

Analysis

I'm still somewhat undecided upon my topic, but there are a couple ideas I was exploring. They are loosely fitted into the Isea themes, but should work just fine. The first would be an exploration of humanity when placed in technologies – our cyber world. How much connection we can have with something that should be inherently inhuman when it seems to hold the traits and values that we place in living and breathing people we meet from day to day. The second theme was on gender ambiguity and gender dysphoria. It is something of a hot topic these days it seems: exploring sexuality and the acceptance of such. I've recently found myself wondering a little more than usual about this topic while I was previously fairly apathetic to them. This came about after a transgendered girl had professed love to me. The event triggered a lot of confusion and I couldn't find a response to give her.

My first topic would try to be a little similar to a few things I've run into in the past. Though there should be numerous projects on this topic, I couldn't quite find them on a whim. The first would be the ever simple eviebot. A popular AI chat program that anyone can jump onto and have a sideways conversation with. Although the life in this character is stilted and comical, I want to explore the idea of artificial conversation, though perhaps not to this degree as I'm not a versed AI programmer. I want to imbue some kind of connection with the interface and having it show emotion or calculated response seems the obvious choice. Another example of the exploration of humanity in the digital space comes from the video game named Soma.

The game thrusts the player into the body of a dying car crash victim, who had his mind digitally copied and stored. He was placed into an artificial body in the future in the post apocalypse. The game explores the concept of humanity and makes the players question their values of life as peoples' beings are no more than data on a hard drive. The goal is to preserve humanity by launching a database of these minds into space, but are we living when we have no bodies? Though the interface for this game is far more complex than a simple webpage, I want to see if I can have the user question the same values.

As for my other topic, it came as more of a recent development and I know little to nothing about the subject and what sort of interfaces to explore. The concept will fall similarly to the first topic however, in that I want to have the user question their established values. Perhaps I can cause the user to feel that disconnect from being in the body of the 'wrong' gender. Perhaps I can even combine my two topics into one?

In both these choices, it's clear that I'll be designing for a more educated or adult audience. To interact with the project I want to make would require more focus than a video game or whimsical webpage. I could possibly open it up to a wider age range while still getting my point across, but I'd like to focus more on the 20+ range for now.