

Inventing the Medium

NINCH Building Blocks Workshop
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Pattern

Whenever I design a chip the first thing I want to do is look at it under a microscope -- not because I think I can learn something new by looking at it but because I am always fascinated by how a pattern can create reality.

Danny Hillis *The Pattern in the Stone*

New Media

Soliloquy as Technology of Representation



Properties of the Medium

- Procedural
- Participatory
- Encyclopedic
- Spatial

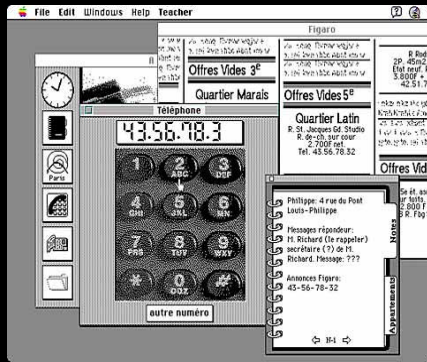
Legacy Design Paradigms

- Graphic Design: Poster
- Human Computer Interaction: Appliance
- Television Producers: “Enhanced” TV
- Instructional Design: Distant Classroom
- Communication: Broadband Telephone
- Library Science: Card Catalog
- Literary/Cultural Studies: Potato Root System

A Medium of Representation



Script the interactor



Design Issues



- Is it a “show”?
- Is there a “movie underneath”?
- Segmentation and juxtaposition
- Standardized labels
- Encyclopedic expectation

Cross-Media Structures

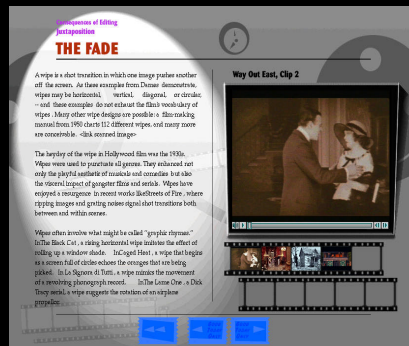


Folger Shakespeare Library. All Rights Reserved

Granularity, Juxtaposition



Textbook to Archive



Virtual Screening
Room
Henry Jenkins, MIT
CD-ROM/DVD Project

A New Medium

Medium of Representation

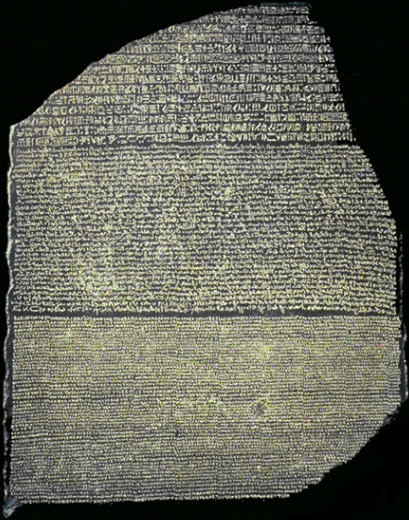
allows us to:

- Inscribe perceptible signs
- Create patterns of meaning
- Preserve and transmit patterns
- Expand our understanding and our humanity

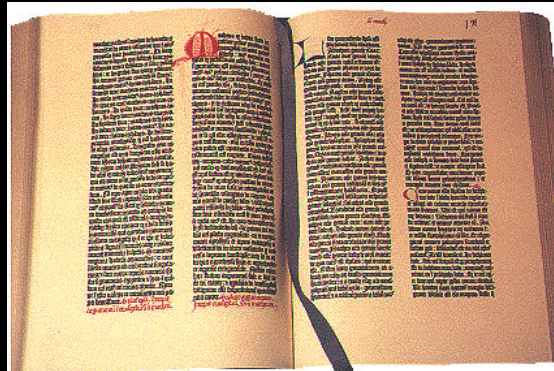
New Media



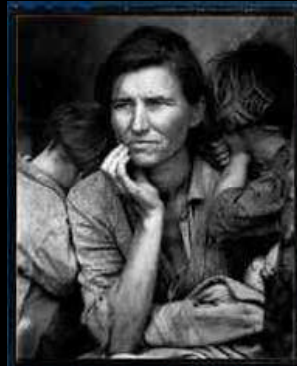
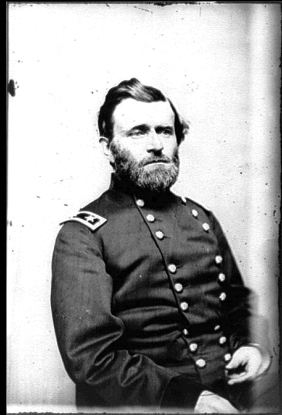
New Media



New Media



New Media



Moments of Invention

Patterns of Meaning

New Forms...New Knowledge

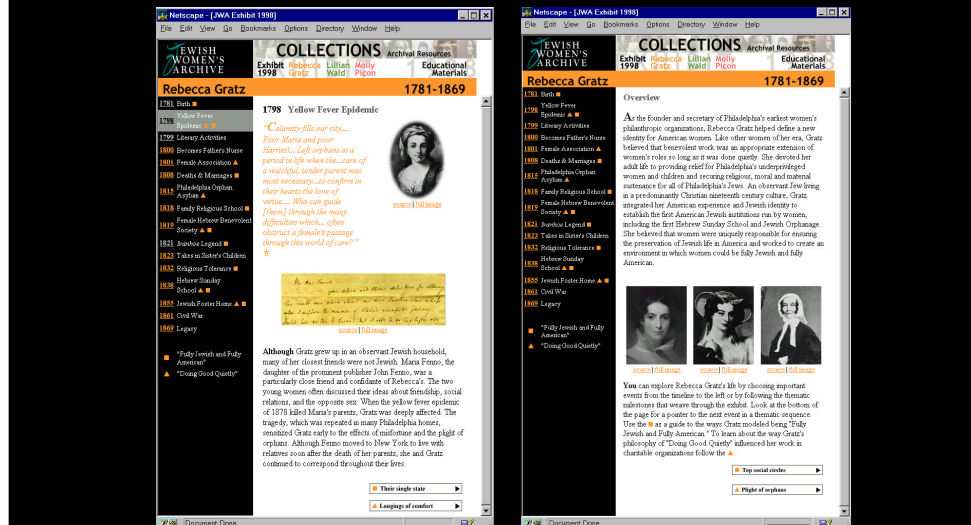
- Digital Archive
- Simulation
- Kaleidoscopic structure





John Belcher, TEAL, MIT, NSF

Reinventing Biography

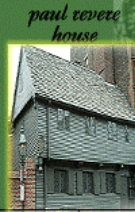


bringing history home

coming of age in changing times



1600



1700



1800

The story of the Pilgrims and their Indian neighbors is familiar to most and many international visitors as well. It evokes powerful images of strength face of adversity, of ships on storm-tossed oceans and winters on bleak New England shores; yet, also of harvest plenty, of Thanksgiving gatherings and golden autumnal afternoons. However, the historic reality which underlies greeting card imagery is far more complex.

how do they know what they know?

credits

©copyright 2000, Massachusetts Foundation for the Humanities

Paul Revere House



caption



caption



caption

The story of the Pilgrims and their Indian neighbors is familiar to most Americans, and many international visitors as well. It evokes powerful images of strength in the face of adversity, of ships on storm-tossed oceans and winters on bleak New England shores; yet, also of harvest plenty, of Thanksgiving gatherings and golden autumnal afternoons.

Choose a Character



Sarah Bennett

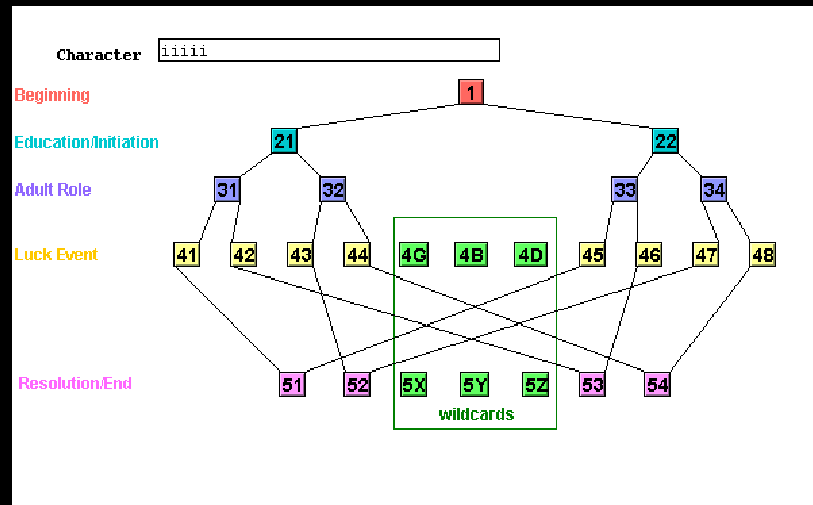
The story of the Pilgrims and their Indian neighbors is familiar to most Americans, many international visitors as well. It evokes powerful images of strength in the face of adversity, of ships on storm-tossed oceans and winters.



Amanda Page

The story of the Pilgrims and their Indian neighbors is familiar to most Americans, many international visitors as well. It evokes powerful images of strength in the face of adversity, of ships on storm-tossed oceans and winters.

how do they know what they know?



demo_projector

AFI Networked Digital Collection

Gone With The Wind (1939)

Directed by Victor Fleming, George Cukor (uncredited), Sam Wood (uncredited)

Production Credits

Plot Summary

Release Information

Script

S. Tarleton: What do we care if we were expelled from college Scarlett? The war's gonna start any day now so we would have left college anyhow.

B. Tarleton: War! Isn't it exciting Scarlett? You know those fool Yankees actually want a war!

S. Tarleton: We'll show 'em!

Scarlett: Fiddle dee dee. War war war. This war talk's spoiling all the fun at every party this Spring. I get so bored I could scream! Besides, there isn't going to be any war.

S. Tarleton: Not going to be any war?

Choose View

Search

Reel Collection

Screen

30

How to invent the medium

Pick something complicated

- Think of a particular task you are obsessed by
- Do you know more about it than you can contain in books, classes, diagrams?
- Do you want to know something / explain something just beyond the reach of available means?

Think abstractly, build concretely

- What are the core tasks?
- What other tasks are like this one?
- What would this task be like if it were doable in the most perfect way?

Look for Harbinger Materials

Hot Norman:

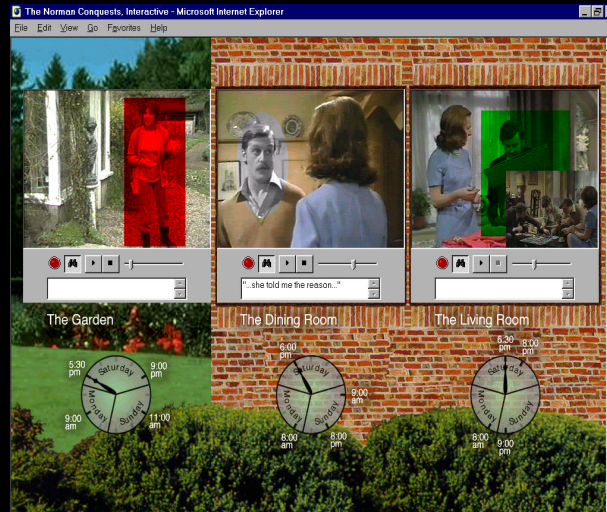
A prototype for
Digital TV

Based on

The
Norman
Conquests,
Trilogy by
Alan
Ayckbourn

Built with

IBM
"HotVideo"

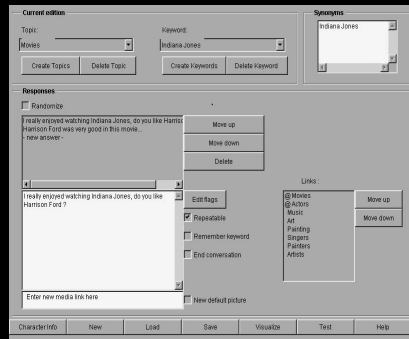


Exploit the Medium

- Procedural: Patterns of Rule-Based Behavior
- Participatory: Patterns of Participation
- Encyclopedic: Patterns of Segmentation, Categorization, and Agglomeration
- Spatial: Patterns of Navigation and Boundary Definition

Create Authoring Tools

CharacterMaker 4 J. Murray, M. Privat



British Museum Stance

- Everything will be brought to you
- Everything has been indexed
- Every medium available
- Every artifact available
- Every part of every artifact at every level of granularity
- Every marginalized group/idea represented or addable

Design for the Future Environment

- Standardized metadata
- Distributed annotation
- Open ended archive
- Growing ability to manipulate with kaleidoscopic power
- Growing ability to replay, readjust parameters

Avoid Pitfalls

- Fetishism of legacy formats
- Constraints of legacy processes
- Confusing expert authority with legacy formats and processes
- “Hypertext”
- “Intuition”

Look for the patterns

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Remember what is sacred

- Not the book: it's a legacy format
- Not the process: it can be improved
- The expansion of human knowledge and human understanding

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