Virtual worlds’ influences on our mental balance and physical health: a survey with philosophical approaches

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Abstract

Interactive virtual worlds have an impact on our mental and physical balance and as an extension in our health. This survey studies the existing literature in these aspects, from a philosophical approach and concludes on the impact that virtual worlds have to the humans. The process applied involves the analyses of key points relevant to computer games, virtual reality and cyberspace.


Keywords: virtual worlds, computer games, health balance

1 Introduction

The total harmony of body and mind in Human beings creates mentally and physically healthy people thus creating a healthier society, and hopefully contributing to a balanced world! Asclpios, used to say that a healthy body coexists with a healthy mind [Matina 1997]. Games through the centuries, present a microcosm of the society of the grown ups [Rushkoff 1997]. Interactivity in respect to Technology is the main element which defers interactive computer games from the non digital games. The Greek-Armenian mystic, George Ivanovich Gurdjieff, philosophised that man in his normal state is essentially sleepwalking. So he was suggesting that interaction wakes the senses. The today’s modern human being is basically sleepwalking if he/she isn’t multitasking. Technology is being revolutionized and in many cases it satisfies our human needs.

2 Virtual Reality and Cyberspace

In a sense, everything one sees on a computer is part of the virtual universe [Rush 2003]. One could think that VR is splitting the human consciousness in two. The Here, is where we physically are located the body becomes part of the machine. The There, is where we are sent mentally in another world. So what is the status of the user, and how it influence human metal and physical balance? The user is no longer a passive viewer but becomes an active participant because of the mental and physical involvement. A VR environment is based on a sensory level, so it could be thought as an extension of the body. The impact of cyberspace can be frame

References


RUSH, M. 2003. New Media in Late 20th-Century Art. Thames & Hudson Ltd.