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Team 4: The History of You

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Website address	http://web.stanford.edu/class/cs247i/projects/F21/team4/?
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Table of Contents 📍

> **Kristina Inouye** Nov 12, 20: [Resolve] ⋯
> I like this section for continuity between P1 and P2 – thoughtful introduction!
> Ⓢ Reply...

Summary 📝

To review, *The History of You* is an interactive fiction piece that explores the effects of **intergenerational trauma** (defined as trauma passed down from initial survivors onto their descendants) on **people of color descended from immigrants in the past 50 years, and their view on mental health treatments and their relationship to their culture.**

> 🔑 **Our interactive explainer from P1 aimed to:**
>
> 1. **identify the components** of intergenerational trauma and their corresponding **negative effects passed down through parenting**
> 2. **convey an emotionally resonant story** with which readers can potentially **self-identify**
> 3. **illustrate the complex, often ambivalent decision-making within each generation** by asking the reader to make choices, and then showing the outcomes

💬 1

Expanding on our goal from P1, **we hope to help our audience to become more aware of how this implicit force is affecting their life.** While we know that this is not a direct solution, we were inspired to create this project because **we believe increased awareness is the first step towards breaking the cycle of intergenerational trauma.**

Thus, we aimed to create a **website** that features our interactive fiction piece, accompanied by relevant **research articles** and **external resources** for those seeking help with their personal health and wellbeing.

> 📌 **Now, our website in P2 aims to:**
>
> 1. provide our audience with a **deeper understanding** of the root causes and effects of intergenerational trauma through our featured explainer
> 2. **curate and collate** relevant research **articles** and **ways to get help**
> 3. offer a **safe space** for users to **begin their own journeys** of personal healing and growth

Primary Research 💡

Article Choice

Since our topic of intergenerational trauma is not widely known, and we wanted to make sure our audience would have a comprehensive understanding of the topic, we decided to include research that answered the following questions:

> *What is trauma?*

> *What is intergenerational trauma?*

> *What methods have been effective for healing trauma?*

> *What does intergenerational trauma look like for different cultures and identities?*

> *What effects do political events such as war and immigration have on intergenerational trauma?*

> *How is storytelling helpful in healing intergenerational trauma?*

Card sorting

After compiling a list of articles that answered these specific questions, our next step was to figure out the best way to display these articles on our website. We wanted to make sure our websites visitors could easily access the information they were looking for, and that the categories displayed to them were as intuitive as possible.

Kristina Inouye Nov 12, 2021
Great justification!
Ⓢ Reply...

Kristina Inouye Nov 12, 2021
This might be a dumb question (sorry if so) but what dis this category mean to y... more
Ⓢ Reply...
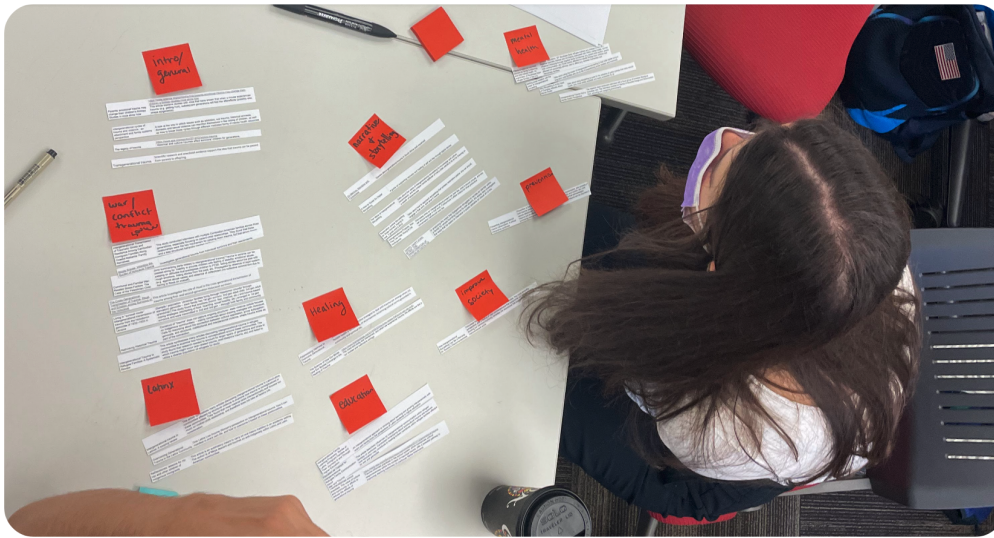
An example open card sort in which the participant sorts the cards and creates their own categories.

To do so, we conducted **5 open card sorts** (2 in class, 3 externally). We gave our testers cards that each had a relevant research article title and summary. We asked them to group the slips of paper based on similarity and finally instructed them to label each of the groups that they came up with.

We chose this methodology because we wanted to ==naturally uncover peoples' mental models== of the topics at hand instead of pressuring them to fit the articles into the "correct" buckets using a closed card sort.
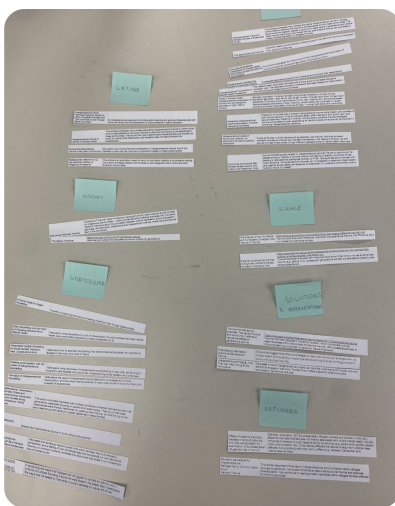
This image shows the aftermath of another open card sort.

During our open card sort, we found that people tended to group the information into **the following categories:**

- *intergenerational*
- *science & education*
- *solutions, interventions, prevention, and healing*
- *narrative & storytelling*
- *refugees, war & conflict*
- *history*
- *Latinx*

> 💡 Using information gathered from the card sort as guidance, we finally decided to split our research into **four main categories** for our website page:
>
> 1. *the definition of intergenerational trauma*
> 2. *its causes*
> 3. *its impacts*
> 4. *its solutions*

Kristina Inouye Nov 12, 2021
If you could export this image at a higher resolution that would be super helpfu... more
Ⓢ Reply...

Kristina Inouye Nov 12, 2021
Love this justification! Nice!
Ⓢ Reply...

Kristina Inouye Nov 12, 2021
Even better that you also considered the tradeoffs!
Ⓢ Reply...

Kristina Inouye Nov 12, 2021
Great compromise!
Ⓢ Reply...

Information Architecture ☁️

Our single page application went through **several iterations based on user studies and teaching staff feedback.**

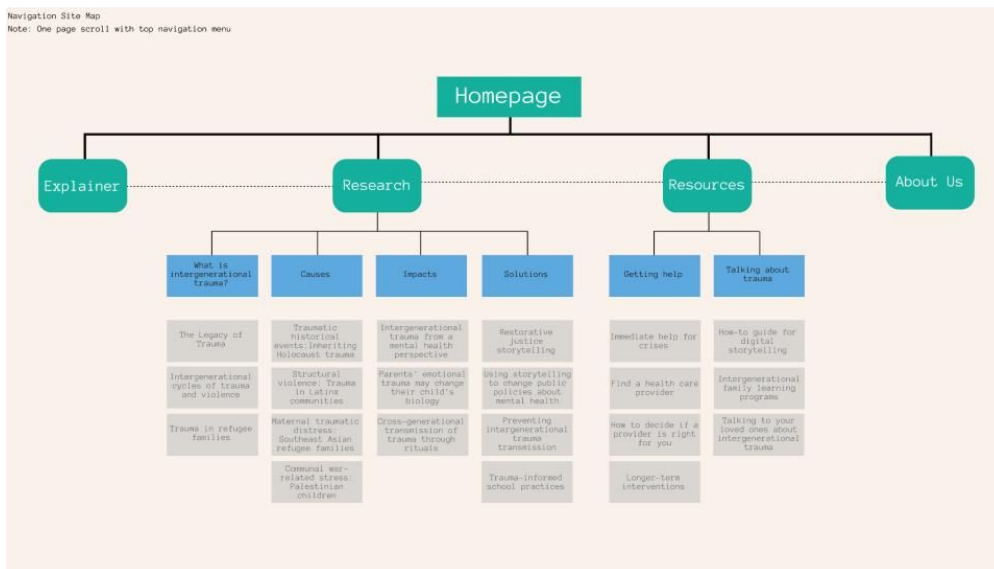## Site Map

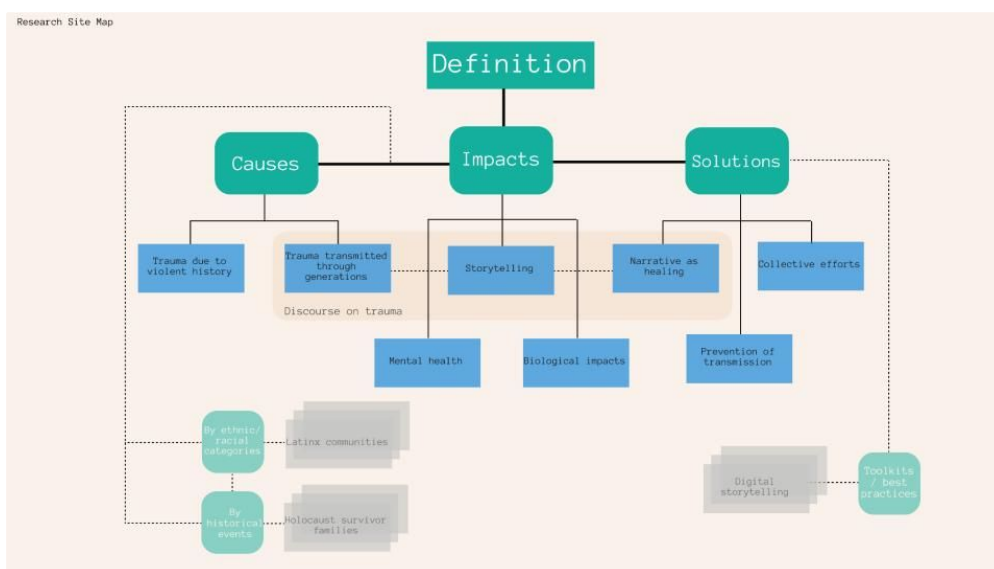**Kristina Inouye** Nov 12, 2021
Great iteration!

Reply...

Above is our first site map iteration. It is a **one-page scroll with a top navigation menu**. We opted for a one-page scroll site because according to research and user studies, this **boosts user engagement** (conversion rates) and **in-depth** perusal of our **simple and structured interface**. This also has the added benefit of **efficiency** for both users and developers, as the content and key features are all in one location. The potential cons of this one-page setup is that it does require more scrolling, and the UX may be confusing if users are expecting a multi-page web design experience. [1] [2]

To address this issue, **we reduced scrolling** by maintaining **the top menu which directly brings the user to the main sections of the site**. In terms of the UX, because we offer a **top menu** that navigates to different sections, it mimics the **traditional multi-page site** so people have a **familiar** experience, while offering the aforementioned benefits of **efficiency** and **encouraging in-depth reading**.

Research (Background) Map

Kristina Inouye Nov 12, 2021
Super appreciate the added definitions of each term. People have different conno... more

Reply...

This is our **Background Site Map** which is nested within our above site map as Research. We later renamed this Research section to '**Background**' because after we tested our site map and received feedback from **2 users** on how this could be misinterpreted as novel research that we conducted, '**Background' was more appropriate as the articles linked under this section are not our own research publications.**

We **defined** intergenerational trauma, then broke it down into **causes**, **impacts**, and **solutions**. This is consistent with the manner in which people sorted the articles. The content under these sections was then categorized into **subsections** (e.g Trauma due to violent history), which was also consistent with the card sorting exercise.
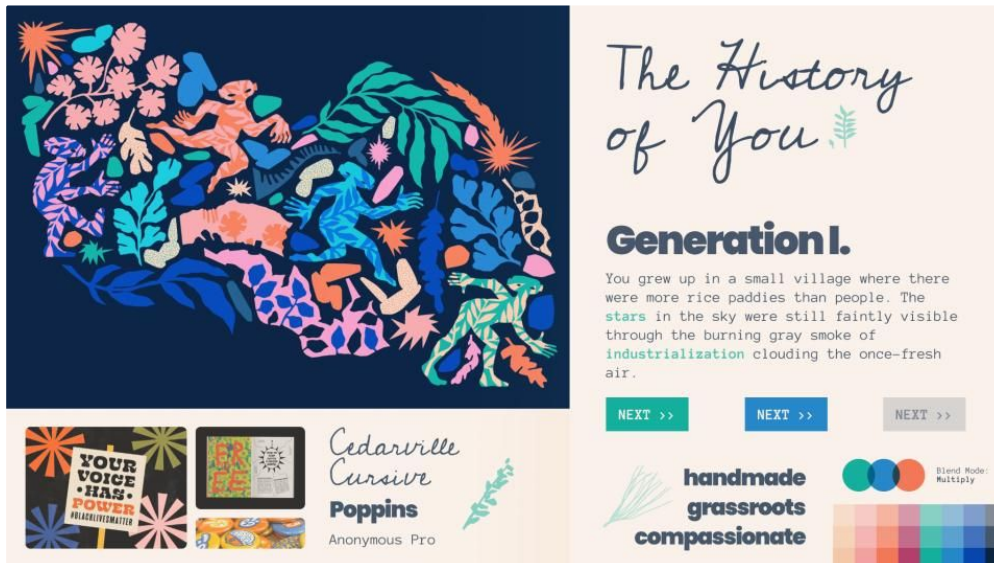
Kristina Inouye Nov 12, 2021

Branding 🖌️

Is this... user testing??? amazing!

Christina Wodtke Nov 14, 2021

<3

ⓢ Reply...

🌿 We wanted our brand to have these **3 key traits**:
1. **handmade** — deliberately **indie** and "**locally-sourced**" with hand-crafted visuals, styling, and coding, away from corporate aesthetics
2. **grassroots** — the feeling of **peer-to-peer**, "**we are in this together**" and "we understand because we are like you" connection
3. **compassionate** — an overall **gentle** and **thoughtful** introduction to the topic, **essential given the sensitiv**e topic of intergenerational trauma

💬 1

These three key traits are especially important because all of this project's creators are just like the intended audience — we are **peers who understand intergenerational trauma because we have lived through it ourselves.** Thus, we also drew from our own experiences and chose words that were personal and caring.

Additionally, the words **handmade** and **grassroots** were chosen because they are reminiscent of locally printed and distributed **zines**, an aesthetic that is personal and **sourced from communities, not corporations**. 1 user noted how this manifests in the website with the earthy tones, custom visuals and rounded styling that feels distinct from corporate-founded external libraries, and it thus offers a "soothing and charming" experience and "makes the topic more approachable."

We chose **compassionate** because the topic is incredibly heavy and we wanted to emphasize that we're trying to come from a **place of kindness** rather than just cold seriousness about the gravity of the topic. **We're in this together and we will try to uplift each other.** Hence, why we opted for warmer colors, earth tones, and plant glyphs as opposed to an earlier iteration with streamlined black and white, but felt empty and dark.

Additionally, for our logo, we chose a **handwritten font** because it also adds a **human, personal touch,** relevant with how our topic centers so closely on the messiness of family dynamics. For the headers, we chose Poppins as it is very legible and clean. We chose Anonymous Pro for the body text because it was designed to reference the fonts in many early digital games, including other interactive fiction pieces besides our own.

Kristina Inouye Nov 12, 2021

Gosh, this writeup is really awesome y'all. Love these extra thoughtful details

Christina Wodtke Nov 14, 2021

I LOVE that you wrote your own code. Badass! (and appropriate for CS students lo... more

ⓢ Reply...

Kristina Inouye Nov 12, 2021

I was wondering this myself, cool that it was a result of user testing!

ⓢ Reply...

Website Design 🖥️

Our Website has 4 main page components:

1. Home (Explainer)
2. Getting Help
3. Background
4. About Us

> 💡 We opted to **code the website by hand** instead of using a web-builder template because we wanted to **act on our values of 'handmade' and 'grassroots.'**   💬 2
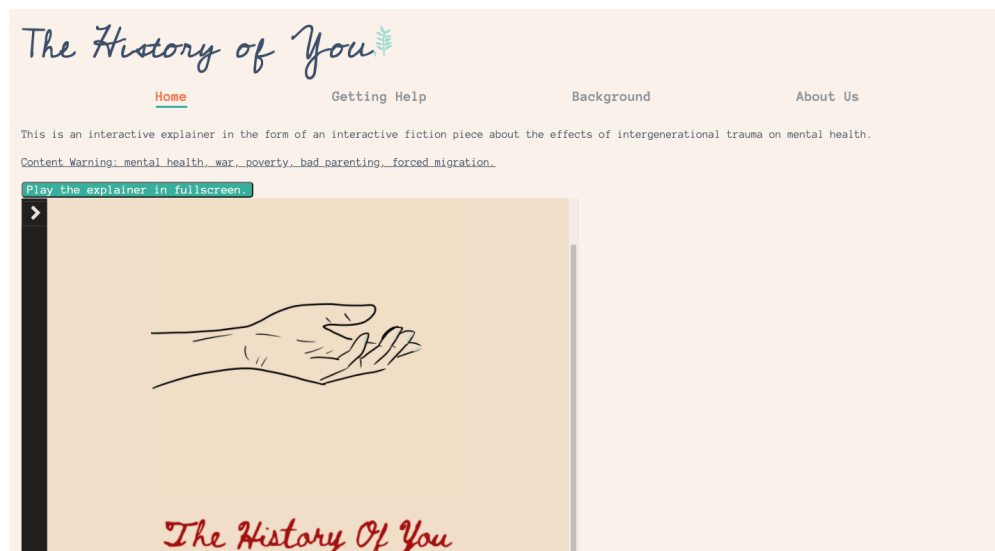
Home (Explainer)

The explainer page includes an **embedded link** to the explainer that is hosted on textadventures.co.uk, as well as a grounding definition for what intergenerational trauma means. We deliberately placed the definition after the explainer after **2 users** noted how the story itself "gave a better definition" and they wanted less text before the main interactive element.

We also included a call to action button so that people can **play the game on fullscreen**.

The **menu** at the top highlights which part of the page is **active**. Since no one outside of the class knows what an explainer is, we just labeled this section as **home**. We put the explainer as the main object to highlight it to our users, who will ideally interact with the story and then examine the resources below.

The home section of our website features the explainer.

Getting Help

The Getting Help section also includes resources that we aggregated regarding trauma, mental health and well-being, and intergenerational well-being.

In the event of a **crisis** from users triggered by the **sensitive topic**, we put "Get Immediate Help in a Crisis" directly below the explainer.

Kristina Inouye Nov 12, 2021
For some reason on my browser it only changes color when hovering over the text … more
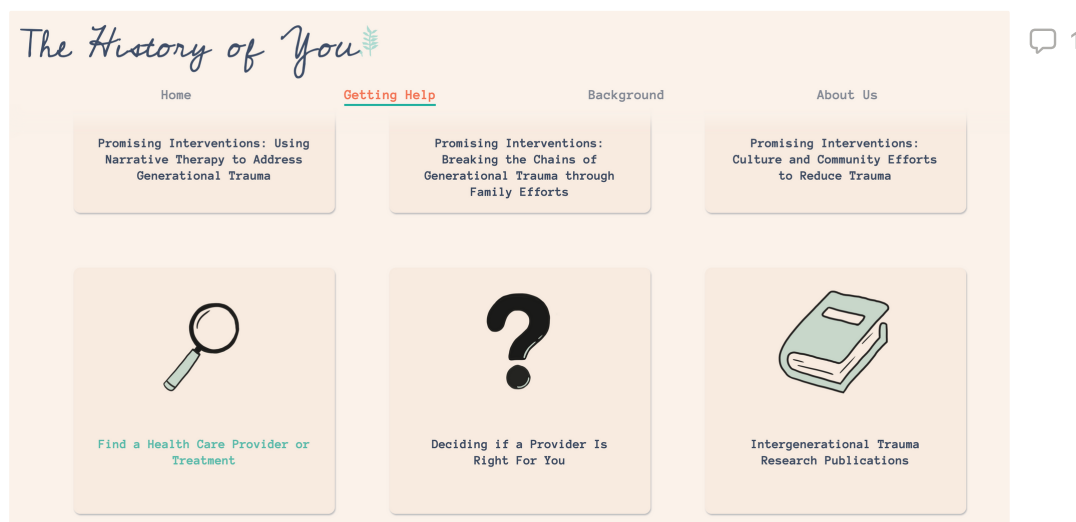
Ⓢ Reply…

We include resources here for people in event of a crisis.

Afterward, we placed a grid of clickable resources that offers promising **interventions**, a **directory** of health care providers, and further **resources**.

We include a grid of resources that are clickable and lead to sites such as a phone hotline, a search page for local healthcare providers, and a list of interventions. When a person hovers over the card, the color of the text changes so that it indicates that it is a link to another page.

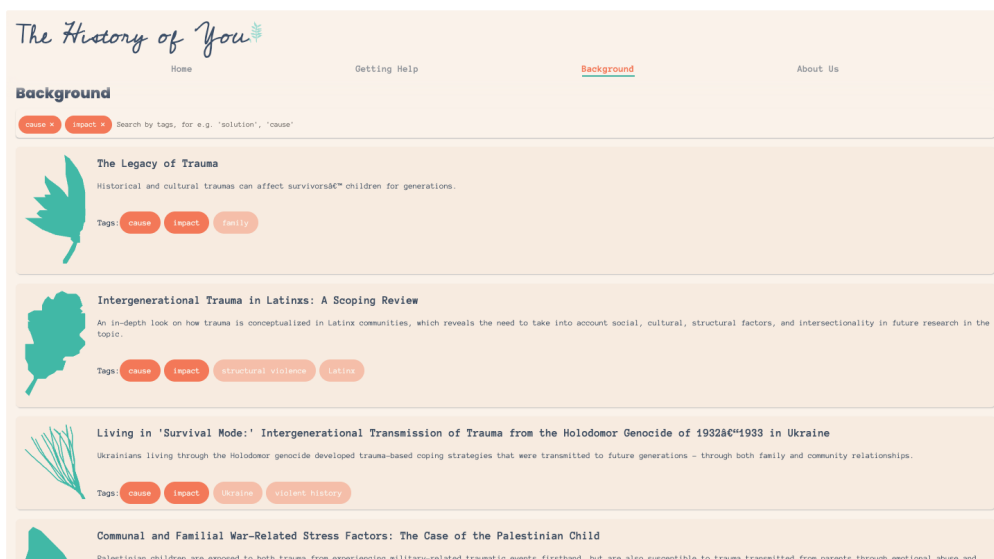## Background

The background page includes **research articles** that ground issues regarding intergenerational trauma, and how it affects many different communities.
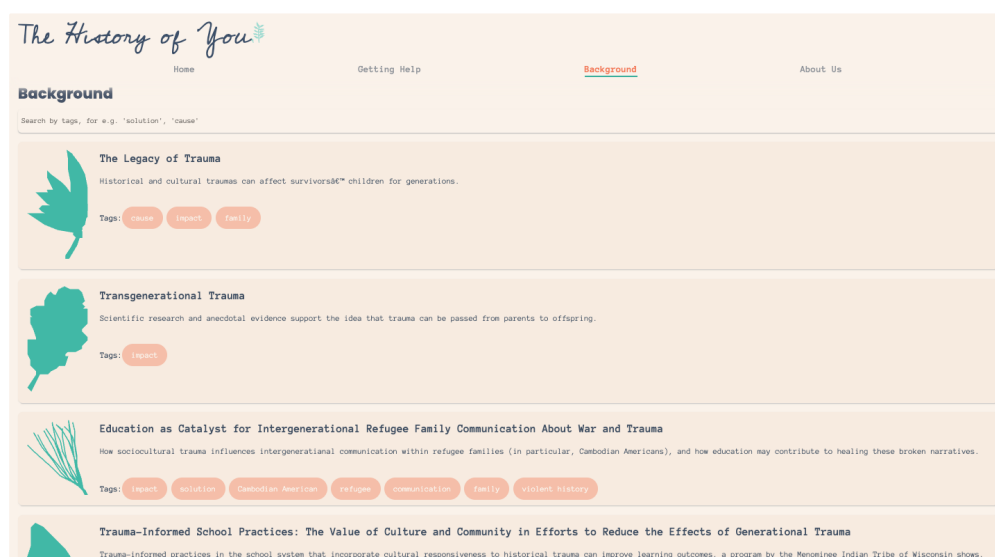
Background section immediately after clicking 'Background' on the menu. All of the articles are displayed as default. There is a search bar to look for tags.

Kristina Inouye Nov 12, 2021
Wow! Above and beyond!

S Reply...

Background section after searching for tags. Articles that have both tags are displayed.

When designing this section, we expected **we would have many more tags** than we did in the end, and thus we created an auto-complete search function as opposed to a **filter pick-list**. Another consideration we made was making un-selected tags muted to **show a difference in the state**, which offers further **user interaction and filtering**. The tags that are selected have **high contrast** for readability. If someone wants to delete a tag from the search, they can click on the tag to remove it.

Additionally, we included **glyphs** in our **accent color** for decoration and to **visually distinguish** between the articles. Ideally, we would show the cover of the article or book, or create our own custom graphics in a future iteration of the project, but we had a short turnaround time so this was our alternate solution.

About Us

The About Us page includes a statement of our mission, as well as an explanation of why we built this, and our names.

About us section at the bottom of the page.

Usability Testing ⚙️

In the process of making the website, we received several pieces of feedback that were salient in our re-designing and the improvements that we made. We tested on at least 5 users.

A Synthesis of this Feedback:

Positive Feedback ✚

- The color scheme, font, and images are warm and fit the needs of the explainer very well
- Cohesive layout that is linked with a distinct brand identity
- The sitemap is organized and intuitive

- Strong sense of purpose

Opportunities For Growth 🌱

- Colors may not translate well over a projector or when printed
- The block text can be overwhelming at times
- The menu headers are not as clear as they could/should be
  - Example: Changing 'Resources' to 'Getting Help'!

Improvements Made ✅

With the feedback we were given, we were able to rethink a few of the elements of our website.

Renaming Headers
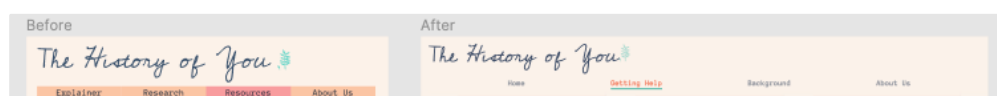
Some of the menu headers were renamed in order to add more clarity to what exactly each page is about:

- Explainer —> Home
- Resources —> Getting Help

The renaming of these headers will allow users to better understand and navigate the site. We also rearranged the menu items such that "Getting Help" proceeds the explainer because it gives users immediate resources to use.

Getting Help Page
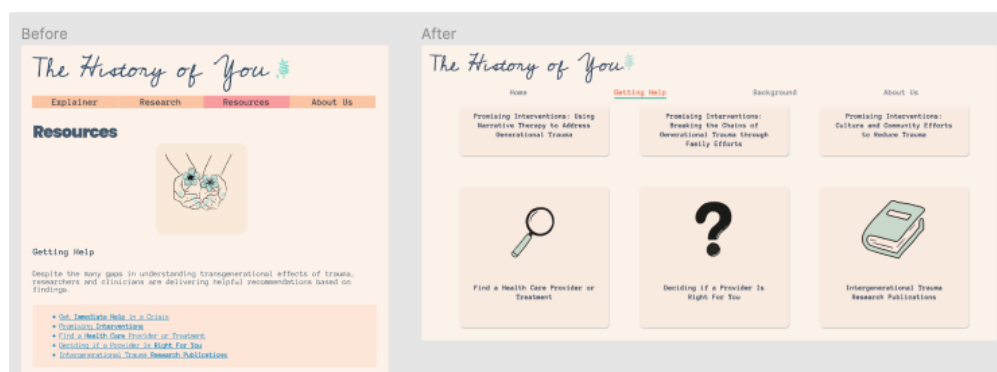
We redesigned the 'Getting Help' page to be much more visually engaging and to disaggregate the sense of blockiness in too much text.

Menu

As you may see above, we also changed the menu bar to a visually minimal but appealing aesthetic that highlights the current menu page as orange, and the others as grey. It is clear which section is active and is more readable than the previous menu.

Future Iterations 🔮

- Research embedding and put more padding to the "play the explainer in fullscreen" button and remove the outline, maybe add grey drop shadow like the cards so that it is consistent with the rest of the design and readable.
- Reduce the size of the explainer, as right now it takes a lot of scrolling to see the bottom.
- Add padding to the left so that there is more breathing space between the text and the edge of the page

- Bold "get immediate help in a crisis" even more to call attention to this section in event of an emergency

- Make three different sketches for promising interventions within the 'getting help' section to distinguish between the types of interventions

Conclusion 🚩

Overall, our website is an integral part of the user experience of our interactive fiction piece *The History of You.* Our site offers a **customized landing page** and includes important resources on **getting help** and **background research** for users who may be triggered by the sensitive topic of intergenerational trauma, or those who desire to seek further help and clarification.

While we used **color schemes** that worked well for the needs of this particular project, we also recognize that they may not translate well over other mediums such as a projector, which is a continuous challenge that we will work on. We also recognize the ambiguity and high text-density our initial site map, and hope that we have made our site **more appealing** and **clearer** to users by creating more **streamlined** and **visually engaging** elements, such as the integrations of icons with resources in the 'Getting Help' page and the renaming of these labels for the menu.

We look forward to launching the site and the explainer, and expanding our users' understanding!

Works Referenced

1. https://www.smashingmagazine.com/2016/03/pagination-infinite-scrolling-load-more-buttons/
2. https://www.uxmatters.com/mt/archives/2018/11/paging-scrolling-and-infinite-scroll.php