



Creative Search Using Pataphysics

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Pataphysics

- is the science of the **particular**
- examines the laws governing **exceptions**
- explains a universe supplementary to this one
- is the science of **imaginary** solutions
- is to metaphysics as metaphysics is to physics

“To understand ‘pataphysics is to fail to understand ‘pataphysics”
(Andrew Hugill’s Useless Guide to ‘Pataphysics)

Pataphysics

- the **clinamen** or the chance
- particular over the general
- exceptions over the ordinary
- the paradox or **antinomy**
- simultaneous existence of mutually exclusive opposites
- subjective
- symmetry, duality
- absurd anomalies
- transcended reality or the absolute
- epiphenomenalism
- unexpected alignment, **syzygy**

Definition of “animal”

- those that belong to the Emperor,
- embalmed ones,
- those that are trained,
- suckling pigs,
- mermaids,
- fabulous ones,
- stray dogs,
- those included in the present classification,
- those that tremble as if they were mad,
- innumerable ones,
- those drawn with a very fine camelhair brush,
- others,
- those that have just broken a flower vase,
- those that from a long way off look like flies.

Creative Search Using Pataphysics

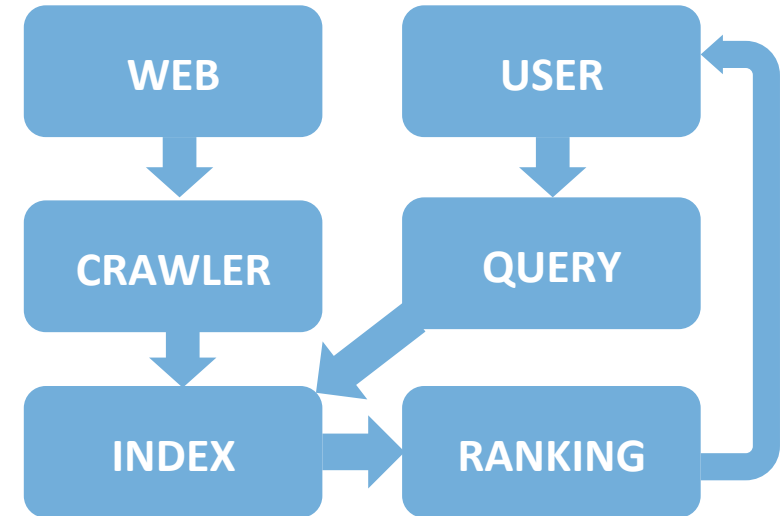
Aim: surprising, novel, inspiring, humorous search

- Exploratory search, not information lookup
- Creative computing by using pataphysical algorithms
- Generate creative search results rather than relevant ones

Pataphysicalisation = applying pataphysical techniques to data

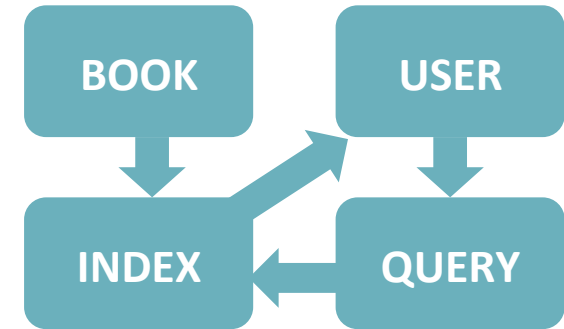
Information Retrieval

1. Information need
2. Query formulation
3. Retrieval process
4. Ranking
5. Results evaluation



Prototype

- Local search in book
- Text only, no images
- Tiny index
- No ranking
- Three algorithms



Exploits and Opinions of Dr Faustroll, Pataphysician (Jarry 1907)

Algorithms

Clinamen

clear - leaf

Deliberate spelling errors

Syzygy

clear – disappear - vanish

Query → synonyms → hypo/hyper/holonyms

Antinomy

clear – allow light to pass through - opaque

Antonyms of query & antonyms of synonyms

Experimental Results

QUERY	CLINAMEN	SYZYGY	ANTINOMY
clear	altar, leaf, pleas, cellar	vanish, allow, bare, pronounce	opaque
solid	sound, valid, solar, slide	block, form, matter, crystal, powder	liquid, hollow
books	boot, bones, hooks, rocks, banks	dialogue, authority, record, fact	-
troll	grill, role, tell	wheel, roll, mouth, speak	-
live	love, lies, river, wave, size, bite	breathe, people, domicile, taste, see, be	recorded, dead

Conclusion

- Algorithms
- Larger Index
- Web
- Multimedia
- Evaluation
- Interpretation
- Apparent randomness
- Transparency

a pataphysical approach to making a creative exploratory search tool

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