

ARRGH: THE AUTOMATED RESEARCH REPORT

GENERATION HOTLINE

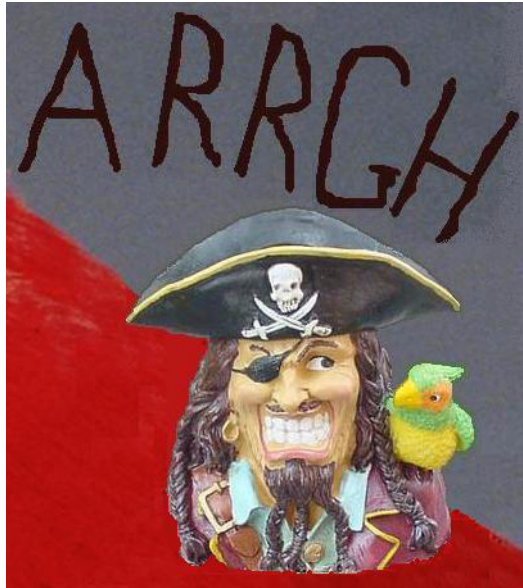


This stuff presumably looks to you as if it were generated by a human. Such is not the case. Instead we pull it out of the hat of a pirate that has grown out of the shoulder of our pet parrot (depicted above). The research reports produced by ARRGH are chronologies compiled by algorithm out of a database of data modules termed the Kouroo Contexture. This is data mining. To respond to a request for information, we merely push a button. Commonly, the first output of the program has obvious deficiencies and so we need to go back into the data modules stored in the contexture and do a minor amount of tweeking, and then we need to punch that button again and do a recompile of the chronology – but there is nothing that remotely resembles the “writerly” process which you know and love. As the contents of this originating contexture improve, and as the programming improves, and as funding becomes available (to date no funding whatever has been needed in the creation of this facility, the entire operation being run out of pocket change) we expect a diminished need to do such tweeking and recompiling, and we fully expect to achieve a simulation of a generous and untiring robotic research librarian.

First come first serve. There is no charge.
Place your requests with kouroo@brown.edu.
Onward and upward in the brave new world. Arrgh.

HOW ARRGH, THE "AUTOMATED RESEARCH REPORT GENERATION HOTLINE," HAPPENED

This hypercontext computerization project has for well over a decade encountered the greatest hostility, and stonewalling, from reference librarians across the nation (sordid details upon request). The consensus of opinion at present seems to be that if we are ignored long enough, we will go away. Since we are not going to go away, a reporting feature has been added, and a website www.kouroo.info has been created.



This reporting feature we have named the ARRGH, or "Automated Research Report Generation Hotline." Since the costs of this are negligible, there is no reason why such a service cannot be entirely free of charge. When we are contacted by email to kouroo@brown.edu by anyone with a request for information, we simply press a button and, usually overnight, generate an Adobe Acrobat .pdf file and place it on this www.kouroo.info website for perusal. It is hardly an optimal situation (Acrobat entirely erases the hypercontext functionality of the database) but it will do for now. The temporary objective of such a hotline can be simply stated: this is not only a service that is needed, it is publicity. The research librarians of our university libraries at present clearly are creating themselves as an obstacle rather than as a solution; therefore in their own best interest they need to be helped to avoid unplanned obsolescence. Well, as we all know, in this real world there is nothing that will bring an apparatchik up to speed more wonderfully than terror – the default seems to be, to allow these marginal folks to become aware that unless they make wild improvements in their present levels of expertise and responsiveness, they are going to be replaced one-for-all by a helpful computer robot, what we here nickname ARRGH, that does its data mining entirely for freebies. We are going to give them a wholesome need to get on board with both feet, before their bosses notice their little attitude problem and challenge them to venture out into the real world to flip burgers for a living.