What Comes Before

Immersive Interactive Story

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Abstract

An immersive interactive story that poses the traditional philosophical question of “Nature vs. Nurture” in a new perspective. Countless twin studies have been done to address this topic, but what if you only needed one person? Thus, the story of *What Comes Before* was born.

Introduction

Video games are moving away from mindlessly going through motions and to telling meaningful stories. As technology advances, more effective techniques of storytelling emerge. They are beginning to steer into the direction of leaving players with lasting questions and emotions. They ask us to question if we would do things differently, to question our morality. We no longer are guaranteed to play the hero.

However, *What Comes Before* is not a video game. It is an interactive story. Much like *Heavy Rain (PS3)*, *What Comes Before* aims to draw the line between video game and movie. Unlike *Heavy Rain*, *What Comes Before* tries to add a more traditional medium into the mix: books.

Thesis

What Comes Before is an immersive interactive story that will force users to ask themselves, but perhaps find they are incapable of answering, the philosophical question of “Are we are who we are, or does our environment shape us?”

Methods

What Comes Before will be built with the Unity Engine; models and animations using Autodesk Maya, using a personally built tool using the Xbox Kinect; voiceovers recorded in the TCNJ recording studio; scripts will be written and organized in Celtx.

Research will include topics such as amnesia, various legal issues pertaining to scenes in the story, the role video games and media play in society, and several others that are sure to surface as development progresses.

Work Plan

- Complete text for scope of project: by October 30th
- Organize script from text: October 31st - November 6th
- Setup storyboards for cutscene(s): by November 6th
- Reserve recording studio and prepare for recording session: by November 13th
- Recording session: TBD (Mid-November to mid-December)
- Concept art: On-going

Implications of Work

What Comes Before will pose not only the question of “Nature vs. Nurture”, but also the questions of “What role do games play in our society?”, “What constitutes as a game?” and “What is an interactive story?”

Similar Concepts/Projects

Heavy Rain (PS3)
Shutter Island (Film)
Momento (Film)
The Machinist (Film)
The Shadow of the Wind (Book)
S. (Book)