**In Our Time**

In my essay I have chosen to discuss computer gaming as I believe that it has a large influence on the children of today’s world. The effect of gaming entering our society at such a rapid pace has left scepticism among many people that dont play video games. Could this be due to a lack of understanding? 60% of teens spend an average of 3 hours a day gaming. I will delve deeper into this topic and the fundamental change it has had on traditional recreation later on in this essay. I will also be focusing on subjects such as the history and development of gaming, the negatives misconceptions, the positive benefits, video games during covid 19 and I will also look at possible career paths and E-sports. Last year Epic Games made a profit of 1.8 billion dollars on their game Fortnite, and Call of Duty Modern Warfare has made over 1 billion dollars since its release earlier this year. The gaming industry has clearly become an integral part of the modern economy.

In 1952, Alexander Douglas designed the first computer game. This was a program that simulates a game of noughts and crosses. These early games were created for research purposes only and were not open to the public. The next milestone for gaming came in 1958 with Tennis for 2, created by Physicist William Higinbotham, the first game for entertainment purposes. Ralph Baer was the inventor of the first games console, the Magnavox Odyssey in 1972. The games were mostly sports based and proved fairly popular. The console paved the way for the likes of Playstation and Xbox.

Video games have had bad press in recent years and I believe that this is a large contributing factor to why the older generations have such negative opinions on children playing video games. The majority believe that video games are just addictive, violent and mindless so therefore unhealthy. Children’s privacy and security online are becoming one of parents’ most prominent concerns. 84% of parents are worried about their children's safety online. According to parents, the most dangerous things that could happen to children online is; children seeing harmful content of a sexual or violent nature (27%), experiencing internet addiction (26%), receiving anonymous messages or receiving content inciting them to carry out violent or inappropriate activities (14%). When realistically in most games, controls and measures are

put into place to minimise these risks.

Most adults don't understand the time and effort needed to be one of the best at a video game. It was apparent in many interviews following Bugha’s victory at the Fortnite World Cup (he won $3,000,000 last year) that the skills required to achieve this sort of level was undervalued. Many interviewers were laughing at the fact that a young person could come across this amount of money, and were implying that it was easy and could be done by anyone. When realistically people put in hours every day to come close to achieving such a high position. Millions of people enter and only a few earn money.

The rapid change in behaviour from how children played traditionally has possibly contributed to anxiety around video games. Traditional recreation was based more outside and simpler. Nowadays, the complexity and the sedentary nature of gaming raised suspicions to its virtues.

Gaming is a fun recreational activity that is enjoyed by millions of people every day. By 2021 it is estimated that over 2.7 billion people will be playing video games regularly (according to <https://www.statista.com/>). The majority of video games encourage players to play with their friends, building teamwork skills and social interaction, even during times like quarantine. It is the game creators responsibility to make their games safe for children. For instance in Rocket League and many other games there have been lots of safety features implemented. For example when adding someone as a friend or inviting someone to join your game you need to know their exact gamer-tag to be able to play with them. So because of this, random strangers can not invite you or join your game. To join someone you have to be on their friends list. The gaming industry is constantly evolving, updating and growing; meaning that games are constantly being improved and created. This ensures that the ever increasing and established gaming community are kept on their toes. Other benefits of playing video games include improvement of reaction speed and hand-eye coordination. Some puzzle games also help enhance problem solving skills. Financially the investment into equipment and software against time is very economical; hundreds of hours of enjoyment can be gained from a small investment.

There are now a variety of careers available in the computer game industry, from coding and designing games to participating in tournaments. Hundreds of job opportunities have been opened up because of video games.

Coding/Programmers earn an average of £36,000 a year. A video game programmer uses a [programming language](https://www.gameindustrycareerguide.com/best-way-to-learn-video-game-programming-in-high-school/) like C++, C#, or Java, to instruct the computer on how to take all of the art and other content and turn it into a working game. Programming is by far the most technical job in the industry. Most Programmers start by getting a degree in computer science, but it is possible to try for an entry-level Programming job at a game company.

A Game Designer can earn an average salary of £49,000 a year. However, becoming a Game Designer can be challenging unless you’ve already [created some games](https://www.gameindustrycareerguide.com/make-your-first-video-game-today-using-these-free-tools/), or have a degree or certificate from a game design school. Some designers start out as QA Testers or Production Assistants, and move into a design role once they prove that they have a talent for it.

Esports is one of the biggest earning sectors of the gaming industry. Johan Sundstein (N0tail) has earnt around $7 million from tournaments. Esports is playing video games at a world class level. People from all around the world compete every day in tournaments to win prizes.

Although Covid - 19 has had a damaging effect on many forms of entertainment and leisure, due to social distancing and self-isolation measures, Esports have substantially benefited. The shift in attention brought about by strict lockdown restrictions and the need to keep adults and children busy and engaged with the vast majority of households having access to an internet connection, “ made gaming and Esports the most immediately-available distraction from the grim events dominating the news cycle.”

The number of players of Call Of Duty Warzone worldwide increased from 6 million at the beginning of March 2020 to 50 million by the start of April. Also in April, money spent on games reached an all time high of $10.5 billion. Twitch is a platform where viewers can watch their favourite gamers play video games live and can interact with others watching and the streamer themselves. The amount of viewers on Twitch increased by 55% between March and April. In the first quarter of 2020 over 3 billion hours were watched on Twitch (roughly double youtube and facebook combined).

To conclude, perhaps the rapid development of video games has made its acceptance into society a slow process. However, its popularity among today's youth has helped gain its place as the world's number one form of entertainment. I believe that if children are properly educated on how to safely use technology at a young age, their common sense and the precautions put into place will make video games a safe environment for all ages. The competitiveness in the gaming world forces game developers to constantly update and modernise their game to draw in and sustain a sufficient amount of players. This keeps the games fresh and exciting for the public. I have no doubt that the gaming industry will end up providing thousands of jobs for my generation. Personally I believe that video games are a good thing, and are a fun and enjoyable way for the youth to interact with their friends and pass time.

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Fnatic insights: Esports covid report