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Graphic Novel Like Text Reflection

When I initially decided to make my GNL text about the Berlin Wall, I knew that I wanted to incorporate the wall itself into the form of the GNL text. I settled on using Bing AI image creation to make the wall, which I used as the backdrop for my story. For the GNL images, I considered using a collage style, but I ultimately decided to use colored pencil with a comic effect over it, as I found this to resemble the graffiti art that can be found on the Berlin Wall today. Then I decided to make a website where you could scroll through the images and text through a 'window' within the Berlin Wall that I had generated. The story that I made for this assignment specifically focuses on the creation of the Berlin Wall, though if I were to continue with this project, I would also make two stories about people who attempted to cross the Berlin Wall (for example, someone attempted to use a hot air balloon to get across), and then I would make a story about the fall of the Berlin Wall. I could also incorporate audio and video in going about telling these other stories. Overall, the end goal of this webcomic is to educate the reader while also providing memorable stories. Currently, I feel as though the comic is educational but not entirely memorable, outside of the way it is presented.

When storyboarding my GNL text, I started by researching the creation of the Berlin Wall, as that's what the focus of this first story is. After gathering the information I needed, I organized a list of major events that I could build a text around and then wrote out text that could function within the context of a comic. I then began drawing my images while intermittently

revising my text so that it would best fit the images I made. This resulted in me condensing text to fit in one image instead of two, or deconsing text to be spread apart across multiple comic images. I considered using a character to tell the story of the Berlin Wall's creation, but I felt that since I was going a more educational route, this wouldn't be necessary, especially since I'm not great at drawing people. I did briefly consider using AI to create a character I could put in my comic, but this would have gone against the visual style I was going for.

The largest hurdle that I ran into during this project was formatting the comic into the Berlin Wall backdrop. In its current state, the web comic might look wonky if the person accessing the comic doesn't have their browser set to the right aspect ratio. The browser zoom must also be set at 100% for the comic to look like it is fitting inside of the wall. There are ways to prevent these formatting issues, I believe, but I would need to learn how to use Javascript. This problem has made me consider that a more stripped-back approach could have been better in telling the story I made, but I think that with the four stories I plan on implementing, the formatting will be worth it. Lastly, the comic panels are very small at the moment, though I intend to make the Berlin Wall backdrop along with the comic panels bigger. Fortunately it is still possible to zoom in with a trackpad to get a bigger image.

I tried to be intentional with my color use throughout this project as well. Generally speaking, when I depicted West Berlin, I attempted to use brighter, shinier colors, as opposed to East Berlin, where I used more muted colors. I think this came across fairly well on the website, as exemplified best on panel eight. Despite this, I wish I had been more intentional with my use of perspective, as the second to last panel makes use of perspective much more than all the other panels. This panel might be worth redoing, but I am torn because the images' angle comes across as fairly oppressive.