

Games Pose New Issue of Law

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The pathological mass-effects of associations such as a kind of “witch’s brew” composed of the combination of effects of interaction of associations such as MySpace and Facebook, with killer computer games (and related practices), urgently demand responsive forms of relevant innovations in law, law-enforcement methods, and social doctrines generally.

Thus, we, like the nations of western Europe, are presently confronted with a new species of sociological process, which has now become a source of an immediate danger to our public at large from forms of violence, expressed from the ranks of our own youth, which are already emerging in forms comparable to ongoing terrorism in South-west Asia.

It should be clear already to any attentive, and competent psychotherapist or sociologist who considers the evidence, that the role of electronic media in producing this deadly phenomenon is not comparable to the cases in which electronics is employed as person-to-person communications; in these cases, we are subjected to a new dimension of communications, in which the controller of the mechanism of communications plays, directly, as with electronic war games, the controlling role of George Orwell’s “Big Brother,” or the like of an Adolf Hitler, in orchestrating a presently rising tide of killing experiences such as that which occurred recently at Blacksburg, Virginia, and comparable instances in Europe and North America.

One of the relevant points of reference for diagnosing the cases is sociologist Emile Durkheim’s treatment of suicide, and recent study of the sociology of games pursued by those who followed, more or less, in his footsteps. Very closely related, but more primitive expressions of the same kind of sociological phenomena are to be recalled from experience with the typical post-1968er terrorism experienced in the U.S.A., France, Germany, and elsewhere over the interval of the 1970s and 1980s.

The crux of the problem is not the fact that computer-based communications provide a mode of direction for the

behavior of persons with some type of association; the crux of the matter is the surrogate form and mode of authority which the victim of influence of certain social networks, or an individual playing a killer game, places on the medium of communication itself. It is the medium of communications itself, rather than a person associated with the medium, which delivers the orders from the “Big Brother” operating as the host of the medium being employed.

The effect of this recently developed mass-phenomenon is a horde of “Terminators” from Hollywood “science-fiction” attempting to run the world by exterminating the representatives of human control of society.

Whether the medium’s active controller in regulating its dependent persons is an actual person, or an automatic, or quasi-automatic device, is virtually irrelevant to the effect of this relationship. The person playing the game does not experience the human personality of Bill Gates of Microsoft when playing the game supplied by that firm’s Internet network; he experiences a robotic-like actor, like an Arnold Schwarzenegger playing the “Terminator”-like part of a Cyber-surrogate for Gates, or whoever might be considered as playing the kind of role Gates plays through Microsoft games’ operations, or through Facebook, or Rupert Murdoch’s attributable role in controlling MySpace. A Bill Gates may be in charge of the person who programs the system; but it is Gates’ intention, or the intention of whatever higher authority controls Gates, which becomes the “God-like” Adolf Hitler who runs today’s relevant Internet version of a 1930s Nuremberg mass-rally. We must not overlook the fact, that MySpace and Facebook typify the social mass base (the relevant “society”) of the armies of machine-like killers manning the killer-games network, until the point they, on program, commit suicide.

Insight into the kind of electronic “Frankenstein’s Monster” the social system of killer computer games has become, should impel us to think back to the sociologists’ studies, following the work of Durkheim and his Swiss and other followers, of the principles of children’s games from the late Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries’ work. Some among us have recognized, to similar effect, the pathological potential in competitive team sports, and the importance of the older von Moltke’s mission-orientation of qualified subordinate commissioned and non-commissioned officers, or the role of that principle in Frederick the Great’s victorious double-out-flanking operation at Leuthen. (As distinct to what Churchill’s silly Montgomery did to the First Army on the northern European flank in late 1944, or Churchill himself did to the Australians against Atatürk in World War I.)

Thus, there are two factors which must be emphasized in opening our urgently needed investigation of the threat to civilization which practices coming out of John von Neumann’s legacy of Silicon Valley present to the very continued existence of civilization today. The essential issue, is two-fold:

1. The imposition, on society, or only significant portions of it, of systems of social control which do not honor the functional distinction between human and animal, or mechanical control.
2. The fact that the computer and related technologies represented by the identified computerized systems, exclude the role of the creative mental potentials specific to the human individual.

More is to be said on this crucially important subject. This has been a beginning.