Assignment 8: Final Reflection

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Part 1

My website is an in-depth, interactive timeline of Robert's Rebellion, a major war in George R.R. Martin's A Song of Ice and Fire series. It is intended to help visualize a part of the story which was never conveyed directly in the books, and help bring a new part of the universe to life. The six major battles of the war are captured as interactive maps, while the opening and closing screens include the leadup to the war and the aftershocks. Users can view the troop positions for each battle and then watch them move across the map as they flee, fight, and conquer. There are individual buttons available to view more information about each army and help the user follow the story across the battles. The target audience is primarily fans of the book series, but it is also accessible to any fans of the Game of Thrones television show. While it is better suited for people who have already been exposed to the media, it is still understandable to people who know very little about the universe. The majority of the copy content is hand-written, but adapted from the wonderful Wiki of Ice and Fire. The two illustrations are also from the Wiki. The map and button images were taken from various resources, and then heavily adapted to fit the project.

Part 2

- **View troop movement**
  On any of the six battle pages, click the "play" button. The right hand screen will animate to reveal more information about the battle, while the map on the left side will be animated. The dots representing troops of each army will move across the map as they approach and fight each other.

- **View troop information**
  After clicking play on any of the six battle pages, a toolbar with various icons will appear on the right-hand side. Select any house sigil to see where those troops were placed on the battlefield (they will appear stroked on the map) and get more information about their commanders and movements in the right-hand side information box. To return to the general information, select the "reset" button at the end.

- **Navigate to a specific battle**
  Utilize the navigation bar to select a specific battle. Click on the name of a battle to be taken directly to that battle page.

Part 3

- **Name of tool**
  Snap.svg
- **Why you chose to use it? (2-4 sentences max)**
  I was looking for a way to create a map that I could animate, and was having issues keeping responsiveness while having the troop dots follow the map. I did some research on SVGs, and decided to use that for all my maps. However, I still wanted to animate the troop movements. Snap.svg came up in my research as the best way to animate SVGs, so I utilized the library for that purpose.
- **How you used it? (2-4 sentences max)**
  I used the library to animate the troops on all my maps, while also adding and removing strokes for emphasis. For movement, I changed the x and y placement of each circle with a specified delay. For the stroke, I created a black stroke around each circle when the respective troop button was clicked.
- **What it adds to your website? (2-4 sentences max)**
  It adds a new level of dynamism to the website, and creates a more impressive interactive experience. It also helps the data visualization pop and bring something unique to each battle map.

Part 4

I made many changes from my previous prototypes, although most were minor. One of the biggest changes I made was I decided to remove the large prequel and aftermath screens, as I felt I could describe the information just as effectively in the opening and closing paragraphs. I also removed the option to click on the troop circles to view more information, as I could not make it feasible. However, I added the troop movements as an extra way to include more animation and keep all the screens interesting.

Part 5

I faced many challenges during this assignment, primarily figuring out how to create and animate SVGs. I also struggled with the responsiveness of the maps; while they now adjust to the screen size, it is possible that some of the troops will get cut off. My final struggle was how to accomplish smooth animations overall, but thanks to a combination of Snap.svg and regular Javascript animations, I was able to keep the movements of the page relatively consistent.