

My Child Has Turned into an Automaton

我的孩子變成了 機關木頭人

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A Dharma talk given by Bhikshu Heng Sure on June 5, 2011 at Taipei Dharma
Realm Buddhist Books Distribution Society
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不論在新加坡、在馬來西亞、或是澳洲，總會有一些家長來跟我們講心聲，他們怎麼說呢？他們說：法師啊，奇怪了，唉，我不知道該不該說了，你知道嗎？我的子女好像變成了電腦迷了，好像addiction，犯癮似的，你叫他們不看電腦，不看smart phone他們就不高興了，他們眼睛沒有離開螢幕過，很不高興的吼著「I am downloading，我在下載，不要找麻煩，不要惹我，I am downloading！」這個樣子。法師怎麼辦？我的子女現在好像變成了機關木頭人、computer addicts（電腦癮）。怎麼辦呢？這是一個新的問題，從來沒有碰到的問題，很麻煩的。

大約二十年前大家都說盡快把電腦帶到課室裡面去，尤其第三世界的國家是很缺乏電腦的，現在很多的教育家改變這種思想，他們說電腦只是一部分，還是人教人才是最好的方法，而不是機器教人。為什麼？孩子不能從機器學到道德觀念，道德觀的學習一定要透過以身作則，一定要看著榜樣才明白怎麼樣做。機器沒辦法傳授所謂「無形的課程」（invisible curriculum），譬如明白是非、明白真假、明白智慧愚癡，這都必須要有人教。

所以，一天到晚看著螢幕，這是什麼？是孝道的逆道而馳。為什麼呢？本來在大家庭中，有祖父、祖母，父母，侄子和侄女、伯

Whether we were in Singapore, Malaysia, or Australia, there were always some parents who came to tell us about their feelings. What did they say? They said: “Master, it’s so strange! I don’t know if I should say it. My children seem to be crazy about their computers; it’s like an addiction. If you tell them not to use the computer or smart phone, they get upset. Their eyes are glued to the screen and they growl, ‘I am downloading something, don’t bother me! Don’t mess with me! I am busy downloading!’ That’s the way they are! Dharma Master, what should I do? My children now seem to have become automatons, computer addicts. What should I do?” Ah! This is a problem I have never encountered before. Very troublesome!

About twenty years ago, people said that we should bring computer technology into the classrooms as soon as possible; especially in third world countries, where there was a lack of computers. However, many educators have since changed from this kind of thinking. They say that using computers is just a part of teaching. Teaching people by people is still the best way, instead of teaching people by machines. Why? Children cannot learn moral values from machines; morality is learned through personal examples. They must look up to examples in order to understand how to do things. Machines have no way to teach what is called the “invisible curriculum.” For example, to understand right and wrong, to understand true and false, and to understand wisdom and ignorance, all these must be taught by people.

So, if someone looks at the screen all day long, what is that doing? It is going against the way of filial respect. Why? Originally, in a big family, there are grandparents, parents, nieces and nephews, uncles, aunts, brothers and other relatives. People understood how to be filial through their elders modeling it for the younger generation. Filial respect is an invisible virtue. One’s character is not fully complete until one has filial respect. In the modern nuclear family unit, slowly through a father, a

伯、叔叔、阿姨、弟弟、哥哥等六親眷屬，由長輩做榜樣給晚輩看，大家就知道如何孝順。孝順是無形的德行，有了孝順才是一個完整的人格。到了現代小家庭的組織，慢慢地由父親、母親、孩子、一隻狗，還有一部車，就成了一個完整的家。那麼爸爸媽媽都要去上班，好了，就把孩子送到幼稚園啦，會有一部車子來接小孩，像 Kiddie taxi 兒童計程車。父母還沒回家來，孩子先去補習班，孩子回家後，爸媽還沒到家，等爸媽回來了，也很疲倦了，就把孩子送到電視機前面。



「你的功課做好了沒有？」「做好了。」「喔，那明天見囉。好，乖乖。」

就這樣子，慢慢地變成一個孩子和幾個螢幕，甚至於一個孩子和五個螢幕：電視機、電腦、電動玩具、手機、還有iPad Tablet。這樣子孩子跟父母每天的時間縮小縮小縮小縮小，跟螢幕的時間增長增長增長。現在的教育多數以機器來負責。那麼電腦上、Youtube的東西，算不是一個有資格、有價值的教材、資料呢？不一定。Internet網路像什麼？像一條高速公路：來了一個卡車，來了一個公共車，來了一個汽車，什麼都有。那麼怎麼決定哪一個是適合給你的孩子？因為看什麼，做什麼，we will become what we behold（見而學之），我們看到什麼，就會變成什麼。哇，如果沒有過濾，沒有智慧的指南，那就危險了。孩子在那些高速公路去跑啊、玩啊，糟糕！所以高速公路是這樣子，網路也是這樣的。

上人苦口婆心來辦教育，是教育年輕人，給他們可以選擇可以辨別的一些智慧，希望他們將來都可以不忘道德觀。

在華梵大學那一天（編按，實法師率法大參訪團於二〇一一年六月二日赴華梵大學交流），有一個機會說，在歐洲有一些黑暗的時代（Dark

mother, children, a dog, as well as a car, it becomes a complete home. Well, Mom and Dad have to go to work, so they put their children in a kindergarten. A car, like a Kiddie Taxi, comes to pick up the children. Since parents have not come back home, the children go to an after-school program. When the children come home, the parents still have not arrived home. After the parents come back, they are also very tired. Therefore, they sit the children in front of the TV.

"Have your finished your homework yet?" "It's done." "Oh, then see you tomorrow. Okay, be good!"

In this way, it slowly became a situation in which one child would be surrounded by a few screens, or as many as five screens: television, computer, video game console, cell phone, as well as iPad. The amount of time the kids spend with their parents keeps shrinking, while the time the kids spend with their screens keeps increasing. So naturally, much of the education of the child happens through machines. So will the stuff on the computer and YouTube be considered qualified and valuable teaching materials or information? Not necessarily. What is the Internet like? It's like a highway: here comes a truck, there comes a bus, and a car, and so on. Every kind of thing is there. How does one decide which one is suitable for one's child? Because learning is still largely "monkey see, monkey do." We will become what we behold. We turn into what we have seen. So if there is no filter, no wise guidance, then that is dangerous. It is bad that children go run and play on the highways! The highways are like this, and the internet is also the same.

The Venerable Master earnestly devoted himself to education. His purpose was to develop in young people the wisdom to be able to differentiate between right or wrong, in the hope that they will grow up with a strong sense of morality.

On the day of visiting Huafan University (Editor's note: Dharma Master Sure led the delegation of Dharma Realm Buddhist University to visit Huafan University in Taiwan on June 2, 2011), I said, in Europe during the Dark Ages, there were savage tribes from the North: Visigoths, Ostrogoths, Huns, Vandals, and Vikings who traveled from north to south. Wherever they went, they burned and plundered the small settlements and villages in their way and killed all the people there. When they saw women, they raped them and then killed them. This continued, one wave after another, for centuries. It extinguished all knowledge, culture, and morality. Therefore, it was called the Dark Ages; there was no light.

At that time, there was a group of religious people, early Christians, because the Protestant Reformation had not yet happened. There were celibate early Christian monks who went into the high towers and put their Bibles there. Most of them were transcribed Bibles. Then the invading barbarians on the ground retreated, moving slowly back like the tide.

Ages)，在北歐有一些野蠻種族：Visigoths（西哥德人）、Ostrogoths（東哥德人）、Huns（匈奴）、Vandals（汪達爾人）、Vikings（維京人），從北方跑到南方去，去到哪裡就把那裡的小聚落、小鄉村燒了，把所有的人殺掉，看到女的就強姦，然後殺了。就這樣子one wave after another，（一波波不斷地）好幾百年。就把所有的學問、所有的文化、所有的道德給熄滅了，所以叫「黑暗的時代」（Dark Ages），沒有光明。

在那個時候有一批人，誰呢？天主教徒，因為基督教還沒有形成。那些天主教修行的和尚，他們是獨身的和尚，跑到高樓去了。他們把他們的聖經，多數是謄寫的聖經放到高樓。地上那些野蠻的人慢慢地像海潮，就退回去了。

看到平靜了，那些宗教的人士，他們就開始辦教育，建立學校。他們說，這是我們的聖經所說的，人應該做的事，就是什麼？道德倫理。慢慢、慢慢地文化恢復了，慢慢地有人可以識字，可以知道是非，可以知道真假。所以他們有一句話就說：how the Irish saved civilization，就是愛爾蘭人怎樣挽救文化、社會、價值觀。因為當時愛爾蘭多數是海島，那些一群一群的野蠻人都要上船去打打殺殺。愛爾蘭人用海島上一個石頭做的高樓，在那兒，保護文化、保護文字。

上人對教育很有遠見，他說將來，人都忘了道德了，根本不問大道。那個時候我們教育都會保留在西方什麼高樓嗎？我們不知道。我們要保留，就是把佛經背到心裡。就怕如果把佛經完全給電腦，然後有了mega virus，什麼厲害的電腦病毒啊，把這個hard drives（硬體）一下子都破壞了，或者透過sunspot（無線網路），所有的網路就把 hard drive弄得 bye-bye了；那佛經就沒有了。所以上人怎麼說呢？他說趕快把佛經背到肚子裡頭去，因為這個hard drive才不會沒有。

現在很多很多圖書館完全輸入到電腦了（編按：全面e化），如果電腦一沒有了，文化就都沒有了。這些圖書啊，就歸無了。聽起來好像神話，是不是？不一定，我們不是說準備，我也不像Oakland那個人（Harold Camping）說，哪一天世界末日電腦就bye了。不是，但是我心裡知道這是可能的，上人說的我都深深地考慮。所以說教育救國，師父絕不僅就這樣子說，教育救世界，教育救文化都有。所以，學佛、學做人，人道盡，佛道成。

When they saw that there was peace, these religious people began to establish schools and provide education. They said, the Bible taught that people should have morality and virtue. Their culture began to be recovered and restored. Gradually, there were people who could read, and who could distinguish between right and wrong. There was a popular idea about how the Irish saved civilization. That is, the Irish saved European culture, society, and moral values because Ireland is an island nation and the invading barbarians would have to board ships to reach them. The Irish had a stone tower on an island where their culture and literature were protected.

The Venerable Master had a lot of foresight in his philosophy of education. He said that in the future, people will have forgotten morality and the Way. At that time, will we protect education in high towers in the West? We don't know. If we want to preserve something, we should memorize Buddhist scriptures, thereby storing them in our minds. If the Buddhist scriptures are kept entirely in computers, if a huge solar storm or some kind of powerful computer virus were to attack our hard drives, the sutras that we have copied to servers would all be destroyed at once. Or through the sunspot (wireless network) make all of the hard drives crash. Then there would be no more Buddhist Sutra. What did Master Hua say about this? He said that we should quickly memorize the Buddhist scriptures because the organic kind of hard drive cannot be lost.

Many libraries are now fully computerized. If the computers were to be destroyed, all of this culture will be gone. All of these library books will be gone as well. It sounds fantastical, doesn't it? Not necessarily. We're not preparing for that, and I'm not like Harold Camping from Oakland, who said that when the end of the world came, the computers will also crash. However, this is possible. I have given considerable thought to what the Venerable Master said. In saying that "education is the best national defense", Venerable Master Hua was also saying that education can save the world, education can preserve our social mores. So, in studying Buddhism, we first learn how to be good people. When one's humanity is perfected, Buddhahood accomplishes itself.

The DRBA is now providing education in Taiwan, the United States, and Canada, for the purpose of developing this path of morality and the path to awakening. Once morality disappears, Buddhism is also forgotten, because there is no gate through which one can enter the Dharma. That is why the path of morality is important. Venerable Master Hua said that "education is the best national defense," and that is what we do -- promote education. This is not to say that as Buddhists we forgo cultivation to teach; it is not so simple. Master Hua had greater depth than that. His vision stretches far into the future.

In the Saha World, we have four stages of the world, which are formation, dwelling, decay, and emptiness. We are in the stage

我們現在辦教育，在台灣、在美國、在加拿大，就是要保留這個人道，不忘佛道。因為人道一滅了，佛道不是說沒有了，而是忘了，沒有門了，所以就是這麼重要。上人說教育救國，我們是推行教育，不是說，我們佛教忘了修行，只是上課了，不是那麼簡單，師父不是這麼淺顯的，他的眼光是永遠的眼光。

我們這個娑婆世界有成、住、壞、空，我們已經在那個「壞」的階段了，一天不如一天，一天不如一天。所以呢，我覺得我們保留的是傳統的道德觀念，是從東方開始傳到西方了。我們等於是那些愛爾蘭的和尚跑到高樓上，而那個野蠻的人並不是一些頭上帶犄角、那些帶

of decay, and the situation is worsening every day. Therefore, I think that these traditional moral values we have been keeping have started to spread from East to West. We are like those Irish monks running to the high towers. The invading barbarians now have neither horns on their heads nor swords in their hands. Who are they? They are probably the television and cable channels, the internet and streaming video sources, and violent video games. How many TV channels are there in Taiwan? When children and adults alike see the barbaric content on TV, we forget about our morality and ethics.

I sing Buddhist songs but I don't sing merely to entertain. Music is a method to help people understand true principles. In this high-

劍的，不是，是什麼呢？恐怕是網路，是這些電視，cable channels（有線電視頻道）。台灣現在多少個頻道呢？看到那些野蠻的內容，把道德觀就忘了。

我唱歌並不是為了娛樂，是用另外一個方法讓大家明白道理，因為一個潮流一個潮流來了，人就不想修行了，不想保留倫理道德。所以我們把情況先說了，到時候我們已經有法子，有準備了。不是我個人的思想，我是看歷史，看過去就知道未來。幸虧有師父這種警告，我不是說末日到了。末日不是一下子的，末日是一點一點把道德倫理給忘了，最終就整個忘記了。

speed society that is always looking for the next novelty, people do not want to practice and they are not interested in pursuing morality and ethics. Therefore, we are making preparations now so that when the time arrives, we are ready to face it. This is not based on my opinion; I am looking at history. When we look at the past, we can know the future. We are fortunate to have such a warning by the Venerable Master. I am not saying that the end of the world is coming. The end is not arriving all of a sudden. The end comes when people forget about their morality and ethics little by little; then finally, they forget it completely and the door to the Dao, to the Spiritual Way, closes as well.