Collex: NINES in the Semantic Web

Interpretative re-use of digital objects

www.patacriticism.org/collex
What is Collex?

- Collect and exhibit
- “...making the manipulation and annotation of [objects] open to all users.”
- Findability: Faceted, full-text search, browse
- Folksonomy: tagging and annotations
Who's behind Collex?

- Applied Research in Patacriticism
  University of Virginia
- Dr. Jerome McGann, Dr. Bethany Nowviskie
- ARP is generously funded and supported by the *Andrew Mellon Foundation*
Collex operations

- Aggregate
- Find (search/browse)
- Collect (tag/annotate)
- Exhibit
Features

- Collecting
  - From original archive, via bookmarklet
  - Directly in search results
  - Sidebar details
- Syndicated collections – per facet, tag, or peer, globally or per user.
Facets

• NINES
  • Object facets: archive, year, agent, genre (and even full-text)
  • User supplied facets: tag, peer

• Collex goal
  • Generic on data domain
  • Developer flexibility in specifying facets
Current Deployment Status

- NINES
  - http://www.nines.org/collex
  - Over 50k objects
  - 12 archives
  - AJAX: term and name suggest features
Collex future

- Saved searches
  - Feeds for all saved searches, and themselves first-class facet citizens
- Set visualizations
- Embedded time-line
- Atom publishing protocol
- Generalizability for other subject domains
Technical architecture

- Solr
  - Faceted browsing/search
  - AJAX suggest data
  - More Like This, Highlighting
- Relational database (currently MySQL)
  - User management
  - Administrative data
  - “Interpretation” storage, backed by Solr
- Ruby on Rails
  - User interface
Solr

- Open source enterprise search server
- Lucene-based
- Lightweight XML/HTTP protocol
  - Can return JSON, Ruby, ... data structures instead of XML
- Facets
- Highlighting
- More Like This
- Scalability features
  - Caching
  - Replication
- Web administration interface for stats and analysis tools
- Extensible
Ruby on Rails

- Rapid development
  - Save and refresh
- Pleasant database modeling with ActiveRecord and Migrations
- Web coding is fun again!
  - The language is a joy
  - Rails elegantly layered on top of Ruby
Other ARP projects

- **IVANHOE**
  - Online playspace that facilitates collaborative interpretation.

- **Juxta**
  - Tool for comparing and collating

- **Rossetti Archive**

- **NINES**

“Poets are the unacknowledged engineers of the world”