

Harvard Ext. Final Project: Fall 2016

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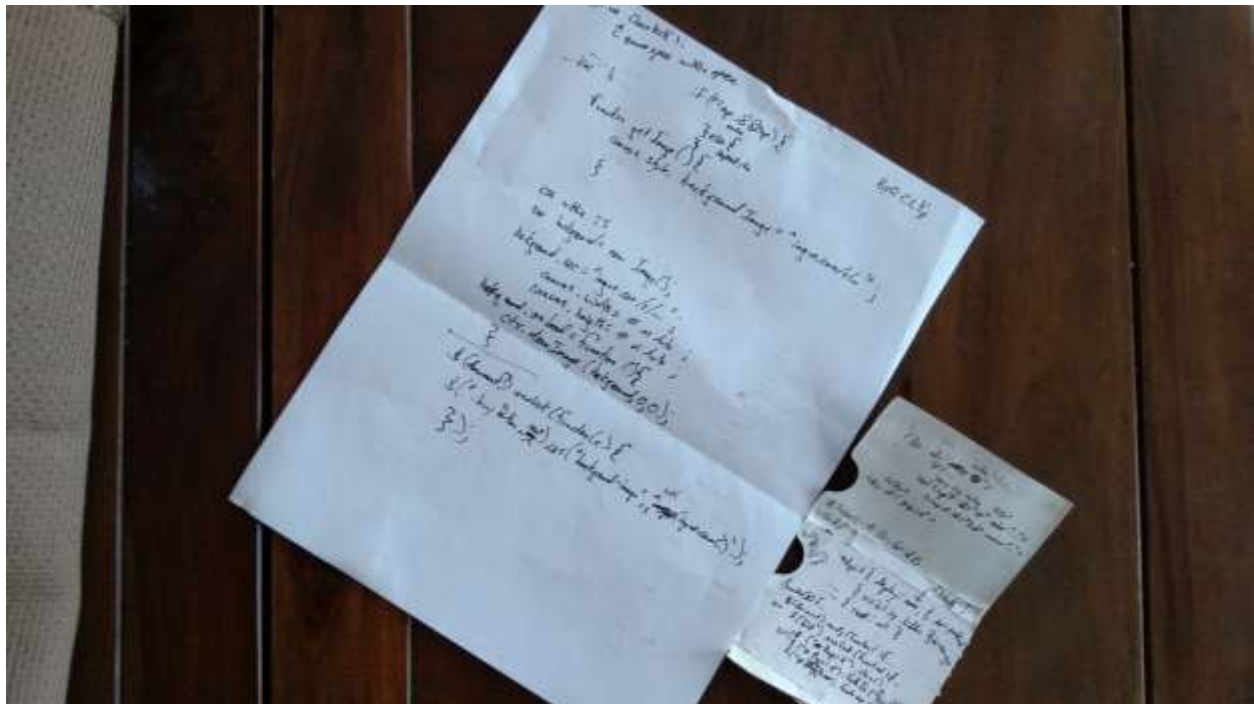
The Objective:

This project was the final grade for a Web Programming Class at Harvard Extension. The requirements were to tie in Dom creation/modification, traversing the DOM, event handlers, and closures. There were the other options of form validation, handling data, and AJAX use. However, I already proved knowledgeable of those aspects so I opted out of those selections.

The Outside Newcomers' Disadvantages:

90% of the class already had a work history, concerning web programming. As a chef, I was the only person coming, with an analogue career, into a digital subject. In terms of resources, I didn't have the luxury of digging through my corporation's past work now made "public" like my classmates. I had to make something from scratch- something simple but capable of showing elegance in terms of JavaScript, which the user may view.

Meanwhile, as I've been attending school, I was also working full time. Sitting down to write out a project was a luxury a chef does not have. The holiday season was upon us, and every day was spent prepping, packing, cooking and cleaning for business & family events. Knowing this hurdle, I decided that sticking to jQuery would be the fastest & efficient way to create & finish my project. With each available moment, I'd pull out my notepad or the nearest paper (ie: menu, gum wrapper, bar napkin, etc) to jot down the possible script which could be used to satisfy the requirements. Composing a basic empty script was easy, but giving it substance was harder.



A Story Is Born:

A picture's worth a thousand words. Given that, all I had to do was find a few pictures to get a story started. Although a complete story could be written based off of a single painting, having only said painting on display for every step of the game would quickly lose the user. The new hurdle became finding an album consisting of different pictures in a similar illustrative style. It wasn't long until I found an [album on Imgur](#) (a free image sharing website) with potential. Sifting through the paintings, I looked for the general feel & purpose of the genre. It became apparent that the cyberpunk genre had a twist with one picture- A man in a leather coat, standing, disconcerted despite the hovering police cruisers whizzing past him in the cold rain.



This man had to be a significant part of the story. He had no face, you couldn't see the color of his hair, and you couldn't quite pin down this male's physical details. You could, however, get a sense of his mentality. Plus the Asian characters in the neon background were just screaming for a Blade Runner-like story (this was before the news of Blade Runner 2049, being released, mind you).

Much like the setting in Blade Runner, it was always raining albeit for the metaphor declaring the world to be decaying. There had to be a reason for the rain in this story. In the original Blade Runner novel, the rain had a connection to pollution from previous global conflicts. This idea was heavily considered but ultimately turned down for the project as our man in the trench coat needed a purpose. Like the movie, he became a detective. What is he detecting though?

Music: Enhancing the Project & the Process:

Like most stories on the screen, silver or small, there's a score to serve and enhance the feel. The obvious choice was to check out the original soundtrack for Blade Runner. The synth music was great, but it needed an update, but also realizing that this was a project with a focus on javascript, I wasn't going to dig any deeper than necessary by creating an original score. Instead, I found modern synthwave as a genre to start my search for a decent score. After playing roulette on Youtube (Spotify can only

allow so many skips as a non-paying user), I finally came across [Gunship's "Fly for Your Life"](#). It matched perfectly. This was going to be the theme song to not just the story but the actual journey to finishing this project.

Working long hours with no weekends until after the deadline, music can be a positive tool in this scenario. Listening to the right (preferred) music can allow one to think more clearly, openly, creatively and thus quickly. These features serve as a commodity, especially when tight on schedule and handling a heavy workload.



Beta Testing Phase:

With the story set and buttons assigned to their specific event handlers, I needed a different set of eyes to test out the product. The beta testers I picked were a mix of people who either knew web development/design and people who were simply detail oriented. This allowed one group to point out user flaws and the other to point out technical issues.

Before further understanding Github, I was using [jsfiddle](#) to direct users to the project for testing. The nontechnical users were instructed to focus on the bottom right window which was result of the composed HTML, CSS, & JS. As for the technical group, they were free to wander & fiddle with the code, with emphasis on the JS. Communication occurred through email & gchat. In terms of feedback, a punch list was used for each user. Each issue/comment was listed and sent to the developer. After each item was analyzed and adjusted, the user went through their punch list again to see if the issues were fixed or any new issues were found. This process was repeated until no significant issues were present. The duration of the Beta testing phase occurred within a week.

From there, I was able to adjust & polish the product for what it was at that point. The result ended with the highest grade in the class, while still having the potential to continue the project. As you can see, the story isn't finished. In due time, the story will continue and eventually come to a fantastic end.

In the meantime, enjoy.