Reflection 2

Jonathan Harris is an American artist, computer scientist and technologist who is well known for his work that focuses on data, stories and interactive documentaries, and rituals. He is the co-creator of *We Feel Fine*, an interactive website created in 2005 that browses and searches the Internet every ten minutes for any form of expression on blogs or forum websites and displays them as these rich and distinctive visual representations. This work along with his other works in the data visualization field, such as the *Yahoo Time Capsule, Wordcount, 10x10, I Want You to Want Me* and *Network Effect* have been instrumental in establishing the field, pioneering the way forward. These projects have been on display at various exhibitions around the world. Harris has also worked with interactive storytelling, which uses structured rituals to collect data in real-world settings, which combines both digital technology and the physical world. These include *Cowbird, The Whale Hunt, Balloons of Bhutan, I Love Your Work* and more. However, *Cowbird* was eventually discontinued after concerns arose about Internet addiction and attention economies. Some of these works featured at international film festivals such as Sundance. These works eventually spun off into magical rituals that he performed in order to transform old family patterns, which he then dubbed as *Life Art*. He had performed 21 rituals and filmed them all, which then culminated into his magnum opus *In Fragments*. Currently, he is discovering a new practice called wisdom work through his publishing studio *Sunlight*, which seeks to create illuminated offerings for people of all ages. In addition to his artistic and technological pursuits, Harris is deeply committed to the

exploration of personal growth and creative expression and his work often reflects this by blending ancient wisdom traditions and stories with modern digital tools. Through his projects, workshops, and teachings, Harris encourages others to live with intention, reconnect with ritual, and find meaning in a rapidly changing world.

As previously mentioned, *We Feel Fine* is an interactive web-based project that explores human emotions by scouring through blog and forum posts through data visualization. This website functions by searching for occurrences and prompts of the phrase "I feel" or "I am feeling," and tracks the sentence and the associated emotion. Once they are located, these statements are categorized by parameters such as gender, age, location, and weather conditions at the time of writing. The result is a living, breathing portrait of the emotional landscape based on the prompt it found. Its interface presents these feelings that make you feel come alive in visually engaging formats — including particles and other dynamic animations that invite users to explore emotions in different ways. Each dot, square or shape on the screen represents a single human feeling, which users can click on to show the original blog post and the corresponding metadata. During a time when social media wasn't as present as in the modern day, this interaction created a powerful connection between anonymous internet users and audiences worldwide, which showed multiple points of view other people's emotional experiences. At its core, *We Feel Fine* is a blend of computer science, art, and human interactions. It demonstrates how technology can be used not just as a tool for predicting and analyzing but also to understand and

connect with others. Through the combination of personal expression and the vast reach of the internet, it creates a visualization of a collective feeling and emotion and showcases beauty and vulnerability in everyday human life. It illustrates how connected we truly are, even in moments of solitude. This project stands as an early and influential example of how visual artwork and data collection can merge to form a deeper understanding of the human condition in the digital age.