

State of Mankind

How much do you know?

Excerpts from

How the Specter of Communism Is Ruling Our World

(75)

Video Games

Numerous children today spend countless hours playing video games. Video game developers make the games increasingly realistic, dynamic, and interactive. They're also increasingly violent and erotic. Children, and even adults, are easily addicted. Video gaming has become a major headache for parents, schools, and even the government. It's now a form of popular culture that follows people from childhood to adulthood, but what sort of culture is it? It is a culture of destruction, no different from drugs. Those who are addicted to video games can't see the drawbacks in a sober and objective manner. They simply think of the games as fun and interesting, and won't give up until they win, advance to the next level, defeat the boss, and so on.

In addition, almost all video games today, from the imagery to the plot, are about advocating violence and killing or contain erotic content or cold-bloodedness. Simply put, the messages conveyed appeal to the demon nature in man. All of this is inappropriate and harmful for teenagers and young people still growing up. Delivering a sense of excitement from killing, destruction, violence, and fighting can lead to desensitizing young people, introducing them to unhealthy thoughts and behaviors, and can even contribute to some committing crimes.

Online games are even more addictive. In the past, games were used to kill time when people were alone and felt bored. Nowadays, online games have become a sport that players seek to participate in and compete against one another. Online gaming has thus become a social activity in and of itself, especially for children. Because a large number of players are interacting in the game, they compete and become enthralled in the game's virtual world.

Huge amounts of energy and capital are invested in such games, and kids who don't play them may be the odd ones out in their friendship circle. Thus, almost against their will, parents are forced to allow their children to join in the online gaming community, and then watch as their children develop an addiction. Video games take up time that should have been used for study, outdoor activities, and normal interpersonal

interactions. Instead, children are turned into captives of video games.

A scholar shared a typical experience from his own family: His 12-year-old son was allowed to play video games for only a few hours on weekends after finishing his homework. But if the child was allowed to do as he wished, he'd have played games almost all the time, skipping showers and meals to keep gaming. The scholar's research showed that video games come to occupy and dominate all the leisure time of young people. Young adults, especially those in lower income brackets and with lower levels of education, increasingly find their happiness in video games, reducing the time they spend on their jobs and in the real world. This is a common phenomenon in the United States and other developed countries.

This scholar has observed a trend in today's society where video games lead young adults to rely on their parents to support them financially as they refuse to enter the job market. When these young people become parents, however, video games won't help them make a living, and it's unlikely they'll be able to improve their skills or find better jobs, as they wasted so much of their lives gaming when they were young. Their children won't be able to rely on their own parents for guidance. Video games have thus reached the point of undermining normal human life.

Video games are spiritual drugs. This differs from hard drugs like heroin, which is banned around the world. Video game development, however, is a major industry. What are the consequences of this? Companies are producing drugs that destroy the next generation, and countries that embrace gaming are sabotaging their own future.

The emergence of the internet and mobile phones has opened up an even broader market for the video game industry. The latest global games-market report released by research firm Newzoo in April 2018 forecast that gamers across the globe will spend \$137.9 billion on games in 2018, representing an increase of 13.3 percent from the year before. More than half of all gaming revenue will come from the mobile segment. Digital game revenues will come to 91 percent of the global market.

The report also predicts that the games market will maintain double-digit growth in the next decade. While the GDP growth rate in many countries is struggling at low single digits, the games industry continues its advance. Mobile gaming alone is expected to reach \$100 billion by 2021. The top three countries in global games market, according to the report, will be China, the United States, and Japan, with China accounting for 28 percent of the global market.

People who believe in God should know that God created man and laid down the ways he should live, including appropriate forms of entertainment. When mankind walks on a righteous path, people will receive deliverance, but when man turns away from God and traverses a diabolical path, man will be abandoned and ruined.

Traditional games, including sports activities and other outdoor activities, are limited by the natural environment, the weather, equipment, and physical strength. Players don't typically develop an addiction to these traditional forms of entertainment and activity. Video games have no such restrictions. Players are invited and lured to immerse themselves in the virtual world of the game non-stop, going without sleep or breaks. This, on top of the fact that such games rarely have anything edifying to recommend them, mean that those who play them come increasingly under the influence of negative factors.

From Chapter Fourteen: Popular Culture—A Decadent Indulgence