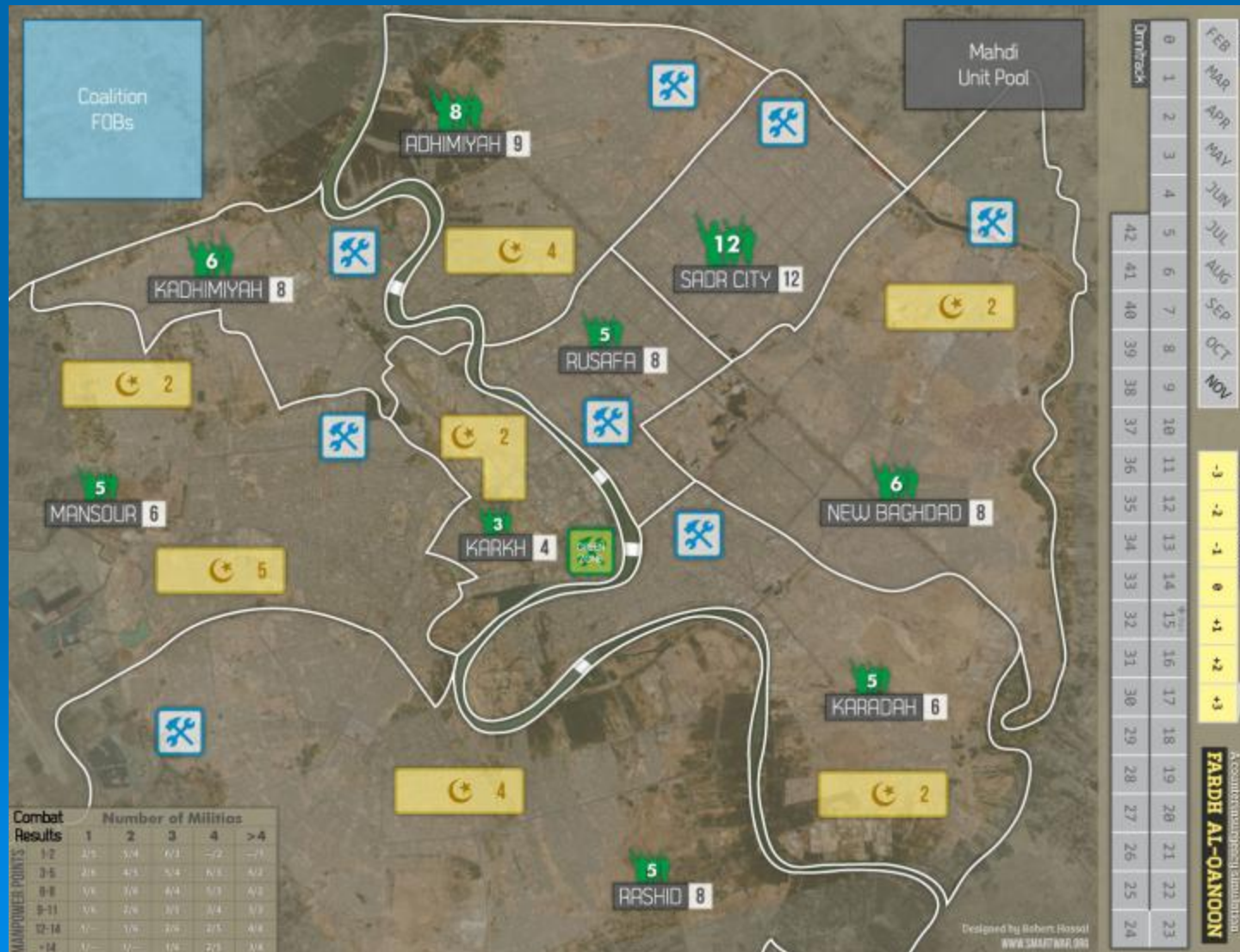
Why is Wargaming Problematic?

Detail vs Accessibility



Why is Wargaming Problematic?

The Changing Character of Conflict



Conclusions

- Wargame models offer a valuable supplementary tool to help understand conflict dynamics
- Wargaming past conflicts is useful in preparing for future contingencies
- Wargaming has image problems which hinder its potential as an analytical approach

Further Discussion

My KCL websites (just
Google 'Sabin KCL')

[http://groups.yahoo.com/
group/simulatingwar/](http://groups.yahoo.com/group/simulatingwar/)

www.professionalwargaming.co.uk

