What effect does cheating have in multiplayer games? It will be the overall goal to breakdown the effects that cheating has in multiplayer games, everyday many online multiplayers are faced with such concern. Cheating regardless of what form it occurs or comes in is still highly frowned upon, being online in a video game still holds serious consequences to its victims. Many folks ask themselves, is it worth it? Is playing by the rules always fair or should one give into temptation and participate among it. Analyzing and bringing awareness to the topic will help shine light upon a very common problem many video game fanatics are faced to deal with.

            Many will argue that a video game is a simple form of entertainment. Much like watching television or listening to music it’s not something majority of people consider to be serious, and would not consider an offense like cheating in a video game, something to be taken seriously. Majority of consumers worldwide fail to see how big the video game industry is and the powerful market it holds as well as the many professional video gamers across the world it welcomes. The value of a the video game has raised greatly as the years have passed, as it’s a phenomenon that can have an effect in everyone’s life, both young and old and is not a gender specific form of entertainment.  Gaming has become a sport, no different to any other traditional sport we can compare it to, it also welcomes professional gamers in pursuits of obtaining recognition and various levels of achievement.  Technology has been one of the major influences that have aided the development and push for the gaming world to grow dramatically since the very first videogames had been created in the early 1950’s. While technology has been the reason we have developed various video game platforms and games throughout the decades, it can also be considered the reason why cheating has become a common problem gamers face.

            Why is technology to blame? Well it's simple, the same way video games are designed and built have also open the door to hackers to abuse of it. The majority of major gaming corporations across the world work effortless around the clock to design all levels and types of video games they also attempt to make them cheat proof to encourage proper use of the games. Many video game design company’s design work in large teams to develop consoles or the actual games themselves, while the actual hardware serves much similar to a computer its pre program to simply operate and “run” the different games it's pre programmed to play. While in the making of the actual game, developers encrypt and format the game to be console specific and deter majority of hackers from reprograming the original coding found in the game. The reality is that many hackers and third party companies have found a way to find loop holes, and take hours, days, weeks, months and years of work and manipulate it to guarantee the cheater an advantage against another player of that game or console.  It's rather a big problem as many of today's consoles have live online connectivity, sometimes all it takes is a pirated software update or a added chip to the original console components to open the door to cheat.

            Where the effect of cheating becomes a major problem is in the live multiplayer games, both online and local create unethical and moral breaking cultures.

Video gaming, depending on the type of game, is something that very much like a real life sport requires some level of skill or talent, you can't simply buy those things, but unfortunately cheating does allow instant skill and talent. Professional video gamers practice majority of their lives in pursuing the top rank as a worldwide recognize professional, but what if they cheated?  Much like a personal relationship with a married couple or dating couples cheating creates insecurities and relationships become damaged. Much like a professional athlete using steroids to gain strength or a baseball player using a corked bat will only buy the successful image the easy way.  Personal satisfaction is great and helps grow a strong ego but in the form that it will only come back to hurt the person worse by destroying the reputation and blacklisting themselves from the trust of those around them. When it comes to the professional level, cheating is viewed and frown upon a lot worse then perhaps a teenager cheating on a local video game match. Despite both forms of cheating are equally negative they end up holding different weights in our society as they will be held to different standards.

            Cheating online does not always come with a friendly consequence, many major companies’ eventually find out or detect the problem and ban the player. Among being banned from a single game many folks would argue that it's not so bad but rather a slap to the wrist, unfortunately it's not that simple. A lot of our online players have to create ID’s and register equipment or serial numbers to gain entry to the online gaming world, cheating will not easily go undetected as a online fingerprint will follow you across different networks and games. One could argue that perhaps changing hardware, reinstalling a new operating system and new online identifications will be a way to cover the mistake of cheating. However despite of changing an online identity, it could rather difficult because many people will eventually recognize the person or figure it out. When playing amongst other players, majority of players build bonds and friendships are born. Cheating a friendship only causes trust concerns, it will never help develop the friendship any further as trust is key. If a player is cheating but simply does not take the gaming lifestyle serious, they are still doing damage, damage to the other players he faces as he is setting false expectations and conflicting ethical behavior. It all links into the ethical egoism aspect of the offender, pursuing their own self interest despite the consequences of others. However, the philosophical aspect of the social contract theory would be the best possible description behind the effect of cheating in a multiplayer game.  As the social contract theory describes the purpose of organized government and civil society relating to voluntary obligation and order really relates to the world of gaming. The importance of order, ethical and moral characters are key to creating a positive culture among gamers, having the door open to break the rules and cheat would simply not benefit all parties. The online gaming society worldwide all share the same objective, to win, to be the best and obtain the satisfaction after facing any opponents.

            In conclusion, the effect of cheating is a selfish action that has major consequences on the offender, while affecting those around the cheater.  Reputations are lost, friendships lost and false egos are created. Without order in the gaming community, we would simply not be able to obtain happiness and satisfaction from playing any video game but better yet against others. The effects perhaps can even cause a career in both the professional player or a beginning gamer at home.