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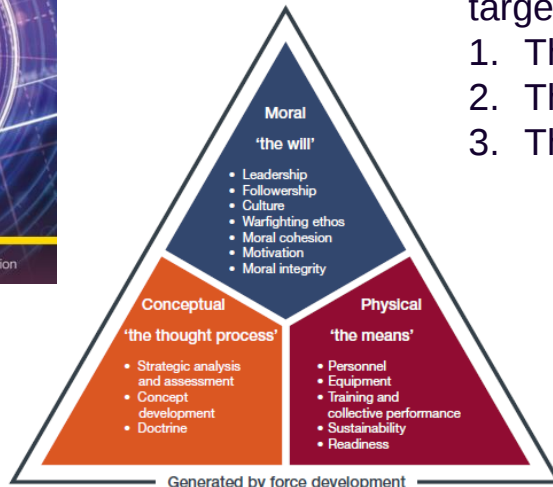
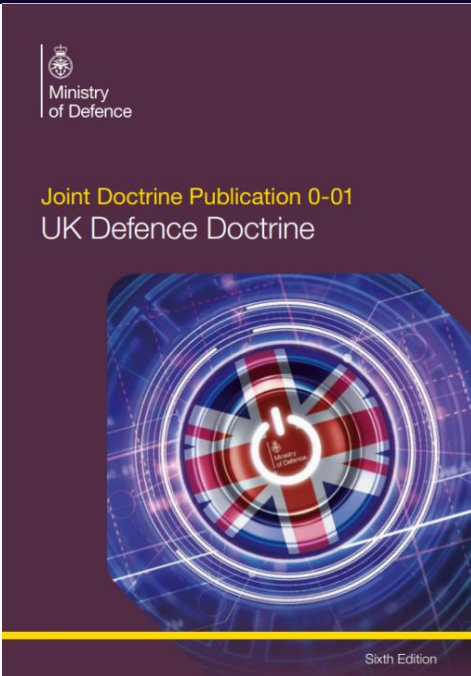
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Military Deception: A Challenge to the Wargaming Community

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Some basic reading



What? JDP 0-01 UK Defence Doctrine (6th ed.) (2022).

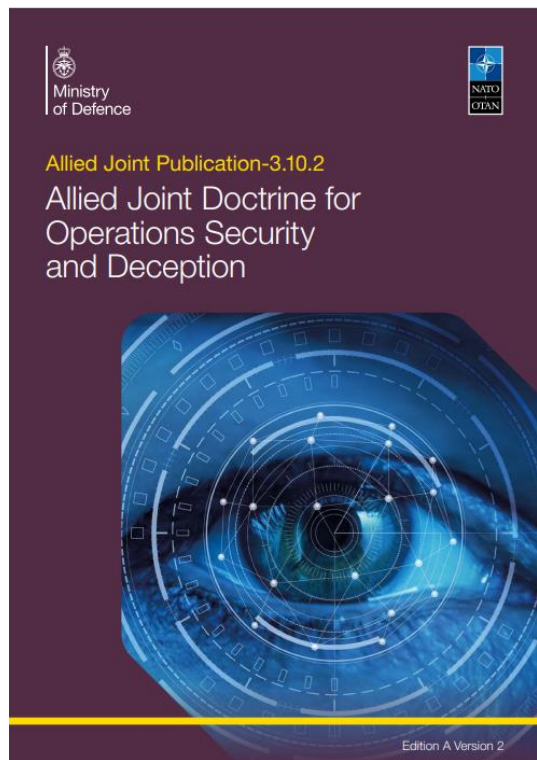
https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/63776f4de90e0728553b568b/UK_Defence_Doctrine_Ed6.pdf

Why? The issue of 'Fighting Power'.

Military deception contributes to optimising our own 'Fighting Power', whilst simultaneously aiming to degrade or undermine the opponent's fighting power by systematically targeting the three components of fighting power:

1. The moral component (the *will* to fight);
2. The physical component (the *means* to fight);
3. The conceptual component (the character of warfare).

Some basic reading



What? NATO Allied Joint Doctrine (AJP-3.10.2) Operations Security (OPSEC) and Deception (2020*).

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/6422d0ba60a35e00120caf09/20230327-AJP_3_10_2_Ops_and_Deception-O.pdf

Why? Provides the NATO (operational-level) perspective. NB. doctrine tells us ‘things to think about’ regarding military deception, rather than ‘how to do it’.

* Currently being updated, for potential publication by the end of 2024 (TBC).

Some basic reading

Research Article The RUSJ Journal

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Ruse de Guerre Redux

Neil Verrall

Deception has always been a valid stratagem of war. However, a number of important issues influence how deception could be used, or negated, within contemporary and future warfare. In this article, Neil Verrall clarifies the conceptual understanding of deception and recent developments within it, and highlights ongoing and new challenges. The article concludes by asking whether deception is still possible, or even desirable, in the 21st century.

The topic of military deception has often been subjected to an 'aura of secrecy',¹ which has succeeded in a status that is rarely seriously questioned. This aggrandisement feeds insecurity, and often contradictory, narratives about deception as a tool of military strategy and tactics for example, the notion that 'we' have historically been good at deception, or 'they' have stooped so low as to employ it; or that the use of deception is illegal, unethical or 'unfair' in warfare. These perceptions can erroneously influence the perceptions and attitudes of politicians and senior military staff as to the fundamental nature of deception, as well as when, how, or even if it should be used. This article seeks to clarify some of these enduring assumptions and misconceptions in order to deliver an improved understanding of deception for the contemporary operating environment, which not only involves war and conflict but also persistent competition and belligerent antagonism for a range of threat actors beyond the traditional threshold of war.

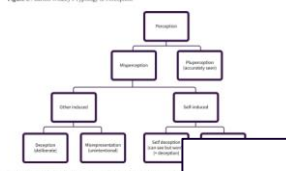
Deception Theory: A Reprise

Historically, deception has been considered part of military strategy and tactics, in the form of a stratagem – a plan or scheme to outwit an opponent. In ancient Greek the term *stratagem* referred to generalship, whereby strategy and *metis* (cunning intelligence) were seen as positive traits of capable military generals – *soferia duxum furis* (made by skilled leaders).² This mentality includes the symbiotic relationship between *dolos* (trickery) and *andreia* (force).³ There are numerous variants of this thinking across other cultures and historical epochs, such as China's *Thirty-Six Stratagems*⁴ and Sun Tzu's *Art of War*,⁵ the *stratagemata* of the Romans,⁶ the *stratagemata* of the Byzantine era,⁷ the *Hagakure* of the Japanese Samurai,⁸ and other relatively modern concepts, such as Russian *voynennaya khitrost'* (military cunning) and *maskirovka* (disguise, concealment).⁹ Everett L Wheeler traces the role of deception in Ancient Roman and Greek thinking.

1. William R Harris, 'On Countering Strategic Deception', R-1220-ARPA, Advanced Research Project Agency, November 1973, p. 10.
2. Everett L Wheeler, *Stratagem and the Vocabulary of Military Trickery* (New York, NY: EJ Brill, 1988).
3. Rose Mary Sheldon, *Amphib: Superior Attack in Ancient Greek Warfare* (London: Frontline Books, 2012).
4. Ralph D Sawyer, *Lever of Power: Military Deception in China and the West* (GreenSpace Independent Publishing Platform, 2017).
5. Sun Tzu, *The Art of War* (London: Collins, 2018).
6. Sextus Julius Frontinus, *Stratagems* (Point Pleasant, NJ: Winged Hussar Publishing, 2013).
7. George T Dennis (translator), *Maurice's Stratagems: Handbook of Byzantine Military Strategy* (Philadelphia, PA: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1984).
8. Yamamoto Tsunetomo, *Hagakure: The Secret Wisdom of the Samurai*, translated by Alexander Bennett (Tokyo: Tuttle, 2014).
9. Vladimir Lukin, *Voynennaya Khitrost'* [Military Cunning] (Moscow: Military Publishing House, 1988).
10. Viktor Maslanskiy, *Opytnoye Maskirovka* [Operational Disguise of Troops] (Moscow: Military Publishing House, 1975).

Ruse de Guerre Redux

Figure 1: Ruse de Guerre's Typology of Deception



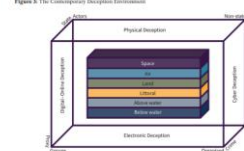
Source: Ruse de Guerre, 'Toward a General Theory of Deception', pp. 19-20.

deception (Figure 2), and selection of the analytical and methodological tools used to conduct a deception analysis. The 'Ruse de Guerre' typology, however, is not a simple, linear model of deception, but a complex, multi-layered system. It is a system that is designed to be flexible and adaptable, and to be able to handle a wide range of deception scenarios. The 'Ruse de Guerre' typology is a complex, multi-layered system that is designed to be flexible and adaptable, and to be able to handle a wide range of deception scenarios. The 'Ruse de Guerre' typology is a complex, multi-layered system that is designed to be flexible and adaptable, and to be able to handle a wide range of deception scenarios.

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Figure 2: The Contemporary Deception Environment



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Table 1: Ruse de Guerre's Typology of Deception

	Relative Strengths	Relative Limitations
Physical	• Provides for direct, tangible, and measurable deception • Highly visible and detectable • Highly and easily detectable	• Information is often limited and incomplete • Physical and cognitive deception are often limited in scope and range
Psychological	• Provides for indirect and subtle deception • Often undetectable and unmeasurable • Often undetectable and unmeasurable	• Often undetectable and unmeasurable • Often undetectable and unmeasurable

Source: Ruse de Guerre.

creating a sense of urgency and a sense of crisis, which would have serious implications for the UK and the US. The presence of increasing, visible, and measurable deception, however, is not necessarily a good thing. It is a sign that the UK and the US are being deceived, and that they are being deceived in a way that is serious and potentially dangerous. The presence of increasing, visible, and measurable deception, however, is not necessarily a good thing. It is a sign that the UK and the US are being deceived, and that they are being deceived in a way that is serious and potentially dangerous.

The Ongoing Challenge of the Moral, Ethical and Legal Basis of Deception

It has been almost two decades since the publication of a seminal paper on the moral, ethical and legal basis of deception.¹⁰ The moral, ethical and legal basis of deception is a complex and controversial issue, and it is one that has been the subject of much debate and discussion.

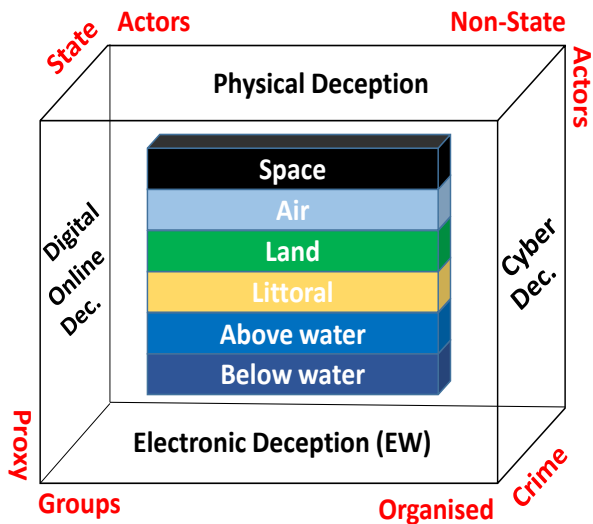
10. Ruse de Guerre, 'Toward a General Theory of Deception', pp. 19-20.
11. J. R. Harris, 'On Countering Strategic Deception', R-1220-ARPA, Advanced Research Project Agency, November 1973, p. 10.
12. Rose Mary Sheldon, *Amphib: Superior Attack in Ancient Greek Warfare* (London: Frontline Books, 2012).
13. Ralph D Sawyer, *Lever of Power: Military Deception in China and the West* (GreenSpace Independent Publishing Platform, 2017).
14. Sun Tzu, *The Art of War* (London: Collins, 2018).
15. Sextus Julius Frontinus, *Stratagems* (Point Pleasant, NJ: Winged Hussar Publishing, 2013).
16. George T Dennis (translator), *Maurice's Stratagems: Handbook of Byzantine Military Strategy* (Philadelphia, PA: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1984).
17. Yamamoto Tsunetomo, *Hagakure: The Secret Wisdom of the Samurai*, translated by Alexander Bennett (Tokyo: Tuttle, 2014).
18. Vladimir Lukin, *Voynennaya Khitrost'* [Military Cunning] (Moscow: Military Publishing House, 1988).
19. Viktor Maslanskiy, *Opytnoye Maskirovka* [Operational Disguise of Troops] (Moscow: Military Publishing House, 1975).

Three core applications of military deception

1. Offensive deception
 - Attack in order to defeat
2. Defensive deception
 - Protect the force (people and assets)
3. Counter-deception
 - Detect adversary deception

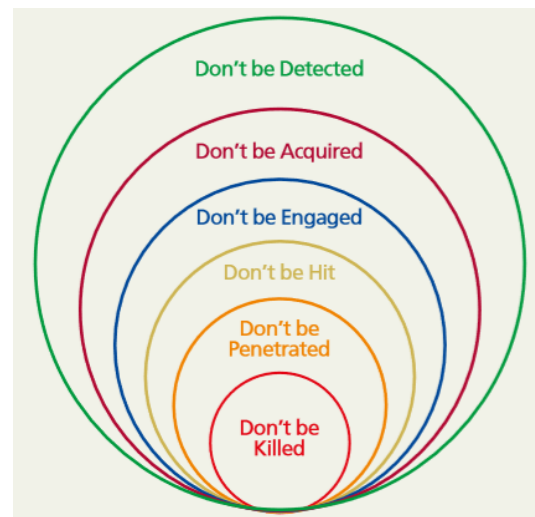
The contemporary deception environment

STRATEGIC AND OPERATIONAL



Source: Verrall (2021).

TACTICAL



Source: UK MOD.

Message: Deception operates across the tactical, operational and strategic levels of operation. As it scales up, it includes multiple domains (space to below water) and the four core deception environments (physical, electromagnetic spectrum (EMS), cyber and the digital-online). Additionally, different threat actors engage in deception.

Principles of deceptive behaviour (*why* deception works)

SEE (sense)	Show and Hide	1. Hiding the real (distract attention away from) by... 2. Showing the false (attract attention to).
	Multi-source and Multi-method	1. Feed information via numerous sources (never single source), and... 2. Feed information using varying techniques.
THINK (perceive)	Ambiguity	1. Reduce ambiguity (to make the target certain, decisive, but wrong), or... 2. Increase ambiguity (to make the target uncertain and indecisive).
	A natural story	1. Credible (is it plausible in their eyes?), and... 2. Consistent (keep the story going as per the narrative), and... 3. Verifiable (make sure they can collect the deceptive breadcrumbs).
	Reinforce expectations	Give added strength or support to the behaviour they expect to see (expect).
DO (behaviour)	Seek a behavioural outcome	What do you want your deception target to 'do' (or not do)? (action or inaction). Don't just influence their thinking, influence their <u>behaviour</u>.

“Deception is basically the same regardless of whatever field it appears in. It’s not a function of technology. Instead, all deceptions are applied psychology”

(Barton Whaley, 2007)

Examples of different stratagems*

- The impossible approach
- The obvious solution
- The fake routine
- Recycling
- The substitution
- The lure
- Deliberate leak / mistake
- Provoking the truth (to unmask)

Basic techniques to hide the real and show the false

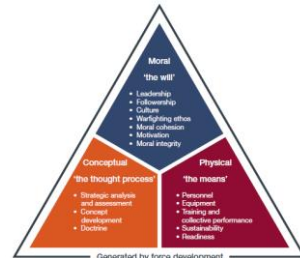
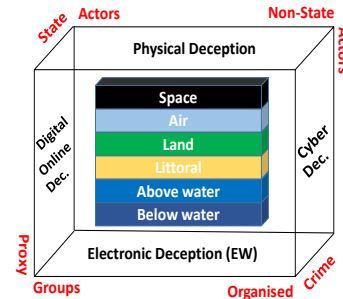
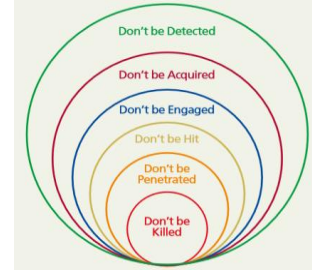
- Masking (making a real thing look invisible)
- Repackaging (making a real thing look different)
- Dazzling (confusing the appearance of a real thing)
- Jamming (stopping a real thing from being detected)
- Mimic/Spoof (a false thing that looks like a real thing)
- Inventing (creating a new, false thing)
- Decoys (distract attention by showing a false thing)

“The array is limited only by the inventiveness of ~~devious~~ ^{clever} minds” (Whaley, 2007)
smart

* A stratagem is a plan or scheme, especially one used to outwit an opponent or achieve an end. Synonyms include gambit, ruse, ploy, artifice.

Summary of challenge

- How to design wargames for offensive, defensive and counter-deception?
- How to design wargames for different scales (tactical, operational, strategic)?
- How to design wargames for domains (space to below water)?
- How to design wargames for environments (physical, EMS, cyber and digital-online)?
- How to wargame different behavioural aspects? (e.g. ambiguity, expectations, etc.).
- How to design wargames with different tradecraft and techniques?
- How to mix some, or all, of these for complex wargames!
- Finally, deception wargaming should be aimed at different aspects of development:
 1. Training and education (conceptual foundations);
 2. Understanding (tradecraft, planning, practice);
 3. Real-world application and operations.





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