

Final Project Description [Week 10]

Name: Serena Student

Section: Tuesday 10am

TA: Aaron Reed

Team: Solo

Project Type: Game

Game Name: "The River Woman's Mountain"

Project Goals

My project engages several concepts we've read about or discussed in class. Several new linking logics have been added to the piece: links that slowly fade away if the player doesn't click on them, and "link mazes" where players get lost in a cluster of short passages, each just a few words long, where every word is linked to another passage in the maze. I was inspired to experiment with different kinds of link logics by the works of Shelley Jackson and Porpentine that we studied in class, and Ian Bogost's ideas of introspection, abstraction, and strong authorship as key qualities of art games (*How to do Things with Video Games*, p. 13).

Innovation Statement

I have identified several similar games to my concept of a game exploring memories through unusual links structures, including "These Waves of Girls" (Caitlin Fisher, 2001), "my body — a Wunderkammer" (Shelley Jackson, 1997), and "a Kiss" (Dan Waber, 2013). Like "kiss" and "body," my project focuses around a central hub (the mountain meadow) which many of the memories return to. However, unlike these works, the player's exploration is framed by a linear story, as the player befriends the River Woman, giving context and narrative structure to these explorations. Each time the player returns to the meadow, they will hear more of River Woman's story.

Unlike "girls" or "body," my project does not use any sounds or images, relying on a simple aesthetic of white text on a dark blue background.

My link mazes, though similar to some passages in works by Porpentine, are to my knowledge a unique innovation, since each word links to a different passage and each passage is only a single, poem-like fragment of narrative. As the player sees the same words over and over while trying to find a way out of the maze, I'm hoping this will encourage them to think more about the structure of why certain words are linked to certain other words, as Stacey Mason discussed in her guest lecture on "hypertext aesthetics."