

Tanvi Muruges

## **Project Writeup**

### **The Social Justice Issue**

The subject of this game is to explore and understand lesbianism, through the point of view of a lesbian. While LGBTQ rights have definitely come a long way, there is a heavy stigma attached to identifying as a lesbian, so I'd like to highlight why it is not a bad thing, as well as explore the unique experience that lesbians have with gender, misogyny, and the self. A lot of lesbians struggle with realizing their lesbian identity due to society labeling it as something bad, or just a phase. This game is to show the struggle one may face as one realizes their identity, watching grow and accept themselves as they are. This is not representative of every lesbian experience of course, but it is influenced by mine and it is still valid.

This subject is important to me first and foremost because I am a lesbian. Secondly, I would love to put more lesbian media out there that is not just representative of a cis, white point of view, as that seems to be the current "acceptable" form of lesbian representation. A lot of acceptable LGBTQ media is cis and white, because it feels the most 'palatable' to heteronormative society. While many lesbians experience similar struggles, lesbians of color have the added factors for also being a person of color, so their experiences are still different.

### **About the Project**

This is an interactive game made with multiple libraries including p5.play, p5.2dAdventure, and p5.clickable. All these combine to create a game where the user can control a playable character and navigate around various states, collecting items, talking to NPC's, and working towards an end goal. The point of this game is to be a vehicle to get the player thinking about a specific social justice issue. I created a narrative driven story of the player character navigating through 3 stages of life, childhood, adolescence, and adulthood, realizing they are a lesbian and navigating the different social and personal problems that come at every stage. Each stage of life will have 2 sub levels: navigating social situations and navigating personal introspection. The social situation part will have the player talk to various NPC's (such as friends, classmates, etc.). The introspection will have the main character reflect on themselves and their identity.

### **Aesthetic Approach**

Gameplay will be mixed with maze navigation and visual novel style, having the user walk around but then they interact with a character or object text box will show up on screen along with dialogue that either asks them a question, or gives them a prompt to think about. The real world will look like a colorful little suburban town, similar to where I grew up. The introspection levels will take place inside one's thoughts, and will look very weird, whimsical, and maybe cryptic. I chose this aesthetic approach as it is a style of game play I am most familiar with, so I wanted to try my hand at it. Additionally, simple RPG style games naturally lend themselves to being able to mimic real live situations, which is a big part of this game and storyline.