

The argument I am making with my game is that war is a cruel thing, but even though we want to hide away from that cruelty and want to end that cruelty, we cannot do those things. In war, cruelty is necessary. If war was kind, there would be no reason for it to end.

In my game, I used several things to help people relate to the protagonist. Immediately in the beginning, I give them the option to look around your room and by doing so you get to learn about how much the protagonist loves their spouse and daughter which gives life to the character. You live your life as them and get to learn new things about this futuristic world where the game takes place. But this happy, care-free life ends when one of the men you are directing dies. Your character begins to suffer, but the next day things begin again, exactly the same. The protagonist barely notices that something is wrong, but the player has to struggle with the fact that they have this knowledge that someone has died but nobody else does. Later in the game, the protagonist goes through this same struggle as they slowly realize that everybody has forgotten the sorrows of war happening around them.

The biggest things that I used to help players identify with the protagonist of the game were the direction sequences and glitchy text. Each day, the protagonist is tasked with leading a group of 25 soldiers through a fight. Your job as a player is to completely take over and give each direction. The fact that players have this high amount of control over these situations means that they will feel more responsible when faced with the death of one of the soldiers. The choice that they made or the order they gave is the reason that somebody died, and this is supposed to help the player feel more connected to the protagonist's emotional struggles and also to the soldiers that have been lost. The other tactic I used to help players identify with the game and the protagonist was the glitchy text. Every once in awhile during the game, certain words appear glitched, these words typically being things like the names of soldiers who died in the past, or people that the protagonist should remember, but doesn't. These glitchy words are meant to be a visual representation of the protagonist's struggle to remember and also, on the last day, the pain of a headache and forgetting again. Because the player can actually see these struggles instead of just reading about them, it should be easier for them to understand the protagonist's suffering, especially during the last day of the game.

I end the game with a quote from William Tecumseh Sherman, where he says "War is cruelty. There is no use trying to reform it. The crueller it is, the sooner it will be over." If all of my previous attempts at trying to get people to understand my message fail, I hope that this quote will successfully tie everything together for a player, but also leave them with the question of whether they agree with this statement or not. I want players to walk away asking themselves if they would rather forget the horrible things, not only in war, but in life, or if they want to remember everything.