The History and Evolution of the Dating Simulator- and My Personal Love Letter to it All

Luthier D. McCabe

The Beginning- 1980's

Out there, somewhere, there is the perfect one for you. Maybe they're sweet and nostalgic. Maybe they're about mean and super sexy chicks or about highschool sweethearts. Maybe they're about dating birds and the horrors of war. I'm of course not talking about people, I'm talking about dating simulators.

Dating simulators are videogames where the primary objective is to pick a character from a select cast and pick the right in-game options to romance them. These games are most often in first person with the characters speaking to you, the player, directly. They are also most often visual novels with little to no actual 'gameplay' aside from picking dialogue options and action choices. Think of them as a choose your own adventure romance novel.

The Dating Sim genre has been immensely long standing with the first of which coming out in 1987. 'Nakayama Miho no Tokimeki High School' was developed and published by Nintendo for the Famicom following the boom of social simulators like 'Little Computer People' and text adventure games like 'Adventure'. 'Nakayama Miho no Tokimeki High School' takes the life simulation aspects of a social simulator, with the core of the game being normal everyday life, and the choice based gameplay of command line text adventure and combines them into a

then completely unique experience. The plot of the game was rather simple, you are new to the school and one of your new classmates just so happens to look like your favorite celebrity, Nakayama Miho. In fact, you are convinced she is Nakayama and are determined to win her heart. To do this you must pick the right dialogue, action, and expression options. Pick the wrong choice and Miho leaves school and you get a game over. This aspect is a major shift from the other choose your own adventure games of the era which had far more branching paths and potential endings rather than just a firm good ending and a game over. This would become a staple of the genre with most future Dating Simulators having one 'Good Ending' per romanceable character and one 'Bad Ending' if you make the wrong choice.

Another aspect of 'Nakayama Miho no Tokimeki High School' that would become a staple of the Dating Sim genre is the layout with the game being separated into 3 boxes: Visuals, Dialogue, and Choices. The visuals box is the largest and takes up most of the screen, since the art is not only a major selling point but the character's expressions will help you pick what dialogue option best suits the situation.

Next is the dialogue box, where all the conversations take place. You can tell which character is speaking by both lip flaps and the dialogue being written in a script like format. "Luthier: Like this", for example. Last is the choice box where you can pick out of a set what you want to say or do. While on screen most of the time in 'Nakayama Miho no Tokimeki High School' the choices box in most future Dating Sims will appear only when a choice needs to be made.

Japanese First Wave- Late 80's-90's

'Nakayama Miho no Tokimeki High School' was a major hit and from there came the first big wave of dating simulators. 'Dōkyūsei', 'True Love ~Jun'ai Monogatari~', and 'Tokimeki Memorial' came out nearly back to back in the early 90's with a primary focus on highschool romances. These games were largely 'cute' with a rather innocent aesthetic. However there were some erotic elements but in a more coy 'pretty girl trips and falls and you can see her underwear' rather than hardcore nudity. Unlike their predecessor these dating sims have multiple girls to choose from, or 'routes' as they would later be known by. While future dating simulators mostly force the player to only pick one route per game, these middle early dating sims not only allowed the player to pick multiple girls at once, they often encouraged it by offering a special 'harem' ending.

Another interesting thing in this era of dating simulators is that while pure, nothing else but dating sim, games were extremely popular so were games that had dating simulator elements. Games like Harvest Moon and Sakura Wars are both standouts in this category and both came out in 1996. They are both Role Playing Games, or RPG's, and both of them are incredibly different. Harvest Moon is a casual farming simulator where the main goal is to grow and harvest plants, sell them, and turn a profit. Sakura Wars is a tactical war game taking place in a fictionalized 1923 Japan. Completely different games, sans one thing of course, they both share dating simulation elements.

Both these games were ported to the west to major success and their dating simulation aspects kept which means to a lot of people Harvest Moon or Sakura War could've been their intro to the genre. But, this is far from the entire case. You see, to talk about the eventual boom

of western dating sims we have to talk about the late 90's early 2000's Japanese Pop Culture boom in the states.

Anime had been a semi underground medium in the states. Subtitled copies of shows like Fist of the North Star and Akira were hard to come across but they certainly had their fanbases. And then almost overnight there was this sudden boom that reverberated across every airway possible. TV, Radio, word of mouth, even newspapers. This boom would go by the name Toonami. A two hour TV block on Cartoon Network dedicated to action cartoons and later, anime. Sailor Moon and Dragonball Z were practically overnight hits firmly cementing anime into the mainstream. At the same time Nintendo and Sony were revolutionizing the gaming sphere, porting game after game from Japan to America as the interest in these japanese titles surged. This led to fan-translations and, if popular enough, official translations of important simdates like Sakura Wars and Tokimeki Memorial.

The SFW games were not the only ones that made their way overseas but a majority of the NSFW one's were fantranslations. This is because at the same time the states were getting their hands on them, Japanese lobbyist groups were fighting for the ban of nudity in games, with Sega in 1996 banning any nudity on its current console. This made these porn games, like 'Rance' and 'To Heart' akin to forbidden fruit to American players that wanted to see just how sexy these banned games were. It was the streisand effect in full force.

With all these forces in motion, erotic sim dates being brought to the states via fan translations, true dating simulators getting official releases in the states, and an overall boom in all japanese pop culture in the states, America saw its first surge in dating simulators. I've categorized them into 3 separate subgenres for the sake of this essay but remember all of this is happening between the 2000's and early 2010's.

Western Eroge: Insecure Men and Dominating Women

One stark difference from Japanese eroge and American eroge is the role of women. In the classic tragically important eroge Rance , the player is entirely dominant. The player is encouraged to go so far as to assault these women and are rewarded with pornographic images for their actions. Rance is not the exception, non consent plagues the Japanese Eroge genre and while important enough to mention I do not want to go into full detail as I don't find those smaller details necessary. I only bring it up to show just how strangely different American eroge is in comparison. The player in these games is often bullied by not just their sexy dominant female dating options, but the narrator itself. Making the game in itself feel like a form of sexual humiliation.

Some would argue that this is just american developers trying their hand at the Japanese 'tsundere' archetype. A tsundere is a character that runs hot and cold, often brash and standoffish until the right boy swoops her off her feet and flusters her. But that is not the case in these games, not in the slightest. I would argue that the women of the American Eroge are flat out dominatrixes. But, why?

In the 2016 essay by Seung Hoon Jeong 'Femdom, the libidinal edge of interfacial heaven' she states "Male desire is to fulfill female desire; this is a basic instinct. Bossy confident women can take full advantage of their beauty for the female-led relationship even beyond the feminist pursuit of gender equality, reversing the power hierarchy in the name of female supremacy. Having a vagina means not lack, but rather power to harden, control, and exploit a penis, thereby possessing its owner's mind and wallet". Dating simulators are all about

simulating a romantic relationship, it just so happens that to a lot of men the idea of a dominating partner, someone they can be subservient to, is really appealing. Especially in a fictional context where you don't have to worry about the societal expectations about how men 'should' be in relationships. I reached out to a professional dominatrix I know, New York is great like that, and asked him about how he views male submissiveness as someone that gets paid to bring people into that fantasy. He brought up similar points to Seung Hoon Jeong but added on with "It's normal for men to crave sex and intimacy but it's not seen as normal to be submissive, the taboo of it is what gets a lot of people. But only if they know no one else will know". And where better to explore one's own submission then in a video game that no one ever has to know you play.

These American Eroge's are targeted towards men who want to indulge in this form of bullying and humiliation. One game in particular hyper-focuses on the fact that the player has to be this anime porn craving idiot who doesn't know how to talk to real girls, the name? "Don't Die Dateless Dummy". The game starts by actively making fun of the player by having the narration read:

"Another summer wasted without anything worthwhile. How did I turn out to be such a loser? How did I graduate highschool without having a single girlfriend? Oh right, I spent my entire fucking adolescence sitting on the computer playing mmorpgs and surfing the web all day. College classes start tomorrow, so I'd better get my shit straight or else i'll wind up a 30 year old kissless, handholdless,virgin"

And this is far from a standout. These games go out of the way to make the player feel humiliated for even playing them. In "Something's in the Air" there is no romance option where the woman is not at least a little rude to the player and in "Who's Gonna Get the Girl Edition 1" the running joke is that she's spending all of the players' money. And in "Don't Get Nervous

Talking to Girls", a game actively marketed to be a how-to guide to interacting with women, you get made fun of to your face if you say anything 'wrong'.

And while yes the women in these games hold more power than the player character it's important not to look at them as these feminist pieces. They are far from it. These eroges are made by men for the male audience and the women in them are little more than a pretty face and body to humiliate and arouse the player. And the game that does this the best and has since become a landmark for the American eroge genre is Huniepop.

Huniepop is a 2015 dating sim with tile-matching elements. The creator in a 2019 interview with Techraptor was asked why he made the game to which he answered: "I wanted to avoid the usual innocent waifu style character types you see in visual novels time after time.". And while I disagree with his thinking that Huniepop was doing anything new in this fashion I do agree with how he answered the question "What do you think the secret to HuniePop's success is?" to which he said:

"The reaction has been very surprising. I think there are a couple of factors contributing to its success. Firstly, it has boobs. Let's be real, boobs are always going to move units"

And boobs indeed. Huniepop has a multitude of dating options and while I could describe the character appearances words do no justice. On the right is one of said options, an alien named Celeste. She is just one of the many busty women the player has the option to romance, though there is one character with a noticeably smaller bust and that becomes a bit of a running joke in the game. The player has to figure out what the girl's like to eat, get it wrong and they'll be insulted, what gifts they like, get it wrong and be insulted, and solve the puzzle right, get it wrong and you get the picture. Huniepop is a genuinely comedic game though it is important to note a good

chunk of the jokes are at the players' expense making fun of their presumed lack of sexual prowess, which as we've seen is a hallmark of this era. Huniepop is not necessarily revolutionary for its content however it is for its impact. It came out at just the right time and thanks to a highly successful kickstarter came out to an already large fanbase. Plus, Youtube back in 2015 had vastly looser censorship laws so "Let's Plays" of the game were everywhere with the most popular ones getting around 7 million views. It was funny, sexy, and the women were mean and the player was a loser they somehow found attractive. It was and is the apex of the American made Eroge.

Otome Games: The Dating Sims for Girls

While a fair chunk of dating simulators in the states took a turn for the sexual, another took the exact opposite turn. As we explored a majority of dating simulators in the late 80's early 90's were centered towards men there was one in particular that stood out. Angelique was a dating sim marketed to young girls that came out in 1994 and while it didn't necessarily spark a surge in dating sims for women it lit a slow burning match. Angelique was inspired by the Shoujo manga genre, which according to Hyeshin Kim in "Women's Games in Japan: Gendered Identity and Narrative Construction" is "the archetypical girly heroines, the emphasis on pure, sexless, tranquil romance and on a peaceful, stablesetting". Hyeshin Kim credits Angelique and its simplicity for getting a lot of women into gaming as a whole since at the time the genre was so male dominated and scary to step foot into. And while Angelique didn't make the 'dating sims for girls' genre, or Otome genre as we now know it as, blow up overnight, it lit a slow burning match that has yet to flicker out.

The western audience didn't get its first officially translated Otome game until 2007 with "Yo-Jin-Bo", a fairly simple visual novel with six romance options. Each of them being a classic teenage girl romance archetype, with well meaning goofy idiots and calm kind 'good boys', all the way to the classic 'bad boy'. A trope that has earned its place firmly in the general romance genre since its founding. Edward Horgan tries to explain the phenomenon in "Exceeding the Threshold, Why Women Prefer Bad Boys" by saying "After all, James Bond, James Dean, and Jesse James all share a dangerous, roguish persona, and women in our popular perception seem to find them hard to resist. Indeed, existing scientific literature upholds the idea that bad boys are irresistible. These studies, of course, couch that irresistibility in the reproductive success of bad boys. In other words, studies examining dominance and hypermasculinity show that bad boys have more sexual partners and are perceived as more attractive than their more considerate counterparts (Sadalla et al. 1987; Bogaert and Fisher 1995).""

The Shoujo influence also brings an archetype not often seen in western teen romances: "The Prince" or "Bishōnen". A very androgynous pretty youthful boy that has an essence of elegance to him. From here, finally hitting the west, the genre began to slowly but surely build. Especially and almost solely with the indie game community. At the time 'games for girls' was still a market seen as small and pointless because 'video games are for boys'.

So because large companies wouldn't make them, indies did. Sakevisual and Pacthesis were two major powerhouses in the indie otome community. And the best part? A lot of them were free. "Anime Sim Date 2.5", the original has since been lost to time, came out in 2008 and was made by one teenager. "RE:Alistair++" came out in 2010 and had a team of 5 people. And unlike the male dating sims they didn't have a backlog of countless professionally made games to reference in their creation. They had manga to reference and other fans to bounce off of.

Making these early games entirely unique in feel. Of course since it was such a small environment some tropes began to become evident, every game had to have a bad boy, a prince, that sort of thing. But no one really minded since it was only that community making and playing each other's flash dating games. No major companies really hit that market in America until a south korean company translated one of its major overseas hits.

"Dandelion: Wishes Brought to You", a beautiful yet weird otome game about falling in love with your pets that are actually magical cat and bunny human hybrids from another world. It tackles class divide and nepotism and how one needs to focus on their own happiness before they crack under the pressure from their parents. Each option is beautifully written and I remember crying as I watched a blonde boy with bunny ears talk about being exiled from his family despite only ever wanting to impress them. It is by all means a delightful game.

4 years later it got completely overshadowed by one of the most popular dating simulators in history that single handedly put otome games on the map. Mystic Messenger is a 2016 mobile dating sim, with over 2 million downloads to date, where the player would get real time text messages from the romance options. Each romance route lasts 11 real life days with days dedicated to getting to know each romance option. Our classic archetypes still stand with bad boys and princes but, the accessibility, popularity, and vastly unique gameplay of 'Mystic Messenger' cemented it as one of if not the most important dating simulators since "Tokimeki High School". Not only did it help prove otome games had a market, but games dedicated towards teenage girls and young women did as well. It finished what Angelique started.

Humor and Romance: A Genre becomes a parody.

With erotica on one side and sexless romance on the other planted firmly in the middle is a genre that laughs at both and at itself. Satirical dating simulators started in both Japan and the states in similar ways, both being indie developers laughing at the tropes they saw in popular dating sims and turning it up to eleven. “Creature Romances: Kokonoe Kokoro” (2013) saw the hypersexualization of women in the eroge genre and made a game about dating a grotesquely sexy grasshopper girl. “John Cena's Sexy High School Adventure!!!” (2014) saw girls dating bad boys and pretty princes and made a game about dating 13 time (now 14 as I finish this paper) WWE Champion John Cena. If “something is just bad (rather than Camp)” because of how it's “too mediocre in its ambition” then the games of this genre are more camp than tents. And the one game in this genre that does it best and is on every single ‘weird game’s you gotta play’ list and on my personal, genuine, greatest games of all time list is Hatoful Boyfriend by Hato Moa.

Hatoful Boyfriend was originally published on April first 2011 and saw a full English release in 2012.

It is a game about dating birds.

Hatoful Boyfriend takes place in a fictionalized future Japan where most humans died out and birds got hyper intelligent. The protagonist you play as is the only human in a highschool by the pigeon for the pigeon. It is every bit as strange and you could imagine and pray for. You could date a bird that becomes the god of pudding, a super spy or his rude princely half brother who longs to play the piano. You could date your childhood friend who works to support his sick mother or you could try your best and fail to date an evil gay scientist who only looks at you as an experiment in the truest extent of the word. And those are not even all of the choices. What

Hatoful does that these other satirical games do not, and what future ones will truly lack, is understand that it is strange but instead of inviting the player to laugh at it encourages you to invest in it. After a while you no longer think of these characters as png's of pigeons and doves but as real genuinely well written characters who you want to see succeed. And after completing every route, one at a time, Hatoful Boyfriend does the revolutionary action by giving you the option to play the 'true' ending. And while I could go on for hours about it, pages upon pages of singing praises, I will instead ask you genuinely to download the game and experience everything for yourself.

With Hatoful's success and the overwhelming number of other satirical dating simulators, Huniepop being one of them as it's largely humorous as well, the dating sim market in America took a turn. All of the most popular games were either humorous on purpose or were joked about (mostly otome's since society will always laugh at the teenage girl) and so the genre in itself became a joke. Successfully oroborus-ing itself.

Companies can do it too, it's just not funny.

"I Love You Colonel Sanders" is a 2019 dating simulator developed by, funnily enough, a studio called Psyop and was published and funded by KFC. It is a dating simulator only in name with all of the elements that the genre has come to be known for stripped away in favor of one big ad. There are no multiple routes, only one dating choice and only 3 endings. There is no depth to the humor, it's joke after joke about how 'funny dating simulators are' as a concept while banking on genre fans to play it. Its only purpose was to sell chicken and not be an actual game.

"Hooked on You" is a game in a similar vein, a dating simulator made to advertise the horror game "Dead by Daylight" but thankfully it learned from the Colonel's mistakes and tried to be

more of a game than an ad. But at the end of the day both games are just ad's meant to capitalize off of what dating simulators were thought to be after parody took over.

"Where we are now."

Dating Simulators are not going anywhere they just look different, and even then only slightly. We still have large games with dating simulator elements like we had back in Harvest Moon but instead with games like Yakuza and Persona. We still have otomes, in fact that genre is booming now more than ever with 9 studio made games being released to the Nintendo Switch in early 2025 alone. American Eroge has taken a bit of a step back but even then the latest Huniepop game came out in 2021 to equally large numbers and even more women to choose from. Satirical dating sims have continued to boom in America but have dwindled immensely overseas.

The best example of this is Nintendo of America chose to hype up the game "Date Everything" being released during their live stream while staying silent on the fact "Tokimeki High School" was getting a remaster, it was the exact opposite in Japan. As for where these games are going in the future I see them going a more hyper realistic route. The mini-dating sims in the "Yakuza" franchise have gone from animated to real women within the last two games and full dating sim titles like "Love Is All Around" and "Knowledge or Know Lady" being major hits with casts of real women rather than pictures. The gameplay involves you watching videos and making choices rather than reading dialogue and action lines.

As for AI I'd argue that it doesn't have a place in the genre because a game where you romance an AI is not a dating sim, it's a chat bot. The biggest difference between the two is that chatbots mold to the user but Dating Simulators as we know them are set experiences for the

player to consume as written. But that may change with the rampantness of AI, we will just have to wait and see.

“Title: The Dating Sim”

All of this research led to me creating my final, an actual dating simulator. The game was made in the Ren’Py game engine in Python with Java elements for a more interactive experience such as occasional text-adventure based conversation options, pronoun and name choices, and a point system that would calculate which character you were kindest to and lead you onto their route.

The game itself is a love letter to the history of the genre, thus why I spent so much time talking about it. I did this by having every romanceable option be based off of an era of Dating Sim. I’ll go into more specifics later but the basics are:

- Joy Hopeful: Japanese First Wave
- Bichon Anderson: Otome Craze
- Phelicia Phallus: American Erotica

These characters do not require the player to know the genre or history beforehand to play and enjoy. You do not need to be a genre veteran to enjoy the game. However, there is occasional referential humor that genre veterans may pick up and laugh at.

That being said “Title: The Dating Sim” is not a joke nor is it a satire. Throughout the process I was asked multiple times if it was supposed to be a parody and, while my game is

humorous, none of the humor derives from the game being a dating simulator. I set out to make a true blue Sim Date and I can confidently say that is what I did and I did it well.

Visuals: Character Design, Backgrounds, and Visual Language

I set out to make a game that celebrates the history of Sim Date's and one of the biggest signifiers of the different eras are the way the games themself look. And while I consider myself an artist now thanks to a sincere conversation with my project advisor, I know that visual art is far from my specialty. But I wanted each character to have their own personal artist that specialized in an art style that echoed the era. So in order to have this strong visual language in my game I set aside the entire winter break to make as much money as I could so I could hire artists to bring this idea to life. I ended up making around 500 dollars doing odd jobs and writing fanfiction. From there I found 3 different artists across different platforms to make 4 different sprites that displayed different emotions: happy, upset, neutral, and one special sprite unique to the character.

Designs and Philosophy : Joy Hopeful

Joy Hopeful is representative of the early days of dating simulators. She is cute but plain and any semblance of sexuality is stripped away. She's your titular 'childhood friend, girl next door' trope. Design wise she is truly a love letter to both 'Nakayama Miho no Tokimeki High School' and 'Tokimeki Memorial'. Her color scheme and art style is taken from 'Nakayama Miho' and the yellow headband

on her head is taken from ‘Tokimeki Memorial’. The creature on her shirt is a reference to how when some older games get HD remixes the new artists don’t know what to do with lumps of pixels, so they just try their best to imagine what the original intention was. The fun thing about her design is that she has a strand of hair on top of her head, an ahoge, that changes shape depending on her emotion. This is a reference to the game mechanic in Miho where the player would have to pick a specific facial expression to use when selecting their dialog option.

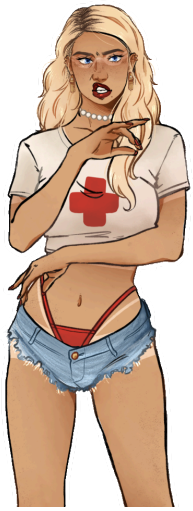
Story wise she is incredibly simple. She’s your childhood friend who’s not necessarily the star of the show, she’s kind and supportive, and all of her story beats are very grounded in reality.

Designs and Philosophy : Bichon Andresen

Bichon Andresen is representative of the men of the Otome genre. His name is a pun on his archetype, Bishōnen. He’s as beautiful as he is handsome and by all means was designed with the intention of being a teenage girl’s dream; buff but not scarily so and slightly feminine in appearance. I got that answer by replaying a bunch of Otome games and picking bits and pieces from the fan favorite characters. The tight shirts of Jisoo from Dandelion and the glasses of 707 from Mystic Messenger. I made sure the artist gave him slightly larger hands, which is a common trope in the otome genre. Personality wise he’s mysterious and gentlemanly, which is a combination of two very common archetypes and story wise he slowly lets the player break down his walls and see his true self. He’s secretly a softy whose parents don’t want him to pursue his dreams but you, the player, inspire him to follow his heart. It’s laughably tropey but that’s what makes him the perfect amalgamation of otomes.

Designs and Philosophy : Phelicia Fallus

Her name alone says it all. Phelicia is the epitome of Western Eroge. She's mean, she's sexy, she thinks you're pathetic and everything about her is dialed up to eleven. When I was first designing her I was really nervous. The genre and archetype she is based off of is highly misogynistic. However it is still incredibly important to the history of Dating Simulators and I would be unable to create a game that encapsulates the whole history of the genre if I ignored the 'sexy bitch' trope. I brought this up to a few different people ranging from my project advisor to my senior sem professor to my sister to other women in my life. Eventually I got a really solid answer in the form of a 9:30 am phone call with my project advisor who said to make it camp. When I asked how I got the best answer I could've ever asked for: "Watch Pee-Wee Herman". I did and created Phelicia, a blonde bombshell that hates you. She's campy in her design with tanlines and nonsensical shorts. Storywise she does not like the player but the player slowly falls into the delusion that she does, and is just playing hard to get. The illusion is broken in her ending cutscene where she tells the player how much she cannot stand them, a complete breakaway from the iconic 'confession cutscene'.

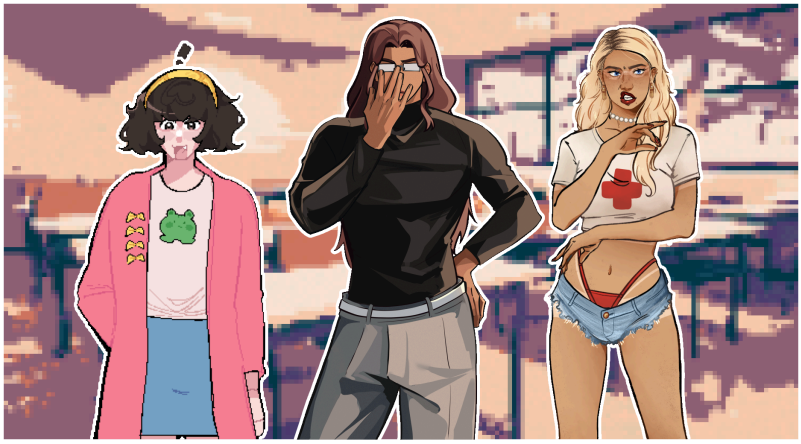


Designs and Philosophy : Backgrounds

Backgrounds were a different story, I did not seek out a background artist. With every character being so visually different I needed a way to make sure that they would all look good no matter what the background was. And so I needed a way to make largely neutral yet non-boring backgrounds.

At first I tried taking real images and just blurring them, but that didn't look quite right. I needed a perfect middle ground for all these different art styles to look good against, and I landed on pixel art that utilized fine pixels. I did this by taking art and putting it into an edited version of JavaScript originally by José Moreira.

From there I took the backgrounds and changed them all to have a simplified color scheme so that the player could make out the background without all of the colors of said background clashing with the characters. I placed a white border around the whole image to act as a frame and to make sure the characters all fit in visually I placed a white border around the characters as well. This made everything cohesive despite the designs all remaining so different. This was the end result



The Show and Feedback

A demo was set up at the senior show and a notebook was placed by the computer so I could see any feedback and take it into consideration for future edits of the game. Watching people play it was fantastic. People reacted to it exactly the way I wanted them to. I heard people make fun of the kind but plain Joy, girls swoon at Bichon (one even called him ‘sexy Rexplode from Invincible’ and while not the intention I do see the similarities), and one man even came up to me to thank me for making Phelicia so sexy. People that were major fans of Sim Dates and people that have never heard of them before alike played and enjoyed the experience. The criticism I got was great and largely future forward (‘add this’, ‘what about..’, ect) and some was gameplay based. One of the most interesting parts of getting critiques were the recommendations for more visual novels to play, and truthfully that mattered more to me than the countless ‘great game!’ comments.

It mattered more to me, not because I don’t like praise, I do. But because it meant someone saw my game as the love letter it was and thought ‘this guy would like this too’. They shared in my love for the genre because they saw just how much care I put into it and how much I genuinely adore the genre. As I continue to work on the game I aim to add more endings and more archetypes, like a super buff kind sexy man that gay men see a lot in the sims made for them, some more jealousy so the player feels fought over (a simdate classic), and of course an ad and meta nonsense that while I may not personally enjoy are common enough elements in dating simulators to want to ad and reference. I may even add in a minigame, lightly making fun of how dating sim minigames are in countless games from Persona to Metal Gear Solid: Peace Walker.

Overall I had a great experience and will go forward to finish “Title: The Dating Sim” to truly make it amazing. Not just as a senior thesis, but as one of many Luthier McCabe games to come.

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