

# FEARFUL FANTASIA: UNRAVELING THE GRIP OF HORROR GAMES ON ENTERTAINMENT AND ADRENALINE ADDICTION

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**Summary.** *Horror games are quite popular in the gaming industry due to humanity's fascination with fear and adrenaline. The physiological effects of adrenaline rushing into the bloodstream and psychological consequences, such as desensitization to fear, are an integral part of playing horror games. Despite the likelihood of negative effects, as the authors warn about before the start of a gaming session, horror games can and will have a positive impact on the player's health, both physical and psychological. Horror games challenge players to confront their fears while being in a safe environment. Many authors delve into various psychological and social topics, which attracts potential players. Despite the creepy and frightening content of most games in this genre, many people find comfort and pleasure in the immersive experience.*

**Key words:** *genres, hormone, consequences, anxiety, phobias.*

## Introduction

Entertainment has been with humans throughout history and has evolved alongside them. The first board games originated around 3000 BCE. Games have found their way into every aspect of our existence. Education, recreation, work, pop culture you cannot picture it nowadays without games or quests, which are considered a game genre. As of now, the game sector produces a large number of media items and generates a revenue of approximately 175 million dollars, making it the most profitable part of the entertainment industry. Just like music and cinematography, video games have various genres. The choice of a favorite genre of games depends purely on the personal preferences of each person. Some players choose their beloved genre based on a compelling plot or well-written characters. And there is a genre of games that combines all these criteria, namely horror. Most popular and classic movies are horror films, so we would like to explain why these types of games are and will continue to be popular in the future.

## Experiment

Upon asking the faculty of game design some questions, we got the following answers: Based on a survey of seventy students, the following game genres are preferred: 47% love horror games, 35% love shooter games, 7% love exploration-based adventure games, 6.5% love fighting games, and 4.5% play casual games on a daily basis. We may infer that the male audience is the one who enjoys horror games the most because the majority of our students are men.

## Influence of hormones on human preferences

ear is the strongest and most ancient emotion characteristic of every human being. So it's not at all surprising why people want to get this feeling so much by watching another horror movie on TV or playing a scary game on their computer. Scientists have proven that while playing horror games, skydiving, or riding on dangerous amusement rides, people experience a release of adrenaline into their blood, which sometimes leads to adrenaline addiction. So what is adrenaline, and why is it so important? Adrenaline (also known as epinephrine) is a hormone and neurotransmitter produced by the adrenal glands and nerve fibers during times of excitement or

fear. The production of this hormone is necessary for the stable functioning of our entire body. A person feels a surge of strength and energy for a certain time. Scientists also claim that adrenaline mobilizes the human immune system, speeds up metabolism many times, and increases blood pressure levels. This is why playing horror games can help you lose weight. Many people who “suffer” from a lack of this hormone in everyday life try to produce it artificially, using dangerous sports, attractions, and horror games. However, we must remember that excessive release of this hormone can cause serious diseases such as heart failure, hypertension, and nervous system disorders. That is why game creators write a disclaimer at the very beginning of the game in order to warn players about possible dangerous consequences and to avoid legal matters if one of the players becomes sick during the game due to the overabundance of scary, bloody, and violent scenes in it.

### **The Psychology of Horror Games Enthusiasts**

However, some players are drawn to different aspects of horror games. First of all, many people are drawn to different facets of horror video games, such as the experience of various dangerous situations while remaining secure at home. As a rule, those who are interested in horror lack emotions or certain events in real life. Some people cheer themselves up by playing another horror movie because they understand that their problems cannot be compared with the problems of the characters on the computer screen who are desperately trying to escape from a huge and scary monster. For instance, having watched or played a particular horror game, a person will know how to behave in certain risky scenarios, particularly if the game is interactive. He will know how to fend off a serial killer, just like in the game “Until Dawn”. In addition, the player could gain insight into how to survive in a post-apocalyptic environment similar to what is seen in “The Walking Dead”. Most people are drawn to horror games due to their atmosphere and visuals. Authors in this genre use their imagination to the fullest, creating terrifying yet exciting worlds with fascinating lore and equally intriguing characters. This genre frequently covers occult, religious, and paranormal subjects, as well as severe psychological issues. The main protagonists in horror games frequently suffer from mental problems or are victims of a tragedy that has an impact on their lives. Many gamers notice similarities between themselves and the characters in the game and share similarities with them. After all, the characters in this genre of games sometimes appear more genuine, as they frequently experience the same difficulties as people in real life, but in a more hyperbolic manner. “Silent Hill” is an excellent example of a game that deals with real-life problems, with the monsters embodying the main characters' fears and crimes, which haunt them throughout the plot. Another fascinating truth is that psychologists utilize terrifying games to treat various phobias. This method is called desensitization. Joseph Wolpe, a notable psychologist, developed this method. Simply expressed, the goal of this method was to gradually expose a person to many stressful or terrifying events so that his psyche became accustomed to them and reduced its terror response. So a person gradually becomes accustomed to his anxiety, and his mind develops more pleasant and positive associations with previously frightening events. This is why avid players of horror games are becoming more and more difficult to scare, or at least to shock, since they are already accustomed to various jump scares and things that cause fear and panic in other people.

### **Conclusion**

The number of people playing horror games is growing year over year, according to surveillance, and it is disheartening to see that many of the players who enjoy this type of entertainment are members of marginalized racial, gender, or ethnic groups. That is because they are happiest when they are playing this kind of game. “The horror genre is not only about exploring taboo territories but also about reinforcing our positive attitudes toward the status quo by showing how much worse things could be.” One of Stephen King's theories about the horror genre is reflected in this quotation. He frequently talks about how horror films may be used to examine the

dark sides of society and human concerns. In this instance, King is discussing how terror not only permits us to examine forbidden subjects but also highlights the significance of our positive views toward the status quo by highlighting how terrifying the alternative may be."

### **Gratitude**

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