



Digital Fictions: Towards Designing Narrative-Driven Games as Therapy

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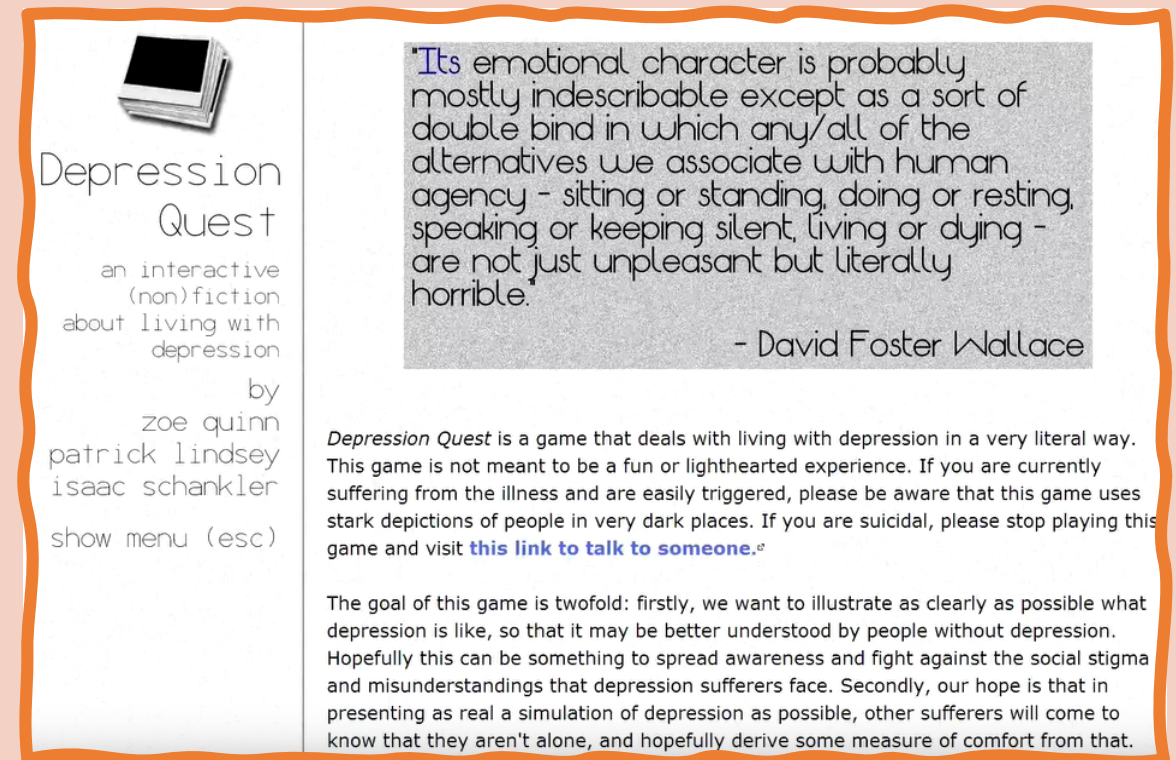
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Digital Fictions (DFs)

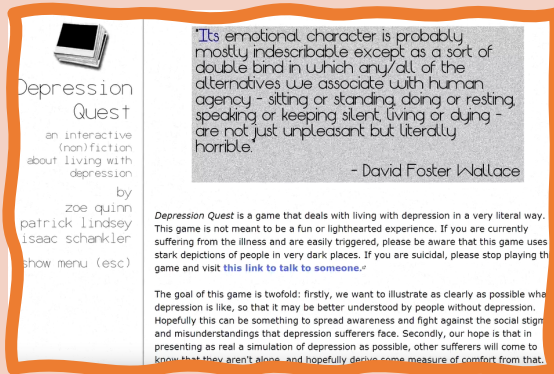
Digital-born media



Depression Quest: Text-Based

Digital Fictions (DFs)

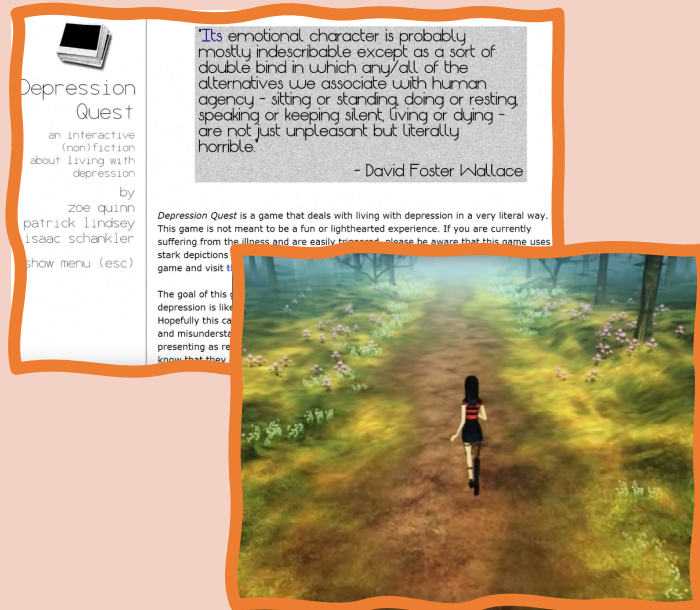
Digital-born media



Tale of Tales: Multimodal

Digital Fictions (DFs)

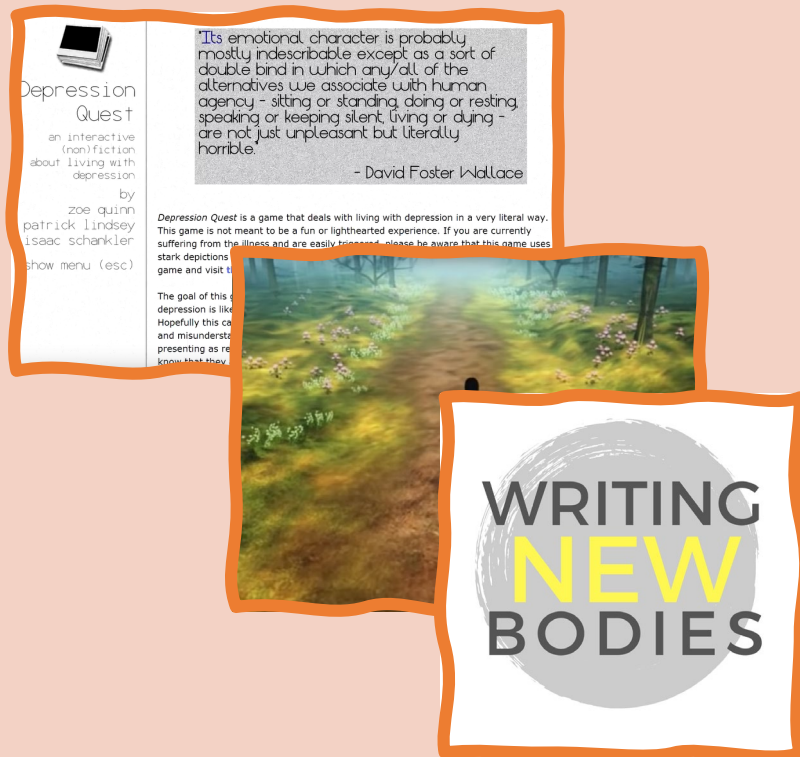
Digital-born media



Twine-Based

Digital Fictions (DFs)

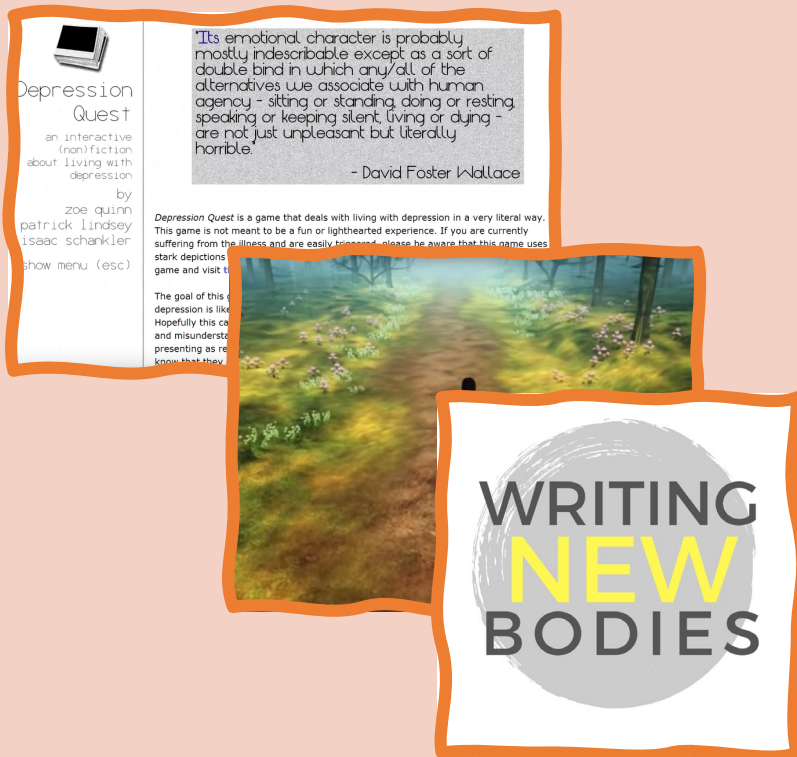
Digital-born media



- Interactive form of storytelling
- Combines reading, viewing, physical interaction, and gameplay

Digital Fictions (DFs)

Digital-born media



- Critical (depression, suicide, body image issues, political & social issues)
- Non-profit
- Often multilinear what-if scenarios

Bibliotherapy

- Intervention method
- Employs directed reading
- Helps with psychological issues
- Expressive disclosure writing

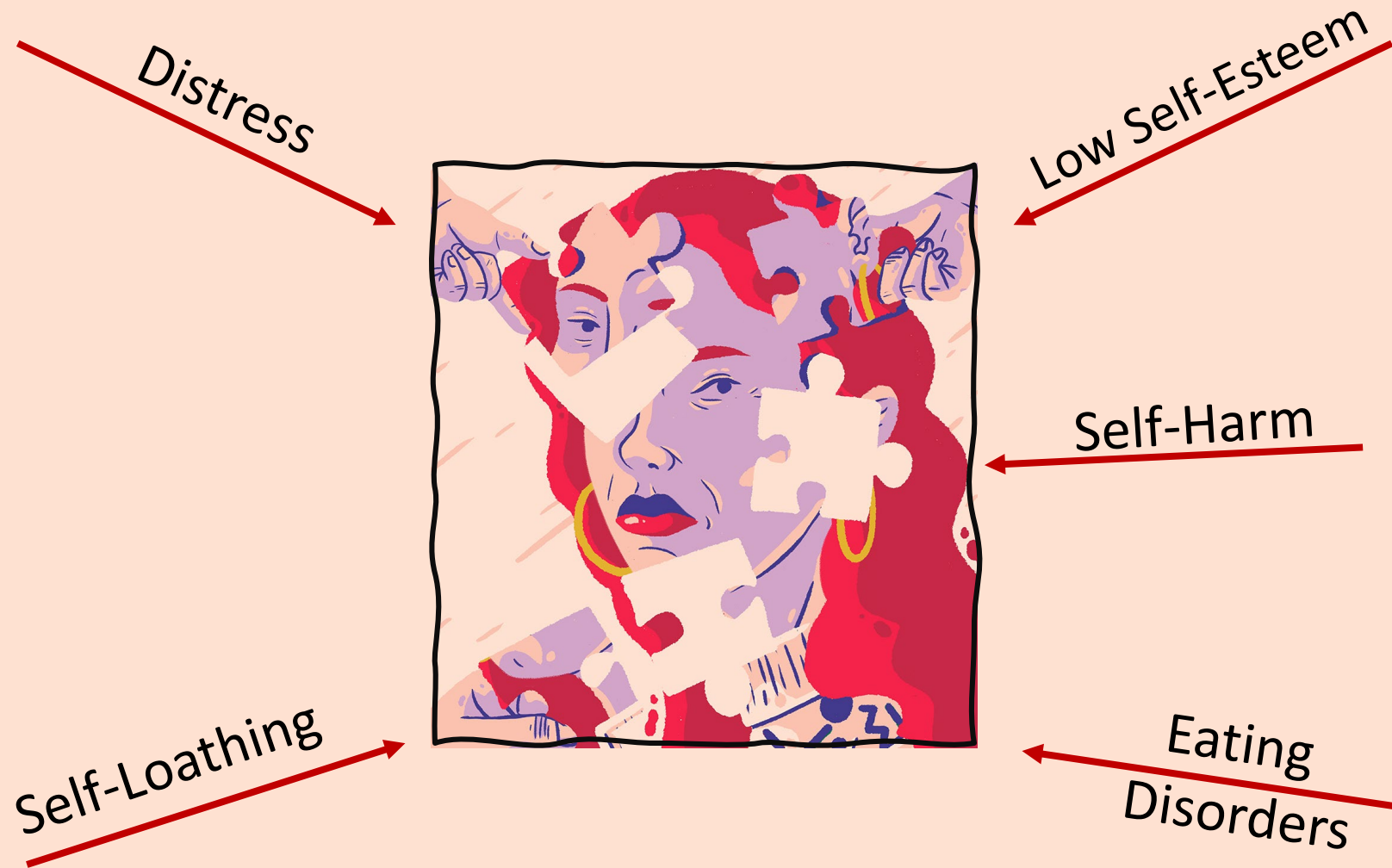


Writing New Bodies

- Targeted towards young, woman-identified & gender non-conforming individuals
- 21st century, digital-born bibliotherapy
- Addresses distress, self-hatred, anxiety → body image issues
- Place of hope and comfort



Body Image Issues



Body Image Issues



Writing New Bodies Methodology

An abstract illustration in the background of the slide depicts several stylized human figures in various poses, rendered in a dark, muted color palette of purples, blues, and greys. The figures are arranged in a circular or semi-circular pattern, suggesting a group or community. The style is graphic and modern, with some figures having distinct features like curly hair or specific clothing.

- Critical Co-Design
- Feminist Participatory Action Research (FPAR)
- Collaborators:
 - critical psychologists,
 - social scientists,
 - body image, social justice, and bibliotherapy experts,
 - (digital fiction) game designers

Writing New Bodies Findings



THEMATIC FINDINGS

Health

Illness, Eating, Disorders, Depression

Embodiment

The Body, Weight, Body Parts, Clothing

Affect-Oriented

Femininity/Gender Roles, Social Media, Beauty Standards, Space, Support, Resistance, Empowerment, Privilege, Sexual Assault, Self-Hate

Identity

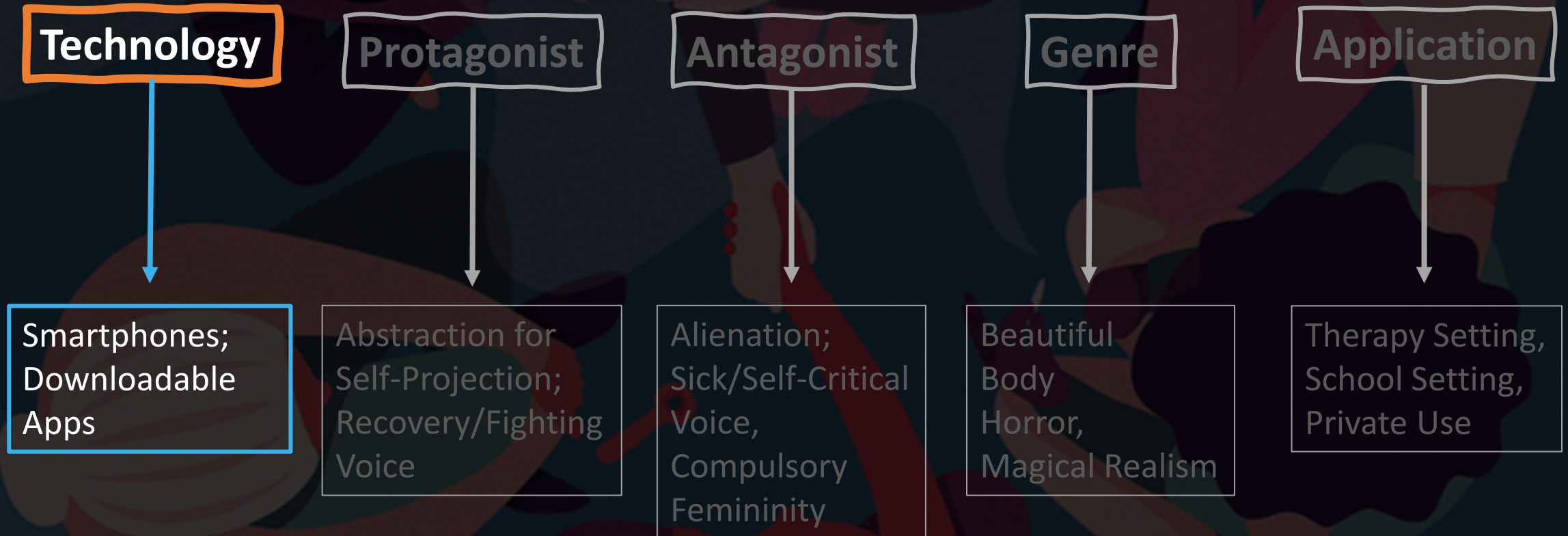
Race, Sexuality, Disability, Queerness, Digital Identity, Trans Identity, Indigeneity, Cis Identity

Narrative Themes

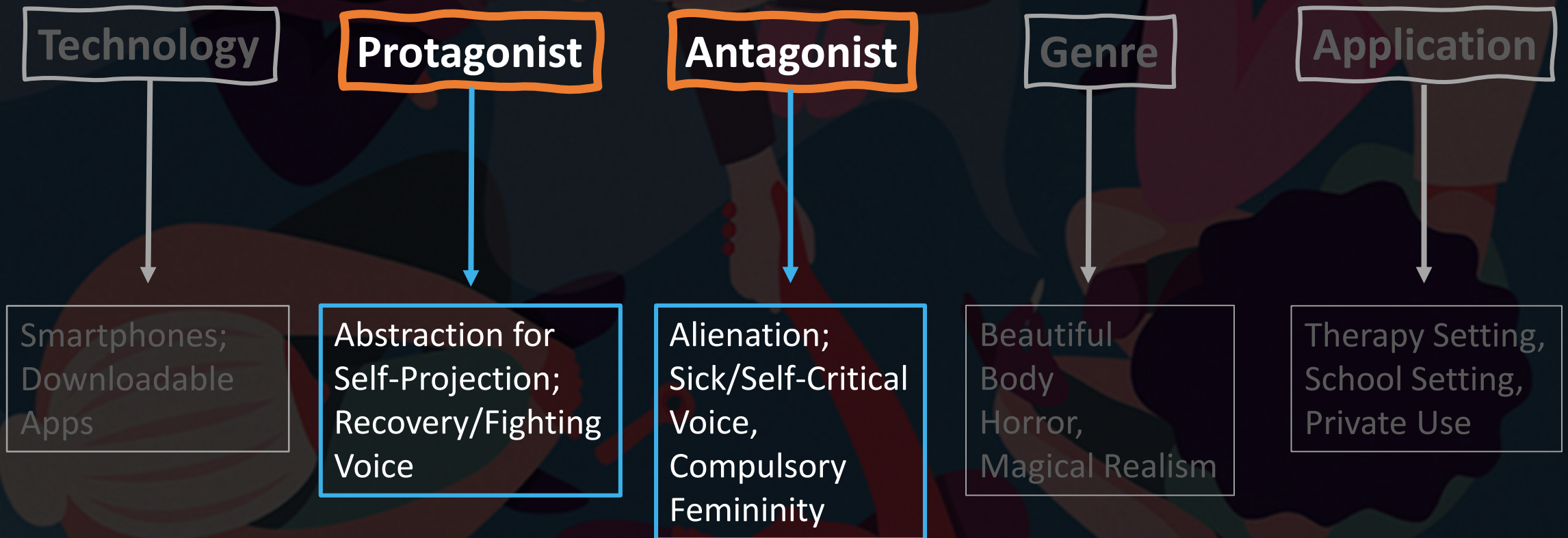
Technologies

The Gaze, Digital Fictions, Character, Direct Themes, Nonlinear/Rhizomatic/Looping, The Mother, The Father

Design Plan (in progress)



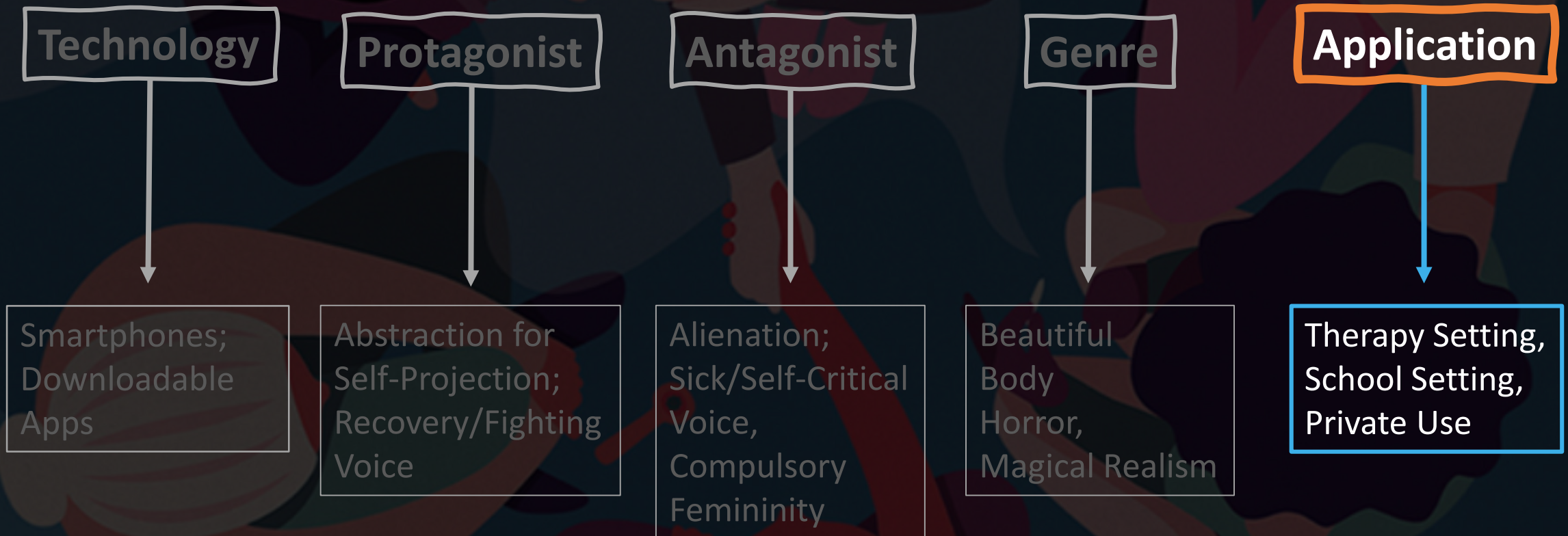
Design Plan (in progress)



Design Plan (in progress)



Design Plan (in progress)



An abstract illustration in the background of the slide depicts several stylized human figures in a circular arrangement, possibly representing a group or community. The figures are rendered in dark, muted colors like maroon, brown, and black, with some highlights in a lighter brown. They appear to be interacting or holding hands, creating a sense of unity and shared experience. The overall style is graphic and artistic, with a focus on form and color over realistic detail.

Towards designing narrative-driven games in therapy

- Interactive storytelling
- Alternative, critical platform
- Artistically appropriate & matter sensitive
- Easy to learn & develop
- Applicable in therapy
- Appeal to younger audiences

Thank you!

<https://sites.google.com/ualberta.ca/writingnewbodies/home>

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FACULTY OF ARTS



Illustrations

Sarah Mazzetti: Illustration slide 7

Luke Brookes (www.lukebrookes.com), slide 8

Gillian Levine (dribbble.com/gillianlevine), slides 10, 11

Ludography

DEPRESSION QUEST (The Quinnspracy 2013, O: Zoë Quinn, Patrick Lindsey)

INKUBUS (Dreaming Methods 2014, O: Andy Campbell, Christine Wilks)

WALLPAPER (Dreaming Methods 2015, O: Andy Campbell, Judi Alston)

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