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Once Upon a Time: Reflection

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Abstract—This paper is a short reflection on exposing myself to a variety of different media, (books, comic books, and television shows), that contains concepts on time travel. With this exposure, I will then attempt to draw my own comic book with time travel in it.

Keywords—time travel, comic book, time machine

I. INTRODUCTION

Up until recently, I have never been interested in the idea of time. What ignited this peculiar interest is something that a person might find unusual, and that is character design. One character I want to create has the ability to travel through time, but I do not want him to just travel to the past, present, or future with no repercussions. What I really want is understand different theories on time traveling to make him more realistic. For example, how can this character do what they do? What happens when this character changes an event in the past? Did the change previously happened, and he is just fulfilling fate, or does it completely rewrite the future that this character knew of? In sum, what I want to know is what exactly happens and what might make time travel realistic.

So, with those goals behind my mind, I decided to expose myself to a variety of media, all centered on time travel. With this exposure, I want to create my very own comic book with some sort of aspect of time travel in it.

II. MATERIAL REVIEW

In total, there are three different books and two comic books I have read. I also watched all the episodes of the Japanese cartoon or anime called Steins;Gate. The three books I read were The Time Machine by H. G. Wells, Slaughterhouse-Five by Kurt Vonnegut, and How to Live Safely in a Science Fictional Universe by Charles Yu. The two comic books were The Time Machine Illustrated Classics edition and Kindred: A Graphic Novel Adaptation by Damian Duffy and John Jennings.

In a short summary The Time Machine is about a man, the narrator, who creates a time machine and travels into the far future where he meets the Eloi, a short human-like race who only eat fruit. He explores this future land and finds another race called the Morlocks, a white-ape like race who live underground and eat meat. The Morlocks attack him the narrator runs away and travel back to present time.

This book was one of the first instance where the word, “time machine” was used. That is the main reason why I read this book. I also read the Illustrated Classics edition to see a side-by-side comparison between a normal book and how it was translated into a comic book.

Slaughterhouse-Five is about this war veteran named Billy Pilgrim, who unconsciously leaps through time in his own lifetime. For example, during World War II, he would be the slaughterhouse in Dresden, then in the next moment, he is on display on the planet Tralfamadore, a time way past the war. Therefore, he is unable to travel into the far future or a time before his, since he would not have existed.

Similar to the previous book, The Time Machine, there is little theory about how time traveling works. The most interesting thing within this book is how the Tralfamadorians experience their life. Unlike humans, they perceive their whole life time, experiencing everything at once. This reminded me of something I once heard. That God created time for us humans so we can perceive the world, while, compare to God, he is able to perceive everything at once, like the Tralfamadorians.

The last book I read was How to Live Safely in a Science Fictional Universe. This book is about Charles Yu, a time machine mechanic who travels in time to fix time machines All the while preventing people changing the past, which would stray themselves away from their own universe. At one point, he meets himself and shoots him. Running away, he jumps in his (future self’s) time machine. He then finds his father, who was trapped due to his time machine broke. Charles then amends with his father and travels to the present.

I really enjoy this book. They brought up a very interesting thought, in each the event where you meet yourself. This will cause an indefinite loop, having an unknown time in which he would have to meet his past self again.

Kindred was the last comic book I read. This book is about a black woman who goes by Edana (Dana) Franklin. Dana would live her life normally until she found herself in a pre-Civil War time. She would then have to save this white boy, whose
parents owned slaves, or she had redirect him to a different path. The reason is that he is her ancestor.

This book also had no scientific support. However, this book was more so on understanding how to form a comic book, more so than understanding how time traveling works.

*Stiens:Gate* takes place in Akihabara, which the main character, Rintaro Okabe, is able to twist time repeatedly using a machine that can send only text messages back in time. His laboratory members (friends) then plan to create a real time machine that could send memories, instead of just text messages, into the past. He then later witnesses his friend, Mayuri Shiina, die in front of him. Rintaro would then use the time machine repeatedly, sending his memories to his past self in attempt to save Mayuri with little to no avail. He then figures out that he is in a different universe, in which, to travel back to his own universe, (a universe with the possibility that Mayuri does not die), he would have to undo all the changes he had done with the text messaging based time machine.

Unlike all the other media, this one was very theoretical. For example, neutron star theory, a theory about a neutron star, which is 466,000 times the mass of earth, and yet, with a diameter of 10-12 Kilometers. Meaning that the gravitational force is high. The theory states that if you can travel to this star and survive the gravitational force, time would travel 30% slower. Thus, a way to “travel” into the future once you get off that star. Another theory focuses on a particle called Tachyon. This is a particle that always move faster than light. Therefore, anything that travels faster than light is able to travel back into the past. However, according to the laws of physics, it is impossible to travel faster than light. Other theories mention consists of Wormhole theory, Cosmic String theory, Dirac Antiparticle theory, Black Hole theory.

### III. **Self-Made Comic Book**

There are two different comic books I have made. One being a very short story with six panels on a single page, and the other one being another short story, but with 19 pages. For the first story, I sketched each panel on a separate sheet of paper. I would then use photoshop to realign each sketch to fit on a single panel. Once I finished that I used the pen tool to outline each sketch. I added the dialogue once I finished outlining each sketch. Color was the last step.

Similar to the very short story, for the longer story, I started out sketching. However, I created a storyboard, mapping every single page out. I would then sketch each page from that storyboard. Then the same step above applies here, scan to my computer, outline with pen tool, added dialogue, and then color.

Due to the nature of the first story being short, I had to imply some portions of the plot. It is about this school girl, fixing her time machine. Some boy is talking in the desk in front of her suddenly get up from his chair, having that chair hit her desk, which spills her juice on her sleeve. The boy sarcastically apologizes. So, the girl sarcastically says there is no need to worry, all the while activating her time machine. The last panel shows no one in front of her staring out the window, happy that her peace returns. The implied part of the plot is that she went back into the past to prevent him from being born.

The more longer story had less portions of the story that is implied. It is about this college student, Jom, who found himself back on the day he first met his wife. He remembers that he was in his lawyer’s office with the divorce agreement in front of him. Checking the date and realize it was the same day when he first met her, he went back into time. His friend, George, points out that Hannah, Jom’s wife, was being ‘hit’ on and suggestion Jom to stop it. The first time Jom experienced this, he did what George said, but this time, Jom suggested George stops it this time.

The next day, George invites Jom to a double date with Hannah and her roommate, Lily. During the double date, Lily ask if Jom liked Hannah, which he denies. Then Jom looks at Hannah placing a shirt on George, testing the size. This made Jom remember the same event with her and another happy moment. Jom then wonders what went wrong and reminisce the bad time of their relationship.

Soon after, Lily and George were looking at skateboards, so Hannah told Jom that George mentioned about him and that he likes to draw, which, she also likes to paint. Jom then, unable to bear with his feelings took her away. Hannah confused wondered of Jom is fine. In this moment Jom started to wonder what he is doing. Hannah said that she will head back first. As she starts to walk away, Jom then had to decided whether or not to stop her and go through is life again or let her go.

### IV. **Conclusion**

From this process, I have learn very interesting theories on time, and how it is explain in other media. I have also learn a better process in creating my comic book and art forms. Initially, thought to be simple, took so much time and effort. I hope one day to revisit this when the time comes to create my character on time traveling, and do a more thorough analyzation of some of the media I have covered.
The Time Machine

Ok! I am Coming

Geez

How annoying. Why did you have to sit behind me?

Toh

Sorry about that. Let me show you a trick to make it up

... What perfect weather today

Beep
What am I doing here?

Well, maybe it's because you signed up for this class?

No, that's not it.

I don't belong here. That's right, the last thing I remember-
I was in an office.

And in front of me was... 

Yes, it's all coming back to me.

Divorce Agreement

I was in my lawyer's office with the divorce agreement in front of me.

Signature ____________________ Date ________________
I then checked the date.

Same day we first met.

And here I am. Exactly 20 years in the past.

Hey look! Chris is hitting on Hannah again.

Why don’t you go and save her?

How about you do it?
I remember that I was the one to help her out last time.

She was so thankful that she offered to buy me dinner.

Please! Let me buy you a meal!

It's all cool.

Good luck buddy~
I wonder where George went.

Huh?

WHAT?!

WITH HANNAH?!

...
Ah...

What is this feeling...

It's none of my business anyway.
Oh, dang dude! You don't look so good.

Not enough sleep?

Huh?
Oh! I am fine! No need to worry.

Well if you say so. Anyway, do you want to come on a double date with Hannah and me? Hannah has a roommate.

Well, I don't know.

PLEASE!
Hello everyone, my name is Hannah.

Sup, I'm George.

Lily.
And I am Jom.

I can't believe I agreed to this!
You like her, don't you?

Huh?

Hannah, I mean.

Wha- wha- WHAT!?

What are you talking about?

Of course not!

Oh really? You've been staring at her since the beginning.
Yes really! It's just...  

...  

Just what?
It's just...
Where did it all go wrong?
They both love to skate don't they?

George told me that you draw on your free time.

I love to paint!
Huh?

Where are you taking me?
Is there something wrong?

Why did I do this.

What am I thinking?

I'll just head back first.
Do I stop her here and do it all over again or do I let her go?