



Designing Wargames - Introduction (Studies in Game Design Book 5)

George Phillies

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Designing Wargames introduces the play and design of classic hex-and-counter board wargames. Written as a textbook, Designing Wargames should appeal to board and computer game designers, board game players, and designers of serious war games for historical and military study.

Phillies opens with a discussion of the basic elements combined to create strategic games, including representation, theme, style, mechanisms, voice, shape, and content. To introduce non-players to board wargames, he describes in detail the play of four classic board wargames, namely Stalingrad, 1914, Panzerblitz, and Fall of Manjukuo. A path to designing a game, stressing the central importance of iterative development and playtesting, is advanced. Several fundamental mechanisms and their variations, including the zone of control and command and control rules, are examined in detail. A case study contrasts a half-dozen games on a single historic campaign, comparing how different designers have created radically different games that represent the same historic outcomes. A paragraph by paragraph analysis of the written rules of one game is given. Issues related to luck and technology are examined. An extensive set of homework problems, many in the form of development projects, support the material in the text.

Phillies' lectures on the material in the text may be seen on YouTube on the GeorgePhillies channel.

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