

Under Choices Narrative Design Document

Revision History

Revision Number	Name	Date	Description
1	Matthew Tunney	2022-01	Document created
2	Matthew Tunney	2022-01	Headings added: Synopsis; Message/Theme; World; Characters; Choice;
3	Matthew Tunney	2022-02	Added more content to headings from GDD
4	Matthew Tunney	2022-02-11	Added Objects heading
5	Matthew Tunney	2022-02-17	Adding content to the Objects section
6	Matthew Tunney	2022-02-27	Added Content to the Message/Theme section
7	Matthew Tunney	2022-03-27	Added content to the Summary section
8	Matthew Tunney	2022-04-03	Edited Summary section
9	Matthew Tunney	2022-04-03	Edited Level 8 in the Choices Section
10	Matthew Tunney	2022-04-15	Edited Level 8 in the Choices Section
11	Joshua Pritchett	2023-03-08	Grammar and spell check pass; Added beat map

Synopsis

In the modern day, we as people are subjected to a new threat to our mental health known as Doom Scrolling. It is the practice of releasing worrying, depressing or aggravating news to the public as a method to control or influence people's decisions.

Our story takes place in a fictional, modern-day country called U.S.A.R., in the city of Lago de Maio before the pandemic became a thing that overcame the world. The player, a recent graduate and owner of a bachelor's in communications and journalism, has just been hired at Under Choices Entertainment (UCE) as a higher-up news editor. The company is secretly connected to the government and aims to control the populace of the country. But thanks to a new work-at-home policy that's been recently established at the company, you can finally make some decisions of your own.

On the first night on the job, the goal of your superiors becomes clear. You are tasked with making sure that the news posts which support the government's efforts for control are boosted onto the screens of every resident in the country. Knowing that anger and sadness are powerful and influencing emotions,

you are told to spread these words of hate and despair to the people, but under this grand webbing of puppet strings you have been cut loose. Working at home now, the company has yet to implement any form of security or methods to view your work while at home, giving you full control over what you release to the public. From here, it is up to you to decide not your own fate, but the entirety of the U.S.A.R. as well.

As the player chooses and releases postings to the country, the world around them changes. You need to be careful whom you side with in this war for control, as you watch it all come together outside your office window. The player could move to influence a new age of peace and prosperity in the country, start a civil war, or be “removed” from their position at work and from the memory of the public.

Message/Theme

Using fake news and doom-scrolling to foment extremist groups and escalate conflicts.

World

The U.S.A.R. is a country founded somewhere in central South America and is heavily based on and inspired by Brazilian culture. The country neighbors such other real-world countries, which potentially get involved with the player’s decisions, but under new names (i.e., if another country does partake in the conflict in the U.S.A.R., they will not be directly named or tied to a real-world country, but instead be referred to as New Donza, Breminairo or a different name.).

Under Choices Entertainment was founded by Gregory Smadony, an immigrant from North America who came to the U.S.A.R. to profit off the lack of a news industry in the country, in the early 1900s. After the world had been plunged through two world wars, the company started making a name for itself with the invention and widespread use of radios, telephones, newspapers, and television. The company turned into a monopoly on news in the U.S.A.R. and frequently released propaganda to help in the war effort during this period. The public strongly believed that the company was giving out information to them to better understand the choices that people can make in the country, for better or worse. However, in the 1990s, Mr. Smadony passed away and the company was privately contracted by the government and secretly managed by one of their head chairs. The new leader of the company, Mrs. Braga Filha, pushed the company’s news postings to the new era of mobile phones and digital news postings, forcing their headlines into the eyes of every citizen of the U.S.A.R. When the government took ownership of U.C.E., they also made a ban on all other old forms of media, such as newspapers and telegrams so that only the digital news they released to the public would be seen.

One-bedroom lower-middle-class apartment in Lago de Maio, a town under the U.S.A.R. regime, Union of South American Republics. The room is messy and unfinished, making clear the protagonist's lack of money. It is possible to see exposed wires in the poorly installed electrical part, the walls with unfinished plaster, and the old furniture that must already be third hand.

The computer and equipment occupy much of the room, all coming from different setups, creating a distorted mix of old and cheap pieces—everything connected to the precarious outlet system utilizing

adapters and workarounds. Through the window, it is possible to see the irregular dwellings spreading out among the hills, covering where there was vegetation before. At the top of the farthest hill, you can still see the statue of Real Messiah, the great USAR leader.

Summary

The unnamed protagonist, a recent graduate of the now-extinct communication and journalism courses, must choose to either go to the U.S.A.R.'s House of the Herd and never be seen again or accept his call to work as an outsourced worker working without rights at Under Choices Entertainment (UCE) as manager of social media for the government.

Since the government finances the UCE, the player will have to follow the regulations and guidelines set by the government strictly, disclosing only what they want the population to perceive as reality. However, with the increasing cuts to the salaries of outsourced employees, the player will have to work from his precarious home to fulfill the company's goals without an official office. In the absence of direct and close supervision of his work, the player will be able to post whatever they want on government social media if the U.S.A.R. doesn't notice, or they will be able to follow the rules of the game to try to get a better life.

Depending on the player's choices, the game will generate different endings.

In the Health ending, the protagonist's uncle will die and leave a message for the player along with a bouquet on his desk.

Character(s)

Player

The unnamed protagonist, a recent graduate of the now-extinct communication and journalism courses, must choose to either go to the U.S.A.R.'s House of the Herd and never be seen again or accept his call to work as an outsourced worker working without rights at Under Choices Entertainment (UCE) as manager of social media for the government.

Braga Filha

Career soldier born into a traditional family. Braga has always been a patriot who scratched his country above all else, even her own. She was a direct supporter of the armed regime that formed the U.S.A.R. government. Since then, she has worked at the highest levels of government, always keeping an eye on how the population sees their country and its leaders—taking the necessary precautions so that the "badly spoken" has its social destiny. For this purpose, Braga directly heads outsourced communication companies, such as Under Choices Entertainment. Although her opinion about the U.S.A.R. was always as clear as glass, Braga's patriotic side never ceased to disturb her conscience, especially when she sees her country's population suffer.

Patricia Jequitinda

Patricia is a young and dangerously politically active woman. She has a lot of social influence, enough to be noticed in the U.S.A.R., because of her critical and controversial posts on social media. The protagonist met Patricia at college, and the two remain close and in contact to this day. Being from a

conservative family, Patricia has always been the black sheep and a critic of the U.S.A.R. government, contradicting all members of her family, especially her father, who is a staunch supporter of the government. Now with the protagonist working at Under Choices Entertainment (UCE), Patricia needs her friend more than ever to help her cause.

Augusto Carreira

Astute and good at talking, a typical rogue from the peak of his 40s. Augusto is one of the bicheiros who has always managed to prosper, whether with a bit of help from the government or not, always finding a way to stay legally illegal. As the good mobster he is, it didn't take him long to find out about UCE's new hire and get the protagonist's contact. Augusto knows the importance of a good image and how social movements can harm his business, so he makes a point of asking the protagonist for "favors," mostly illegal. Like any good bicheiro, his interests are neither for nor against the government, as his only interest is himself.

Mc Leqkin

Black, lower class, and born on the outskirts of Lagos de Maio, Mc Leqkin is the protagonist's childhood friend, and they consider each other as brothers. He doesn't care about politics or the U.S.A.R. government. The only thing that matters to him is expressing himself and following his dream of becoming a great icon of favela funk.

Even with the depressing situation that society is in, Mc Leqkin never lets himself be shaken and he does everything to keep his spirits up and not let himself get depressed. The protagonist has always been a great friend to Mc Leqkin, but their new job could push that old friendship away at a time when Leqkin may need it most.

Alexandre Reis

The protagonist's uncle, Alexandre, is an older man who has difficulty dealing with all the information he receives on his smartphone. Alexandre's life has improved a lot since the U.S.A.R. was implemented, and he is very grateful to the government for it. The government's international closure policies have helped its market growth, and the government has been helping to create many opportunities for the true citizens of the U.S.A.R. Even though it causes debates and discussions, Alexandre always made a point of staying close to his family members because that is most important to him.

Potential Plot: Alexandre is the oldest of two brothers, the other sibling being the player character's father. The player's father passed before the game takes place, and Alex was very hurt by his departure. As a result, he felt a need to take care of the player, his nephew, as if he still had a younger brother. In his texts, he'll refer to the player as "Novo" or young in English. This is what he used to refer to his brother as when he was still alive. Throughout the story, the uncle will send texts slowly revealing this tragic backstory during his time of illness.

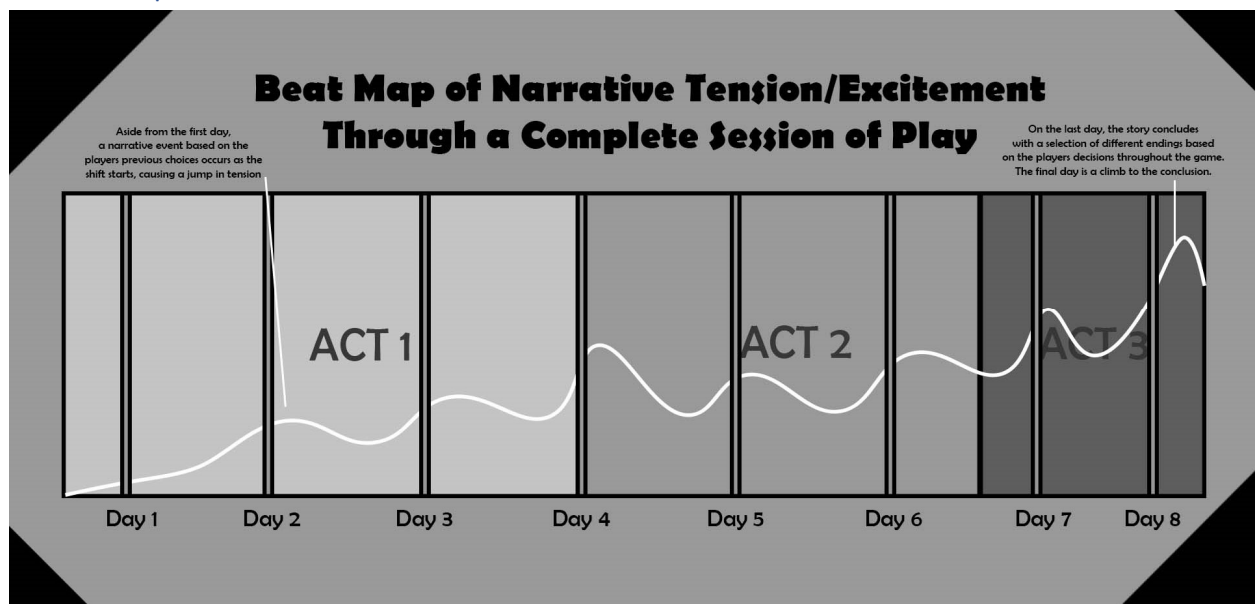
Objects

Plot Devices

Computer: The device from which the player will interact with social media posts.

Mobile phone: The device with which the player will interact with some of the main characters

Beat Map



Choice

Level 1

If the player reposts pro-government news, the government will use riot suppression methods on protestors.

If the player reposts anti-government content, an anti-government protest will start.

Level 2

If the player reposts extremist content, a protest will turn violent, and people will cause massive property damage.

If the player reposts anti-government content, an anti-government group hijacks the airwaves.

If the player reposts pro-government news, the government will use riot suppression methods on protestors.

Level 3

If the player reposts anti-government content, an anti-government group hijacks the airwaves.

If the player does their job well, a disinformation campaign will occur to counter the earlier hijacked broadcast.

If the player reposts extremist content, a protest will turn violent, and people will cause massive property damage.

If the player reposts news about illness on social media, a government news report of an illness spreading around will be broadcasted, but the government tells people not to worry.

Level 4

If the player reposts news about illness on social media, a news report will be broadcasted. It reports that deaths regarding the illness mentioned earlier start increasing, but the government tells people not to worry.

If the player reposts extremist content, a protest will turn violent, and people will cause massive property damage.

If the player reposts anti-government content, an anti-government group hijacks the airwaves.

Level 5

If the player chooses fake news about the illness, the player's uncle informs them they have a doctor's appointment coming up.

If the player reposts extremist content, a protest will turn violent, and people will cause massive property damage.

If the player reposts anti-government content, an anti-government group hijacks the airwaves.

Level 6

If the player booked an appointment for their uncle, the doctor tells you and your uncle the symptoms are nothing to worry about for now, but to take medicine, just in case.

If the player reposts extremist content, a protest will turn violent, and people will cause massive property damage.

If the player reposts anti-government content, an anti-government group hijacks the airwaves.

Level 7

If the player reminds their uncle to take medicine, the player's uncle will do so.

If the player reposts extremist content, a protest will turn violent, and people will cause massive property damage.

If the player reposts anti-government content, an anti-government group hijacks the airwaves.

Level 8

If the player reposts anti-government content, the government loses its control over the people, and war erupts across the country. The government has been brought down. Alexandre calls the player to ask them about what is happening. Patricia calls to thank the player for helping bring down the government. Mc Leqkin calls to ask if the player can hang out with him later. Radicalism Ending unlocked.

If the player reposts extremist content, a protest will turn violent, and people will cause massive property damage. Alexandre hopes the player is staying safe. Mc Leqkin and Patricia wonder where the player is. Violence Ending unlocked.

If the player did not remind their uncle to take medicine earlier, Alexandre dies from illness. Mc Leqkin offers his condolences and aid and awaits the player's response. The company has offered a period of leave to mourn for Alexandre. Health Ending unlocked.

If the player boosts mostly government-related posts, the government will give a speech on all media in the country. Alexandre gets diagnosed with depression. Patricia is not heard from again. It seems like she disappeared. Mc Leqkin is no longer talking to the player. Braga offers to help the player move to a new home. Government Ending unlocked.