

# Games for Peace and Welfare

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## Keywords

Peace, Welfare, wargames, Future's Language, ethics of gaming

Dear readers all over the world,

Games and gaming have been with us since the beginning of mankind, as is war. Games can be fun, help us discover and grow in multiple ways. Games may lead us to better understand each other, but potentially may also lead us astray. Wargames and shooting games were once developed to improve strategic thinking and also, to master Warcraft. To date, wargames and shooters are popular categories of games available in commercial Appstores, driving gaming console sales. The commercial interest here cannot be denied. These games are specifically designed to fulfil an entertainment purpose and are in popular demand. Do we still realize, though, that these games have arisen from another purpose?

According to [Duke and Geurts \(2004\)](#), a young Russian professor, Maria Birstein developed a first industrial application of strategic military gaming in 1932. Since then, such games have become important tools for both military and non-military training, that is, decision making. And after World War II, gaming-without-the-general scenarios were increasingly developed. Especially since the 1960s, increase in the gaming technique has been dramatic, and, as [Duke \(1974\)](#) predicted, the use of the term 'Gaming' as 'Future's Language' has become pervasive in nature.

Modern simulation and gaming has expanded the applications of the field to improve our society: decision making, urban planning, policy making, environmental issues, healthcare, etc. When studying the articles in *Simulation and Gaming Journal*, it is fair to say that the S&G community has been contributing to using research of all games attempting to learn and create a better future.

Now, we find ourselves in the 21st century. People enjoy playing wargames for mere fun while others use the same games – or games specifically developed for military training purposes. Ethics of modern wargaming for fun – and the possible negative effects on society – have been a much debated as pointed out by [Curry and Price \(2017\)](#). A topic now more relevant than perhaps in a long time. With the world in turmoil once again, we, the authors and chief editors of the *Journal of Simulation and Gaming* are in concern and, indeed, advocate an ongoing debate on ethics of gaming. Transparency in

advocated goals of gaming, as well as possible desired and undesired side effects, is in need of disclosure and research.

War in the real world is not a game. It is a great worry. Even if the field of Simulation and Gaming started its history in relation to the wargames developed and used in the military, it may never be the case that games for fun are developed to build hostility, feed on feelings of aggression or even, develop into actions that can actually and deliberately hurt people.

We pursue peace and welfare by using gaming. The Journal of Simulation and Gaming stands for those who study, design and play games – hoping for our better future.

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