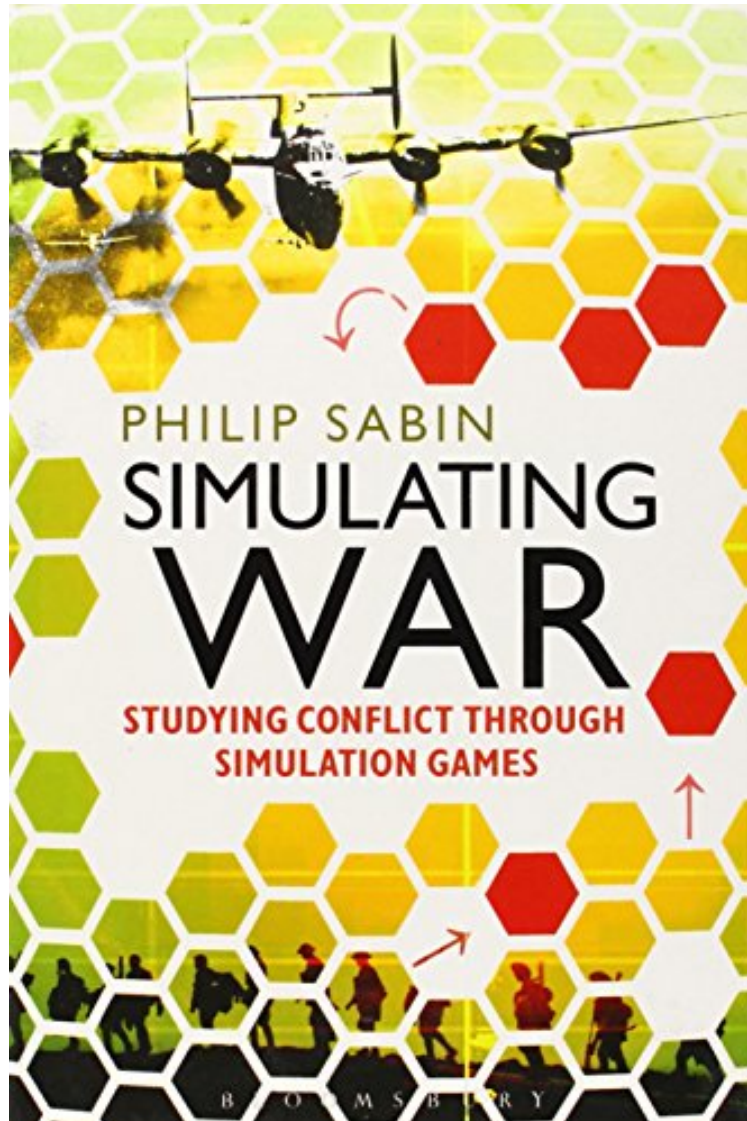


## Simulating War: Studying Conflict through Simulation Games

*Philip Sabin*

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**Philip Sabin : Simulating War: Studying Conflict through Simulation Games** before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Simulating War: Studying Conflict through Simulation Games:

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Very insightful book for the series professional war gaming student ...By chris daltonVery insightful book for the series professional war gaming student and teacher. not for the feint of heart in deciding to enter the world of war gaming that goes beyond the computer glorified children's versions. Philip Sabin knows his topic and all of its nuances. I work in a professional war gaming department and across the board, the

seasoned professionals with whom i'm associated all have his book on their shelves for ready reference. 2 of 3 people found the following review helpful. An excellent alternative to traditional history

By Tommy M. Mcguire Consider a traditional history of a war: You learn the dates, places, the actors, what happened, and hopefully why. What you do not learn is the consequences of alternative choices nor the effects of the constraints that the actors were under.

Sabin offers an alternative to the traditional study of history, using simulations which allow students to take the place of the actors in a conflict. These offer the hope of exploring alternative choices as well as allowing the students to understand viscerally what the actors would have felt they could do.

Sabin's simulations are wargames, tabletop games which are cheap, easy to construct for a specific scenario, focused on the specific issues of a conflict, and understandable by students quickly. These are significant advantages over other, more technological, simulations.

For an extra illustration of the possibilities, check out Sabin's other book, *Lost Battles*, which uses a flexible wargame toolkit to examine many battles in the ancient middle east.

2 of 3 people found the following review helpful. An Interesting Look at the Design and Use of Wargames

By Andrew Wyllie This book takes a look at the development and use of 'Conflict Simulations' or wargames. The initial chapters of the book were a slow read for me and seem to be a little too academic for what I would consider a book trying to reach a general audience about this topic, but after these initial chapters the pieces of his reasoning and his design logic seem to fall more into place, so I would suggest the reader be patient and keep reading for a little bit.

I have been a wargamer for a good part of my life and over the years have collected a sizeable group of different types of games. This book goes into the details of items that are present in a lot of wargames like zones of control and explains what they are representing and not treating is just as a game mechanic. The author spends a lot of time describing how different types of conflict situations (or wargames) are designed and developed. He talks about the differences that you would see about fighting in Ancient Roman times versus a more modern conflict like World War II.

One thing I have noticed that since I started reading this book, whenever I am playing either a board wargame or a computer version, I seem to be examining and thinking about what the designer was thinking or try to get across regarding certain elements of their design. What are they stressing as being important versus what might have been glossed over as a simple side-note or something beyond the player's control. Before reading this book, I do not remember thinking about such items in the games I play.

I would recommend this book to anyone who has ever played a board wargame and might have wondered what has gone into the making of it. He even discusses computer wargames and indicates which ones he thinks are good simulations and which ones are more geared less toward recreating a conflict and more towards the general entertainment category. This book will get you thinking differently about the games and how the modern military in a lot of countries use very similar games to train the soldiers of today.

Over the past fifty years, many thousands of conflict simulations have been published that bring the dynamics of past and possible future wars to life. In this book, Philip Sabin explores the theory and practice of conflict simulation as a topic in its own right, based on his thirty years of experience in designing wargames and using them in teaching. *Simulating War* sets conflict simulation in its proper context alongside more familiar techniques such as game theory and operational analysis. It explains in detail the analytical and modelling techniques involved, and it teaches you how to design your own simulations of conflicts of your choice. The book provides eight simple illustrative simulations of specific historical conflicts, complete with rules, maps and counters. *Simulating War* is essential reading for all recreational or professional simulation gamers, and for anyone who is interested in modelling war, from teachers and students to military officers.

'Brilliant. Professor Sabin has produced a masterwork, one worthy to grace bookshelves that are home to Von Reisswitz's *Kriegsspiel*, Wells's *Little Wars*, Morse and Kimball's *Methods of Operations Research*, and Schelling's *The Strategy of Conflict*. If you want to learn more about the unquestionably horrible but quintessentially human activity that is War, you need to read this book.' Dr Peter Perla, Center for Naval Analyses, Alexandria VA, author of *The Art of Wargaming*. 'In *Simulating War* Professor Sabin provides us with a scholarly and very useable toolkit that allows us to supplement the dry data of statistical analysis or computer simulation with the realities of human interaction and the play of Clausewitz's "chance". Wargaming is a neglected and misunderstood art in the modern military: this book does much to put that right, and should be on the shelf of any thinking military professional.'

Brigadier Andrew Sharpe OBE, Head of Research in the Development, Concepts and Doctrine Centre, UK Defence Academy

About the Author Philip Sabin is Professor of Strategic Studies in the Department of War Studies at King's College, London, UK. He has worked closely with the armed services and appears regularly on TV and radio. He has also co-edited the two volume *Cambridge History of Greek and Roman Warfare* (2007).