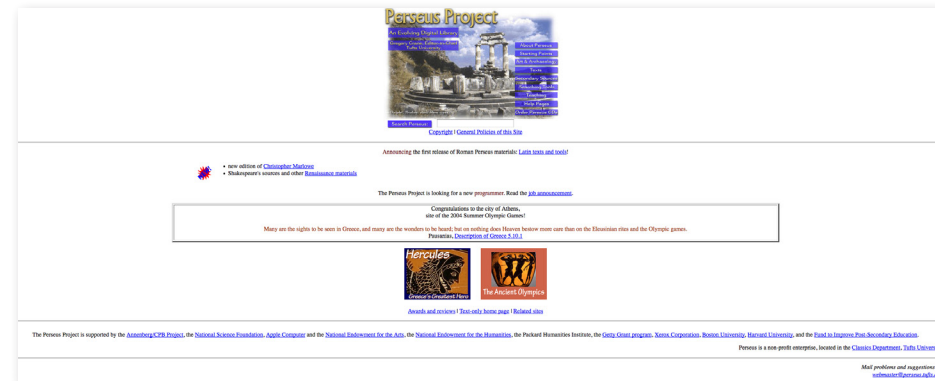


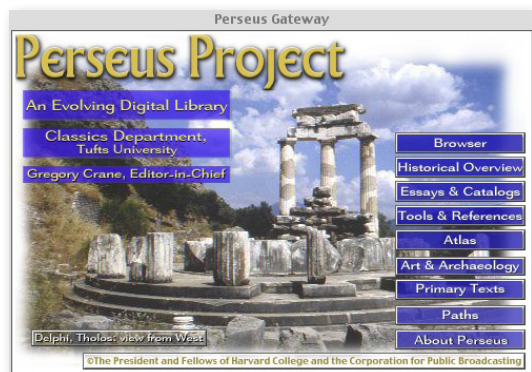
Perseus 2.0 | CD | 1996



Perseus 2.0 | website | January 1997



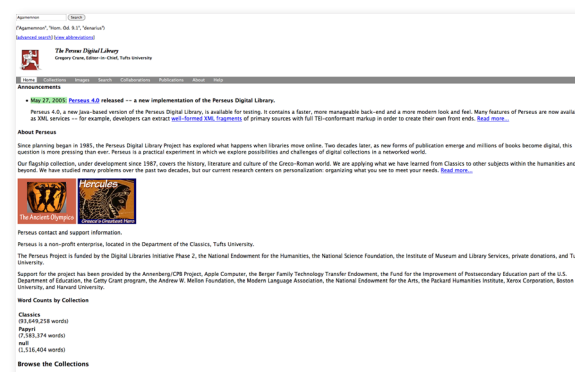
Perseus 2.0 | website | December 1997



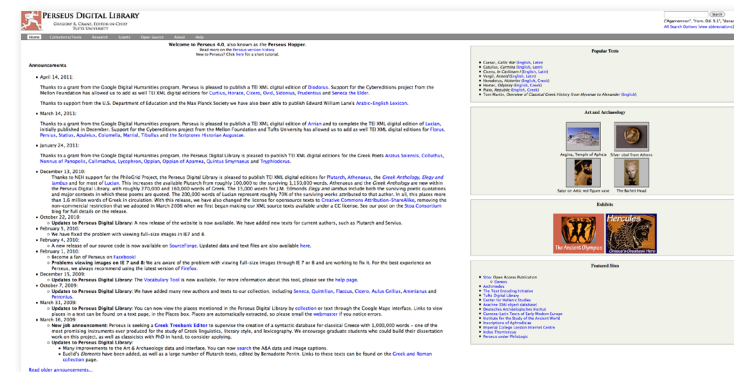
Perseus 2.0 | CD | December 2000



Perseus 3.0 | CD | November 2000



Perseus 4.0 | CD | June 2005



Perseus 4.0 | CD | May 2011

TECHNOLOGY

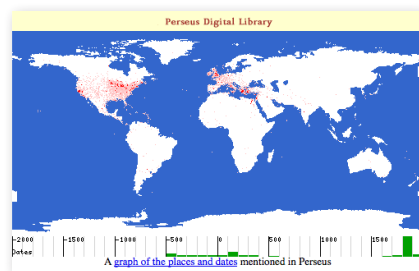
- Hypercard technology used for the 1996 CD-ROM had limitations which influenced the general aspect and graphic design of the interface. The platform independent CD of 2000 reflects the evolution of technology in terms of graphic capabilities and affordances.
- Early versions of the project displayed default fonts with little hierarchical signification (1996). Later iterations employed typography as a tool for organization.
- Users in 1997 were offered a text-only option of the website, included to address bandwidth and web-browser constraints. This option was eliminated in 2005 for Perseus 4.0.

MISSION

- The Perseus project began as a collection of Greek texts for academic use and this was reflected in the title displayed in Greek characters. Later, the scope of the project expanded:

“...the overall goal is not to create a single library on one subject, but to help develop the protocols for a vast, cross-cultural virtual library spanning many cultures and periods.”

- G. Crane, 1998
- If in 1988 the collection was viewed as an interactive curriculum (Gregory Crane et al., 1988), 10 years later the idea of a complete digital library for the humanities built on the infrastructure provided by the ancient Greek collection was already well integrated into the ideology of Perseus. The collection, however, retained the designation of “project” until 2000. The expanded and revised Perseus 3.0 version was the first to use the title “Perseus Digital Library.”
- Another example of the deep influence of discourse is reflected by Perseus’s adherence to the concept of historical spaces, as illustrated by the map interface in Perseus 3.0. Here, the goal is to provide a complete, immersive experience.



November 2000

BIBLIOGRAPHY

All snapshots included on this handout are downloaded from the Internet Archive Way Back Machine (http://wayback.archive.org/web/*/http://www.perseus.tufts.edu)

Crane, Gregory. “The Perseus Project and Beyond: How Building a Digital Library Challenges the Humanities and Technology.” *D-Lib Magazine* (1998): 1-18. Print.

Crane, Gregory et al. “Perseus: An Interactive Curriculum on Classical Greek Civilization, A Proposal to the Annenberg/CPB Project. Appendix.” 1988. Web 2.0 Mar. 2011.

THE FACE OF THE SCHOLARLY CORPUS AND EDITION

Diachronic View of Collection Interfaces

In order to study the evolution of digital collection interfaces over time, we examined the home page of the Perseus project from a diachronic perspective. Our approach consists of looking at the main factors responsible for interface changes – technology, users, missions and media culture – and assessing how and to what extent the changes affected various interface elements over time. We found that the diachronic approach to the study of interface design is feasible within a predetermined context. In this handout, we have included a timeline representation of different variations of the Perseus interface and examples of interface changes affected by the aforementioned factors.

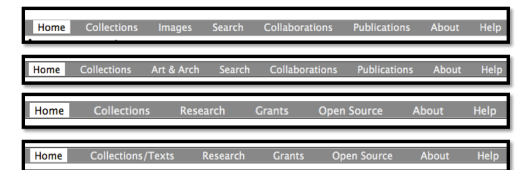
Geoffrey Rockwell, Stan Ruecker, Daniel Sondheim, Mihaela Ilovan, Jennifer Windsor and the INKE Team

AUDIENCE

- As the Perseus collection expanded, so did its user base. As a consequence of expansion and diversification of use, the main navigation menu went through several reorganizations and labels became more general and less descriptive and task oriented.



January 1997



Perseus 4.0 navigation bars 2005 - 2011

- The first search box appears on the homepage of the Perseus in late 1997, but a button for “Search tools” and “Search” is used intermittently on all versions of the website.



December 1997

MEDIA CULTURE

- The transparent navigation buttons, display fonts and stylistic effects such as feathered edges and drop shadows of Perseus 2.0 graphics reflect design trends at the time this version of the website was released in 1996.
- Perseus 3.0 had a classic tripartite website format, with a header, body and two sidebars. All page elements were clearly delineated and framed.
- Perseus 4.0, released in 2005, was created at the peak of the blogosphere and its format is influenced by typical blog layout design.