MORS Journal of Wargaming – Frequently Asked Questions

Does this journal cover hobby, serious, or digital games?

This journal is focused on what we call professional games: games played by experts or practitioners in the field with the goals of education, rehearsal, and/or understanding the subject of the game. Thus, we do not cover games focused on entertainment, training, or most of the applications of "serious" games (e.g., medical training). Articles on digital games, technology in games, and similar are welcome, as long as they are applicable to professional games.

Is this journal peer-reviewed? If so, how do I become a reviewer?

Yes. You can become a peer reviewer by contacting the editors, or by getting an article published in the journal.

Who is in charge of the journal?

The journal is published by the Military Operations Research Society (MORS). Ms. Tina Yan, MORS' Manager of Continuing Education & Publications, oversees general operations.

The Editors-in-Chief are:
- Dr. Ed McGrady (Adjunct Senior Fellow, CNAS Game Lab)
- Dr. John Curry (Bath Spa University)

The Board of Advisors consists of:
- Dr. Peter P. Perla
- Dr. Stephen Downes-Martin
- Ms. Stacie Pettyjohn
- Dr. James "Pigeon" Fielder
- Dr. Anja van der Hulst
- Dr. Nina Kollars

Can I see my published article without having to join MORS?

Yes. All published authors will be given access to the issue they are published in. To view back issues of the Journal of Wargaming, authors will have to join MORS or purchase a subscription.

How long will it take for me to hear back about my submission?

As we are just getting started, that is an unknown. We are dedicated to rapid turn-around of articles and will update this question when we get more data.

Do you have any limits on submission length?

No, but we suggest that papers be 10-35 pages (double spaced, 12-point font) unless there is a reason for them to be shorter or longer. Manuscript length articles are better published as books.

What will get an article rejected?

We will reject articles that are poorly written, editorial in nature (e.g., opinion pieces), or poorly argued. One key thing we will look for is unsupported assertions, and we will kick back papers that have them for changes prior to review.

One of the most common examples of "poorly written" articles that we have seen are those that attempt to tackle too many different topics and lose focus on the author's intentions. Another common thing we see is that opinion can creep into otherwise well-argued articles in the form of statements like "all DoD games" or "most games" when discussing challenges of game bias, lack of realism, and similar topics. We do not reject criticism, but the negative and positive statements should be clearly tied back to either data or an argument. We do not reject articles based on topic, point of view, or results.

Do my articles have to have data associated with them?

No, we welcome all types of articles, including those based in philosophical or literary theory, theory of games, or psychological topics. Those articles should be well-written and their logic clear and traceable in the arguments made. In addition, those articles should be well-referenced. Essentially, we are not a "science" journal, rather we are a journal about all aspects of professional games: the technical, artistic, analytic, professional, and humanistic. If, however, you do have data gleaned from gaming we would be happy to consider it.

How much analysis do I have to do on my data?

If you have managed to collect data about games, then congratulations! We'd be happy to publish your paper. However, remember that most data collected from social science experiments (which is what games are) requires careful analysis and that your claims from the data should be clearly tied back into the analysis and data.

What is a Game Report?

We wanted to have the ability to describe games and share them as part of the journal. However, the description of a game, or multiple instances of the same game, without associated analyses is not a journal article, it's a description. Thus, we have the Game Report, which is a description of a game. It should not be just the rules, maps, and pieces; rather it should be a text description of the game, the scenario, how it is played, and what challenges or other factors were seen in its play. You do not have to include analyses, argument, or creative contributions as part of a game report. A game report is more than a review, but less than a full-scale study of the play of a game with data and analyses. It should include graphics and charts describing game play, and the scenario.

Can I do a Game Report on a commercial game?

No. Game reports, because they simply describe a game, should be about professional games.

But I used a commercial game in my class/training/design, why can't that be a game report?

It can not only be a Game Report, but it can also be an Article depending on the amount of analysis or thought that goes into the paper. We are not precluding commercial designs as part of articles or reports on professional games, just the simple description of a commercial design. If the game is used in a professional context, an article or report that focused on the professional context would be happily accepted.

I have a book/game/conference I want to review…

We do not include reviews in the journal at this time, though we may in the future.