

The “Fuzzy Edges of Wargaming” ?

Exploring Non-Kinetic Conflict Dynamics

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why does it matter?

- * “Wars of the future are likely to be unconventional.”
 - * Most wars of the past 50 years have been unconventional.
 - * All war is political.
 - * All conflict outcomes are fundamentally shaped by social, economic, and political dynamics.

War is merely the continuation of policy by other means.

The moral elements are among the most important in war. They constitute the spirit that permeates war as a whole, and at an early stage they establish a close affinity with the will that moves and leads a whole mass of force, practically merging with it, since the will is itself a moral quantity. Unfortunately they will not yield to academic wisdom. They cannot be classified or counted.



why does it matter?

- * War-fighting is hardly the only reason to be interesting in modeling conflict dynamics and embedding these in a serious game or simulation.
 - * humanitarian and development assistance
 - * political risk assessment
 - * human rights protection
 - * journalism
 - * social science education



challenges

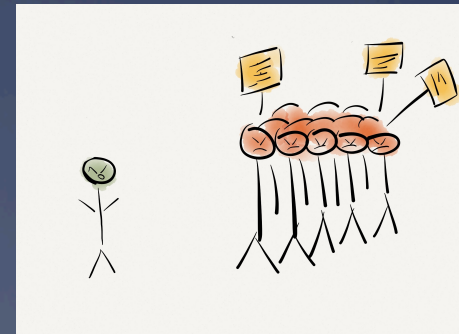
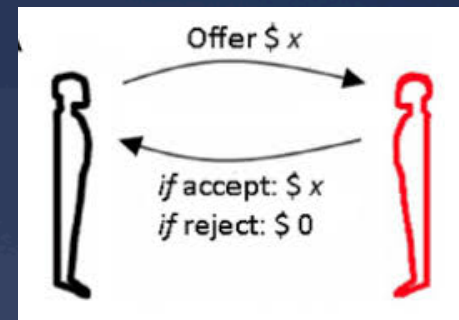
- * The social science of conflict remains uncertain, even more uncertain than the modeling of kinetic operations.
 - * large number of variables
 - * competing theoretical models
 - * tendencies rather than invariant relationships
- * Political, personal, cultural, and institutional interactions play important role in shaping outcomes.

minisims

- * “Minisims” are short conceptual games that are designed to:
 - * challenge presumptions
 - * offer quick insight in conflict and peacebuilding dynamics
 - * link to other materials
 - * help break up the monotony of a lectures
 - * act as a group “ice-breaker”

minisims

- * Ultimatum Game
 - * Widely studied by behavioural economists and anthropologists.
 - * Clear implications for conflict negotiation and behaviour.
- * Other quick abstract classroom negotiations.
- * Stakeholder assessment simulation
 - * Hidden information and agendas
 - * Marginalized populations



minisims

- * *Crisis Response* card game
 - * Developed by the World Bank based on ideas from the Connections 2012 Game Lab.
 - * Showing comparative advantage, coordination issues in humanitarian assistance/disaster response.



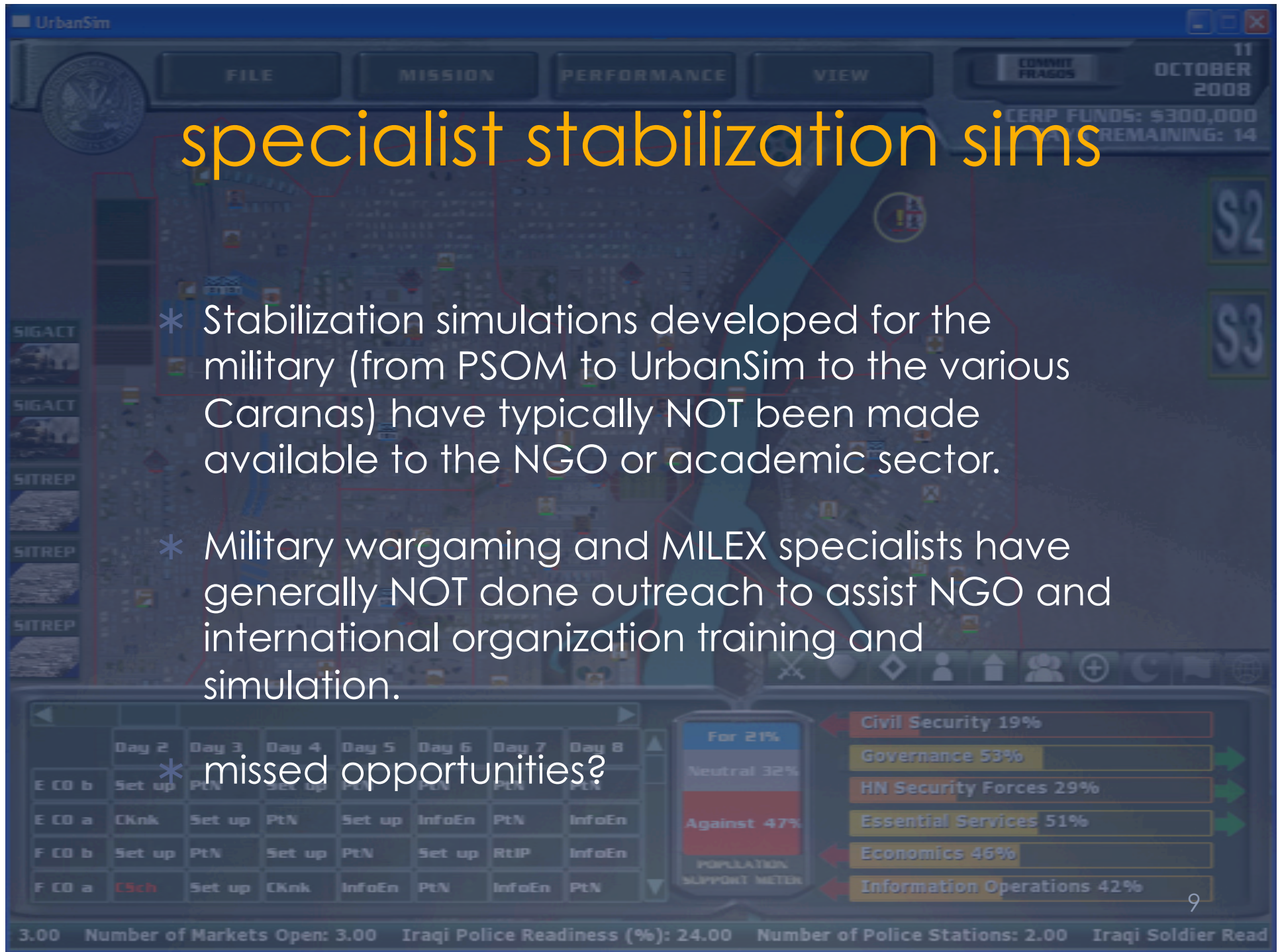
boardgames

- * Most hobby wargames contain limited simulation of non-kinetic factors, and/or are too challenging for large numbers of non-gamers to quickly master.
- * train-the-trainer approach
- * optional assignment
- * class play
- * manual games do have the advantage of being easily customizable (including by students)
 - * this in turn leads students to think about social modeling issues

specialist stabilization sims

- * Stabilization simulations developed for the military (from PSOM to UrbanSim to the various Caranas) have typically NOT been made available to the NGO or academic sector.
- * Military wargaming and MILEX specialists have generally NOT done outreach to assist NGO and international organization training and simulation.

* missed opportunities?



poor integration of non-military actors in military exercises

- * The “primary school teachers with C4” problem



COUNTRYX

REPRESENTATIVE PROFILES

Opposition Leadership (You)

The leader of the opposition, an ethnic Delp, communicated indirectly with commanders of the rural insurgency. He had been accused by the ruling party of having prior knowledge of insurgent attacks on government targets, with hard-liners in the governing party accusing the opposition leader of coordinating the attacks. The opposition leader is a skilled politician, having been part of the ruling elite for over a decade prior to the upheavals following the first President's death. When the first President's nephew fled the country following the attempted coup, the opposition leader stayed in the capital and maintained dialogue with the new President, eventually arranging a cessation of urban political violence. The opposition leader's position between the insurgency and the ruling government makes him an important figure but his political aspirations remain unclear. He is alternately viewed as a peacemaker by some, and guerrilla sympathizer by others. The ability to influence the insurgency to meet his political ends has been noted by third-party observers.

President

[Show Profile](#)

Submitted

First World Envoy

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No ActionTaken

The Deputy Chief of Mission has 12 years experience in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and has been in Country X for three years. Serving first as a political officer in the Embassy



Phase 1

Phase 2

Phase 3

Results

SITUATION ANALYSIS

Country Condition

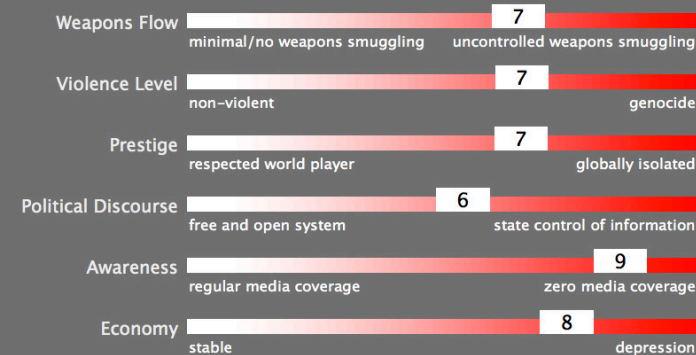
Remnants of the former ruling regime have launched an insurgency in the periphery of the country aimed at destabilizing the new government and forcing new elections.

Government counter-insurgency tactics have taken an anti-Delp character, with international observers accusing the government of genocide.

National politics are currently conceived as a zero-sum game with economic and security advantages flowing to those linked to the ruling urban elite.

Presidential elections are constitutionally mandated, but the current government has postponed the next round, set to occur in 3 months

Snapshot



Options

DEADLINE FOR DECISION
2012-02-13 22:30

Choice 1

Express willingness to engage in dialogue/negotiations with leadership of government and insurgency.

Choice 2

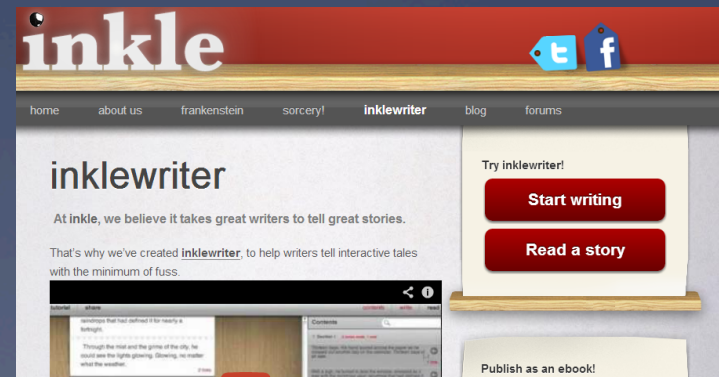
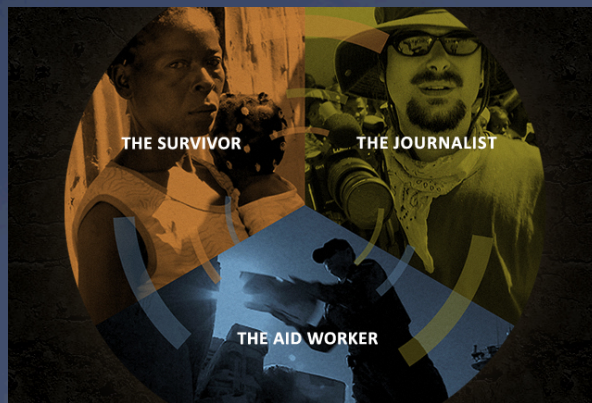
Increase levels of violence in insurgency by communicating with Delp insurgents.

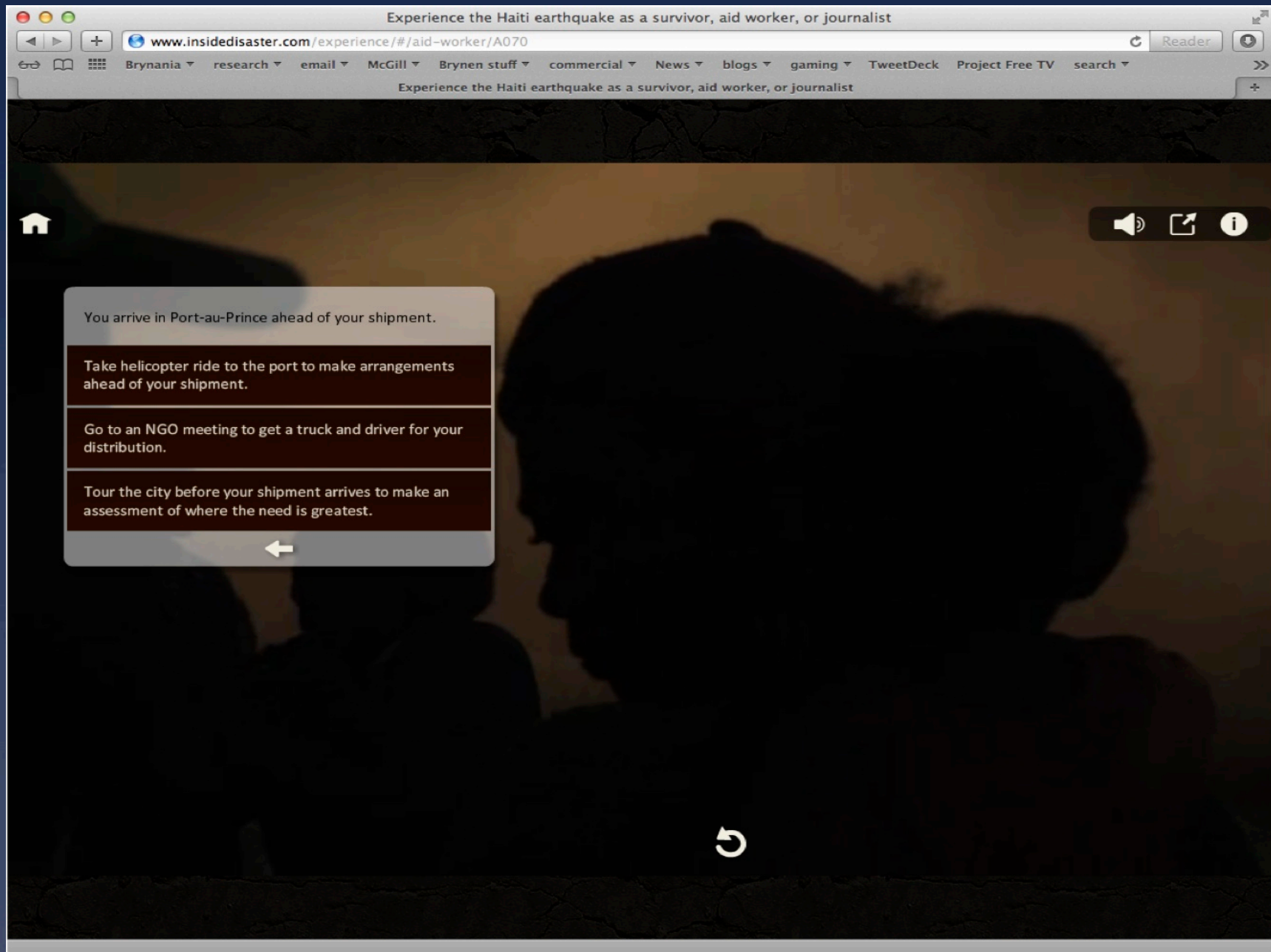
Choice 3

Prepare candidacy as hedge for possible round of Presidential elections

interactive fiction as conflict simulation

- * Considerable potential for choose-your-own-adventure type game materials integrating text, graphic, and videos.
- * Growing number of easily used tools (Twine, Inklewriter), useable by instructors or students.





Hard to Handle: A DDR Story

by *Daniel Stysis, Jess De Santi and Kegan Chang*

THE COUNTRY OF BADNOK HAS RECENTLY been the subject of a major civil war. The Gand, a minority ethnic group in the country, founded a resistance movement against the dominant ethnic Lothan ethnic group. Naming themselves the Gand Liberation Front, they fought the regular army for nine bloody years, with both sides committing major human rights violations. Now, however, mutual exhaustion by both sides has allowed a peace treaty to be brokered, and it will be necessary for aid agencies and the United Nations to help set Badnok on the road to peace.

Continued

Continued

“The names of the combatants,” he states. You glance quickly at the list. It seems that there are far more male names than female names on the list compared to the group in front of you. Do you trust the list or not?

Yes, you trust the list. He seems to be in charge, why take risks you don't have to?

No, you don't trust the list. The discrepancy between the list and the group in front of you seems too large to ignore.



large-scale crisis simulations

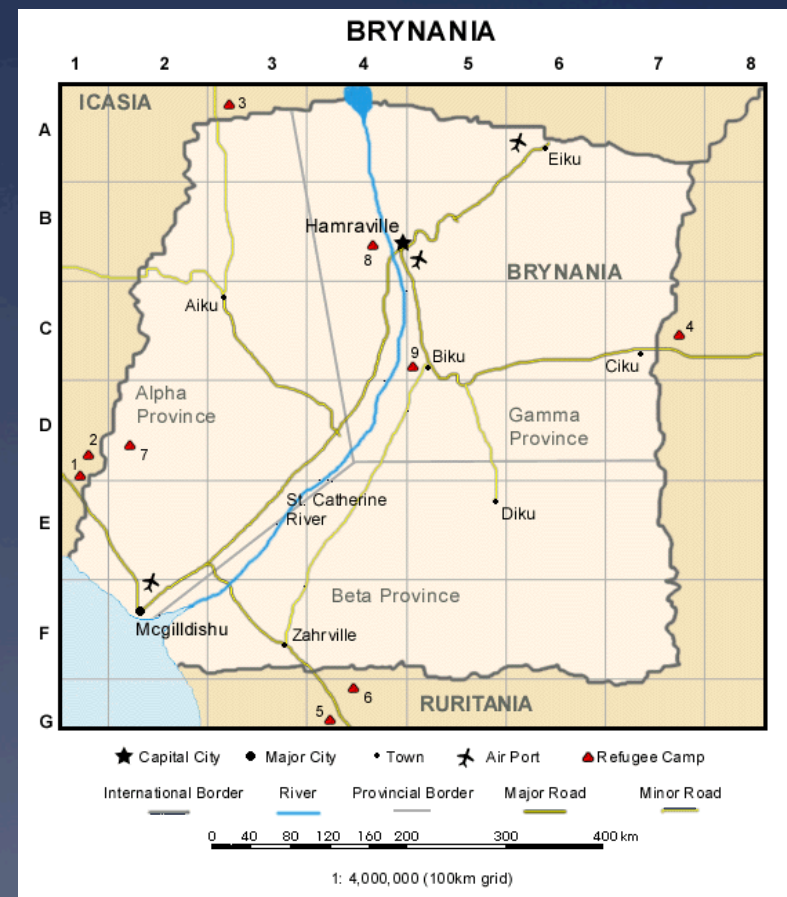
- * with specialist software support for online role-play



- * ad hoc, using freely available web tools
 - * email, IM, VOIP, Twitter, websites, blogs, YouTube

Brynania simulation

- * set in real world, but on fictional continent of Cyberia
 - * peace negotiations, humanitarian assistance, peacekeeping, CIVPOL/SSR, refugee repatriation, transitional elections, longer-term development
- * 130 students from two classes playing variety of roles (local government, insurgents, civil society, NGOs, UN agencies, international community)
 - * generally senior policy-maker roles, but occasional “zooming” to lower-level position to highlight particular operational challenges (“strategic corporal”)



Brynania simulation

- * Sim runs 12 hours per day for 7 days
 - * 1 hour = 1 day, 1 day = 1 month, covering 7 months of stabilization operations
- * Both face-to-face and electronic interaction
 - * class generates approximately 1,000 hours of face-to-face interaction, and 12-15,000 emails
- * Allows qualitative and quantitative comparisons across simulation runs (n=13)



- high (self-reported) positive effects on **understanding of academic course material**

- high positive effects on understanding **operational challenges and constraints** (theory vs praxis)

- modest positive effects on **non-academic personal skills**

Perceived impact of the simulation (N = 45)

For each question, participants answered using a 7-point scale where 1 corresponded to “no, not at all” and 7 corresponds to “yes, completely”.

Question	Mean	SD
Did the simulation increase your understanding of the material covered in the class readings?	5.51	1.16
Did the simulation increase your understanding of organizational processes involved in politics?	5.80	1.06
Did the simulation increase your understanding of the real-world constraints on peace operations?	6.20	1.14
Did the simulation improve your understanding of negotiations?	5.49	1.33
Did the simulation improve your ability to engage in negotiations?	5.00	1.68
Did the simulation enhance your written communication skills?	4.89	1.50
Did the simulation enhance your verbal communication skills?	4.36	1.92
Did the simulation enhance your social skills?	4.02	1.66
Did the simulation enhance your time management skills?	4.62	1.72
Did the simulation enhance your information management skills?	5.47	1.38
Was the simulation more useful to you than a week of readings on the subject?	6.18	1.40
Was the simulation more useful to you than a week of lectures on the subject?	5.98	1.46
Did the simulation enhance your empathy for others in conflict situations?	5.04	1.69
Did the simulation enhance your understanding for the views of others in conflict situations?	5.44	1.22
Did the simulation increase your understanding of various roles involved in peacebuilding (i.e. aid, development, diplomacy, military)?	5.96	1.04
Did the simulation increase your appreciation for those involved peacebuilding?	6.25	0.97
Did the simulation increase your desire to work in peacebuilding?	5.41	1.40
Did the simulation increase your understanding of the material covered in the class readings?	5.76	1.09
Did the simulation increase your understanding of the bureaucracy involved in politics?	5.87	1.08
Did the simulation enhance your leadership skills?	5.00	1.60

Brynania simulation

- * Instrumented game also used by King (2012) to examine the psychology of violence.

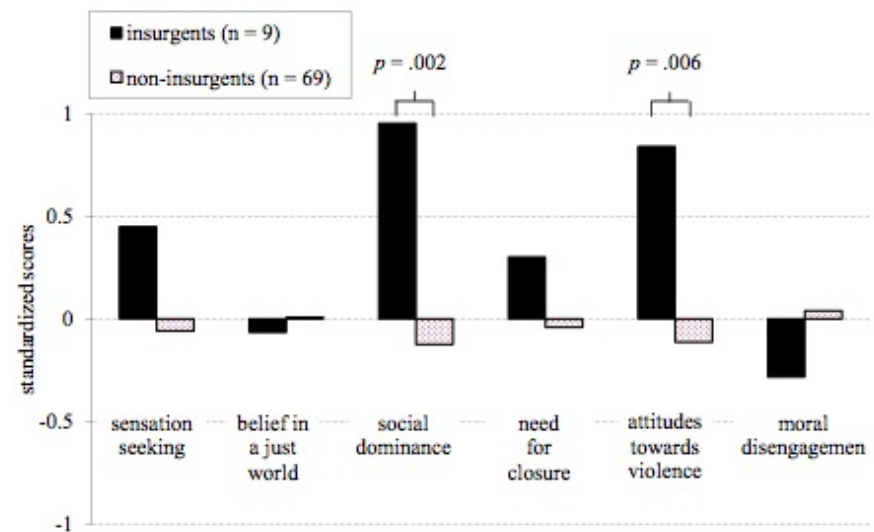



Figure 5. Standardized scores of psychological scales for insurgent-terrorist roles as compared to other roles.

Carana HADR game

- * Four player instructional game developed from discussions at Connections 2012.
- * Generally cooperative play with asymmetrical victory conditions.
- * Emphasis on resource allocation, coordination, assessment.
- * Print-and-play for ease of distribution (to be made available at PAXsims).



Heavy Rains

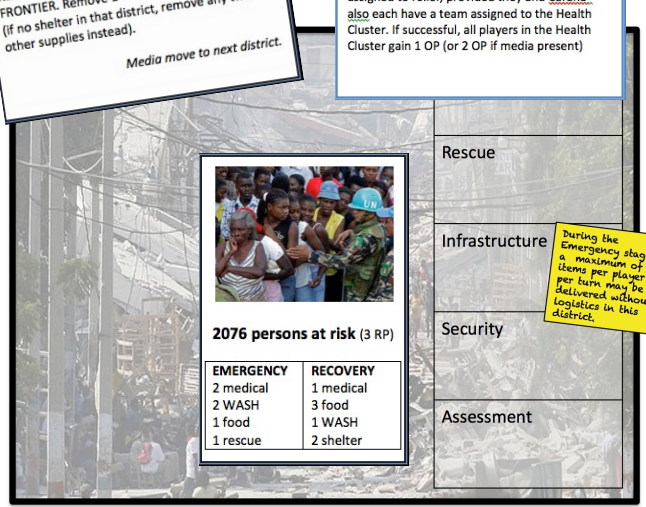
Remove 1 LOGISTICS infrastructure from FRONTIER. Remove 1 SHELTER from each district (if no shelter in that district, remove any two other supplies instead).

Media move to next district.



Vaccination Programme

The current player may remove the Measles card from a district where they have a team assigned to relief, provided they and Carana also each have a team assigned to the Health Cluster. If successful, all players in the Health Cluster gain 1 OP (or 2 OP if media present)





2076 persons at risk (3 RP)

EMERGENCY	RECOVERY
2 medical	1 medical
2 WASH	3 food
1 food	1 WASH
1 rescue	2 shelter

Rescue

Infrastructure

Security

Assessment

During the Emergency stage a maximum of 3 items per player may be delivered without logistics in this district.

conflict simulations and policy planning

- * Chatham House, Israeli-Palestinian refugee negotiations (2008)
 - * traditional negotiations role-play simulation
 - * scenario designed to force parties to think about design of agreement and implementation challenge
 - * physical lay-out and process designed to “simulate” feelings of marginalization within refugee community
 - * part of multi-year “track two” process support by Canada, UK, EU, others

conflict simulations and policy planning

- * National Transitional Council (Libya), civil war scenario planning (2011)
 - * simple BOGSAT format with described scenarios rather than iterative game
- * UNRWA and University of Exeter, regional crisis planning exercise (2013)
 - * “gamified” competitive policy exercise (event injects, roleplayers), rather than properly iterative game

references and further reading

Slide	Reference
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