

Leibniz ScienceCampus Annual Conference 2024

in cooperation with

Working Group on Military Forces and Violence of the
Bundeswehr Centre for Military History and Social Sciences

Playing War

Simulations, Games, Exercises, and the Representations of Military
Force and Violence

Date: November 27 - 29, 2024

Place: University of Regensburg

Note: The conference will take place on-site; online participation is also possible.

Registration: Please register for on-site or online participation via the following address:

Registration on-site participation until November 26, 2024

Link for online participation:

Contact: info@europeamerica.de

“Is this a game, or is it real?”

David Lightman

War Games, USA, 1983 directed by Stuart Gillard, John Badham

The conference “Playing War – Simulations, Games, Exercises, and the Representations of Military Force and Violence,” taking place from November 27 to 29, 2024, at the University of Regensburg, delves into the depiction and simulation of military violence across various historical contexts. Organized by the Leibniz ScienceCampus in collaboration with the Working Group on Military Forces and Violence from the Bundeswehr Centre for Military History and Social Sciences, this conference offers an interdisciplinary platform to examine both historical and contemporary phenomena of wargaming.

This conference aims to deepen the understanding of how military force and violence are simulated and represented in various settings, and how these representations shape the practice and perception of real-world phenomena leading to discussions on the boundaries of authenticity and simulation.

At the heart of the conference lies the concept of “play” which serves as an analytical lens to explore how violence functions within imaginatively created environments. This ludic approach includes military training exercises, digital battlefield simulations, historical reenactments, as well as commercial board and video games. The conference seeks to uncover the connections between forms of “playing war” and the imaginations and realities of military violence.

Concept and Organization: Kerrin Langer, Jon-Wyatt Matlack, Frank Reichherzer, Juliane Tomann

Program

Wednesday

November 27, 2024

Campus University of Regensburg
Sammelgebäude Room S.214

Welcome and Introduction 13:00 - 13:45
Welcome by ScienceCampus and ZMSBw
Introduction: Play and Representation Impulse by Organizers
Panel 1 14:00 - 15:30 <i>In cooperation with the LeibnizScienceCampus Lecture Series – War.Peace.Security</i>
"A School of War" – Notes on the History of the Prussian Kriegsspiel
Jorit Wintjes (Würzburg) "A School for War!" – Notes on the History of the Prussian Kriegsspiel
Steffen Pielström (Würzburg) "I hate this with a Passion!" – Facing Chance and Uncertainty in Kriegsspiel
Pia Hofmann (Würzburg) "Nothing is as Difficult as Writing an Order" – The Language of Kriegsspiel 1824 to 1914
Panel 2 16:00 - 17:30
Present Futures, or: Preparing for the Uncertain
Megan Hamilton (London) Battle Drill and the British Empire, 1939-45
Doug Stark (Chapel Hill) Protective Play – Farocki's Operational Games
Regine Strätling (Montréal/Mainz) Exploring Military Uses of Video Games with Harun Farocki's Installation Serious Games
Keynote Lecture 19:00 – 20:30 Haus der Begegnung, Hinter der Grieb 8
Anders Engberg-Pedersen (Odense) Martial Aesthetics – On War as an Artform

Thursday

November 28, 2024

Altes Finanzamt, Room 319, Landshuter Str. 4

Panel 3 8:30 - 10:30
The Fog of Play – Military Training Exercises as Imaginary Spaces of Power
Ashley Vance (Washington D.C.) Eight Minutes to War – U.S. Army Training Maneuvers in Germany, 1948-1961
Simon J. Moody (London) War-Gaming as Bureaucratic Politics – The British Army of the Rhine and Tactical Nuclear War
Jon-Wyatt Matlack (Regensburg) Overlaying Reality and Fiction – The Battlespace of U.S. Army/German Army Maneuvers of the 1960s
Oleg Rusakovskiy (Potsdam) Mock Battles of the Young Tsar – Martial Amusements of Peter the Great in a Comparative Perspective

Panel 4 11:00 - 12:30
“The Pity of War” – Crimes, Injury and Hardship in Video Games
Tatiana Konrad (Vienna) & Lukas Wieser (Vienna) “This Is All Your Fault” – Violence, War Crimes, and the Avatar-Player Interaction in the Video Game Spec Ops: The Line
Amina A. Touzos (Mainz) A Game of Life and Death - Medical Simulation in War Video Games
Sebastian Richter (Regensburg) Anti-war games and their Fragmentation of Existential Events

Panel 5 14:00 - 15:30
Fuzzy History and Distorted Pasts
Christin Hansen (Paderborn) & Julia Quast (Paderborn) Playing War, Playing Men – The Representation of Masculinity in Hearts of Iron IV
Pieter van de Heede (Rotterdam) Algorithmic Pacification – Dissecting Codifications of Genocidal Violence in the World War II-themed Grand Strategy Game Hearts of Iron IV

Kuschel Daniela (Mannheim) & Jan Gonzalo Iglesia (Tarragona)
Playing the Spanish Civil War – Tendencies, Constants and Evolutions

Panel 6
16:00 - 17:30

Between Authenticity and Estrangement – Past and Future Realities

Rory Butcher (Leeds)
“Done the Correct Way”? – Spectrums of Authenticity and Accuracy in Historical Re-enactment of c.1750-1870

Daniel Bamford (Nottingham)
Post-modern Wargaming – A Reality Check

Charlotte Nachtmann (Regensburg)
Rolling the Dice of War – Evaluating Warhammer Tabletop's Capacity to Simulate Modern War Scenarios

Friday

November 29 2024 – Altes Finanzamt, Raum 319, Landshuter Str. 4

Panel 7
8:30-10:00

Modeling Realities - Military, War and beyond

Christian Stachelbeck (Potsdam)
Learning by Playing – Wargames as a Training Method in the German Army, 1888-1926

Pijus Krūminas (Vilnius)
Economics in Tabletop Wargaming – Modelling the Impacts in the Baltics

Serhiy Choliy (Kyiv)
Universal Conscription in the Habsburg Monarchy – Military Maneuvers and Population integration into the Military, 1868-1914

Panel 8
10:15 - 11:15

Posthuman Gaming - The Human as Interface

Cringuta Irina Pelea (Bucharest)
Virtual Reality, Augmented Reality and Holographic Displays in Warfighting. “Playing” with Human Augmentation Technologies

Michał Żmuda (Rzeszow)
Time-Critical Eyes - Media Archaeology of Shooting Techniques in Digital Games

**Conference Reflection and
Podium Discussion
11:30 – 13:30**

On Playing War - Towards a Contextualization

Chair: Jon Wyatt Matlack

Juliane Tomann (Regensburg)

Sebastian Dörr (Heidelberg)

Frank Reichherzer (Potsdam)

Ivan Sablin (Heidelberg)

Christian Jentzsch (Potsdam)

