In the few short months since our last issue, it appears as if crisis and instability have only grown. From the acceleration of the coronavirus pandemic and global protests against racial inequities, to the curtailment of freedoms in Hong Kong and a deluge of disinformation, there are a host of challenges to national and international security. In many cases government and non-government institutions alike have appeared ill equipped to respond effectively to these complex, interconnected crises. One wonders how much (or how little) effort had previously been made in the halls of government or the corner offices of industry to explicitly challenge pre-existing paradigms and rigorously test extant plans. It would not surprise me to learn that activities oriented towards these purposes, which form the bedrock of Red Teaming, were rarely undertaken and even more infrequently assimilated into operational planning in many of the institutions which are responsible for responding to the current crises. Conducting a survey of how much Red Teaming was done, and how well, by the relevant agencies would likely be enlightening.

CART has undertaken several activities to enhance the practice and recognition of Red Teaming in the past quarter. It has completed its distributed, online Red Teaming experiment (Operation Chameleon Fire), strengthened its Advisory Board and worked to build strategic partnerships with an ever-expanding set of organizations that either engage in or would benefit from Red Teaming. Most prominently, CART designed and conducted a large virtual wargame titled “The Storm After the Flood” on behalf of the Army Futures Command. This event had over 270 attendees who participated in an interactive Red Team exercise to stimulate new thinking on how the weaponization of information is evolving. We did so by simulating the complex, multi-modal and multi-system nature of a well-coordinated information operation against the United States. The event was regarded as extremely useful and characterized by one participant as “top-notch, professionally planned and executed with some of the brightest minds in their fields.”

We hope that you find this issue of The Red Siren, which includes a thought-provoking article by a leading red team practitioner, useful and entertaining. On behalf of the team at CART, I wish everyone in the Red Teaming community good health during this difficult time.

Sincerely,
Gary Ackerman
Director, CART
Avoid mirror imaging bias. Mirror imaging (attributing one’s own beliefs and thinking to the adversary) is detrimental to Red Teaming because it prevents Red Team members from considering the adversary’s point-of-view and thus undermines a core aim of the Red Teaming approach. Although there are no direct empirical tests in the Red Teaming literature, this appears to be universally accepted among the Red Teaming community as an essential best practice [10 sources].

Red Teams generally benefit from diversity. In almost all cases, Red Teaming is more efficient if there is diversity among Red Team members in terms of their knowledge, experience, demographics and/or cultural background. This allows for a broader range of perspectives, more multi-faceted analysis and more synergistic collaboration amongst team members. There is consensus in the Red Teaming literature, with anecdotal evidence but no empirical validation [8 sources].

A Red Team needs a clear mandate. Successful Red Teaming begins with defining the scope and objectives of the team. This helps to ensure that the team remains focused on the intended issues, assists with creating benchmarks for evaluating the team’s performance, and increases the likelihood of its outputs being accepted and implemented. There is consensus in the Red Teaming literature, although there has been no empirical validation [5 sources].

I recently participated in a panel discussion with CART where I was asked about the inclusiveness of Red Teaming, the supposition being that Red Teaming in practice might be forbidding to newcomers. It was a good question and one Red Team practitioners should ask themselves. After all, we Red Teamers often lament about the challenge of finding others who “get” Red Teaming, but what if some of our problems with outreach are because we are not welcoming enough?

While there are many reasons why people might be put off by Red Teaming, I find the most common one is simply unfamiliarity. Newcomers at Red Team events often have little understanding of the process and are normally meeting other participants for the first time. Their unfamiliarity with the process and the participants can lead to an uneasy first-day-of-school atmosphere when, instead, they should be anticipating fun and inclusiveness. As such, when my company plans Red Team events, we include activities that get people involved, get to know us, and teach them about Red Teaming.

A Red Team vs. Blue Team exercise is an excellent vehicle for getting newcomers involved in Red Teaming. A technique that has worked for us in the past is to add a Green Team. The Green Team represents the influence base, which are the people being affected by the decisions and actions of the Red and Blue teams. In a military oriented exercise, the Green Team normally considers Whole-of-Government issues, while in commercial exercises, the Green Team looks at matters outside the business sphere, such as environmental impacts, public perception, and regulatory and policy implications.

Since the Green Team is given equal weight to the other two teams, having a Green Team broadens the aperture of the exercise and allows more voices to be heard. This encourages fresh thinking and promotes new ideas. Green Teams also work as feedback loops to the Red and Blue and makes them give attention to the unintended consequences of their proposed actions. The give-and-take between the three teams is one of the best ways to show newcomers how the Red Team process creates opportunities for open and frank problem solving, giving equal voices to everyone.

There are other ways, as well, to get newcomers involved in a Red Team exercise. First, for military organizations, we encourage civilian attire and use first names, essentially removing the potential bias of rank. Second, we start our large events with an icebreaker game to release some of the first day uneasiness. And finally, we always host a social at the end of the first day. [Note: A good Red Team always buys the first round.] Taken together, these and other techniques can make a Red Team exercise welcoming to new participants and memorable for everyone.
Dealing with disinformation operations by creative and adaptive adversaries is becoming more challenging than ever before. Red Teaming could be a useful tool to identify and highlight the complexities of weaponized information and develop mitigation measures. Some initial work in this area includes:

- **Mad Scientist Weaponized Information Virtual Conference**, U.S. Army Mad Scientist - Army Futures Command (2020)
- **The Storm After the Flood (Video) - Virtual Wargame Panel**, The Center for Advanced Red Teaming (July 2020)
- **CISA Releases New Insights on COVID-19 Disinformation Activity**, Homeland Security Today (May 9, 2020)
- **RSA Red Team Exercise Highlights Election Threats from Deepfakes and Fake News**, TechRepublic (February 2020)
- **Cyber Firm Sows Chaos in Election Hack Simulation**, FCW (November 2019)