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# Sen. Josh Hawley defends speech on porn and video games

[Mike Allen](#), author of [AM](#)

Sen. Josh Hawley (R-Mo.) told "Axios on HBO" he'll make masculinity a signature political issue, because he claims "the left" is telling men: "You're part of the problem. ... Your masculinity is inherently problematic."

**Why it matters:** As an ambitious Republican frequently mentioned as a possible future candidate for president or vice president, Hawley, 41, is using American masculinity to appeal to suburban parents, and to working men won over by Donald Trump.

- "As conservatives, we've got to call men back to responsibility," Hawley said. "We've got to say that spending your time not working ... spending your time on video games, spending your time watching porn online ... is not good for you, your family or this country."

**Hawley raised the issue on Oct. 31 as a keynoter** at the National Conservatism Conference in Orlando, Florida:

- "Can we be surprised," he asked, "that after years of being told ... that their manhood is the problem, more and more men are withdrawing into the enclave of idleness, and pornography, and video games?"
- "We need the kind of men who make republics possible," he added.

**Asked during the "Axios on HBO" interview** to paint a picture of his ideal man, Hawley said:

- "Well, a man is a father. A man is a husband. A man is somebody who takes responsibility."

**Challenged on whether his assertions are based on data** or mere hunches, the senator said millions of men had been idled in part "because jobs have dried up in many cities across America and rural areas, too."

- "I think you put together lack of jobs, you put together fatherlessness, you put together the social messages that we teach our kids in school, I think we've got to confront that and its effects," he added.

**Asked about the indelible image of him raising a fist** in solidarity with protesters outside the Capitol on Jan. 6 before the riot began, Hawley said he doesn't regret the gesture.

- "I don't know who came into the Capitol or not," he said. "If they did come into the Capitol and they violated the laws, they're criminals, and they should be prosecuted — and they'll get no support from me."

[https://www.axios.com/josh-hawley-masculinity-porn-video-games-c32d4575-13de-4f28-b26b-99aa21bcdae7.html?utm\\_campaign=organic&utm\\_medium=socialshare&utm\\_source=email](https://www.axios.com/josh-hawley-masculinity-porn-video-games-c32d4575-13de-4f28-b26b-99aa21bcdae7.html?utm_campaign=organic&utm_medium=socialshare&utm_source=email)