

Taking The Long View  
or  
Increasing the Military Effectiveness of  
Defense Wargaming

Matt Caffrey

# Why Listen To Me

- **DoD Civil Servant – previous positions**

- AFRL Liaison to HQ AFMC for Wargaming
- Lead Wargaming, Air Force Research Laboratory
- Professor of Wargaming, Air Command & Staff Col
- Research, School of Advanced Airpower Studies

- **Colonel USAFR (ret.) - assignments**

- Senior Reservist, AFRL Info Directorate
- Chief Wargaming, AF/XOOC (Checkmate)

- **Author/Speaker**

- Author, On Wargaming
- Co-author, Gulf War Fact Book
- Three chapters, many articles, hundreds of talks

# Disclaimer

**The following views are those of the author and do not necessarily reflect those of Air Force Research Laboratory, Air Force Materiel Command or the United States Air Force**

# Looking Too Close

- Many attempt to quantify specific impacts of specific wargame
- The problem is
  - Impacts tend to have several causes
  - Impacts may take a decade to become clear

# Overview

- Does Wargaming provide a significant edge?
- What measures have increased this edge previously?
- What measures are likely to be effective today?

But First...

# Lets Do a Thought Experiment

- Each of you are the leader of a Greek City State
  - Each of you have the same population
  - Each of you have the same training methods
  - Each of you have the same weapons tech
- Even fights are bloody and unpredictable
- How do you get an edge?

# Has Wargame Provided an Edge?

- First Generation, Coincidence or Correlation?
  - Civilizations & wargaming
  - Great Leaders, Elizabeth I,



# Has Wargame Provided an Edge?

- Wars of German Unification
- World War I
- Early World War II
  - Blitzkrieg
  - Wolf Packs
- Late World War II
- Early vs Late Cold War
- Gulf War I (Iran vs Iraq) vs Gulf Wars II & III

# Has Wargame Provided an Edge?

- YES

# How Has the Edge Expanded or Diminished

- 1811 - 1870, The Prussian Monopoly
  - New Methods, New Applications
  - Used at War College, National and down to Corps
- 1871 - 1918, Shrinking the German edge
  - Methods copied, uneven adoption
  - Principally at War Staff & Colleges

# How Has the Edge Expanded or Diminished

- 1919 - 1940, Increasing the German edge
  - Greater Breadth - Birth of Pol/Mil wargaming
  - Greater Depth - Staff Colonels to line Captains
- New Applications
  - Doctrinal development
  - Weapon optimization
- New technique - doctrinal Red

# How Has Edge Expanded or Diminished

- 1941 - 1945, decreasing the German edge
  - New Technique - Operations Research
  - Greater Breadth - Science Advisors
  - New Applications
    - Doctrinal development
    - Anticipating German tech - UK counters

# How Has Edge Expanded or Diminished

- 1946 - ? Sources of Soviet Edge
  - Head Start + massive data collection
  - Depth of Application - within USSR & clients
- ? - 1990 Sources of US Edge
  - RAND
  - “Never Again” - war at war college
  - CENTCOM
  - DARPA Net

# Extending Our Edge

- Greater breadth - Wargame all elements of national power
- Greater depth -
  - Teach cadets to commanders how to wargame
- New technique - Wargame in your pocket
- Old applications new again
  - Doctrinal development
  - Weapon optimization - parameters & CONOPS

# Are We Extending Or Restoring our Edge?

- China
  - Has wargamed - 40 and 60 years into future
  - Goal to lead military wargaming - institute
  - Goal to be world leader in recreational software
- Russia - I got nothin