ADL
Anti-Defamation League®

RACIST GROUPS USE COMPUTER GAMING TO PROMOTE HATE

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PROMOTING VIOLENCE AGAINST BLACKS, LATINOS AND JEWS

On Martin Luther King Day, Resistance Records, a distributor of racist, anti-Semitic "White Power" music began to advertise *Ethnic Cleansing*, a CD-ROM based computer game whose object is to kill "sub-humans" — i.e. Blacks and Latinos — and their "masters," the Jews, who are portrayed as the personification of evil. The ads said, "Celebrate Martin Luther King Day with a virtual Race War!" Resistance Records is owned by the National Alliance, the largest and most active neo-Nazi organization in the United States

The Title Screen of Ethnic Cleansing

Patterned after popular mainstream video games such as *Quake and Doom*, the game turns racially motivated violence in "entertainment." Racists and anti-Semites are clearly trying to spread their hate-filled vision to a wider, computer-savvy, younger audience through the violent body-strewn world of shoot-em-up computer games while hoping to make some money along the way.

The premise of *Ethnic Cleansing* is that a city — clearly New York — has been destroyed by gangs of "sub-humans" controlled by Jews who are lead by the "end boss" lurking in the subterranean "Lair of the Beast." Plans for world domination are seen in the subway, along with a map of "problem" areas in the U.S. and a sign reading "Diversity, It's Good for Jews."

The player (who can choose to dress in KKK robes or as a Skinhead) roams the streets and subways murdering "predatory sub-humans" and their Jewish "masters" thereby "saving" the white world. During the game monkey and ape sounds are heard when Blacks are killed, poncho-wearing Latinos say "I'll take a siesta now!" or "Ay carumba!" while "Oy vey!" rings out when Jewish characters are killed. The game has a high level of background detail and various National Alliance signs and posters appear throughout while racist rock blares on the soundtrack.

Screen Shot of the game's protagonist in KKK garb. Note: He is carrying a noose for lynching.

At the end, the player confronts the "end boss," a rocket launcher-wielding Ariel Sharon, who hurls insults such as: "Oy vey! Can you shoot

no better than that?"; "We have destroyed your culture!"; and "We silenced Henry Ford." When Sharon dies, he coughs out "Filthy White dog, you have destroyed thousands of years of planning."

The National Alliance is advertising *Ethnic Cleansing* as the first in a series of games to be produced by Resistance Records. The next release will be *Turner Diaries: The Game* based on *The Turner Diaries*, by William Pierce, the long time leader of the National Alliance. *The Turner Diaries* describes a world-wide race war in which white "Aryans" destroy all non-whites and Jews with nuclear, chemical and biological weapons. One of the most widely read and cited books on the far-right, it has explicitly influenced, among others, The Order, the Aryan Republican Army, The New Order and Timothy McVeigh, the Oklahoma City bomber.

While the most sophisticated racist game available online, *Ethnic Cleansing* is not unique.

Gary (Gerhard) Lauck, of Lincoln, Nebraska, (a.k.a. the "Farmbelt Fuehrer,") has several anti-Semitic "entertainment "video games on his website under the heading "Nazi Computer-Spiele" or "Nazi Computer Games.

Most of these games are much simpler than *Ethnic Cleansing* but they serve a similar purpose in that they allow players to interact in a racist environment in which they can indulge their fantasies.

In addition, the "comedy" section of the Web site of the racist, anti-Semitic World Church of the Creator includes racist jokes, comics and media files, as well as downloadable racist games. Among these are *Aryan 3, Shoot the Blacks, NSDoom* (NS is short for National Socialist), and *WPDoom* (WP stands for White Power).
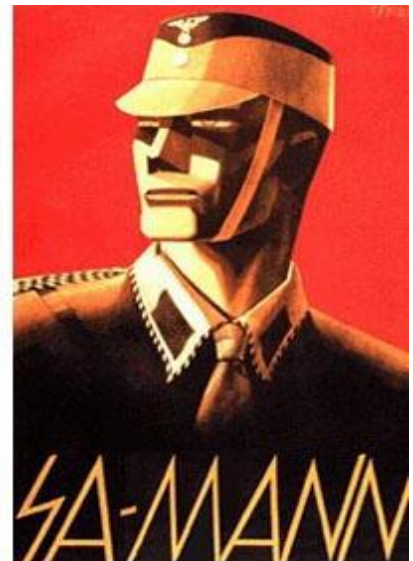
An image from the game SA-Mann from Gary Lauck's web site. The game is a variant of Pac-Man.

MAINSTREAM GAMES ALLOW PLAYERS TO ASSUME NAZI ROLES

The online multiplayer version of *Return to Castle Wolfenstein,* currently one of the top-selling games in the United States, allows gamers to choose either Allied or Axis "sides" in this popular shooter (albeit no overtly Nazi regalia or symbols appear in the multiplayer game, but they are in abundance in the single player campaign).

Another popular online game, *Day of Defeat,* is described by *The New York Times* as having "battlefields decorated with swastikas and Nazi posters," and "in some games, a battle is signaled with a rousing call to arms broadcast in German."

CREATING A RACIST COMPUTER GAME – A RELATIVELY SIMPLE TASK

Making *Ethnic Cleansing* was fairly simple. Its designers were able to use a powerful, freely available open-source game program or engine that "drives" the program by providing the basic operating instructions to the computer. The designers then simply plug in their message of hate.

Open-source software is a common phenomenon in the computer world. Programmers often give permission for people to use or modify their work, usually in exchange for an acknowledgement.

The designers of *Ethnic Cleansing* then created a "mod" (modification) without changing the existing game programming code. The engine gave them the ability to change the characters, backgrounds and sounds of the game thereby creating new "worlds" and targets in which players can interact.

By plugging in a small set of images and sounds created in readily available graphic and sound editing programs, the mod producers at the National Alliance created an immersive environment filled with Nazi propaganda in which users could indulge their violent, racist and anti-Semitic fantasies

The game engine used by Resistance Records is the open-source, freely distributed Genesis 3D engine. They also used the Reality Factory Games Developer Kit from the same company. Neither of these programs has racist content.

ADL LETTER TO WILDTANGENT, OWNERS OF OPEN-SOURCE SOFTWARE MADE TO PRODUCE ''ETHNIC CLEANSING"

February 20, 2002

Alex St. John,
President and CEO
WildTangent
18578 NE 67th Court
Building 5, Redmond East Office Complex
Redmond, Washington 98052

Dear Mr. St. John:

We want to bring to your attention that a nationally known hate group has created a violently racist computer game, "Ethnic Cleansing" using the Genesis 3D and RealityFactory software owned and licensed by your company. In fact, the game is now being sold online by a white supremacist record label with your company's logo prominently displayed both within the game itself and on the CD-ROM packaging. The game is crammed with anti-Semitic and racist images, and the goal is to shoot to kill as many Jews, Blacks and Hispanics as possible.

ADL has long tracked the growth of extremism on the Internet, but the use of computer video games as a source of revenue and recruitment for hate groups is a new and deeply troubling development. We are especially concerned that similar open-source software could enable racists to develop even more sophisticated games in the future. Already, the National Alliance, a violent neo-Nazi group, is selling "Ethnic Cleansing" and is promising to market and sell other versions of this game.

We hope that you find this development as outrageous and offensive as we do. We urge you to publicly disassociate your company from this offensive perversion of your game and to state unequivocally that WildTangent does not endorse the views of racists and anti-Semites. In addition, we ask you to consider developing language to be included in the licensing agreements of your open-source engines that would prohibit them from being used as a vehicle to promote hate and bigotry.
We look forward to your response and working with you.

Sincerely,

Abraham H. Foxman
National Director

ADL ASKS INTERACTIVE DIGITAL SOFTWARE ASSOCIATION TO HAVE MEMBERS CONSIDER SETTING INDUSTRY-WIDE STANDARDS

February 21, 2002

Douglas Lowenstein, President
Interactive Digital Software Association
1211 Connecticut Avenue, NW #600
Washington, D.C. 20036

Dear Mr. Lowenstein:

We want to bring to your attention that a nationally known hate group has created a violently racist computer game, "Ethnic Cleansing" using the Genesis 3D and RealityFactory software owned and licensed by WildTangent, a company that is a member of your association. In fact, the game is now being sold online by a white supremacist record label with that company's logo prominently displayed both within the game itself and on the CD-ROM packaging. The game, which is crammed with anti-Semitic and racist images, is one of several racist computer games that purveyors of hate are currently offering for sale or download on the Internet. We encourage you to see our new report on hate video games, which is currently featured on our Web site at www.adl.org.

ADL has long tracked the growth of extremism on the Internet, but the use of computer video games as a source of revenue and recruitment for hate groups is a new and deeply troubling development. We are especially concerned that similar open-source software could enable racists to develop even more sophisticated games in the future. Already, the National Alliance, a violent neo-Nazi group, is selling "Ethnic Cleansing" and is promising to market and sell similar games. We hope that you find this development as offensive as we do.

While we strongly support the First Amendment right of gamers to use software to create modified versions of popular games or new games, we are concerned that racists and anti-Semites will continue to use open-source engines to spread hate and bigotry. We urge you and responsible members of the software industry to consider setting an industry-wide standard that would help stop hate groups from turning open-source games into propaganda tools. This might include developing guidelines, included within the games' licensing agreements that would prevent the software from being used to create games that include hateful themes and content.

We look forward to your response and working with you.

Sincerely,

Abraham H. Foxman
National Director

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INTERACTIVE DIGITAL SOFTWARE RESPONSE TO ADL LETTER

March 5, 2002

Mr. Abraham H. Foxman
National Director
Anti-Defamation League of B'nai B'rith
823 United Nations Plaza
New York, NY 10017

Dear Mr. Foxman:

Thank you for your letter of February 21 regarding the creation of racist and anti-Semitic computer games using open source software. I share your revulsion at these games and applaud ADL for your work in bringing them to light, I believe you have raised important issues and I intend to explore ways our association can, consistent with constitutional protections and respecting the individual business practices of our members, limit use of legitimate software tools for hateful purposes. I would be happy to discuss this matter with you further and thank you for your important work to create a more tolerant and humane world.

Sincerely,

Douglas Lowenstein
President