

P2 Wolves in Wolves' Clothing Write Up:

Link to Game: <https://zugzug104.itch.io/wolves-in-wolves-clothing>

Password: password

Premise:

You are a member of a fraternity in the future. You face various dilemmas that put you at the crossroads of being immediately moral and accruing social capital to shift the culture of the fraternity. Many of the dilemmas you face are unique to Greek life on campus. Your choices impact the people immediately around you and everyone on your university's campus.

I wanted this game to reflect the experience of someone participating in Greek life trying to do good. Many of the problems we see in fraternity culture are passed down from the older generations to the younger. That's why your actions to and around the pledges have an impact on the overall house's culture in the game. Additionally, the way Title IX works in relation to Greek life and other organizations often places the burden of justice on members of the fraternity. This is a bad thing for many reasons and I wanted this game to showcase how. If the culture of the fraternity follows historical trends of protecting its members over the general campus, self-governance becomes a hall pass to act however you want within your house. Moreover, if someone outside of the organization wants to file a report, there are numerous social and institutional barriers that discourage filing a report. Lastly, I wanted this game to showcase that many of the people in the house are unproblematic themselves but their complacency towards bad behavior only allows it to snowball. The player is supposed to feel stuck and understand that there are no perfect choices. You must decide what you are willing to trade. The choices one must make to get elected to Judicial Board will likely negatively impact the house's culture in the long run.

"Why can't we report him to Title IX?"

"If any of us report him to Title IX, we can't take any action against him. That includes not letting him attend our parties. This process could take months and we aren't even guaranteed to win. It's in your best interest to keep this quiet. This isn't the first time he's done something like this, and he wasn't supposed to be at the party tonight. We have elections for the Judicial Board in 4 days. You should run."

Proceed

Resources:

<https://yaledailynews.com/blog/2023/02/24/title-ix-retaliation-policies-prevent-clubs-from-expelling-alleged-assailants/>

<https://mubetapsi.org/policy/doku.php?id=policies:title-ix-guidance#:~:text=The%20Fraternity%20cannot%20take%20any,take%20any%20action%20at%20all.>

<https://www.pandslawtitleix.com/blog/2023/february/understanding-retaliation-related-to-title-ix-ac/^^>

In one of the most important moments of the game, a list of resources about the issue I am tackling are given to the player

```
(if: $moral >= 1 and $popular >= 4 and $speech is "relax") [
You've won the election! (set: $election to "won")]

(else-if: $moral >= 3 and $popular >= 3 and $speech is "enforce") [You've won the election! (set: $election to "won")]
```

It is exceptionally difficult to win the election. Out of all the playthroughs one could have, less than 1/5 of them result in winning

```
{(if: $pledge is "vat") [(set: $culture to $culture - 1)]}
```

Culture variable also indicates the direction that the house is headed towards

Playtest:

First Playtest with Arnav (CS377G Student):

Feedback: The text is too chunky to keep me engaged. Shorten the text. The RPG elements are interesting though.

Changes Made: I rewrote large parts of my first draft and began my second draft with short, punchy sentences.

Second Playtest with Gracielly (CS377G Student):

Feedback: The quick time events are too quick and the text comes at the screen too quickly. The quick time features are interesting and engaging.

Changes Made: I added more time to both the text and the timer before a decision is made in the quick time events.

Third Playtest with Alyssa (22-year-old Design Masters Student):

Feedback: The story is good and interesting. I like the decisions I get to make. There are a few places where it is unclear who is talking and a few places where you could use the placement of the text to communicate more information. I would love to see how all of my choices affected things at the end.

Changes Made: I increased the timing for the quick time events and the text pop-ups again. I also added color to different speakers and put people on the left or right depending on whether they align with you. I added a legacy description at the end of the game.

Final Playtest with Ana (CS377G Student):

Feedback: There were a few bugs with text not popping up if I did not make a response in time for some of the quick time events. I love the legacy description at the end. The dilemmas were interesting. I liked the length. Love the worldbuilding touches with the different technologies. I would love to hear someone say something after the election.

Changes Made: I fixed the bugs! I decided not to add any comments after the election because I believed the legacy feature was sufficient. I understand that it would be cool if you could hear a pledge stick up for you or an active being unkind, but I liked making the player feel a little isolated regardless of what they chose.

Game Evolution:

The first main draft I had for the game was an RPG where you began as a freshman pledging a fraternity. You would encounter similar dilemmas, but the setup took too long and was uninteresting. Moreover, I struggled creating options where the player would want to choose being popular over being moral. Instead, I opted for the player to be someone who has already been initiated into a fraternity so they can have more agency within morally ambiguous circumstances.

The year is 3190. You are a bright-eyed freshman at MIT, the Mars Institute of Technology.

Are you a **Gloopalis**, an **Archetron**, a **Human**, **FROG** , or a **Crumpled Napkin** ?

I am a **FROG**.

Confirm

RPG character selection screen from first draft



Superior intellect and inferior strength. Second species to join the Cosmic Union.

Character choice one from first draft

Gloopalis are strong. They were the last species to join the Cosmic Union.



Character choice two from first draft



<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Frog>

Character choice three from first draft

Moreover, I had big chunks of text that made the game unengaging according to my first playtest and to conventional wisdom.

Finally, waste management services pick you up and take you to a landfill.

You are once again reunited with the sun.

However, you understand that it is only a matter of time until the next pile of garbage arrives, burying you once again. You choose to appreciate the moment that you have with the sun instead of worrying about your inevitable, and likely permanent, parting.

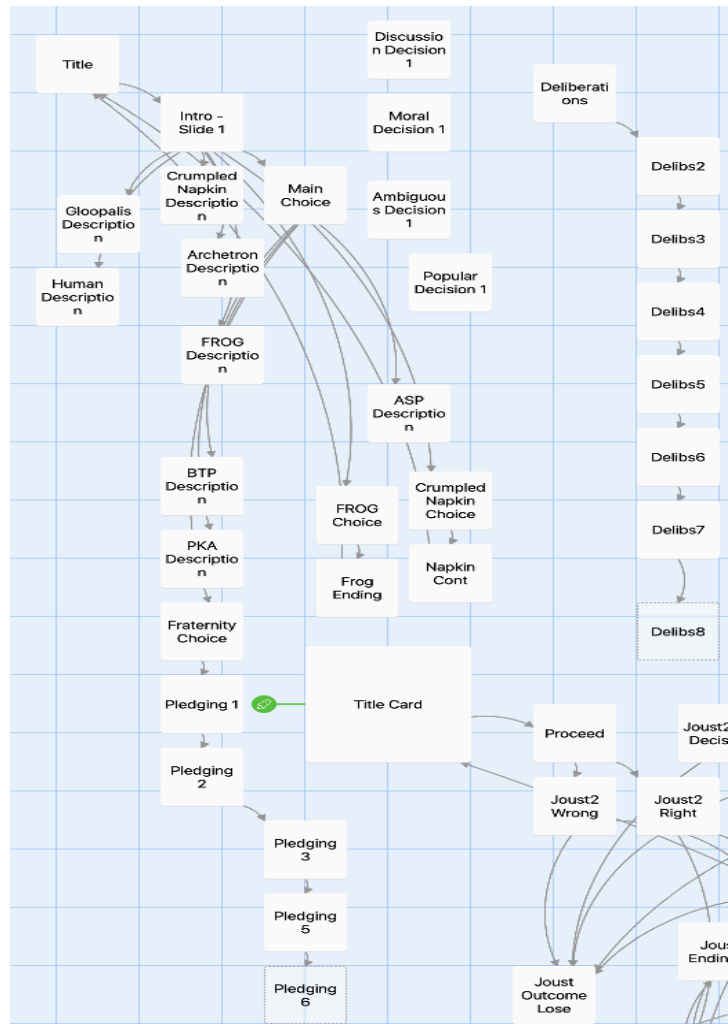
You begin to appreciate your lack of agency because you are allowed full control only of how you choose to process the events around you, and you learn that this is enough for you to be satisfied.

You understand that all good things come to an end and that infinity is inescapable for all things, sentient or not.

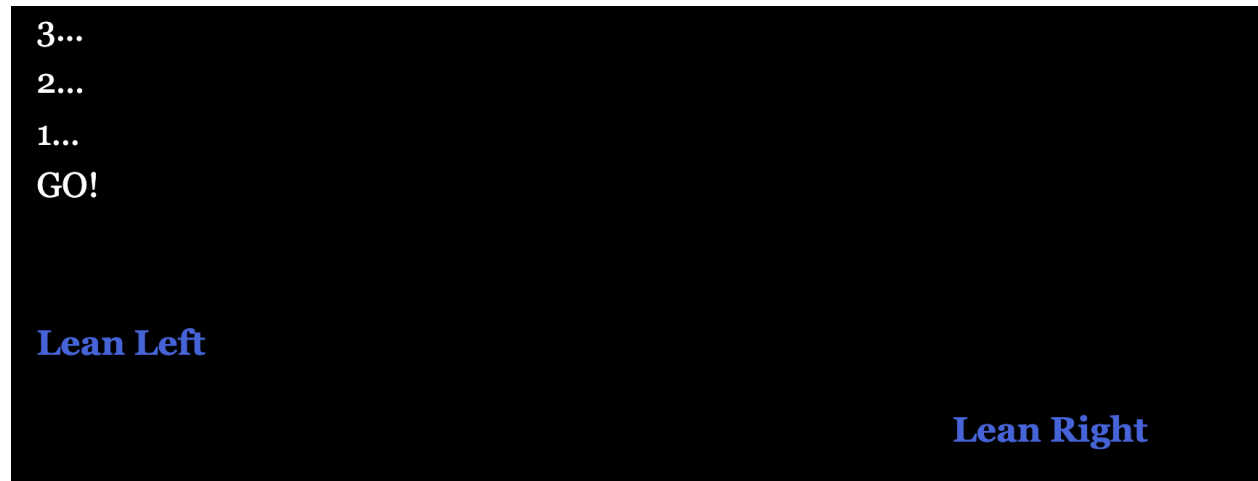
You are filled with satisfaction because you choose to be, and that is a great choice indeed.



Example of a huge chunk of text from the first draft



For draft two, I started by reducing the walls of text. Instead of large chunks, I had short sentences and quick time events to make it more engaging. From my second playtest, I learned that the quick time events were engaging and that the short sentences packed enough meaning to develop the story. However, the timing of the quicktime events were too quick, so I had to fine-tune how much time I gave my players to read the text and make a decision.



Example of a quick-time event

From my third playtest, I learned to further increase the time that I gave players to read and respond to quicktime events. I also learned to leverage elements like text alignment and text color to make the game more readable. I was worried that some of my dialogue would sound too cartoonish despite having encountered it in the real world, but my playtesters did not think so.

"Hey, Wing. Get in here."

"What's up guys?"

"Did you hear what happened to Bruno? He's being investigated for dancing with a girl."

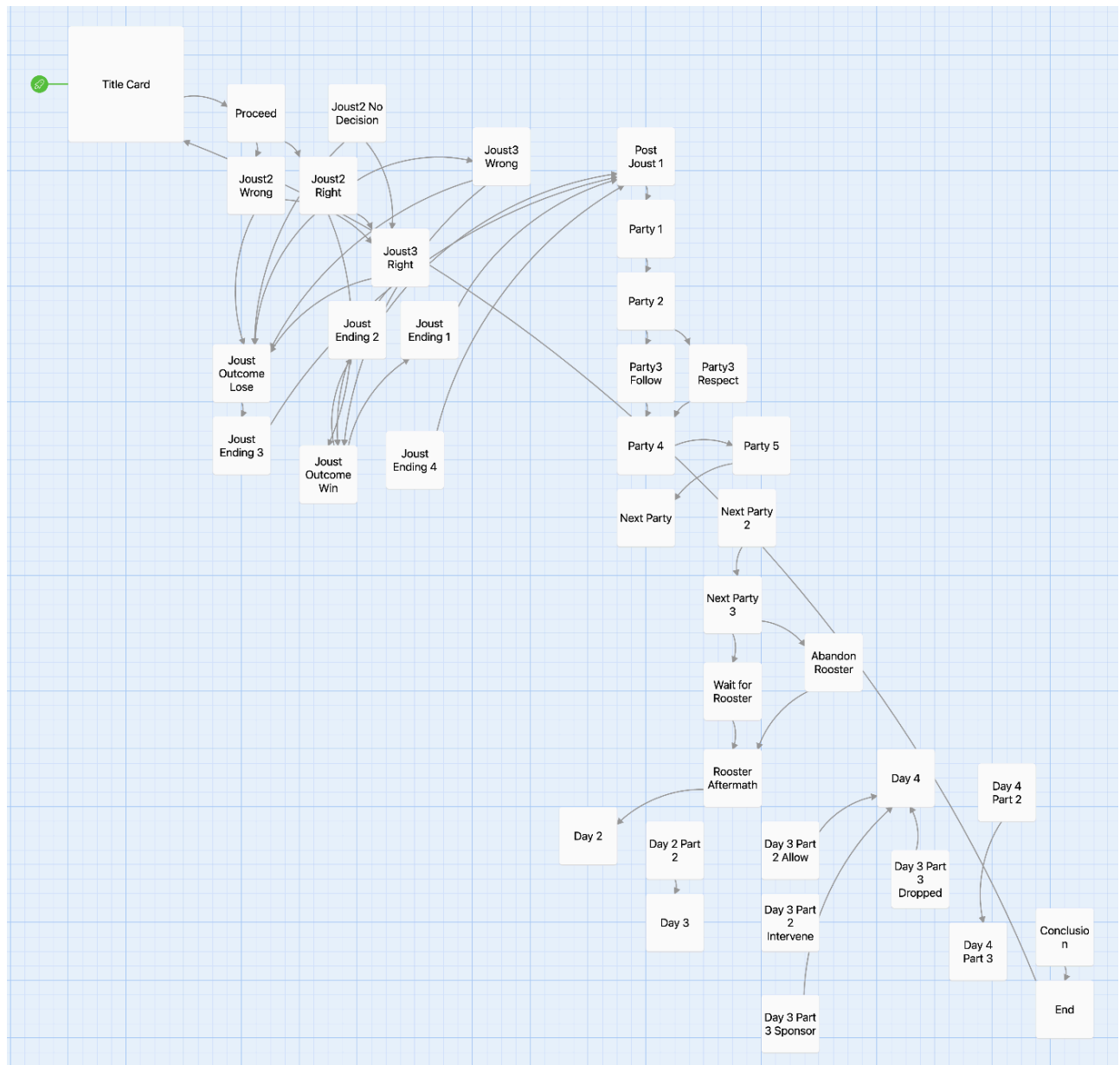
You feign ignorance.

"That's ridiculous. Why would he be investigated for that?"

"He was grinding on her, but he didn't know she didn't like it. It's not like we all haven't made girls uncomfortable at some point."

Example of text alignment and color to enhance UX

From my final playtest, I learned that many of the mechanics I've implemented fulfill their intended purpose! I had a few bugs pertaining to text rendering and timing, but I was able to fix those.



Final Twine story tree

Reflection:

I began this project by just putting things on a page and getting stuck figuring out how I want to get to the part of the game where I get to talk about the things I want to talk about. I learned that I can just start the story where I want it to begin in order to make the player and myself more interested. I also began the game by making side-stories to get away from the plot that I was already developing. That should have been a sign that I did not like my current plot. Next time, I would flesh out which ideas I want to communicate first, figure out how to convey them in a

setting, and start in the middle of a setting or at the middle of a setup. I do not write often, but if I did I believe I would have an easier and more fun time creating interactive fiction.