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**Porn, the Military and Technology in Games**

Technology’s continued progress is nothing short of a miracle. The pace at which technology becomes obsolete is now so fast that it has set a precedent of which we have never seen before. There are many extraneous reasons for this, however the two largest industries that have pushed technology forward unlike any other is pornography and the military. To be clear, technology does not necessarily refer to electronic technology – which will be the focus of my argument – as while all electronics are technology, not all technology is electronically based.

But firstly, how does this involve games? A very important point to be considered is how any of this relates back to video games. For one, video games due to the factors that influence them have always been an odd culmination of the concept of “play”, cinematography reminiscent of Hollywood movies, a simulation of sorts and to a lesser extent a means of escapism. As Huizinga described, the idea of play induces a simplified world of rules where there are clearly defined winning and losing situations within the usually abstract world a game creates so as to simulate a space that does not abide by the less regulated scope of reality as a whole. For video games, this inadvertently makes the simulation aspect of play a serious benefit for both the porn and military industries, which I will portray through historically significant breakthroughs in technology as a direct result of these industries.

There is much to be said about pornography’s contribution to how we’ve reached present-day advancements. The accessibility of porn in the form of VHS tapes in the 70s is what ultimately led to the fall of Betamax tapes, and was the reason closed captioning exists today. Porn is even the innovator of online payment, due to the great potential profits the porn industry had to gain by taking advantage of the accessibility of the internet. The simulation is quite obviously intended to result in sexual arousal which continually had greater and greater potential with the new capabilities of consumer grade hardware. As a wise man once said, “Necessity is the mother of invention”.

As for the military, the examples are much more obvious and direct. The literal first programmable, electronically-based digital computer to ever exist was ENIAC in 1946 that was mainly used to help progress the hydrogen bomb designs the U.S military was working on, as well as ballistic tables. Of course this was the size-of-an-entire-room style computer at its conception, but as they were the first to pioneer such technology they also had the largest contributions to its development and the most justifiable uses for its development. Later on, one such development would be simulators. Marine simulators, astronaut simulators, combat and of course flight simulators were all meant to train troops to be their sharpest without risking life-threatening situations for the sake of experience. These were all intended to both train troops and get them accustomed to the “psychological flow” as the Psychology of Games podcast calls it, whose tactical importance in dangerous and critical situations is impeccably valuable. If an astronaut is to have an air leak aboard a space station, for example, it would be paramount that they be able to maintain a calm and focused state of mind so as to avoid panic and solve any unexpected problems swiftly and efficiently. This applies to all the high-risk fields mentioned, which is why the military to this day has a particular interest in simulators so much so that there are fully-fledged rotating flight simulators available as a game or a carnival ride at places like the Smithsonian Museum and other relevant institutions. This has also made its way to a lesser extent to the consumer side of things. From Microsoft Flight simulator 2020 and HOTAS’ to Real-Time Strategy games (such as Age of Empires) and racing sims (such as the Forza series of games), it is clear that both the strategy and entertainment that simulators provide is in high demand.

There is a place where the innovation of these two industries and the direction they’re taking become one in the same: Virtual Reality. It is undeniable that virtual reality is the future – not just of gaming or porn, but humanity as a whole. It is no coincidence that the Matrix-like future we seek is being spearheaded by the gaming industry given what has been discussed. Simulation will be more immersive and life-like than ever and that has huge implications for the future.

The TeslaSuit is one such innovation that serves both industries. The TelsaSuit is a two-piece full body tracking suit for VR that has 68 contact points with the users body. In essence, it uses electric muscle and nerve stimulation to simulate both touch (such as weight and force) and temperature. As the team representing the TeslaSuit has described, it will be the most immersive possible VR experience to be available, while also having an “adult-themed” benefit for those who are seeking such an experience. When it is released to the public (which was expected to be the past year, but has been delayed for obvious reasons) it will undoubtedly sell like hotcakes and make headlines around the globe.

While I can see how it might be difficult for one to envision how the porn industry in particular has had any bearing over technology and its evolution over that past decades, I hope that this piece has given enough historical context and examples to make not sound as ridiculous as it might on the surface. Overall I wouldn’t say it is a necessarily good or necessarily bad thing that these industries have carved the path we walk on today, but more of a reflection of the human animal and to some extent Stanley Kubrick’s idea of sex and war being two sides of the same coin.

**Works Cited:**

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