Awaken Analysis

This semester, I was in a group with a few people from last semester, and one new person. William, Wayne, and Evan. It was a fun experience working with them and being given this wild topic and making something unique out of it. I remember when we were first given the topic, I almost shut down every other part of my brain. I was thinking of so many different things to try and work with this topic. When I was riding the shuttle home, I realized that this project was the perfect opportunity to use something I had been thinking about for a while. We got the topic of life, consciousness, and the implications of quantum mechanics. Something I had been thinking about recently was, is my fate written? Does anything I do actually matter. Is everything I am going to do in my life already decided. I wanted to believe against that, which is where quantum mechanics comes in. I’ve wanted to believe that I write my own future. There are pages in my book unwritten and I write them. So, I toyed with this concept of a world where the world knew the end results. They knew that everyone’s future was written, and they were able to find this story. Some of my other partners had thought of this and a looping idea. We had the idea of “rebirth” and “multiverse theory” in our head at the start of this project and really wanted to incorporate it into our comic. I believe our comic is a bit long because of this. Wayne really wanted to add some great text into the comic, and I think he succeeded, but it makes the comic a bit long. My favorite thing about the comic is the interactivity. When thinking about how we could make it interactive, I thought about incorporating user choices into the game. This went along with another one of our themes for the comic, which was the ability of free will and choice. Do your choices actually matter? Do you have free will? This goes hand in hand with consciousness as well. Does someone that is conscious or anything that is conscious have a level of free will? It was interesting to think about it and we added it into our comic. We also had the idea of using color on characters to represent free will. However, this kind of got confused a little in some team members and got lost along the way. Some of us incorporated it, however, and it can be seen in the comic. I think learning about all the science that we did this semester and all the interesting theories and making a comic out of it was a great experience. I definitely learned a lot as well from the many books we read and incorporated as much as I could into this project. The ideas from Beyond Biocentrism really came in useful when theorizing and talking about the science and making sure it all made sense in the scope of our comic. On the technical side of the project, this was a lot more art than I was expecting. I don’t know what I was expecting for a comic, but it wasn’t this. Many different poses for our character, different backgrounds, background characters, and various other artworks. A hard part was also keeping a similar art style between all of the group members. However, besides William’s style, I think we did a good job of matching each other pretty well. It began when we got a good design for the main character, then everyone was able to go off of that. This semester I was particularly proud of the code. I made this one big script with many methods and variables inside of it and gave a copy to each group member with comments to help them understand it. A lot of my group members don’t understand programming the best, so I decided to make this script for them and comment on it to help them out. They all edited it to work with their part of the comic, but they all function similarly. The code controls the text on the screen and also most of the things that happen within the comic. The text box color changing, the background changing, animations, sounds, and other things. The main method for writing the code takes in a few parameters. A font, text size, text color, text box color, the chunk of text to be iterated, and a speed at which it is iterated. It sets all of the properties of the text, and then uses a for loop to iterate through the text in a textmeshpro object. Then, when the text box object is clicked, it plays the next line of code. Our code works like an actual script. There is a script method with a few if statements to check the loop number. In our case we have 4 loops starting at 0-4. Then inside each if statement there is a switch statement that reads the input number. The input number gets increased with each sentence or with each Pause method. This method pauses the comic to add things like animation or transitions. If the text box is clicked while the code is being read, it instantly completes the text. I was pretty proud of my work that was done on this script. I felt it was efficient as possible, but I realized there could’ve been more advanced things to shorten it up. Last semester I said I wanted to move away from working with William and Wayne, as last semester got a little rough and I had to take the entire project into my own hands. This semester was completely different. We worked way better as a team, and they pulled their own weight this time around. For this project, we had scrum masters and sprints. Wayne and I took turns on being the scrum masters and making sure everyone knew what the tasks were for the week. We have a discord group that we regularly talk in to keep everyone updated. This semester we also met in the lab and participated in the GIMM all-nighter where we got a good chunk of the project done. I was happy with the work that everyone got done during the sprints, we were able to meet those sprint goals for the most part and get this project done with ease and not rush it in the end. I would give Wayne a 6 for this project. He made both of the end animations and did a great job with his script. He also did a great job taking the scrum master position and leading us to what we needed to do. I would also give Evan a 5. He just joined GIMM this semester and hadn’t really programmed or used Unity before. I had assumed he had already taken the prior semester classes, but he hadn’t. However, his ideas for the project were brilliant and he put in a lot of work learning Unity and learning the code that I helped teach him. I would give William a 3 on this project. He didn’t deliver as much content in his section of the comic as the rest of us did. He also did make any choices in his section of the comic. The only choices available are in Wayne and I’s section of the comic. However, he still did good on the project and was able to help get it out to what it is now. Of course, every project has its own problems, but we were able to work out most of them. The project has IOS support so it can run on any compatible iPhone device. However, there is some weird error when built on PC that stops the project from continuing on Evan’s part of the loops. The project works completely fine in the editor mode and on mobile, however. There is 2 ending to this comic. One ending is obtained from making all the right choices in the comic. The other is obtained by not making enough choices. We symbolized these two endings perfectly. The ending where you gain control and change your fate by making choices ends with the death of the main character by jumping in front of the tracks. She is rebirthed into a new person, escaped from the realities of her world. The ending where you don’t make enough choices results in the death of the figure or what the figure represents, the consciousness. The character’s bracelet breaks, which also physically represents the connection to her consciousness and her free will. She loses all color in this ending and continues living her same day routine. This project was definitely unlike anything I’ve ever done before. It was a concept I’d never have chosen on my own, but when given it, it opened up my mind to so many different ideas and possibilities. From a writer’s perspective, it was a fun thing to dig into, and I enjoy the result we came out with.