

# Suzanne Collins Website Redesign: Design Explanation & Report

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## Introduction:

After analyzing Suzanne Collins' author website and performing heuristic evaluations and usability tests, my team and I discovered a variety of experience-hindering aspects. To address these issues, I propose the consideration and employment of the following redesign comps. I have created comps for the site's homepage, "About" page (listed as "Biography" on the current site), "Works" page, and "Interviews & Reviews" page (listed as "Interview" on the current site).

## Header:

For all of the pages I redesigned, I employed the same header. Collins' current header contains her name (clicking on which leads the user back to the homepage) and four menu tabs: "Home," "Works," "Biography," and "Interview." In our heuristic evaluations and usability tests, we discovered that users expect or would appreciate finding contact information, a dedicated "Shop" tab, and an event calendar on author websites. In my header redesign, I added a "Contact" tab, a "Shop" tab, and an "Events" tab, and I also removed the "Interview" tab. The contents of the "Interview" tab can now be found by clicking on the hyperlinks that lead to the "Interview" page on the homepage and "About" page. Additionally, the "About" tab will have a dropdown menu containing the "Interviews & Reviews" hyperlink.

In our evaluations and tests, we also found that a "Search" feature would make navigating the site significantly easier. I added that feature to the header, as well. I altered the layout of the header by placing the navigation menu tabs next to Collins' name instead of below it for a more streamlined appearance. The search feature is directly to the right of the navigation menu, so the search feature and Collins' name sandwich the tabs, creating a more balanced appearance.

## Color Scheme & Typography:

I altered the color scheme used in the header and the rest of the website, as well. On Collins' homepage, there is a provisional cover for her upcoming release, *Sunrise on the Reaping*. The plum purple, navy blue, beige, and white used in the cover embody Collins' calm and professional demeanor and presentation, so I used them as the new color scheme. Her typography was already professional and legible, so I kept a similar sans serif font for headings, subheadings, and clickable links and a similar serif font for body text. Plum purple, bold, sans serif text are headings and subheadings. Navy blue, semi-bold, sans serif text are clickable links and tabs. Navy blue, normal, serif text are body text.

## Homepage:

The current homepage for [suzannecollinsbooks.com](http://suzannecollinsbooks.com) follows a three-column layout. The left-hand column contains an image of Collins, a "Welcome" title, a welcome blurb, and a link to an NPR interview. The middle column contains information about Collins' upcoming releases, and the right-hand column contains "Selected Works" and "Quick Links." In our evaluations and usability tests, we found the three-column layout used in this way to come across as old-fashioned and rudimentary. We also found the "Selected Works" and "Quick Links" tabs to be more confusing than helpful.

When I began redesigning the homepage, I wanted to employ the *Sunrise on the Reaping* cover color scheme in a way that utilized more whitespace to have a more modern appearance. To further contribute to the creation of a modern appearance, I wanted to remove the three-column layout and simplify the content included on the homepage.

Instead, the homepage begins with a clickable slideshow containing information about Collins' upcoming releases and events. Our usability tests showed that users expected and desired a "pre-order" option with the upcoming release information, so I placed that beneath the book title and release date for *Sunrise on the Reaping*. Below the slideshow, I centered the "Welcome" title and welcome blurb. On either side, I included a

photo of Collins and a fake rat in Central Park, which she references in the blurb. Finally, I included a clickable link to an NPR interview that Collins references in the blurb, as well.

The new overall homepage appearance is more modern and less overwhelming. The limited content it includes makes finding specific information much easier, and the altered color scheme contributes to a more aesthetically pleasing appearance. This redesign addresses usability issues and elevates the [suzannecollinsbooks.com](http://suzannecollinsbooks.com) user experience.

## **“About” Page:**

The current “About” page on Collins’ website is listed as “Biography.” To better comply with common website lingo, I changed “Biography” to “About.” In our usability tests, when tasked with locating specific interviews with Suzanne Collins, users would search on the “About” page, so I included a clickable link to the “Interviews & Reviews” page.

Layout-wise, Collins’ current website contains no textual information “above the fold” (above the website’s scroll-point), so I reorganized the content as follows: instead of placing the image of Collins above her textual information, I placed the two of them next to each other, in a two-column layout. Now, users will see the image of Collins *and* textual information about her as soon as they lay eyes on the page.

I wanted to keep this page relatively simple, so other than employing the new color scheme and typography I listed above, I made no other changes.

## **“Works” Page:**

The current “Works” page on [suzannecollinsbooks.com](http://suzannecollinsbooks.com) is quite overwhelming. It is designed in a three-column layout. The left-hand column contains each of her books’ covers, accompanied by quips relating to each book beneath each cover. Neither the covers nor the quips are clickable. The middle column contains clickable titles for each book and underneath each title, a brief book description. The right-hand column contains the same “Selected Works” and “Quick Links” previously mentioned.

I redesigned the layout as follows: firstly, I kept the same bold, sans serif “Works” title at the top of the page. Below that, I added three clickable buttons that sort her works by series. If a user wishes to see the books in *The Hunger Games* series, only *The Hunger Games* books will be displayed on the page when the button is clicked. The same goes for *The Underland Chronicles* and Collins’ childrens’ books.

Instead of the three-column layout currently employed, I opted for an itemized layout. Each book has a clickable cover and title, with the release year below the title, organized in a grid. When a user clicks on a book cover or title, it will lead them to a page that contains the book’s description, alternate covers, reviews, and links to book merchants.

With this proposed redesign, the user will easily be able to see all of Collins’ works with minimal scrolling, and the desired information for each book will be available when the user clicks on either the book cover or title. Furthermore, Collins’ portfolio is always growing. She already has eleven, soon to be twelve works, so a sorting feature will make finding specific titles much easier.

## “Interviews & Reviews” Page:

Currently, Collins has two interviews she links on her website: an NPR interview with Nancy Pearl in which Pearl discusses *Gregor and the Overlander* and an interview between Suzanne Collins and Jen Reese with Scholastic Press about *The Underland Chronicles*. In our usability testing, users expressed confusion about both interviews being located in separate places, even though there is a dedicated “Interview” tab. As previously mentioned, they would also go looking on the “Biography” page (now the “About” page) when they were unable to find one of the interviews. To remedy these issues, the “Interviews & Reviews” tab will now be found in a dropdown menu when a user hovers over the “About” tab in the navigational menu located in the header. Both interviews are listed on the redesigned page, and they are also accessible elsewhere on the site. The NPR interview is accessible on the homepage, and both interviews are accessible on the “About” page.

The current “Interview” page is also organized in a three-column layout, although the left-hand column is left empty. The middle column contains an image of

Collins, an image caption, and a transcript of her interview with Jen Reese. The right-hand column still contains the same “Selected Works” and “Quick Links.” Because the left-hand column is left empty, the page appears unbalanced.

I altered the format by removing the three-column layout. I added an “Interviews and Reviews” title at the top of the page and below the header. Below that title, I included a clickable link to listen to Nancy Pearl’s NPR segment. The Jen Reese interview transcript lacked textual formatting, making it difficult to read and scan. I bolded the questions, decreased the space between each question and its answer, and increased the space between questions. These changes increase scanability and readability for the user. I included the same picture of Collins and a fake rat in Central Park displayed on the current “Interview” page, and I also supplemented this image with most of the book covers for *The Underland Chronicles*, as Collins’ interview with Jen Reese covers that series.

## Conclusion:

My proposed redesigns for [suzannecollinsbooks.com](http://suzannecollinsbooks.com) improve both usability and visual appeal by addressing key issues discovered during my team’s heuristic evaluations and usability testing. Changes to the navigational structure, including the addition of “Contact,” “Shop,” and “Events” tabs, as well as the integration of a search feature, enhance the user’s ability to find relevant information efficiently. Simplifying the homepage layout, improving the readability and scanability of content, and adopting a modern color scheme relevant to Collins and her works contribute to a more aesthetically pleasing and user-friendly experience. The reorganization of the “About,” “Works,” and “Interviews & Reviews” pages further supports content discoverability and clarity, creating a cohesive and intuitive website that better represents Suzanne Collins and her works.