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## About This Game

In 199X, you control Clara. That's the problem.

The doctors say she's delusional, but you both know that can't be true. The two of you need to explore Delilah, the town where Clara lives. You need to navigate her messy, personal relationships. Most of all, you need to find a cure. And beat the game.

199X is a 2-3 hour narrative adventure, split into seven playable days. It is written by Evan Tognotti, and features a full-length original soundtrack from acoustic weirdo Kearney.

**Play 199X. Help you help herself.**

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## WHAT PEOPLE ARE SAYING

"199X advertises itself as a 'game without mechanics,' which is probably because it is another crappy Steam Greenlight game made in RPG Maker. It is a 'lightly interactive' game (aka players basically press the arrow keys) and features a whooping one protagonist. Again, this is because this is a horrible excuse for a 'game' made using a horrible excuse for a 'game engine.' Not only that, but the developer of this game has the utter gall to charge for this couple hour 'interactive experience.' Although is (sic) is only \$2 US, it is still disgusting people are being charged for this crap." - [Lusipurr.com](http://Lusipurr.com)

"There is also quite a bit of social justice in this game which makes parts feel a little bit like a (sic) 'educational game' or propaganda... don't expect any male characters to have any depth or role in the plot, it's all about the ladies and the male characters are there for window dressing." - **A Steam reviewer**

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Title: 199X  
Genre: Adventure, Indie  
Developer:  
Evan Tognotti  
Publisher:  
Evan Tognotti  
Release Date: 11 Dec, 2014

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English



Remember when I told you?  
Remember when I said  
+ that you'd  
FORGET  
and yet...

There's no regret left  
**BUT** I don't mind  
It's not like you'd find  
the kind of love I'd had for you then  
if you tried  
searching in the darkest places when  
I just spend the good will you'd  
built up  
All these years, no don't forget we'd  
Both rather be any place  
but Here - M.G.

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# 199X

A GAME WITHOUT MECHANICS



WRITTEN BY  
EVAN TOGNOTTI

MUSIC BY  
KEARNEY

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If you are into very deep, emotional, indie games, this game is for you. I love how the game actually involves the person playing it because it really feels like you're there talking to all the characters. The story really sets you on an emotional rollercoaster. The songs are pretty rad and the character you play as really gets you to like her. Also lots of internet and other game references which I like.

10/10 would cry to again.. I really enjoyed this game. The music is gorgeous. The characters are very likeable and their relationships are interesting. If you're looking for something short, sweet and cute this is the game for you.. Wow...this game has left a deep and emotional scar for me. The whole game breaks the fourth wall to the point of understanding the same feels that Clara feels. This will be the only game I have actually used my name for. Clara, you will always be remembered as a friend of mine.. It's got an interesting story - no, sorry, that sounds like a backhanded compliment. It's a GREAT story, but the mechanics don't manage to hold it up.

Getting from place to place is slow and boring. The environments are too large and full of empty spaces, and there's nothing showing me which way to go. All I'm told is the colour of the building I'm looking for. The \*colour\*. Nobody refers to buildings by colour, but it's their only distinguishing feature in this game. And if I didn't write down the dialogue where I'm told where to go next, there's nothing to remind me, forcing me to search the entire oversized city to find the next plot event. Loading a savegame made before that dialogue is my only recourse.

There's no map, no quest log. At least there are constant messages informing me that a particular piece of knowledge has been stored in my inventory - which is a very clever twist on standard RPG mechanics. But I was completely disillusioned when I went to consult a piece of information I'd acquired earlier, because as far as I can tell, the game doesn't actually have an inventory at all! The mechanics flat-out lie to the player about what is possible!

And because there's no way to get a reminder of what you're supposed to do next, loading a savegame is an exercise in frustration. I load the game, and it plonks me down outside my house (or wherever) with no context. If I don't remember when I saved, I don't even know what in-game day it is.

And all this is a great shame, because as long as you stay on the path the designer intended, it's a very engaging story. Lots of love and betrayal, brilliant characters, a dystopian future with some very weird ideas about women, and some scary-trippy segments where Clara questions her own sanity. All the characters are well thought out and developed, there's no background NPCs who repeat the same lines over and over. It's moving and thoughtful and just a little bit silly, if you can get into it.

But it doesn't take much to break my immersion. One minute, Clara's happy to babble about fire extinguishers and vending machines for pages on end - the next, there's no text for examining her neighbours' homes, not even to tell me who lives where. Yes/no choices pop up, but my response is barely acknowledged, and forgotten at the end of the scene. Some rooms don't have visible exits, leaving me to hunt for the invisible trigger block. So there's a lot of small frustrations to distract from the story.

Now, it's cheap, so if you're not sure whether you'll like it I advise you to get it anyway. I don't regret buying this game. I just think it could have been a lot better.. Warning: This game is not a "game" per se. It is more of a mildly interactive visual novel, made with RPG Maker. If this is not your cup of tea, you might be disappointed. That's the reason behind many of the negative reviews, as far as I have seen.

If you are ok with the play style, you will be rewarded with a nice story based on breaking the 4th wall.

The characters are well fleshed out through realistic dialogues (complete with some swearing and mild sexual themes) both between themselves, and (for Clara, the protagonist) with you, the player.

Despite the cartoonish graphics it is actually more adult-themed, touching issues of relationships, existence and perspective. Some of them are not as developed as I'd like to, but, then again, it's a \$2, one man show game. I might be asking too much of it, and the truth is that despite an occasional lack of polish or unanswered question, it was still a marvelous experience.

Clara, I hope that against all odds you are ok. \*presses pinkie against screen\*. You control Clara, a girl admitted in an hospital due to her delusions, you'll soon break out and set out to find a cure for, well, the player actually: that's cause you're actually

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controlling her, you're the voice inside her head and are able to move her body and influence her actions. What follows is a slightly interactive game that tackles the themes of human relationships, mental illness and game design in equal part and isn't afraid to break the fourth wall in doing so.

**PROS:**

- great soundtrack
- engaging story backed by a truly good narrative
- manages to craft a surreal and somewhat disturbing atmosphere
- Clara is a very well written character with a distinct personality and believable reactions
- uses its 4th wall breaks very well

**NEUTRAL:**

-no real gameplay apart from moving around and interacting with objects\ characters (but then it's clearly explained in the Store page), this is basically a slightly interactive story

**CONS:**

- areas feel a bit too big and walking around can get trite at times
- the other supporting characters are quite lacking in depth, it's difficult to care about any of them (even when Clara does)
- unimpressive graphics even for an RPGMaker game

<http://steamcommunity.com/sharedfiles/filedetails/?id=660889975>

199x is extremely simple as games go, you basically just move around and interact with a few objects or people to propel the story forward. But the story and narrative more than make up for the barebones gameplay as they're truly good: the plot is slowly revealed as days go by and you find out more about Clara, her past and what's happening to the city. The whole thing seamlessly goes from disturbing to surreal to funny without breaking a sweat and it expertly breaks the 4th wall whenever necessary. Clara is also a very interesting character, has a good depth and is hard not to get attached to her as you play the game.

As good as Clara is it's a shame that the other characters you meet are pretty lacking in depth, even those that are supposed to be important in the story: a bit more interaction would have gone a long way in helping the player get attached to them and care about their fate as much as Clara does. The walking around can also get a bit dull as the few areas you travel through feel a bit too huge and, as far as I know, there's no quick walk button.

If you're ok with a game that is just interested in telling you a story then 199x comes fully recommended: there's something in Clara, her narrative and the subjects the game addresses that can easily leave a mark.

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A pretty interesting look at agency and control in video games. The story is great, and gave me a lot to think about, however the game suffers from several design issues. The levels and spaces are badly laid out and the general design of the city and interiors is quite poor. The game feels very slow at times due to large spaces between points of interest. The developers clearly has a lot of heart and some great ideas, but needs to work on the more technical and design aspects of making games.. A pretty interesting look at agency and control in video games. The story is great, and gave me a lot to think about, however the game suffers from several design issues. The levels and spaces are badly laid out and the general design of the city and interiors is quite poor. The game feels very slow at times due to large spaces between points of interest. The developers clearly has a lot of heart and some great ideas, but needs to work on the more technical and design aspects of making games.. I actually really enjoyed this short game! I came into this thinking it would be horrible but I got a lot of enjoyment out of this. I loved the story and the character development. The soundtrack was probably my favorite part of the game, very rare and exciting! The only thing I disliked was that I had to finish the game at one time because when I would exit it out, it would not save and I would have to restart. Other than that, this game is very great and enjoyable!. The bad: I was disappointed that this isn't really a game. The entire "game" is on rails, and even many of the interactions yield the same dialogue (or at best a small deviation before returning to the main dialogue), so at best this is the illusion of the game. Honestly writing additional dialogue would not have strained development and would have been pretty easy to do considering the game, so it comes off as lazy. Sure you move the character and press a button to examine things and trigger dialogue but you can't deviate from the linear path of the game. There is also quite a bit of social justice in this game which makes parts feel a little bit like a "educational game" or propaganda. Certain other parts just feel a bit amateurish, such as forced consequence-less battles and flat characterization. Don't expect any male characters to have any depth or role in the plot, it's all about the ladies and the male characters are there for window dressing.

The good: The tone and music of this "game" is spot on. I felt creeped out in a good way by the setting. I was decently engaged in the plot and figuring out more about the setting. It's a short game you can finish in an evening, and I think the price is fair for the experience, if you won't be turned off by the bad things I mentioned above. I got it on sale for cheap so I can't complain.

Overall I was let down by this title, as it really isn't a game, isn't interactive as it pretends to be, and has some political messages I found distracting and annoying. I think Tognotti could really make something good if he focuses on making his games more interactive and making characters less of caricatures. I would enjoy something longer with actual choices to be made. You know, like a game might have.. My expectations for this game were low, considering the price, but as I played, I grew more and more attached to Clara. It was amazing how I could feel her frustration as well as her loss. And knowing that I-- the player-- was the root of it was, while humorous, a sobering fact. I would recommend this to anyone that enjoys a short, simple, and immersive game.. This game is....odd. I've played games that break the 4th wall before, and games that make you make choices, and games that make you feel things. This game does some of all of it, and in a very odd satisfying way. I came away from this experience really thinking about some things in my own life. About perceptions I have about people I know and things that I do. Not very many games have ever done that to me.

I think a good game to compare this to, is To the Moon. Not a lot of gameplay, but that isn't the point of the story. It's there to make you think, and this game made me think.

If that's not the sort of experience you want, then this isn't the game for you.

Took me about 2 hours to beat, and I'd say that it's fairly priced for the experience. I thoroughly enjoyed it, and am going to see if the developers have made any more games.. Warning: This game is not a "game" per se. It is more of a mildly interactive visual novel, made with RPG Maker. If this is not your cup of tea, you might be disappointed. That's the reason behind many of the negative reviews, as far as I have seen.

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Clara, I hope that against all odds you are ok. \*presses pinkie against screen\*. I am very glad this game exists. At first, I only

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bought it because of its sarcastic title and after a couple of minutes of play I thought that the game is in an amusing way strange but has maybe some rather poorly written dialogues. But wow \u2013 may whole perception of the game changed.

Like games as \u201cto the moon\u201d or \u201cRichard & Alice\u201d it shows very good, what one can achieve even with very limited technology if it is used not to create a generic JRPG but to focus on the story and create some unexpected and creative narration.

Surely, some people might be angered or outraged because the game clearly shows tendencies to discuss some issues about misogyny, gender relations and the social construction of gender. It has by times some strong statements even if they are good incorporated in the narration.

Besides that, the story is simply strong! The weird sci-fi story mixed with a tragic love story and a young woman looking for her destiny in a pretty strange world that gets day per day more twisted. The whole story about love, violence, friendship, terrorism, sects, sex and the hate for women in the history of medicine is brought to you with the help of great way of narration: A surreal way of breaking the fourth wall (breaking? Devastation of the forth wall and half of the stage) and strange \u201cSophie\u2019s World interaction\u201d without the consciousness of the main character, which you control, and what indeed is the problem.

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