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Comparative Technology
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Final Project Report

I'm just about at the finish line, and I am feeling pretty good about my project. Through this whole process, I feel that I have become very comfortable with InDesign, which was my main learning goal starting out. Plus, I got to continue to refine my design skills and I got to work a bit in Photoshop. All in all, I would say all of my learning goals fit in well with this project and I achieved them all.

As for the actual project, it is now almost fully realized (save one detail that I will get to in a bit). After the midterm check-in and feedback session, I realized that I needed to embrace more that this interactive document inhabits the gray area between document and web page. From that, I eschewed my original linear framework and came up with more of a web. After the title and introduction, the reader is brought to the "hub," which has buttons that lead to a main page for each of the nine apparatuses. Everyone liked the aesthetic of the large, high-res image with text on it, so I used that for a main page for every apparatus. I still wanted to include more information, so I made a secondary page for every apparatus that has individual images highlighting a certain aspect of that apparatus, which I explain in rollover text.

On four pages, I wanted to include video as well. This has definitely caused me the most grief. At first I couldn't figure out how to get the video to play upon export, which I finally resolved by uploading from a URL as opposed to placing the video. From there, though, I couldn't (and still can't) get the controller bar to show up at the bottom of the video that lets the reader pause, fast forward, etc. The videos

play, so for all intents and purposes the document is fully functional, but I really wish I could figure out how to get the controller bar to show up.

In the end, this was a great project for everything I wanted to learn, and I now I have more design skills, as well as an attractive document that can aid me in my future research.

Weekly logs

Week 6

Following the feedback that I got from the class, I spent this week reworking my structure to fit into the “hub” model. I started looking for high quality vertical images that I could use for the main page of each apparatus. This week was mostly background work, as I had to go back to the drawing board a bit.

Week 7

I found pretty much every image that I wanted to use for the main pages. I added the images for the silks, static trap, flying trap, and rope, and pole pages. I also fixed the video on the pole secondary page so that it actually plays upon export. On the backside, I’m moving all of the images to a folder specifically for these resources, so I don’t have to relink all the time.

Week 8

I added the main images to the remaining pages: Lyra, Hammock, and Straps. I also made all of the buttons for “the hub.” Using a circular frame tool, I was able to make these buttons like little windows. Each one is of the main image of its specific apparatus, but only of the contact point between the aerialist and the apparatus. I showed my project to Stacey and she gave me some good tips on how to better incorporate the text into the images, so I reworked a lot of that so that the text would reflect the shape of the aerialist.

Week 9

This week was all about making all of the secondary pages, which took a very long time just because there was so much image resizing to be done. I also finally figured out how to make rollover text (making it into a button that doesn’t appear until activated, and then activating it by making its corresponding image a button as well). I plugged those effects into the hub as well as the secondary pages. I also put in videos in other secondary pages but still couldn’t figure out the controller issue.

Week 10

This was the week for small details. I wrote the introduction (which I had been putting off). I also added navigation buttons to the whole document. I spent a very long time trying to figure out the controller bar issue, to no avail. In the meantime I proofread everything and did a few test uploads. Everything (except the controllers) is good to go!