

## **Megagaming and Professional Education**

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This document is the Presentation

**Citation:**

MARSHALL, Alan (2021). Megagaming and Professional Education. In: Megacon 2021, Online, 19-21 Mar 2021. Megacon 2021 UK. (Unpublished) [Conference or Workshop Item]

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# Megagaming in the Lecture Room

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My Story...

...where two components of  
my life combined

Am I a  
gamer?



Oh, and  
these...







# Why do I like games?

- Sandbox environment
- Can be creative
- Competition/conflict
- They tell a story
- Play by the rules

Why do I like games?

Because they are  
fun...

...and I enjoy them



# Me – the professional

- 22 years working in health and social care - mainly mental distress.
- Real lives. Serious work for a serious person.
- Stressful, under-resourced & long-hours.
- Traumatic at times.

# Me – the serious lecturer

- Training students to be nurses and social workers.
- Providing Continuous Professional Development training.
- Even longer hours!
- Learning outcomes, customer focussed &

Was it possible to combine  
two of my passions?

Challenges...

Gaming isn't serious!

You shouldn't simulate  
such delicate situations



People don't work by rules

Gaming? That's for geeks  
isn't in?



This is wargaming ↗

Well they do play, but often  
the games aren't very good

Here is a  
kitten...

...should I hit  
it with a  
hammer?







Here is Bob.

He is an older  
adult.

He is male.

Please roleplay  
Bob

Here are the rules...

...if you don't follow  
the rules bad things  
happen...

...roleplay this and  
follow the rules.



***"Those in Higher Education do not play  
enough. As such they are living in a cultural  
lag."***

**(Guerts and Duke 2012, p x).**



# My first megagame

Large groups of  
people

Roleplaying

Negotiation &  
Interaction

## Chaos

Lots of rules –  
(changing)

Hidden structures

Secret goals

# Safeguarding – Health and Social Care

Lots of people and  
services involved

Playing a role

Negotiation &  
Interaction

## Chaos

Lots of rules –  
(changing all the  
time)

Complex structures

Secret goals



# Wicked Problems

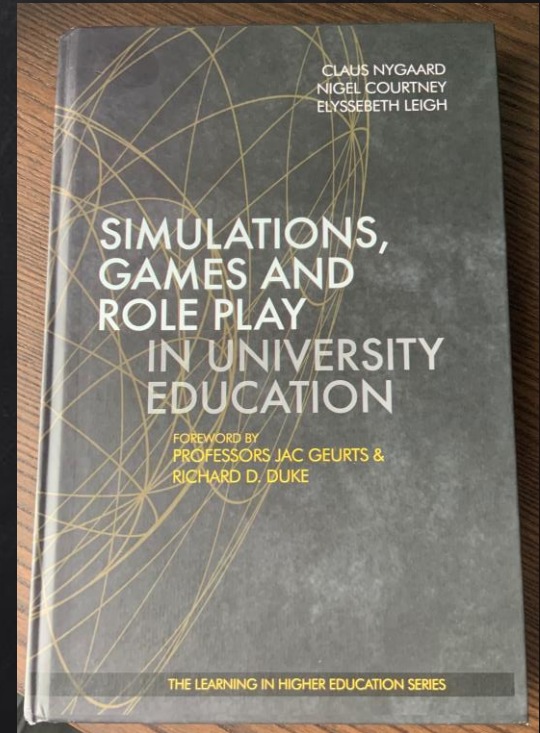
- Incomplete or contradictory knowledge
- Lots of people involved
- The problem is linked with lots of other problems
- It will costs lots of money to address



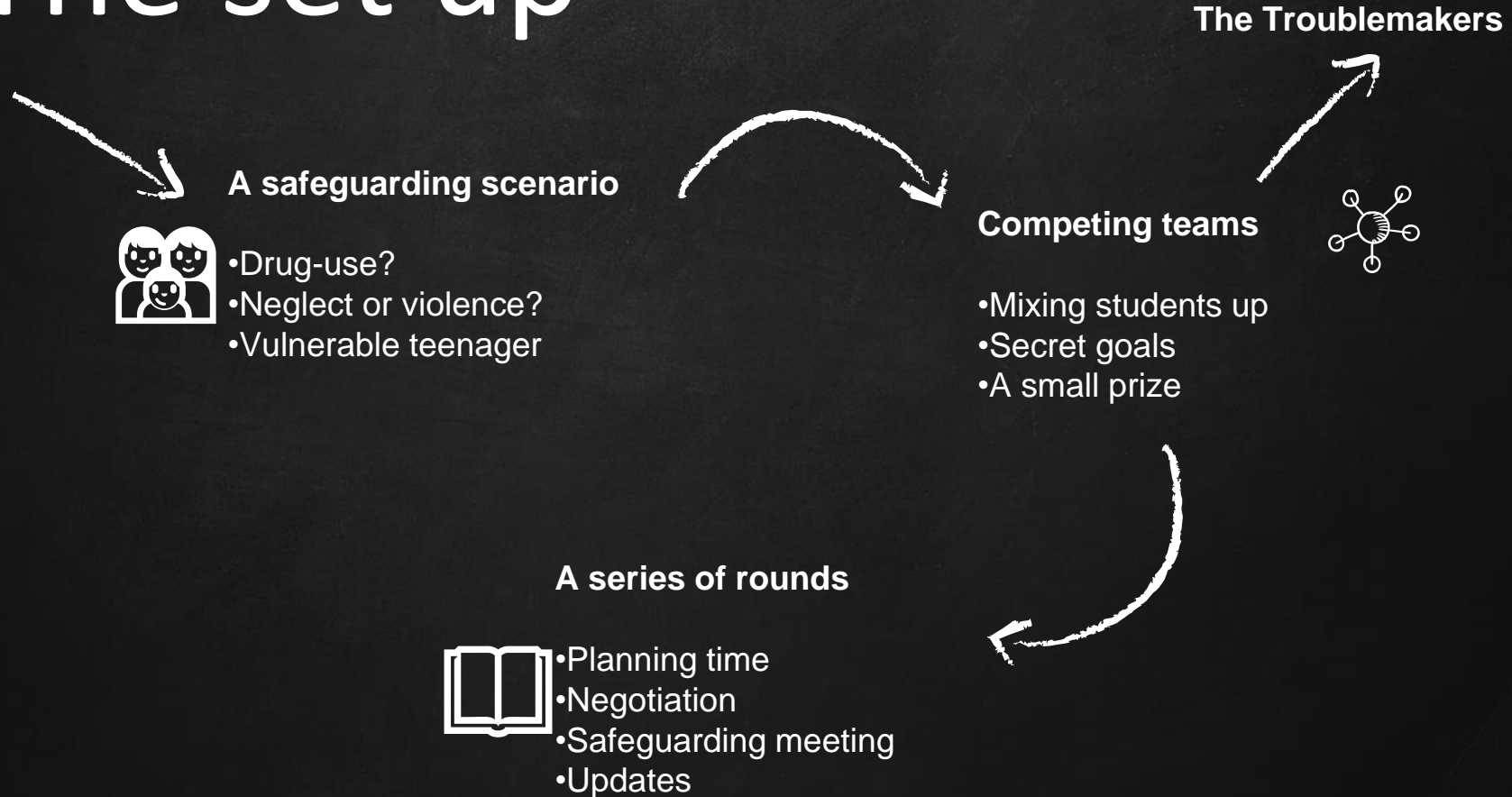
## The five Cs

- X Complexity
- X Communication
- X Creativity
- X Conflict Resolution
- X Commitment to Action

(Guerts and Duke 2012)



# The set up



# The essential ingredients

- Uncertainty
  - Little foreknowledge
  - Quick allocation to teams
  - Secret goals for each team
- Competition
  - Separating friends
  - Goals
  - Separate team meetings
  - Allow things not normally allowed

# The essential ingredients

- Chaos
  - Not enough thinking time
  - Impossible goals
  - The Red Team
- Realism
  - Free roleplaying
  - Choose their own strategy
  - Playing against real people



# What happened?

- Unexpected outcomes and creativity
- Students wanted to continue
- Troublemakers
- Proper roleplaying!
- Questions about practice in reality

# Feedback

“I have never done something like this before and I really enjoyed myself, it was a very different way of learning but very engaging.”

“I think it was one of the best sessions I've attended so far in my experience of SHU. Lots of us talked about it for a long time after the session, which doesn't always happen. It didn't feel like work though I learned a lot from it. “

“It was something fun rather than just staring at a screen. “

“It was interactive, made you think, problem solving. I liked the lecturers approach he was empowering and interesting .”

# Feedback

“Thank you for the session. It was a refreshing change and way of learning. Being in university from 9-6 today flew by as we were not just sat at a PowerPoint.”

“And if you're doing any extra ones, let me know! Thanks for this experience, it was great! “

“I took a lot from this session and learn a lot better by interactive teaching techniques “

“I liked the objectives and felt they were realistic to the organisations represented in the activity. I thought the facilitation was good as there was guidance but very minimal prompting about the action that should be taken, and a lot of good humour :) “

How many students said that they had experienced wargaming before?

# Credits

X [SlidesCarnival](#) who made and released this presentation template for free

X Paul Howarth from Pennine Megagames for being a sounding board and for ideas on my game structures

X Guerts, J & Duke, R 2012, *Simulations, games and Role Play in University Education*, Libri, Farringdon