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The Blood of the Vampire: A Video Game Demo

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The Blood of the Vampire: A Video Game Demo

A Thesis
Presented to
the Graduate School of
Clemson University

In Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degree
Master of Fine Arts
Digital Production Arts

by
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Accepted by:
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Abstract

The Blood of the Vampire demo for a 2d visual novel / rpg styled game designed with the Unity game engine. The game is a continuation of Florence Marryat's 1897 novel, *The Blood of the Vampire*, which features a complex story that players get to shape through their actions. The overall project includes several other versions including a C++ game and a html text based game. Development of this game spanned over a year and was impart a collaboration between DPA major Marie Jarrell and English major Lauren Woolbright.

Table of Contents

Title Page.....	i
Abstract.....	ii
1 Artist Statement.....	1
2 Influences.....	4
3 Characters.....	13
4 Setting.....	17
5 Method.....	22
6 Conclusion.....	35
Bibliography.....	39

Chapter 1

Artist Statement

The aim of this project was to create an interactive story to be used to teach and facilitate discussions on gender and race in 1900s England and the modern era. While the main focus of the narrative is centered around the social and political climate of Victorian England, the issues covered in the game and the original novel by Florence Marryat are still applicable in today's society. At its core the story of *Th Blood of the Vampire* is of a lonely girl, Harriet Brant, who has been separated from society due to circumstances of birth beyond her control. Harriet is a white passing mulatto immigrant disconnected from the rest of the world who desperately wants to be loved. Unfortunately for her, Harriet is also a unique type of vampire who drains others not by drinking their blood but by forming meaningful relationships with a victim and unconsciously sucking out their life force. Harriet's struggles throughout the novel have very clear parallels with the struggles many biracial youths encounter during their life times including isolation and a search for identity. Harriet's vampirism is even said to be a result of her biracial heritage. Along with that the way the vampirism functions, draining anyone she tries to befriend regardless of gender, also allows her struggles to be used as an analogy for the struggles of a closeted queer woman. In fact one of the main characters in the novel questions Harriet's sexuality and whether the young girl's overwhelming desire to befriend her has ulterior motives. Either way the original story offers up some incredibly potent and meaningful concepts which are just begging to be explored and examined.

True, Marrayt's book does go into some of the ideas with great enthusiasm there are just some many different ways a story like this could end and so many different ways an audience could approach it. This is what writer/collaborator Lauren Woolbright and I began this project. We wanted to create a means for a new audience to experience the unique aspects of this narrative. Things like how society was engineered to disempower Harriet and give her agency to a variety of men, many of whom she had no even met. Of perhaps the most pressing question that book posits, Is Harriet truly a monster? She has no intention to harm others but her mere presence kills many. Is she a tragic victim? Some see her that way but others believe that her poisoned heritage makes her vile by nature. So is there even a point in someone like her trying to be good? What if she had chosen differently? What if Harriet had chosen to revel in her abilities? What if she had used them to fight against the world which sought to cage and control her? What if she had been given another ability, the power to invigorate those she connected with? What if she had been given agency over her life?

That was the focus of this project, to seek and give Harriet control over her fate here with a player acting as an extension of Harriet's will. This project was an exercise in creating a world and story which allowed Harriet and the player to take a stance on where they fitted into the narrative. Why? Because personal agency is a defining feature of interactive media and a luxury that is often not granted to women both narratively and realistically. Harriet is given no control over her powers in the book which rob her of every connection she chooses to make. Even though Harriet is the protagonist of her story her decisions ultimately lead to despair. She has no control over her own future of happiness fate and her curse have already doomed her to failure.

In creating this new experience which would allow the player to shape the narrative into a

multitude of outcomes based not their choices we sought to shape Harriet into a new type of protagonist, a new type of woman. Whether that woman is an ordinary person, a hero, or a monster would be up to the player as would the fates of various other characters in the game. While this is not fully realized in the Unity Demo an earlier text based game tells the full story ending with a final confrontation between Harriet and the source of her curse. *The Blood of the Vampire* is a visual novel rpg which seeks to be a type of interactive gothic horror. One whose ending isn't set in stone but is never the less an exploration into the darker side of human history.

Chapter 2

Influences

The process of gathering influences for this project differed greatly from past artistic experiences as not only the look of the game was important but also the physical feel of the interaction. This interaction also needed to match the style, themes, and mood of the piece. Since the way people interacted with the story would ultimately determine how we told the story this ended up taking precedence over the other aspects. Thus the first sources I looked to for inspiration often didn't match the story the game wanted to tell. Instead they provided examples on how to tell a certain type of story. I can only really compare it to gathering influences for a of film by looking at styles of cinematography rather than going by story or genre.

Here the camera for our game was third person and pulled back from a main character who was the center focus. The camera of many a 2-D top down RPGs (Role-playing games) and visual novel adventure games. These types of view points allow players to feel connected to their avatar and yet maintain a certain amount of distance. Like a kind of god watching mortals or child playing with toys, players see their avatars as beings whose fate they control and yet as people with personalities, hopes, dreams, wants, and struggles separate from their controller. Setting up this type of camera is also simple to implement and utterly familiar so that neither programmer nor player need to spend time experimenting with the set up. It is a tried and true method with a plethora of examples. This was reflected in the selection of our first two main

influences which included a long standing classic series and a more modern spin-off of a runaway hit franchise, *Pokemon* and *Ace Attorney Investigations: Miles Edgeworth*.



Figure 1.1: images from *Ace Attorney Investigations: Miles Edgeworth* and *Pokemon: Ruby*

In the *Pokemon* games there was an excellent camera, style of character movement, and top down map set-up which could be used as a starting point for layout design. The game also provided a starting point for object interactions by instigating investigations and speech through collision and simultaneous specific button pressing. *Ace Attorney Investigations: Miles Edgeworth* provided a similar reference point but with more detailed characters and a different perspective on handling locations. These were important as the detailed characters provided examples on how to make player controlled animations fluid and responsive without sacrificing character. The rooms provided examples on how to create more recognizable and unique locations without losing the characters to the clutter doing things like leaving walking areas bare and only allowing the characters to stand partially near the walls which could then be filled with items to create atmosphere. However, neither of these games shared any visual connections with

the game we wanted to create. These games were bright and comedic, they didn't share setting or tone. So, the pool expanded and games featuring a similar setting we sought out.



Figure 1.2: images from *London Life* and *Harry Potter and the Chamber of Secrets* for the GBA

Luckily finding games of similar play style set in London wasn't very difficult. After some searching prime examples were uncovered, the 2002 game boy advance Harry Potter adaptation of the *Chamber of Secrets* and a mini-game within the *Professor Layton and the Last Specter* game called "London Life." Both games featured similar play styles to the *Pokemon* and *Ace Attorney* games while also being set in a Victorian-esque fictional London setting. Providing references for room and building construction and city planning. While actual illustrations and photos of London would be referenced in background construction a literal translation of the city would be impossible due to scale and movability. These games and their layout designs created a city that felt like London but could be easily traversed. Still, both of these games featured a London that was bright and bustling. The Layton setting was small and quaint mirroring the slice of life simulation it was trying to present and the Harry Potter game was cluttered and excited in order to enhance the game's themes of adventure and bold discovery. Neither of these narratives

Burton's work. Burton's work seems fixated on misunderstood monstrous loners seeking love and acceptance juxtaposed against a background of death and decay.

His work was a worthy starting point but a bit too grim. *The Blood of the Vampire* novel is a tragedy but the game we hoped to create would also offer a sense of hope and discovery. The kind found in another cinematic work led by *The Nightmare Before Christmas's* director, Henry Selick. Selick was largely responsible for bringing Burton's drawing to life on the big screen and his later feature *Coraline* took the dark twisted atmosphere and added a layer of sugar. This film has a great deal of the same visual aesthetic as *The Nightmare Before Christmas* but is a little brighter and warmer in look and tone. However, this is not to say the film didn't have a darkness or mystery all its own, but these moments were condensed to specific climaxes and didn't permeate though out the entire film. Thus the tone is able to swings from bright and colorful to dark and frightening as the narrative demands it. The film certainly more subdued than either Selick's previous work or the original artwork from the children's book the movie was taken from. These illustrations from critically acclaimed comic book artist Dave McKean led to a more thorough examination of the artists other works.



Figure 1.4: examples of Dave McKean's art style

McKean's work has always been incredibly twisted, bordering on grotesque and yet hauntingly beautiful. Perhaps best known for his work on the highly successful Sandman series, McKean's work is basically a surrealist nightmare. The forms are ugly, brash, bold, and beautiful and while the shapes and forms found in his work would not be present in the game we wanted to make themes still meshed with certain aspects of the story. After all the characters in *The Blood of the Vampire* are ugly, selfish, loud, snooty and utterly human. Harriet Brandt may be our protagonist and a supernatural monster but her largest faults are a childish tendency to be selfish and inconsiderate, not a thirst for blood and depravity. Harriet is not evil but she is not a kind person and no one else in the story is really any better. There are no saints or white knights, everyone is broken and yet you still find yourself drawn to them. There is a kind of beauty in the ugliness of our characters.



Figure 1.5: Detail of Kara Walker's *World's Exposition*, 1997

This brought the game to the work of artist Kara Walker. While the first iteration of *The Blood of the Vampire* used more detailed pixel art in the costuming both versions, the C++ and the Unity version, utilized the art of silhouette for its character design. There were multiple reasons for this choice, to mirror a Victorian artistic style, to create a character design which could be used to easily convey any emotion with minimal effort, to create a character which could critique certain aspects of character design such as the “white as default” aspect of character interpretation wherein a character without a stated racial heritage is usually perceived by fans as being white. But one of the most subverse aspects about silhouettes which grew me to them was the fact that they conceal. A silhouette only gives you an outline of a person it conveys nothing of what lies underneath but because the person is so non descriptor you can also use them to convey horrible truths. Kara Walker is an African American artist who specializes in

using silhouettes to portray the ugly. She is perhaps best known for her paper cut murals of silhouettes which illustrate the horrors of the American slavery system. The sellouts rely heavily on deeply offensive imagery and stereotypes but there is a sort of sick beauty to her work. The forms are so expressive and full of character. Even when people are being dehumanized to the point where some women are portrayed as floating heads over two gigantic pairs of breasts you feel the humanity in them. Or rather the humanity in the people they represent the former slaves and slave owners who shaped a nation, the current Americans who will forever be defined by this institution. Much like the various characters in *The Blood of a Vampire* even if they are horrible you still care about these people. You care about their struggles and desires. The story is dark but there is still hope.



Figure 1.6: images from *The Last Door* and *Lost Constellation*

This brings me to the last two influences which we plan to draw from; Alec Holowka's *Lost Constellation* and The Game Kitchen's *The Last Door*. These two relatively new online games deal with death, mystery, and dread in very unusual ways. The first *Lost Constellation* tells a melancholy story taking place on the longest and coldest night of the year. It is a story

about keeping promises and its wistful melancholy tone is contrasted with the sharp wit and hopeful determination of its anthropomorphic reptilian protagonist. The Last Door has a much more horrific take on death. This episodic point and click horror game offers little in the way of hope. Rather it focusses on discovering horrid truths at the expense of its protagonist's grip on reality. The Last Door shares the same time period and setting as The Blood of the Vampire and while Lost Constellation is more in line with what we want to create, The Last Door provides a solid example of where we are beginning. The narrative of this game regardless of the player's choices, will not be happy; however, that does not mean it is without all hope. In the end the narrative's themes and lessons will lie in the hands of players who can decide to strive for redemption or throw themselves into bowls of monstrosity.

Chapter 3

Characters

Our titular character Harriet Brandt begins the game a recent widow who, devastated by the loss of her husband has committed suicide. In the book Harriet is a spoiled mature brat. Her life has been one of privilege and naiveté as she has spent most of her childhood and adolescence in a convent. Harriet is unaware of her parentage and as the story dives into her history we come to find that Harriet is the result of an unholy union between two absolutely horrendous people. Harriet's parents are described as being morally bankrupt and physically detestable; however, Harriet is stated as having a sort of unearthly beauty. Harriet is a woman who is easy to lust after and desperate for love. Her greatest wish is to be loved and to love some one or something, a baby, a husband, a friend. All throughout the story Harriet tries to form bonds between people but in forming those bonds she ends up an unwitting killer. Oddly enough even though love is a major driving factor in Harriet's decisions and actions Harriet herself is a rather selfish and unempathetic person. She constantly puts her own desires before the feelings of others and her presence is stated as being both a blessing and a curse. However, this is the Harriet before the game the Harriet players control after the game is another creature entirely.



Figure 2.2: sprites for Harriet including full silhouettes and pieces for Unity construction

Harriet formed the base of all character designs each new character was created in a way to compliment of contrast her. For minor characters such as the gossiping maids Harriet's bold colors were always meant to stand out against them. Unlike Harriet these characters were fully alive, they existed in the realm of the living but since Harriet was our main focus this flipped the nature of these characters. They became almost ghostly and while Harriets features could be distinguished these characters where nothing more than greyed out silhouettes. Originally they were created by designing fully realized characters and then darkening the forms until their features disappeared. However, in later iterations they were silhouettes first which were lightened and given minimal features.



Figure 2.3: sprites from C++ game for maids (bottom) and nun (top) along with reference images



Figure 2.4: redone maid sprites fully constructed and faded

As for major characters such as the nun the design mirrored the construction of Harriet. The only real difference between these characters and Harriet was the pallet. Harriet was designed to be a dark figure, a shadow against a world of grey. For her opposites the designs reflected the light draped in garbs of white against black forms. However, this was not meant to create a dichotomy of good and evil. Harriet is a fluid character she can be a monster or a saint meanwhile the people she interacts with are equally as complex. While the nun she drains in the

opening is an innocent inspired by Princess Elisabeth of Hesse and by Rhine, a woman of incredible charity and kindness, she is still a figure head of a society which is corrupt. Harriet is seen as a monster not because of any maliciousness in her heart but because of her biracial heritage. She is demonized because she does not conform with a racist and sexist society. Thus, the characters who define her story can be seen as equally good and evil a mirror to Harriet's own state though inverted.



Figure 2.5: redone nun sprites including full silhouettes and pieces for Unity construction

Chapter 4

Setting

The Blood of the Vampire takes place in late 19th century London. It is a time of great change and revolution both financial and societal. There is a huge upheaval occurring amongst London's elite society as rising industries are creating a new subset of socialite, the nouveau riche.

Meanwhile, London's female population has become more and more vocal in their demands for equal rights. Demonstrations are held on street corners, in parks and street squares. On the outside the city has become a calamitous place of new ideas and new voices yearning to be heard amongst a backdrop of brick and steel.



Figure 3.1: references for London buildings and streets

On the inside; however, the tone is very different. With all the new wealth being brought in by London's industrial revolutions London's interiors have become decadent and decorated. Interiors are bathed in extravagant patterns and colors. Rooms are cluttered with various odds and ends while textiles of all sorts of complexity leave no surface blank. Furniture has become more and more floral and intricate with curves, dips, and circles making each piece as showy as possible. This was a very loud and colorful period for the London home and yet the setting of this game is devoid of much color and detail.



Figure 3.2: references for room interiors, furniture and bobbles

In fact the setting is bare and almost everything is rendered in black and white. While the floors and walls of the rooms are not bare all other fabrics are devoid of anything more than a simple swath of grey. Almost everything is grey including the people save for the few bits of white and Harriet's pure black dress. The only color found on any item is the red flower in Harriet's veil. A single drop of blood on the canvas the only real source of life. Because the London in *The Blood of the Vampire* is not a living city. It is not a dead city mind you rather it exists in a type of purgatory. Nothing really exists here it is just a mirror of the place Harriet once resided in where the souls of her living and the dead reside. Rooms have the trappings of life, beds, chairs, desks but they do not feel lived there are curves and crowns in the furniture but it is also naturally stiff and obviously duplicated giving the sense that as you progress you never really go anywhere new. This is not a place you want to remain in, the sheer boredom of the setting prompts players to leave it in the hope of finding more. Of course whether or not Harriet is able to leave this place and move onto a better one is up to the player.



Figure 3.3: full shot of room layout with player character for scale

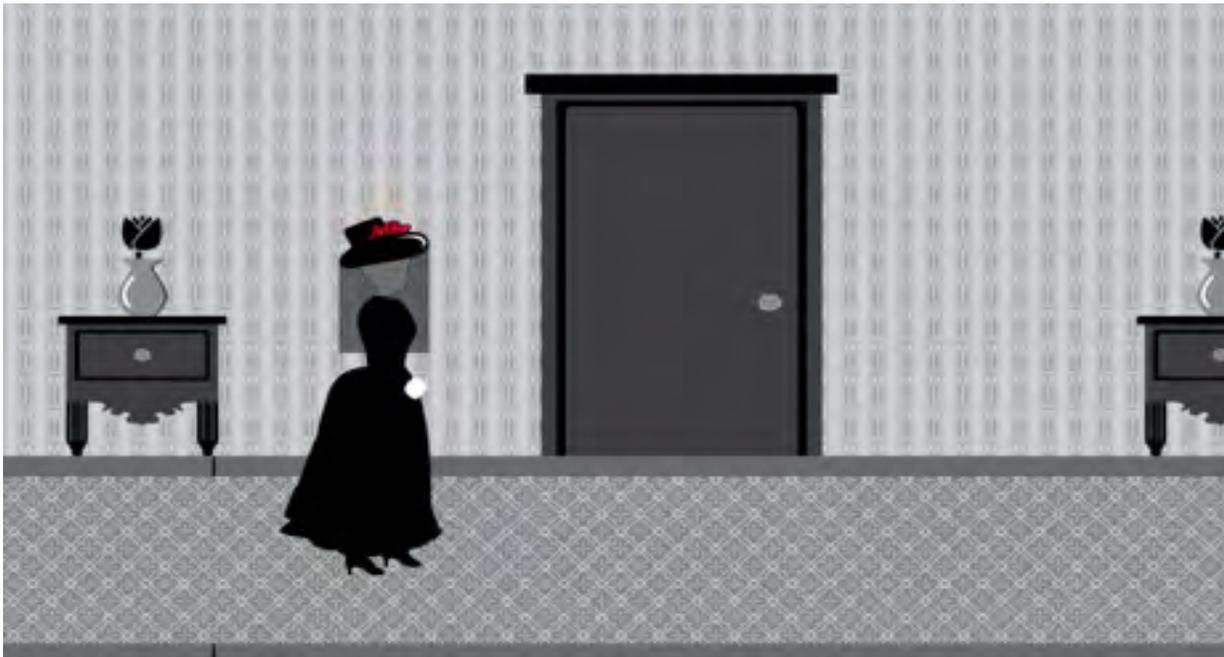


Figure 3.4: camera shot of player character in hallway

Chapter 5

Method



Figure 4.1: opening shot and room shot of C++ iteration

The development of this game was only realized through the development of two other games. The first of which was a C++ version which utilized the code from Dr. Malloy's Video Game Development class. Using code provide by Malloy as a base this version helped set up the layout and early visual style of future projects. The overall game was fairly identical to the current version but certain changes made due to the codes limitations. For example all stages had to be the same dimension in the C++ version so a long hallway had to wrap around and fit itself into a large box.



Figure 4.2: hallway shot of C++ iteration

The main struggles when creating this game included getting the player sprite to move in various directions with multiple sprites representing different movements and allowing the player to interact with various items on the screen. This included opening and closing new menus as well as creating separate levels each with their own unique items and sprites. The final stage of the demo also include an enlargement of the entire area making it seem as if the player had zoomed in on the action. This was largely faced using the root-zoom feature provided in Malloy's code but many other features required the complete deconstruction and reconstruction of items on the screen. There was also a need to give specific items on the screen boundaries which the player could not cross, while a solution was found it would often cause the player to become stuck if the player sprite was touching two boundaries at once. While these issues were

fine for a short demo they would not due for a larger game with numerous levels and items. At the same time there was a desire to create a version which could be played easily on many platforms not just a DPA linux machine, which the first version was largely configured for.



Figure 4.3: confrontation with nun from C++ iteration

Thus began the development of the second game which actually started out as the development of the current game. You see the goal of this next iteration was to create a fully complete narrative. A game which would take you through the whole of Harriet's second journey. With a stronger focus on narrative completion this project began with a paper prototype. This allowed us to flesh out exactly how the story was to proceed., which locations we would need to create, how many interactions and characters there would be, and what choices players make.



Figure 4.3: paper prototype

The prototype was incredibly rough with the end result largely being a bunch of scribbles but the entire session was recorded and all the major decisions were noted down and later turned into a word document. From this document development of a new game began starting with the

development of the setting and characters which has already been written about in the sections above. These illustrations and many more were created over several weeks during the summer of 2015. However, near the end of July the head writer revealed that they would need a fully playable version of her story by August. So, the production changed gears from an interactive 2D side scroller to an html text based game.

To begin this transition a quick search was made on how to create an html text based game. From this we came across youtube ccMultimedia and their simple text game Der Kerker. Thanks to ccMultimedia for providing an input system we were able to overwrite their code to create a completely new game.



Figure 4.4: browser page of *Der Kerker*



Figure 4.5: browser page of *The Blood of the Vampire* html iteration

Der Kerker provided simple examples of how to create rooms, allow movement, place and use items, and store items in inventory as well as create an end game screen which would allow players to restart the game. At it's core Der Kerker was a simple collection of if then statements such as:

```

else if (input == "take lunchtray" || input == "take lunch tray" || input == "take tray") {
    if (currentroom == "jail" && lunchtray == false) {
        lunchtray = true;
        $('<p>You picked up a lunch
tray.<p>').insertBefore("#placeholder").fadeIn(1000);
    }
    else $('<p>That item is not here!<p>').insertBefore("#placeholder").fadeIn(1000);

```

So it was fairly easy to simply create new variables and new conditions for any phrase the user entered. This allowed for the quick set up of any room or situation needed for the game and thus we were able to flesh out a full version of the script. This turned out to be astronomically helpful and important as it became clear that we were thinking to linearly with our narrative. The original game script was written as if the player would progress in a very specific way, going from point A to point B to point C while doing X, Y, and Z. However, in some cases it was possible to go from point A to C and the B while trying to do Z Y and skipping X. Thus the script greatly expanded to handle all these conditions. The world needed to present evidence in such a way that it may not matter if the character had been to a certain place before and actions such as killing or supporting a character needed to change the dialogue of certain places entirely. For example one scene of the game included a demonstration in the park with several actors some of whom could be killed without alerting the populace but one if the speaker was acted on then everyone's dialogue and options had to change. Still through this format we were able to design a game with a complete narrative with multiple endings.

With two projects under our belts we began development of the current project which we knew we wanted to design using the Unity 2D engine. Thus we began this iteration by completing a tutorial for designing a Unity 2D platform created by youtuber 3DBuzz. While completely different from the product we were trying to create this tutorial walked us through simple set up of a level. It also provided examples of scripting in Unity with their UnityScript which was syntactically similar to C#. Taking what we learned from this tutorial we began scripting the first level of *The Blood of the Vampire*.



Figure 5.1: screen capture of 3DBuzz tutorial game

To begin, first the sprites of all the items in the room needed to be imported into Unity and used to create unique objects. This was done with the aid of a sprite sheet contained bits of every unique item the player would see in the game including the background, furniture, and characters. Once imported into Unity the software was able to use a single image to create

multiple sprites via the sprite editor. Here boundaries were set on the reference area for an item, so that an item labeled vase would only show the illustrated picture for the vase. By creating a transparent png square reference area, one could create a sprite that only displayed pixels with an alpha value. From these unique items, prefabs could be created which store game object components and properties. With a prefab, a designer can create a door that leads the character into another room and use that same door with that same teleporting ability by simply dragging and dropping it onto the screen. Prefabs were essentially necessary for many items including characters, which were comprised of multiple sprites arranged in a certain order and carried with them components and properties for animation.

Once all the characters were in place, the game needed a working player object and camera which would scroll with the player as they moved. For the control of the player, a simple script was set up to establish the item as a `2DRigidbody` which is a class with specific functionalities that enable animation, movement, and interaction. This class provided by the Unity engine allows an item to have a position and velocity and also provides functions to move the item based off of the current position, a coded factor, and time. The player script written for handling Harriet also allowed for the declaration of an `Animator` which would update the animation based on conditions in the script, such as when to play the walking animation or the idle animation based on the player's velocity. The construction of this script borrowed certain aspects such as how to flip the sprite direction from the 3DBuzz tutorial but also relied on Unity's pre-coded kinematic functions to handle boundary detection and standard WASD and Arrow Key set up for controlling movement. There were also additional public and private variables to allow the coder to control the starting position of the player and the player's ability to move. Both of

these variables could be manipulated in other scripts so that certain objects could override control of the player at key points, such as when the player opened a dialogue box or entered a new room. Unity's ability to reference other user coded items was key for creating objects which could react to each other as seen in the construction of the camera.

The camera script helped form the basis for player dependent scripts. Simply put it allows the player to reference the `Player.cs` class which has been instantiated in the game and based on the data stored in that class allow the `CameraPlatTut.cs` to react in specific ways. Here the script uses the `player.position` data to update the camera's position. The script also allows the coder to reference a `BoxCollider`, an item in Unity which creates an invisible box that can be used to trigger functions upon contact, and define boundaries that the camera can not go past. The movement of the camera is handled with a `Lerp` function which smoothly transitions the center of the camera to remain centered on the player. The code also allows for the declaration of margins which are a limited amount of space the player is allowed to move about in without triggering the camera's movement. By referencing the player the camera could also change data in the player's code. While the camera does not do this this functionality is necessary for creating level loading boxes which load the next level and teleport that level's player to the level's starting point. The manipulations of the player is also used by certain dialogue codes which cease player movement when the player comes in contact with a selected bounding box.

But let's go back to programming dialogues. This required two separate scripts, one to control a GUI box and the other to handle text to fill the GUI box with. The GUI box handle `TextboxManager.cs` is a script which is connected to the game object you want to function as your dialogue box. Unity allows you to create this unique type of game object and import the

image you want to use for your dialogue box as well as the typeface you want to use for your font. The activator will load in a script and then split it up by the separate lines. It stores the number of lines it creates and can loop through the lines until it reaches the end line. The script will also search for a player type object and depending on a boolean will cease player movement if activated. The TextboxManager class is referenced by another class called ActivateText.cs. This script can be connected to specific items you want to trigger dialogue from. Each object can be given it's own text or can set it's own startline and endline number to select text from a single script. The script can be triggered either by a collision between the object's BoxColider and the player's BoxCollider alone or via a collision and a specific button is pressed. The code also allows you to load in an Animator object so scrolling through certain dialogue will result in triggering an animation for the object with the script .This technique was used to trigger the nun's fainting animation after the player spoke with the nun.

In fact a similar technique was used for transition between two animated states. The programmer can create a variety of animations for an object using Unity's Animator component. This component will allow the user to recreate animations by using a special window. This window holds a record button and a timeline which can also be toggled to manipulate the animation between a dope sheet and a curves manipulator. To create an animation just create a new clip, press record, click on a spot in the time line, and move the transform and rotate tools to put the components you want tho change. The changes you make will appear on the timeline as dots which can be further manipulated to create a smoother action. Once recorded the animation becomes the items default state and it will loop on through that animation once the game is started. Using this method a wide variety of animations clips can be created and then toggled

between each other using the Animator controller. This controller provides a window into which each animation clip can be loaded and connected to each in which ever way the programmer decides. Using variables which will be filled in using scripts the programmer can set the conditions for the change so that the code which handles the players movement and velocity can use that data to set a value for direction which is then read by the animator to determine if the character is moving or standing still and thus switch animations from a walk cycle to an idle stand. The Animator Controller could also be used to set or change a default state though it would automatically make the first clip created for an object it's default animation.

Using the most of the techniques described separate rooms were created and linked together to create a short interactive experience. The final parts included creating a menu, adding sound and packaging the game into a downloadable format for play. Menus were simply other levels with buttons added which upon being pressed would activate a load level script. Unity provides a variety of GUI items including buttons which much like the dialogue box can also be edited to change their visual design. Sound was even easier to add as it the programmer only needs to upload a music file and connect it to an object. With the game functioning the next objective is to export the game using Unity's Build window. First the programmer needs to open each level scene and add the scene to the build list. The order in which scenes are added will determine the level number which is important to remember for the load level script. Once all levels are added the Build window allows the user can adjust the settings of the build including what dimensions the program should be able to be played at, what types of icon art the user wants to use for the game, and how high of a resolution the game should be able to be played at. Once these settings are were filled in the only thing left to do was choose the platform we wanted

the exported game to be playable on and what name we would be saving the game as. With all that completed the finally product was rendered and saved to the computer.

Chapter 6

Conclusion

This project overall spanned several semesters and three iterations, each using completely different formatting styles, programming languages, and visuals. Each iteration was an exercise in learning new ways of telling a story with the aid of technology. Video games are a very young medium with so much potential for learning and entertainment which are continually being explored and developed. We wanted to use this medium because it offers the chance for its audience to not only see or imagine a whole new situation but the ability to experience that situation first hand. To be approached with a world and situation unlike the one they currently experience and choose how they approach situations within that world. Those situations can be anything from rescuing a prince from a dungeon, competing in a grand tournament, setting up a civilization in a barren landscape, or finding a way to make the ends meet while living in poverty. While there are plenty of games that create empowering and heroic scenarios many new developers are trying to create experiences that ask the audience to question the world around them and learn from difficult situations that many live but are rarely explored be they in games or in many other forms of media.

These games seek to expose players to the lives and experiences of the underrepresented in the hopes of effecting positive change and discourse. Known as “empathy games” to many in and outside the gaming industry, these interactive experiences often put players in the figurative shoes of the under represented or simply present them as virtual characters for a player character

to interact with. It is the goal of these games and their developers to combat discrimination through understanding and empathy. A lofty goal but not one without merit as both the gaming industry and gaming community have come under fire recently for several cases of discriminatory harassment. Most notably harassment against women game developers, critics, and players. In one expose on the experiences of women within gaming culture and the gaming industry researchers Jenson and De Castell took note of several high profile instances of harassment targeted against women for having unconventional opinions on games or for highlighting issues women face when interacting with the medium. Specifically the online hate campaigns geared at famous game writer Jennifer Hepler and blogger Anita Sarkeesian who both received numerous threats of death and violence for expressing their opinions. Helper was targeted largely for her belief that narratively driven games should allow players to skip fighting and Sarkeesian for posting a Kickstarter campaign wishing to examine common tropes applied to female characters in video games. Jenson and De Castell also mentioned the #1reasonwhy twitter campaign which sought to expose the types of first hand instances of sexism and misogyny women in industry faced along with the types of sexual harassment and assault at many had experienced at conferences. It is the belief of those who create “empathy games” that by providing more nuanced narratives of unheard voices people can come to reject the harmful prejudices that they have learned and instead learn a more supportive means of interacting with people from different backgrounds and social standings. As posited in their PBS web-series on video games Jamin Warren, these games allow for a wider variety of stories and experience to be heard and many believe such games can reduce prejudices and encourage empathy.

The Blood of the Vampire seeks to be such a game meant to help students explore the highly complex and historically entrenched topics of feminism and race politics. It is a learning tool and a piece of entertainment meant to engage learners in the various aspects of this one girl's life and the lives of all the people she interacts. There are confrontations with characters from the story and historical figures all of whom struggle with issues that are still relevant to our modern discourse. There are discussions on racial purity, female medical autonomy, depression, and the role of motherhood. There are characters who flat out mock and ridicule those expressing new ideas of all genders, those that fully support them, and those who believe they are doing the right thing but are hampered by their culture's limited view of people's potential. This story is old but the ideas it can inspire are no less revolutionary today and the exercise of creating a narratively driven game was equally eye opening for both our writer and game designer. Within these games we were tasked with creating a narrative that was both controlled and fluid. The desires of the audience to shape the narrative had to be implemented so that they allowed players freedom without disrupting the narrative. What happens if the player tries to kill a character necessary for unlocking the next location? How might their feeling of the situation be used to shape Harriet's character. How does one create a protagonist that can be viewed as saint or devil without any change to their character design? What kinds of choices can we make to better or worsen our lives and the lives of others and how do those choices affect our future? I can not say that our project offered up definitive answers to all these questions but it did produce answers none the less. Answers which encompass our own unique style and opinions on this subject matter as well as offer up possible templates and examples for future designers to create their own games. Whatever the case *The Blood of the Vampire* was born out of a desire to give a chance to a

character originally destined for tragedy and allow its developers a chance to stake their own claim to the games medium and industry.

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