My Reflection on Dr. Molzberger's Aesthetics and Programming.

When searching for scholarly articles that related to what I was interested in accomplishing in this class, I wanted to find something that spoke to the creative side of my brain; to associate positive experiences and ideologies with my general lack of excitement towards programming in an attempt to kickstart similar attitudes towards programming that I have for creating art. I believe I have found a great first step towards accomplishing that after reading Dr. Molzberger’s article *Aesthetics and Programming.*

Molzberger’s article is based on interviews with eight highly skilled programmers and what he learned from them, a unique few that he calls “super programmers, software people, who show exceptional performance quantitatively as well as qualitatively” (247). One of the things Molzberger mentions that stood out to me, was the trance like state some of these programmers enter when they are encompassed by their work. These programmers are incapable of being distracted in this state and can work until they are satisfied with the result. This immediately reminded me of the various times I have entered a similar state while illustrating something I care about, or even more so while I am trying to put together a scene in Unity that I can picture as clear as day. Molzberger called this an “artistic state of consciousness” (248). In this state the programmers were able to work for extensive hours, they were less concerned with food and other general things one must do to keep themselves healthy. Although I wholeheartedly disagree with pushing one-self to such a degree, I too have done the same thing when I have such a clear vision of what I want to make in my head that all I want is to manifest it on the screen in front of me. Strangely enough I enjoyed this state just as these programmers have.

Molzberger points out that these programmers are looking towards aesthetics when working, saying: “I have to like the solution, it has to be aesthetic… a feeling inside of me has to be satisfied” (249). I think, just like in my own version of this artistic focus, these programmers can clearly see the final result of their work. Unfortunately for me, I have never had that feeling while programming but now I know that if I can continue to grow my programming skills, I can maybe reach an artistic focus that I have reached in my other creative work.

Molzberger, Peter. “Aesthetics and Programming.” In *Proceedings of the SIGCHI Conference on Human Factors in Computing Systems*, 247–250. CHI ’83. New York, NY, USA: ACM, 1983. <https://doi.org/10.1145/800045.801620>.