OAI Services Unbound
(Prometheus or Frankenstein?)

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The Spark of Life

- 2 Page Python Repository
- 1 Page Python Harvester

Simple tools like these are fine for the conventional OAI model where others harvest our data and provide value-added services.

But this is our data, so what if we want to provide our own set of value-added services while we’re at it?
It’s Alive!

- XML displayed in a browser is ugly
- But, you can include an XSL stylesheet reference in OAI response instructing browsers how to transform it into HTML
- The stylesheet reference is simply ignored by regular OAI harvesters
- A crude [NDLTD Union Catalog](#) interface
The creature learns

- The OpenURL Registry is little more than an OAI repository plus a stylesheet.

- This registry is interesting because it contains content in addition to metadata.

- The problem, though, is that this content is buried in an OAI wrapper.

- Bright idea: extend OAI with a custom getMetadata verb!
The Townsfolk Attack

- A bare-bones OAI repository can be converted into a human-friendly web application by doing a few simple tricks with OAI.
- Unfortunately, this only works for one OAI repository at a time.
- Some of these tricks might be frowned on by OAI purists.
The Creature Finds Friends

- **OAI Registry at UIUC**
  - 518 repositories registered
  - 329 with distinct repository identifiers
  - OAI harvestable
  - Many repositories still lack repository identifiers, but Tom Habing is willing to add them retrospectively

- NISO asked us to create a new registry patterned after the OpenURL Registry
The Creature Adapts

- All the tricks used on the OpenURL are based on manipulating OAI responses.
- Rather than extend a particular OAI repository, these tricks can run as a separate Servlet that performs dynamic OAI requests behind the scenes to get what it needs.
- Because the URLs for these OAI extensions are so ugly, why not have this Servlet hide them behind a simple URL pattern?
- By incorporating the repository identifier into the URL pattern, they can work for anyone.
And Lives Happily Ever After

- http://errol.oclc.org/
- http://errol.oclc.org/xmlregistry.oclc.org
- http://errol.oclc.org/xmlregistry.oclc.org.rss
See the ERRoL Project page at:

http://www.oclc.org/research/projects/oairesolver/