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PUI Assignment 8

Part One:

- I. My website is an investigative storytelling website revolving around an “unsolved mystery” about the deaths of Russian hikers in the 1950s. As HCI students we are always told to “embrace ambiguity” and I enjoyed the concept of trying to investigate a story that has no reasonable explanation.
- II. I wanted to set up my pages by establishing a relationship with the hikers on the expedition, provide a “concrete” timeline of what we do know, and then utilize the subsequent pages play around with how this data has been interpreted by various parties (both at the time of the deaths as well as present-day theories).
- III. Through my site, I try to explore a niche topic that people might not be aware of but would find interesting. I try to utilize design as a means of inviting people to learn about this subject, but also balance heavy text through playful animations and utilizing different tools to convey information.
- IV. The target audience for this website would ideally be the general public. With the rise in popularity of true crime documentaries such as Serial, Making a Murderer, as well as the inherent unsolvability of these cases, there’s a clear market for exploring these topics. I really enjoy the idea of creating web experiences that might be able to play around with design to engage people in a way that complements the written form of this content.

Part Two:

- I. My Interactions are primarily scroll based, as I wanted to encourage readers to delve further into the subject matter. I thought that implementing animations would pique further curiosity into the material, even when it might be more dense than other sections. My reasoning is that even if they don’t read everything, perhaps they might scroll to explore the animations and in that moment something might catch their eye.
- II. The two interactions I’m proudest of are my sections on the Investigation page as well as the modal boxes for the hikers. I have never really worked with responsive design or really thought too hard about the use of the screen, so being able to make content that is responsive to the browser window size was really exciting for me. Also being able to utilize React to toggle between the different sections felt like an achievement for me. The modal boxes felt like they would be too complicated to implement but it felt like it helped achieve simplicity on a page that was relatively dense with content.

Part Three:

- I. React JS

- II. I used React namely because I really wanted to learn React and thought this final could force me into getting a feel of components. I used other libraries with it, namely react reveal and Bootstrap to help me with responsiveness.
- III. I used React to render my content as different components onto one single page.
- IV. While React required a lot of individual components and files, I found that it made it helpful to work with a lot of data at once. I was able to feed through my content into the different pages and it felt a lot cleaner while I was working with my actual HTML. It also allowed my DOM manipulation to be much clearer, especially with animations.

Part Four:

After having my peers look at my website, one thing that they commented the most on was that the menu confused them and that it didn't allow them to look at the other sections of the website (only took them to information pages). I thought this was a great point, so I chose to use a standard nav with a hamburger menu for my website. This was a lot cleaner and it made it easier to see the narrative I was trying to provide my audience about the story.

Part Five:

React felt like a completely different world than Javascript and there was a huge initial learning curve. I really had a tough time understanding how to use components, so I sought help from the SSUI students to get a better idea of how it could work on my page. Creating responsiveness was also a challenge, I never really tried designing for mobile, so I thought more about ensuring some content rendered clearer with this assignment. Lastly, GitHub haunted me the entire project timeline and I spent a lot of time troubleshooting GitHub during this project.