

Game Feel Reflection

After reviewing the notes from my pitch, I realized I wasn't particularly invested in or sure of my idea for *Rice Sandwich*, and instead analyzed *Woman Hollering Creek* for a better game idea. I annotated the text and looked for symbolism, themes, and experiences that could be translated into a game. I first started by brainstorming what kind of game could communicate the general experience of the story. I realized a narrative game that changes based on your choices was immediately out of the question because domestic abuse happens regardless of what the victim says or does. I decided that I would capture everything that surrounds domestic abuse, with it being implied. The game is about Cleófilas herself and about her slowly working to find a way to escape it through a series of puzzles. The general story (Cleófilas finding a way to escape her abuse) and character names stayed the same; however, I added in other ways for her to escape and different plot events that obviously couldn't be explored in a demo of a level.

I decided on a point and click, first-person format for this game because I think it allows the player to experience the deep feelings of isolation and powerlessness in the story. You as the player are stuck looking at one angle and cannot move freely throughout the space. It's claustrophobic to be confined within the limited space of the living room, kitchen, bathroom, and bedroom. This is amplified by the condition of the house. The holes in the walls, the filth, the trash, the "whiskers in the sink". There is no escape from the slovenly environment of the house, adding to that desperation and powerlessness.

I think the controls being confined to the mouse adds to the immersion. With games like this, that obviously rely heavily on the mouse, I thought it would break the immersion to look down at the keyboard and hit something like "I" to open inventory. Plus, you don't have to

remember any controls besides point and click. This idea came from a call I had with my little brother when I was asking how the controls work for FNAF and he explained you drag the mouse down to pull up the camera. I settled on moving the mouse to the top to pull down the inventory, but if I had more time, I could've found something with more significance.

If I expanded this project, I would add several possible ways to escape Cleófilas' situation. This would add in more events not included in the original text; however, I believe this addition would highlight the story's theme of the overwhelming power of love and support in the face of abuse. Cleófilas found examples of unconditional love that helped her escape abuse that could be translated to the help and support that can come from many places and people.