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Engaging the Global Conflict Culture - The Imagined Battlefield and the War/Military Gamers

The free-download online game *America's Army* (AA) released by the US Department of Defense in 2002 was designed to make its fellow gamers consider the possibility of joining army and participating in military practices. Nearly ten years after September 11, more war/military videogames such as the *Medal of Honor* series and the *Call of Duty* series sell more copies every year, simultaneously attracting enormous amount of gamers and fans worldwide.

As conflict-gaming is becoming a global phenomenon and a key medium for the governments to develop the digital generation's interests in warfare, more national military departments today are prepared to join the race of the military-entertainment-establishment in order to consolidate the global conflict culture. Three national campaigns including - the 2008 UK Ministry of Defense's Start Thinking Solider Interactive Website, the 2007 Japan Defense Ministry's White Papers in Manga, and the 2009 Taiwan Ministry of National Defense' Manga White Papers, are strong evidence to explain how game players and manga readers are forced to grow a greater sense of war and engage in the visual/virtual process of conflict-ideologies. In this regard, my research proposes three ethnographic methods to analyze contemporary war/military game players: 1. applying participation observation to record gamers' in-play and online activities, 2. setting-up a website (web-blog) to collect gamers' conflict-gaming experiences, and 3. conducting in-depth interviews with casual and professional gamers.