
Making a Better Future Using Simulation and Gaming

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Dear readers of *Simulation and Gaming*,

After Richard [Duke \(1974\)](#) wrote his legendary book entitled “Gaming: The Future’s Language”, *Simulation and Gaming* researchers, became more confident in the fact that we could contribute to making a better future, whether the contribution is big or small.

Fifty years have now passed since its publication. After all this time, we are still striving for a better future using games and insights derived from gaming technology. By use of gamification, for example. As we stated in our previous editorials, skills and cognition can be improved by using games, even if games seem to be merely built for entertainment. People’s immersion in games built to have fun, generating endorphins and positive feelings, can contribute to their well-being. Consider the situation that you become sick, old, or bedridden, your avatar, as your digital twin, may still travel the world, generating impressions and memories as real travel can do.

Another advocate of the benefits of gaming and gamification, Jane [McGonigal \(2010\)](#), and her TED talk had a huge impact on society. Indeed, Jane herself reported to have suffered from the aftereffect of a brain concussion, a situation she felt she overcame by playing games. Hence, next to her TED talk, Janes’ personal story may be an inspiring example of how games contribute to the recovery of illness using games ([McGonigal, 2012](#)).

In reality to date, we are facing a diversity of situations and crises that never expected 10 years ago, when Jane gave her TED talk. To date, and in the recent past, we

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are dealing with global pandemics, and disputes growing whilst involving social media and fueling conflicts between countries. Due to climate change, the impact of natural disasters has become more frequent and more extreme. We simply need reliable simulations and perhaps also gaming scenarios to deal with disasters, natural or not, to be prepared.

One of your editors would add an anecdote of the unexpected. When presenting a game of disaster management at the game exhibition and fair 'Spiel 06' held at the Messe in Essen, Germany, the major response from participants was that there were few natural disasters in Europe; therefore, at that time, they had little concern about the theme. It might be true that natural disasters were rare then, but now we have to deal with the effects and after-effects of climate change, e.g., global warming, and natural disasters such as extreme weather causing floods, landslides, and so on. For sure, the game has caught up on relevance, and most likely, would attract a new generation of environmentally savvy and worried players to date.

Even facing the challenges above, we dare to be optimistic. We trust that our readers of *Simulation and Gaming* will be regarded as forefront people, embracing insights and tools derived from gaming and simulation. This is to evolve and refine scenarios and thoughts on how to better deal with the challenges of to date. And yes, that includes the topic of dealing with multifaced international political conflict. We, the serious players and researchers, have a long tradition of research in policy-making, diplomatic negotiation, and future forecasting. And we must revisit our heritage ever so often, to learn from and spread the word, onboarding new generations that may be unaware. Generations of players, who may have new views and approaches to combat new issues building on heritage, but with a fresh eye, ear and mind to support our joint future.

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