

BREWING CONNECTIONS

Process Book

Designed by Sara Veith

Graphic Design Senior Thesis 2024

SUNY New Paltz

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The background is a watercolor-style wash of colors. It features a mix of muted greens, purples, and earthy browns, with some lighter, almost white areas. The colors are blended and splattered, creating a soft, artistic texture. The word "CONCEPT" is centered in the middle of this background.

CONCEPT

Project Statement

Brewing Connections explores the social and mental health benefits of tea through three unique zines that educate students on how tea brings people together and how tea can help one incorporate more mindfulness into their life.

For this project, I researched the benefits of tea, interviewed the owner of a local tea shop, and hosted several tea parties that helped build community at SUNY New Paltz. I created a cohesive visual language inspired by the look and feel of collage art and printmaking, and implemented it into my zines and branding.

Deliverables

Visual Identity

Three Zines

Why Tea?

Tea is one of the most popular drinks in the world, and there's no secret as to why. Not only is it delicious, a large number of studies prove that it helps reduce stress, encourages social connection, and improves one's overall well-being.

In late 2021, I began to drink more tea after visiting my grandparents often and visiting the Ridge Tea and Spice Shop in New Paltz. I found that drinking tea helped me cope with my anxiety and daily stress. I realized that tea became something I was passionate about, and I wanted to learn more about the hundreds of varieties of tea and their benefits.

Before I knew it, I was reading books about herbalism, shopping at local tea shops, and creating my own herbal tea blends. Because of my passion about tea and the benefits that come with it, I knew I wanted it to be a part of my senior thesis.



Audience

In the early stages of my project, my audience was pretty general. Anyone can drink tea and reap the benefits of it. However, after some time, I began to focus more on the emotional and mental health benefits of tea.

I then shifted my focus onto the students of New Paltz. College students are especially very stressed, and the students at New Paltz are no exception. I wanted to introduce a new way for students to connect to their mind, body, and other students, which, in turn, would help reduce stress and improve overall well being.



New Paltz
STATE UNIVERSITY OF NEW YORK

The background is a watercolor-style wash of colors, primarily in shades of green, purple, and brown, with some white and light blue accents. The colors are blended and splattered, creating a textured, artistic effect.

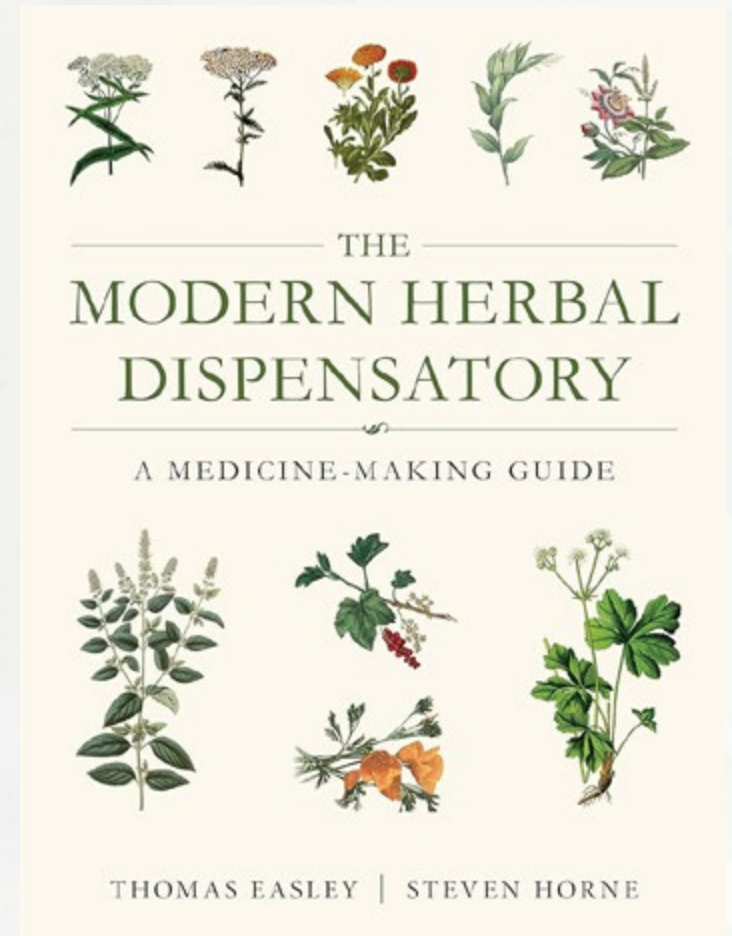
RESEARCH

Preliminary Research

My early research consists of looking at books, videos, and documentaries about tea and herbalism.



How Tea Is Enjoyed Around The World
Food Insider



The Modern Herbal Dispensatory
Thomas Easley & Steven Horne

Peer-Reviewed Articles

Here is a list of some peer-reviewed studies, articles, and websites that are about that I found during my research process.

Griebing, Tomas L., and Ajay Nangia. "Humanism, Compassion, and Afternoon Tea in Medical Education." *Journal of Graduate Medical Education* 7, no. 1 (2015): 132.

"How Does Social Connectedness Affect Health?" *Centers for Disease Control and Prevention*, March 30, 2023.

Jones, Mat, Richard Kimberlee, Toity Deave, and Simon Evans. "The Role of Community Centre-based Arts, Leisure and Social Activities in Promoting Adult Well-being and Healthy Lifestyles." *International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health* 10, no. 5 (2013): 1948-1962.

Lee, David S. "The Morning Tea Break Ritual: A Case Study." *International Journal of Nursing Practice* 7, no. 2 (2001): 69-73.



The screenshot shows the article page for "The morning tea break ritual: A case study" in the *International Journal of Nursing Practice*. The page includes the journal title, author information (David S Lee RN, RPN, DipTeach(NuEd), BA(Ed), MEd, PhD), publication date (21 December 2001), DOI link, and citation count (14). It also features a "Find it @ New P@t@z" logo, contact information for Dr. David S Lee, and navigation options like "Read the full text", "PDF", "TOOLS", and "SHARE". The abstract text is visible below the navigation bar.

**INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL
of NURSING PRACTICE**

The morning tea break ritual: A case study

David S Lee RN, RPN, DipTeach(NuEd), BA(Ed), MEd, PhD

First published: 21 December 2001 | <https://doi.org/10.1046/j.1440-172X.2001.00246.x> | Citations: 14

**Find it @
New P@t@z**

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Abstract

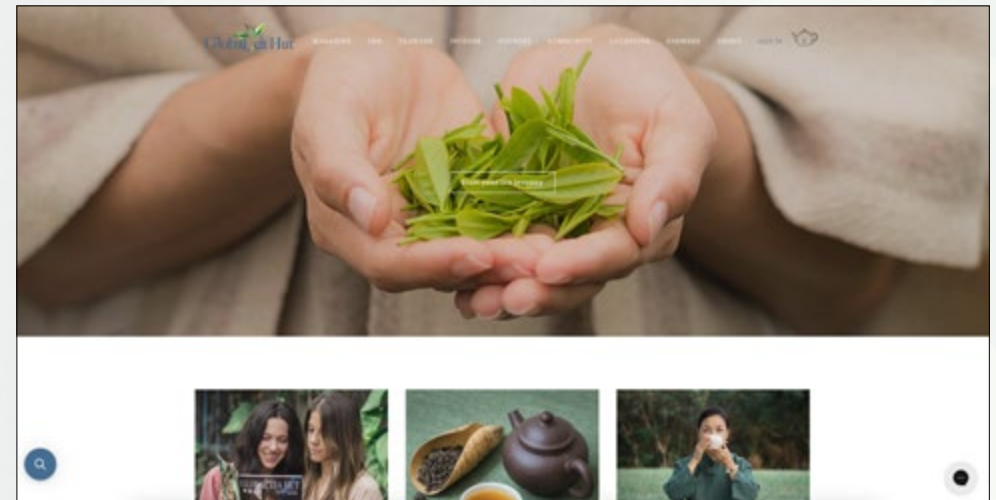
Many nursing scholars have examined the negative effects of rituals in nursing practice, and have argued for nurses to abolish these ritual practices; however, rituals remain resilient. There must be reasons that nurses are keeping these rituals alive. This study aimed to explore the meanings of the 'morning tea break ritual' to a group of nurses in a medical ward. The study employed an ethnographic methodology and found that the morning tea break ritual provided time, space and an environment where nurses can ventilate their feelings and gain each other's support. Thus, the morning tea break ritual has positive contribution to nurses' work and both nurses and patients are the beneficiaries of this ritual act.

Existing Projects

Here are a few existing projects and websites that I was looking at while conducting my research.



This is part of the website for Luna Root Wellness, an apothecary in Vermont run by Angie Barger, a clinical herbalist. The website was designed by Medium Creative Co. The Tea Project is an initiative for educators to learn mindfulness, coregulation, naturalism, herbal tea, and gardening, and to incorporate it into their classrooms. You can be a part of it by taking courses offered by Angie. It's a very unique take on tea and herbalism, and you can even get college credit for taking the classes.



This project is the main website for the Global Tea Hut, a tea center in Miao Li, Taiwan that wants to educate volunteers and visitors around the world about tea, tea rituals, and meditation. They started in Taiwan, but they now have locations all over the world, including one in California and another in Colorado. Many of these locations host weekly tea ceremonies and workshops. Their website also has a shop where you can buy high-quality teas, teaware, and more.

Interviews

I had the wonderful opportunity to interview Corinn Crawford, one of the owners of The Ridge Tea and Spice Shop in New Paltz. A lot of her insight and feedback would end up making its way into *Brewing Connections: How to be Sip Savvy*.

I also had the opportunity to interview Andrea Frank, a photography professor at SUNY New Paltz that also happens to be a tea lover. She gave me some unique perspectives about how tea is enjoyed outside of the United States and how tea can be grown and enjoyed sustainably.



Andrea Frank



Corinn Crawford

Outreach

I put up a flyer and sent out a survey to New Paltz students that asked them to write about a happy memory or story that involved tea. The survey got over 15 responses, and a lot of these responses would eventually end up in *Brewing Connections: Spilled Stories*.

I also reached out to my roommates, friends, and other students to come take part in my tea parties that took place from October to April.



“Tea-sis” Parties

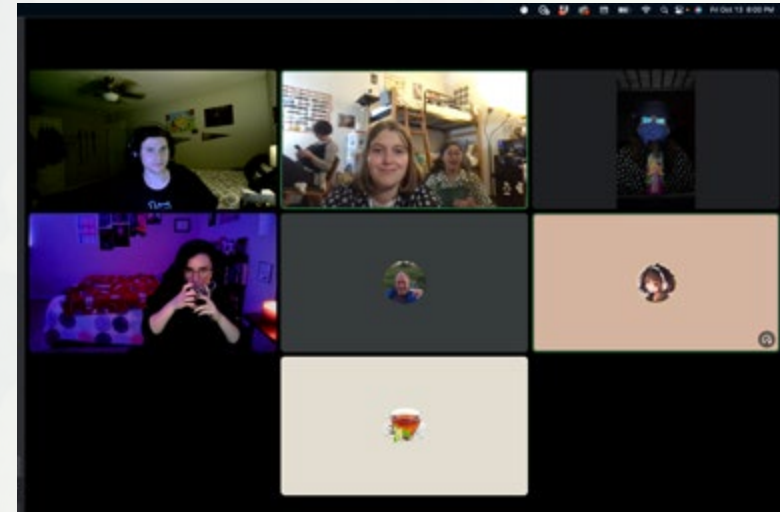
Over the course of two semesters, I hosted 5 tea parties to get feedback on my thesis and take photos of people enjoying tea with each other as content for my thesis. These photographs were originally supposed to be used in a website prototype, but a lot of them ended up making their way into my visual identity.

The first tea party was online with my friends back home, and the second tea party was hosted in the Old Library building on campus.

Over Winter Break, I hosted another tea party at my house with my friends. I used some nice teacups and even made some homemade jam and pastries.

The last two tea parties were collaborations between me and student clubs at SUNY New Paltz. I worked with New Paltz Pride and the Little Old Ladies Club.

I got very helpful ideas and feedback at all 5 tea parties, and everyone who saw my work was very excited to see how my zines would turn out.



Pecha Kucha

For my pecha kucha presentation in November, I had to explain my entire thesis and my research in 4 minutes or less. It was a challenging presentation, but I was able to clearly explain what my project was about and show my research within the time limit. It really helped me figure out what I should focus the most on during my process and how to clarify my concepts in my thesis proposal.



Thesis Proposal

Throughout my first semester of working on my thesis, I was constantly writing and updating my thesis proposal. By the time I was done writing it, I had a very good idea of what I needed to do for my thesis to be successful and helpful to other students at SUNY New Paltz.

Sara Veith
Spilling the Tea – Graphic Design Thesis Proposal
ARS 407 – Fall 2023

Thesis Statement

Tea is one of the most popular drinks in the world, and there's no secret as to why. Not only is it delicious, it helps reduce stress, encourages social connection, and improves one's overall well-being. My thesis project will explore the social and mental health benefits of tea. I will be making a website prototype and some zines to educate students on how tea brings people and communities together. I will also highlight how drinking tea with people is great for one's mental health and can help one incorporate more mindfulness into their life. This can be especially helpful for the students in New Paltz who are going through a lot of anxiety and stress. This project will be completed through conducting research, interviewing the owner of a local tea shop, and hosting tea parties that can help build community at SUNY New Paltz. I will create a cohesive visual language inspired by the look and feel of botanical art and printmaking. The goal of this project is to bring people on campus together and to promote a healthier, more mindful lifestyle through drinking tea.

Thesis I End-of-Semester Review

I got some good feedback at the end of Thesis I. Everyone that I talked to was excited to see what I would end up creating in the next semester. Some people even seemed like they were willing to try more tea. The end-of-semester review was also one of my first opportunities where I was able to get feedback on my designs and visual inspiration.





VISUAL DEVELOPMENT

Visual Inspiration

For a graphic design field trip, I went to the Brooklyn Museum for a zine fair. I was very inspired by the vast amount of creativity displayed there. I was particularly inspired by the zines that incorporated printmaking and used more than one kind of paper. This is where I decided that I wanted to definitely make some zines.

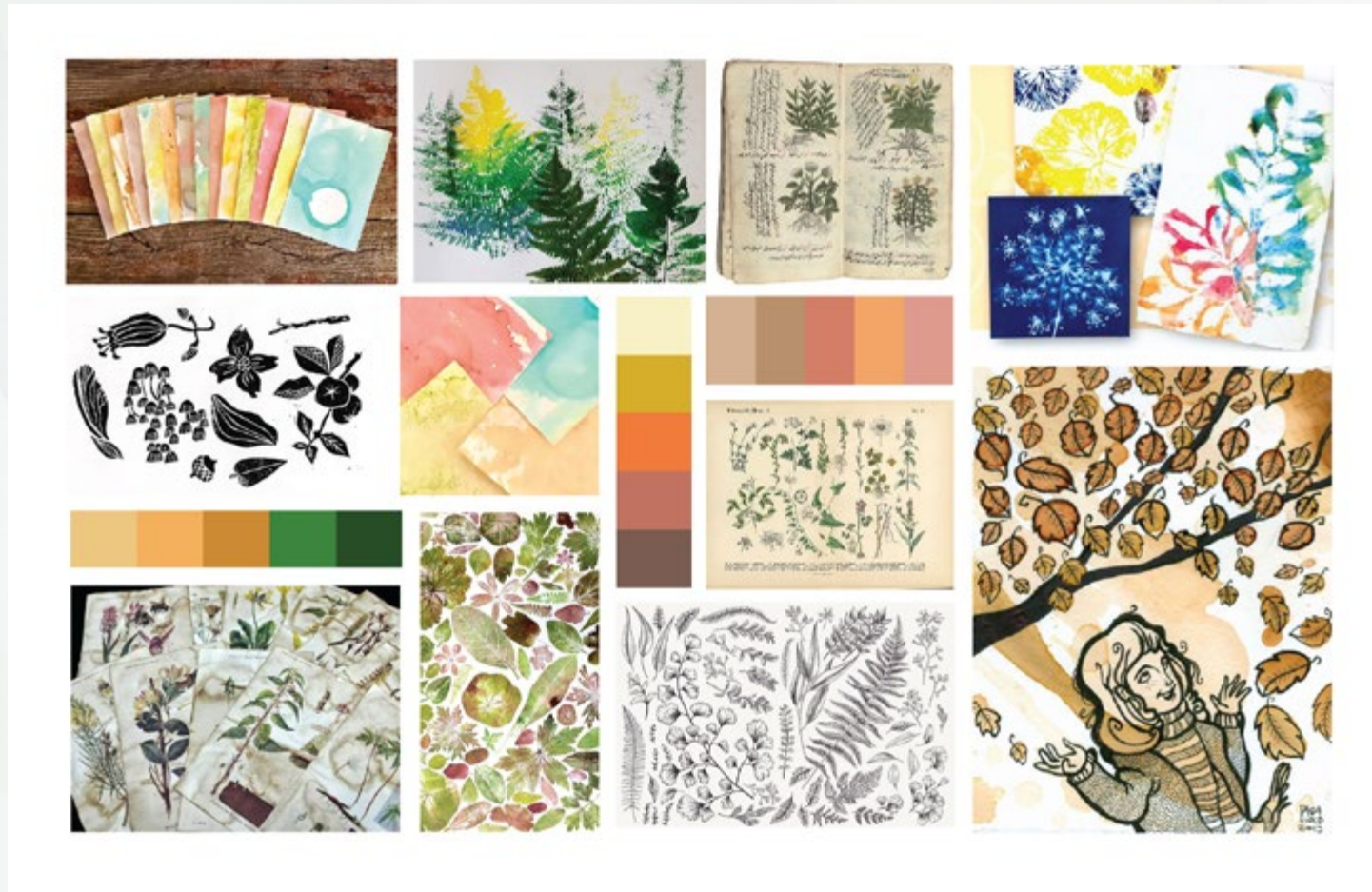
Outside of the zine fair, I was inspired by nature prints, botanical artwork, and watercolor. I was also inspired by the drawings used in Alice in Wonderland, especially the Mad Hatter's tea party. Most of these visual styles did not entirely make it into the final visual identity.

What did make it, however, was tea-stained and coffee-stained artwork. I had a “light-bulb” moment during my 3rd tea party when my friend described that their tea almost looked like “ink”. After that, I looked into tea-stained paper and artwork and ended up applying it later.



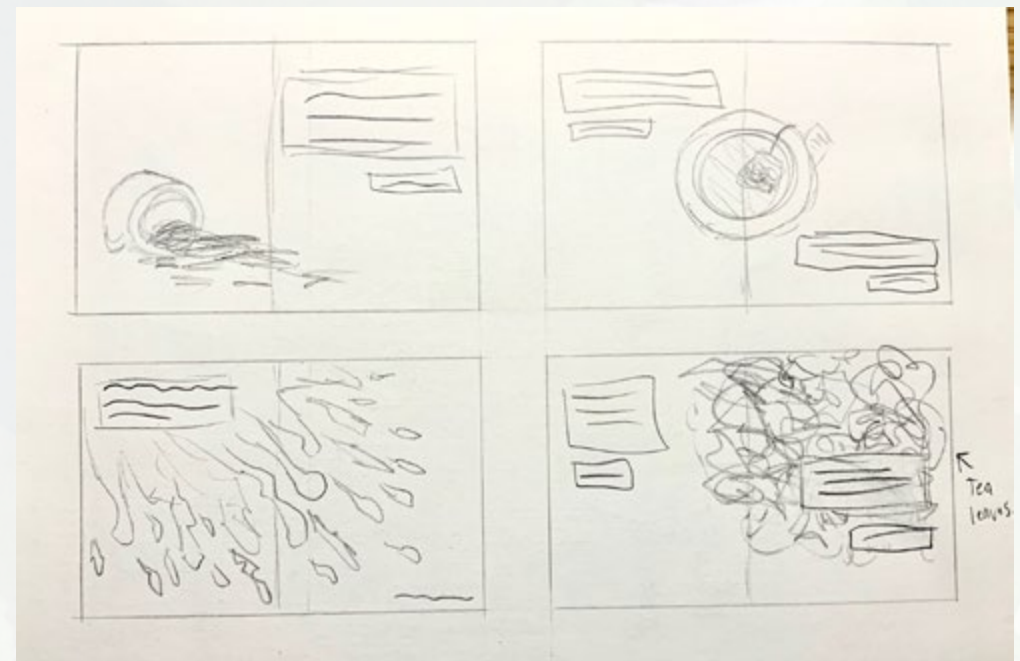
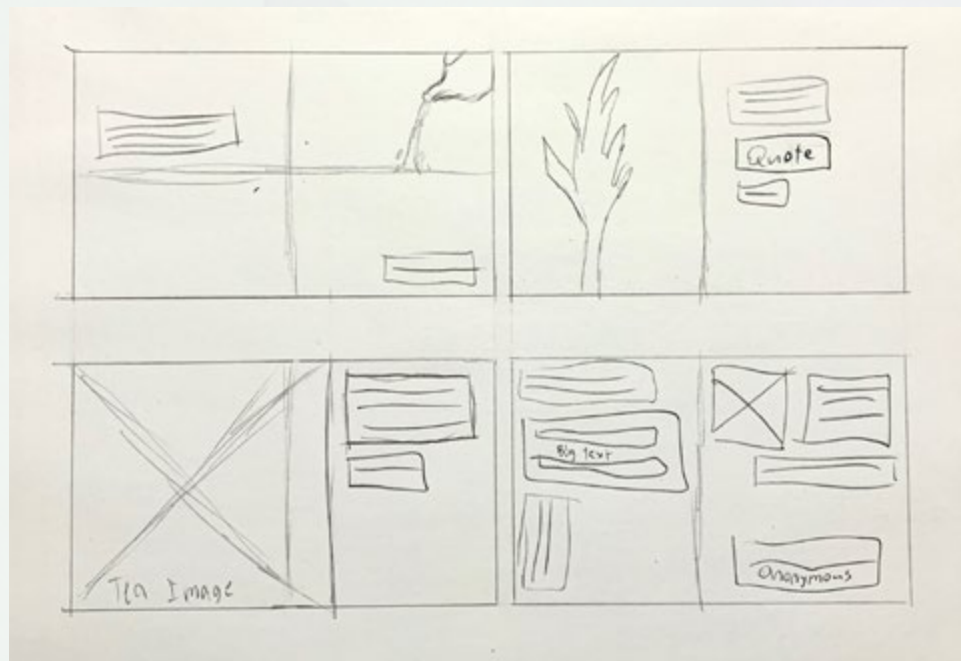
Moodboards

In my early stages of early exploration, I made multiple mood boards to showcase the visual styles I was inspired by to see what looked the most interesting and experiment with combining different elements from each board.



Sketches

Here are some early sketches of some zine spreads that I was planning on making. While it was a good start, they were very simple and my spreads would become more complex later on.



Early Spreads

Like my sketches, my early spreads were simple and needed a lot of work. I was mainly trying to experiment with different images and styles to see what looked the best at this point.

I am absolutely a tea person. I grew up drinking a lot of tea but my go to is matcha or green tea in the morning and it has overall improved my energy. I get extremely anxious when drinking coffee or other super caffeinated products but green tea has really helped me to still wake up in the morning without feeling super anxious! I also overall feel healthier when drinking tea!

Antonio '24



Every morning my dad has to have at least one cup of tea. It has gotten to the point he gets grumpy without it. So, now on mornings where we're both home, I turn on the kettle and set up the cups with his bag of English breakfast tea and my strawberry tea. Then while the tea steeps we get to have a little chat with my dad about the week or what we have planned for the day.

Kaitlyn '23'

During the last year I noticed the time that I drink the most tea is when I'm sitting and doing homework, and it's herbal tea. The warm sensation of drinking it and holding the cup itself is very soothing, and remains something I really enjoy and associate with de-stressing.

Anonymous

One day, my friends and I went to an afternoon tea service. We tried two different types of fruit tea, and both were really good! There were also a bunch of cute pastries, finger sandwiches and scones. It was a very fun experience, and I'd definitely do it again.

Abi '24

The first time I ever sat down with a cup of tea was with my grandmother. It was peppermint tea and we were sitting at the dining room table on a sunny day just chatting for about 2 hours. It was such a pure moment and it was the first time I ever tried peppermint tea. But now her seat remains empty and her cup is dry.

Peppermint tea will forever be my favorite because it warms my heart more than any other tea ever could.

Marissa '24

Gathering Content

While I was experimenting with my visual identity, I was gathering a large amount of content. I was mainly gathering imagery from stock photo sites and taking my own photos. A lot of the images were eventually printed out, ripped, and scanned to be used to create the “collage” look of my visual identity.

I also needed to create some content by staining different kinds of paper with tea. I found that watercolor paper gave the best results and it actually looked similar to watercolor. Once everything dried, I scanned all the paper and used it in my zine spreads.



Writing & Editing

While creating a visual identity, I was writing all the text that would be used in the zines. Even though my writing was good at first, I decided to make it even better by getting feedback at the Writer's Studio at the Center for Student Success. The person who helped me was very helpful, and I was able to successfully write and edit all my text content thanks to them.



Thesis II Midterm Review

The midterm review for Thesis II gave me mixed results. At this point I was struggling to figure out what direction I wanted to go for my visual identity, and I was hoping the midterm review would give me an idea of which direction I should go. People liked a little bit of everything I made, so I had no single direction to go in.

Thankfully, I received some good feedback a week later when one of my classmates suggested that I try layering images to make my spreads look less flat. This feedback is what eventually led me to create the “collage” style for my thesis.



Blogging

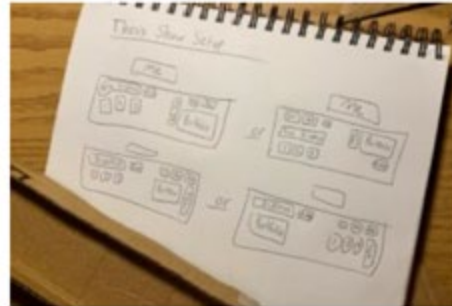
Throughout both semesters that I was working on my thesis, I was recording my process on my graphic design blog. This is where I would post new drafts of my content every week and get feedback on it. The feedback that I was given by Amy and other students was very helpful, especially in Thesis I.



Weekly Blog Post #10

I finished my zine spreads and tweaked them a bunch after some much needed feedback. I also printed out two more copies to see how they look printed. I also printed out my banner earlier this week. How to be Sip Savvy Tea Tranquility Spilled Stories This week I've talked about my thesis to my...

April 29, 2024



Weekly Blog Post #9

I currently don't have much to show, since I've been super busy and dealing with some family stuff this weekend. I should have some new zine spreads to show by Monday night, if not, Tuesday night. I'll either update this post or make a new one. (sorry) I made a ton of zine spreads and...

April 22, 2024



Thesis Assets

One sentence that describes my project: Connecting to yourself and others through tea. Final project description/statement: Tea is one of the most popular drinks in the world, and there's no secret as to why. Not only is it delicious, it helps reduce stress, encourages social connection, and improves one's overall well-being. My thesis project explores the social...

April 15, 2024

The background is a soft, abstract watercolor wash. It features a mix of muted green, lavender, and pale yellow tones, with some darker, more saturated areas. The colors blend together in a fluid, organic manner, creating a textured and artistic feel. The overall composition is balanced and visually appealing.

FINAL DESIGN

Visual Identity



Matcha
#6da843



Butterfly Pea
#3d80aa



Hibiscus
#a93f94

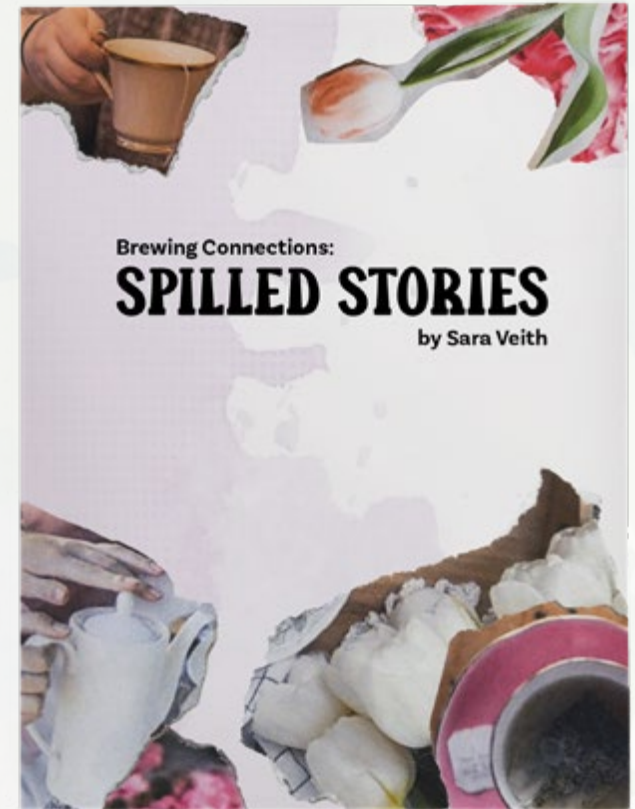
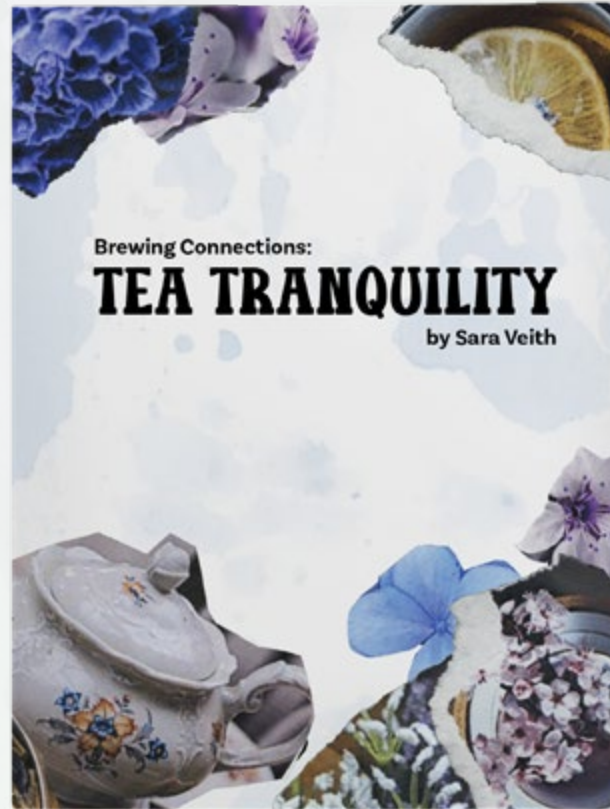
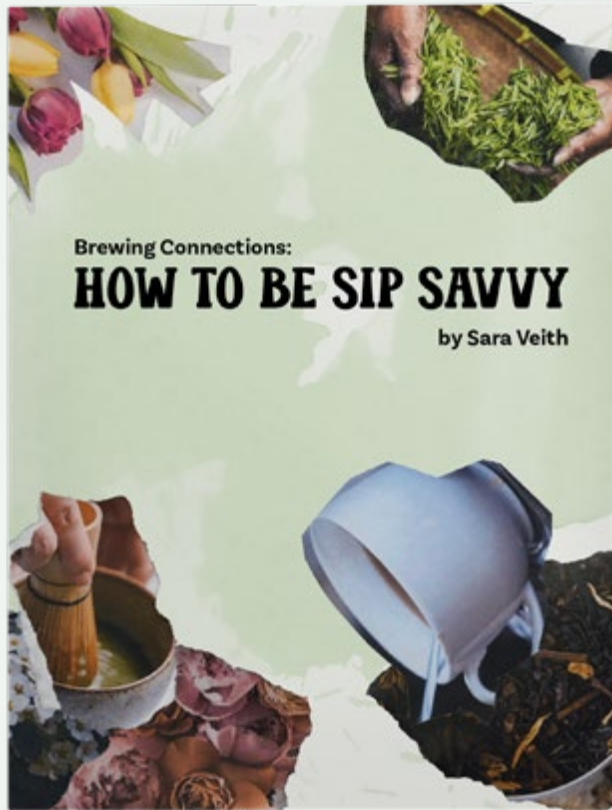
Milk and Tea

Drink more tea!

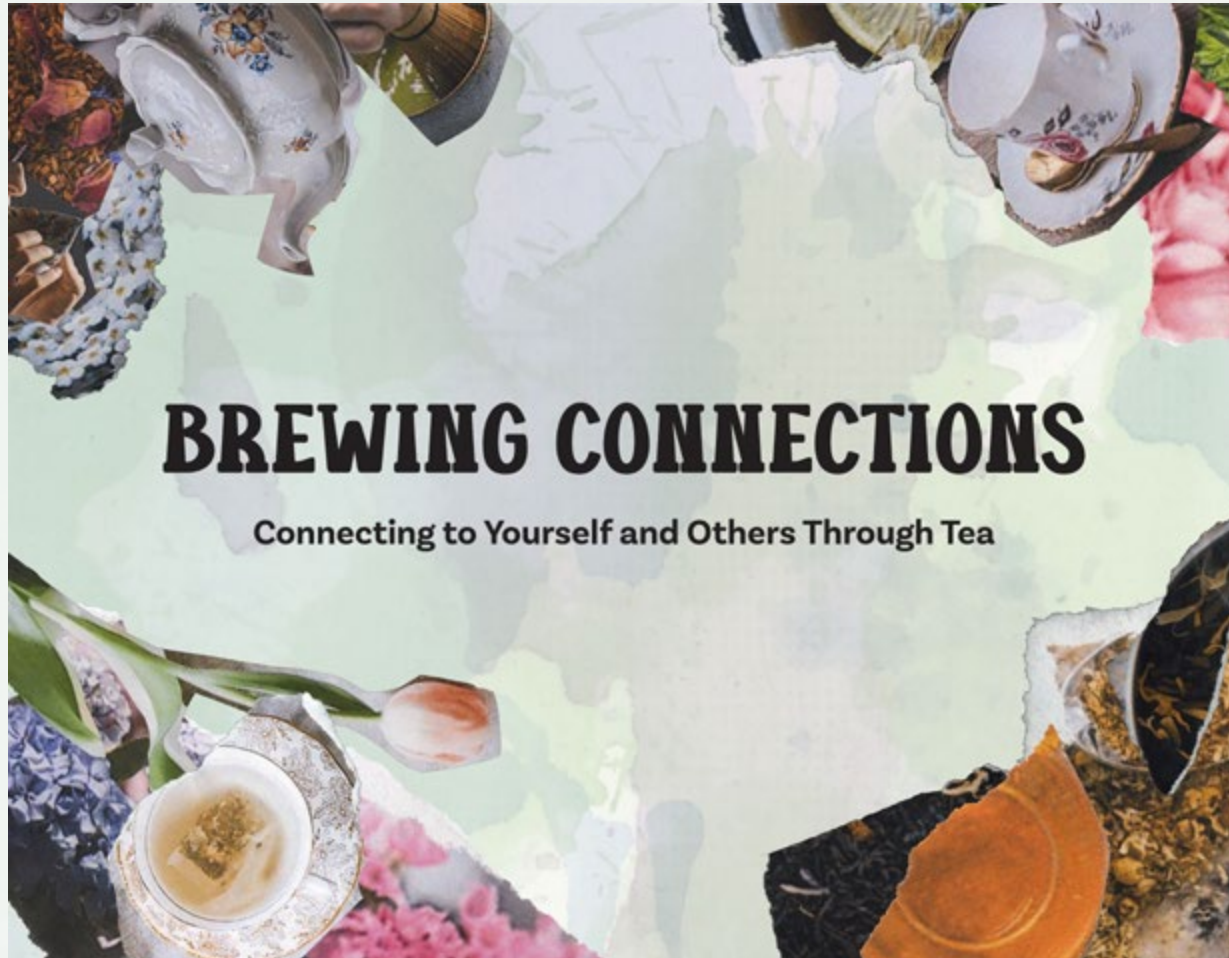
Basic Sans

Tea is popular in the UK.

Zines



Thesis Assets & Mockups



Thesis Show

I had a wonderful time at the thesis show! I gave out pretty much all of my zine copies and all my iced tea was gone within the first hour. It was also really nice to see everyone else's work too. My project was well-received and I was happy with it.



The background is a soft, abstract watercolor wash. It features a mix of muted green, lavender, and pale yellow tones, with some darker, more saturated areas. The colors blend together in a fluid, organic manner, creating a textured and artistic feel. The overall composition is balanced and visually appealing.

REFLECTIONS

Obstacles

I faced quite a few obstacles while working on my thesis. The main two obstacles I faced were time and lack of inspiration.

Sadly, I did not have enough time to do everything I originally wanted for this project by the end of the Spring semester. I originally wanted to create a website along with the three zines, but I unfortunately did not have the time to work on both. Despite this, I was still happy with what I had for the Thesis Show.

During Thesis II, there was a huge lack of inspiration after the first few weeks. It was hard for me to create content and figure out what visual direction I wanted to go. I hit a “pit of despair” right after the midterm review, however, after getting my mind off of thesis during Spring Break, I eventually got back on track.

Reflections

My main takeaway from my thesis that collaboration is key. Getting feedback from my classmates helped me so much, and when I was feeling a lack of motivation, seeing people excited for me and my thesis was enough for me to feel motivated again. Nothing has to be done alone, and it's okay to ask for help sometimes.

Another takeaway is to take breaks. I constantly felt burnt out while working on this project, and if I did not take any breaks, I don't think I would've been happy with it.

Overall, it is fulfilling to finish the zines for this project and see people actually look at them and read them. I may be done for now, but who knows where this project will take me into the future.

The background is a soft watercolor wash. It features a mix of muted green, light purple, and pale yellow-green colors. The colors are blended together, creating a textured, painterly effect with some darker spots and lighter areas. The overall tone is gentle and artistic.

THANK YOU!