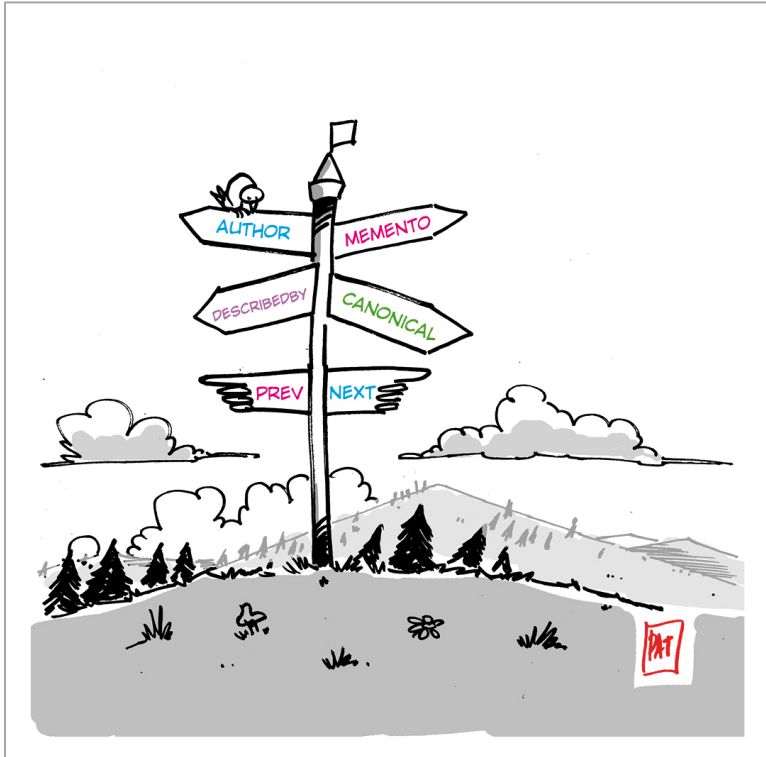


# Establishing New Levels of Interoperability for Web-Based Scholarship

Herbert Van de Sompel  
Los Alamos National Laboratory  
[@hvdsomp](https://twitter.com/hvdsomp)



Cartoon by:  
Patrick Hochstenbach

Acknowledgments: Michael L. Nelson,  
David Rosenthal, Geoff Bilder, Simeon  
Warner, Harihar Shankar, Shawn Jones

### D-Lib Magazine

November/December 2015

Volume 21, Number 11/12

[Table of Contents](#)

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### Reminiscing About 15 Years of Interoperability Efforts

Herbert Van de Sompel  
Los Alamos National Laboratory  
[herbertv@lanl.gov](mailto:herbertv@lanl.gov)

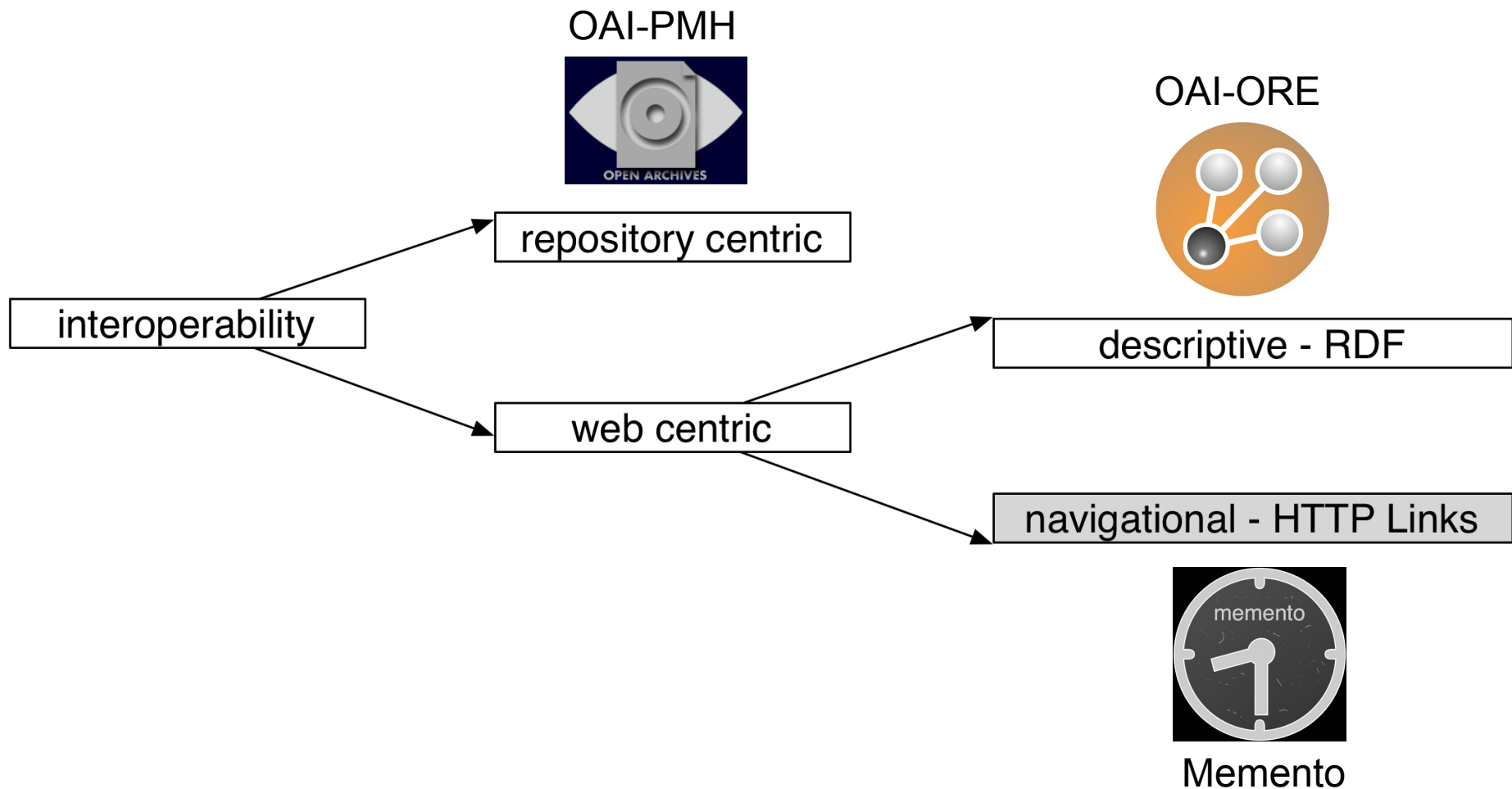
Michael L. Nelson  
Old Dominion University  
[mln@cs.odu.edu](mailto:mln@cs.odu.edu)

DOI: 10.1045/november2015-vandesompel

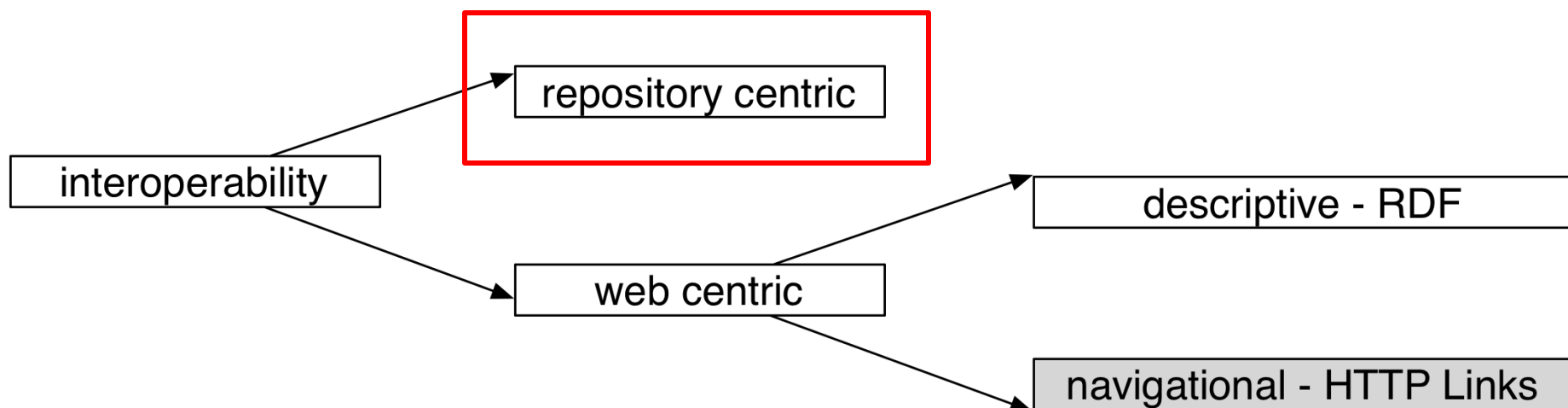
# Research Communication & Research Process on the Web

- A highly distributed activity
- Turning this distributed activity from a gathering of silo-ed nodes into an ecology of collaborating nodes, requires establishing interoperability
  - In the web context, this seems like a rather unique challenge: Most web enterprises do not want interoperability they want dominance, monopoly
- To a large extent, interoperability across this distributed activity remains restricted to persistent identification of communicated objects and contributors
  - Which results in added-value – services can be created

# Evolution of Our Thinking about Interoperability



# Evolution of Our Thinking about Interoperability





1999

- OAI was a heroic effort to fundamentally transform scholarly communication
  - By promoting communication via preprints, non-peer-reviewed papers
- The OAI took a technical approach to achieve the goal
  - Make preprints easier to discover, access

The OAMH protocol is a low-barrier interoperability specification for the recurrent exchange of metadata between systems



# the Metadata Harvesting protocol

service provider

data provider





# Those Were the Days

# Lycos™



## Lycos search form, large catalog

Query:

Max-hits:  Min-terms:  Min-score:  Terse output: ☐

proof of intelligent life on the net™

Type a specific question, "phrase in quotes" or Capitalized Name.

Query Box

the Web  [Tips](#)

News Flash: [Sports haunt King's & Shannon's](#)

Click a topic to explore the Web's largest directory.

Directories

- Arts & Entertainment: books, music, movies, theater...
- Business (News): business services, small business...
- Computers (News): desktop computers, notebook, software...
- Education: colleges, universities, adult education...
- Getting It Done: kids, job, lawyer, your money...
- Finance & Investment: baby, home, mutual funds...
- Health: diets, fitness, illness, women's health...
- Internet (News): internet, HTML, web publishing...
- Politics (News): elections, government, local, local...
- Shopping: online shopping, computers, CDs...
- Sports (News): baseball, NFL, basketball, hockey...
- Travel & Leisure: air travel, food, lodging, cruises...

Netscape: AltaVista: Main Page

Back Forward Home Reload Images Open Print Find Stop

Location:

**AltaVista™** The most powerful and useful guide to the Internet

Ask AltaVista™ a question. Or enter a few words in

Example: Where can I find more information about different breeds of cats

Excite - Netscape

File Edit View Go Communicator Help

Back Forward Reload Home Search Netscape Print Security Stop

Bookmarks Netsite  What's Related

**excite™**

Personalize Your Page! New Members [Sign Up](#) • Excite Members [Sign In](#) • [Help](#)

Choose your favorite photo!

**My Excite**

- FREE Excite Mail
- Excite Planner new!
- Make Excite My Start Page!

**Today on Excite**

Thursday, July 8, 1:06PM EDT

- News: Big Loss for Tobacco
- \* Poll: Power System Backup?
- \* Excite Shopping: Khakis
- \* Like to Talk? Voice Chat!
- \* See Hot Photo Personals!

**Want a Free Voicemail Account?**

**Shopping** Auctions Classifieds Shopping Search Romance Shop Free Stuff Browse Catalogs Bikinis & more...

**People & Chat** Chat Now 8679 People | Voice Chat | Member Directory Personals Email Lookup People Finder

Billing online with AT&T

**My Stocks** edit | X

Sponsored by **Charles Schwab**

Get Quotes

Symbol	Price	Change
Nasdaq	2766.440	+23.400
Dow	11193.380	+6.020
S&P 500	1400.950	+5.090

**My News** edit | X

**Top Stories | Photos** (Jul 8 12:58PM)

- Clinton L.A. Poverty Tour Stop Focus On Youth Jobs
- U.S. May Investigate White Supremacist Group
- Veterans Affairs Secretary West To Step Down

**ZDNet Technology News** (Jul 7 7:20PM)

- Directory Interoperability Forum debuts; Microsoft buys Zoomit
- Wintel cranks up workstations
- Hacker's Sentencing May Be Delayed

**My Weather** edit | X

Enter your Zip Code:

[ Airport Delays | 3D Weather ]

**My Services** edit | X

- Buy Books at Amazon.com
- AT&T Communication Center
- Buy Software at Buy.com



Herbert Van de Sompel  
COAR Annual Meeting, Vienna, Austria, 12/04/2016



http://



### 3.1.1.1 Encoding an OAI-PMH request in a URL for an HTTP GET

Don't trust HTTP

## 3.6 Error and Exception Conditions

In event of an error or exception condition, repositories **must** indicate OAI-PMH errors, distinguished from [HTTP Status-Codes](#), by including one or more error elements in the response. While one



```
http://an.oa.org/OAI-script?  
verb=GetRecord&identifier=oai:arXiv.org:hep-  
th/9901001&metadataPrefix=oai_dc
```

HTTP GET with GetRecord verb



A repository replies to a request with an *incomplete list* and a  
resumptionToken;

An HTTP link

# Repository-Centric Interoperability Paradigm

Address interoperability challenges from the perspective of a node, e.g. an IR, a publisher, a web-based authoring portal, a software repository, ...

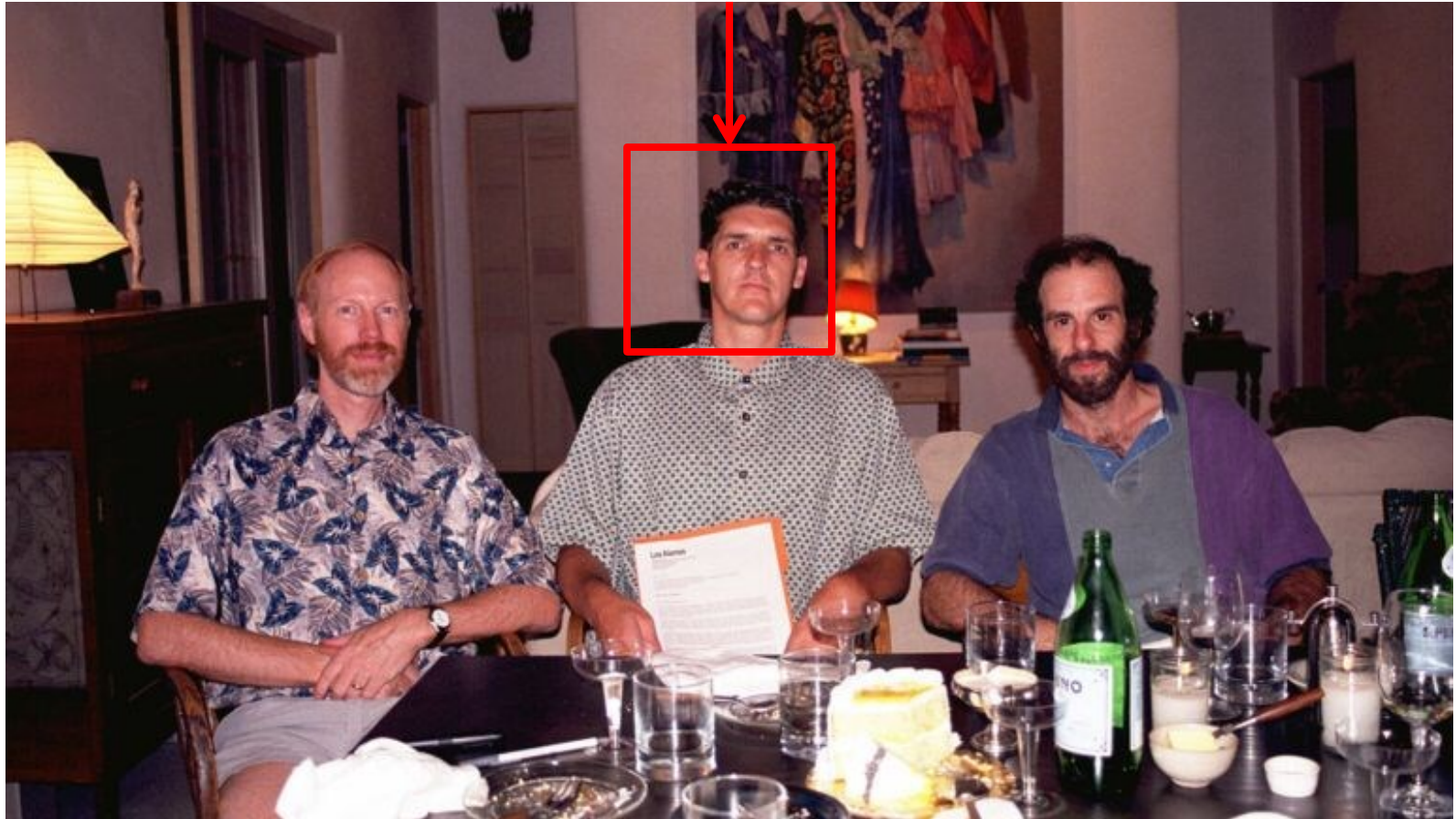
- **The node at the center of the universe**
- Define a machine interface for your node, expect others to use it
- Piggybacking on the web without truly embracing its core technologies
- The node resembles a brick & mortar library that can be visited subject to well-intended yet idiosyncratic policies – the interface



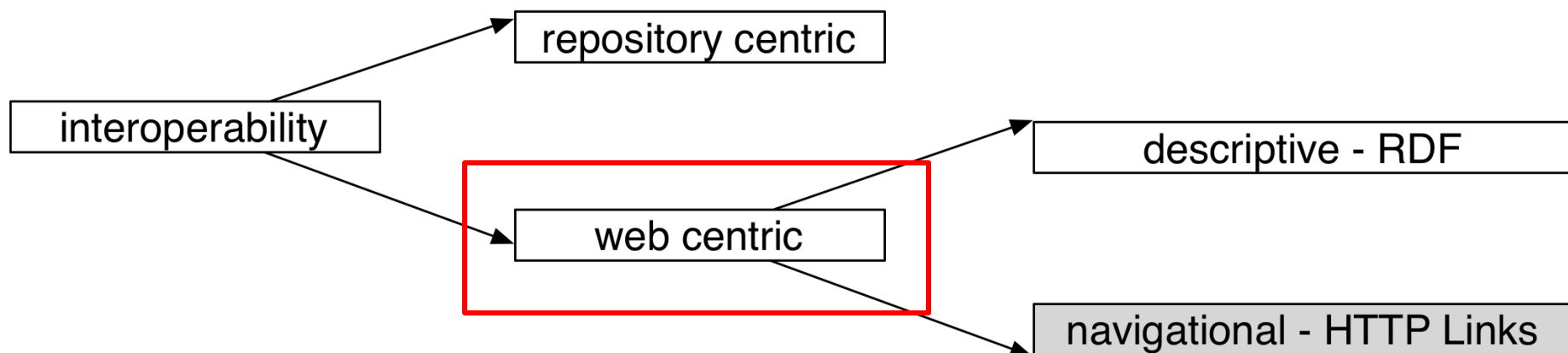
# Launching the OAI - Luce, Van de Sompel, Ginsparg (1999)



Repositories still use OAI-PMH, created in the olden days when I looked like this



# Evolution of Our Thinking about Interoperability





# Web-Centric, Resource-Centric Interoperability Paradigm

Address interoperability challenges from the perspective of the web

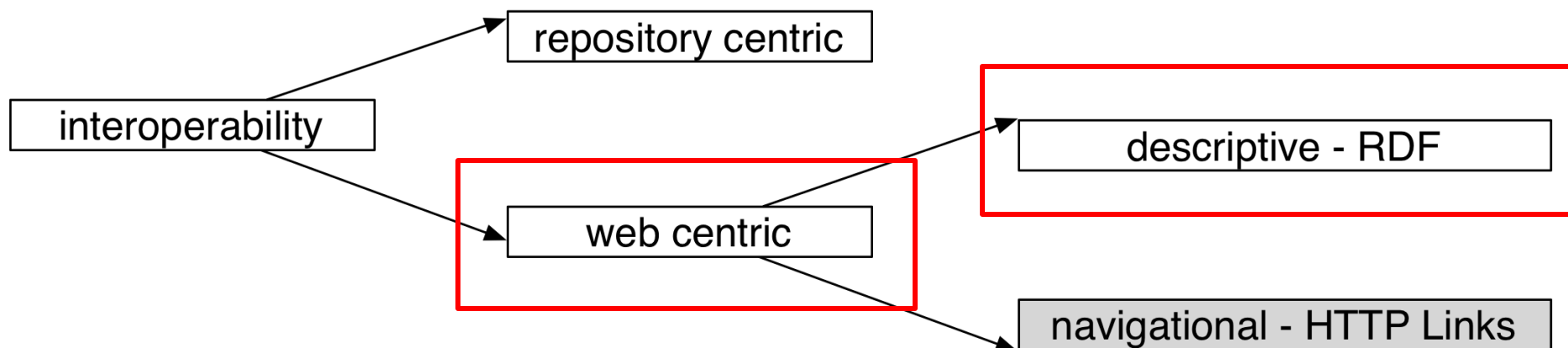
- **The resource at the center of the universe**
  - The notion of a node, a repository, not even of a web server exists in the architecture of the web
- The tools of the interoperability trade are the primitives of the web

# Tools of the Web-Centric Interoperability Trade

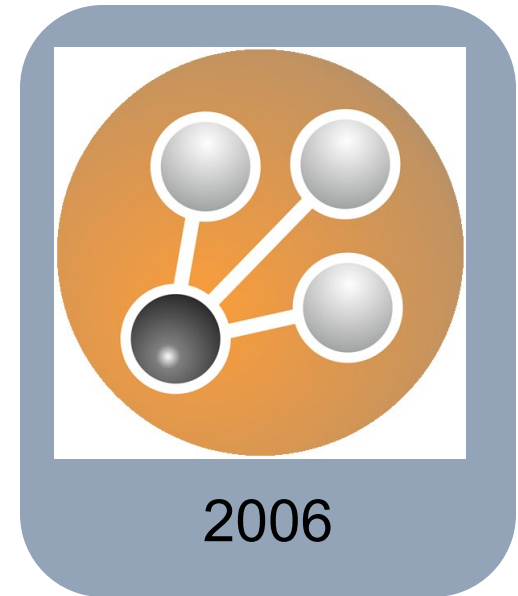
- Resource
- URI
- HTTP as the API: HEAD/GET, POST, PUT, DELETE
- Representation
- Media Type
- Link
- Content Negotiation

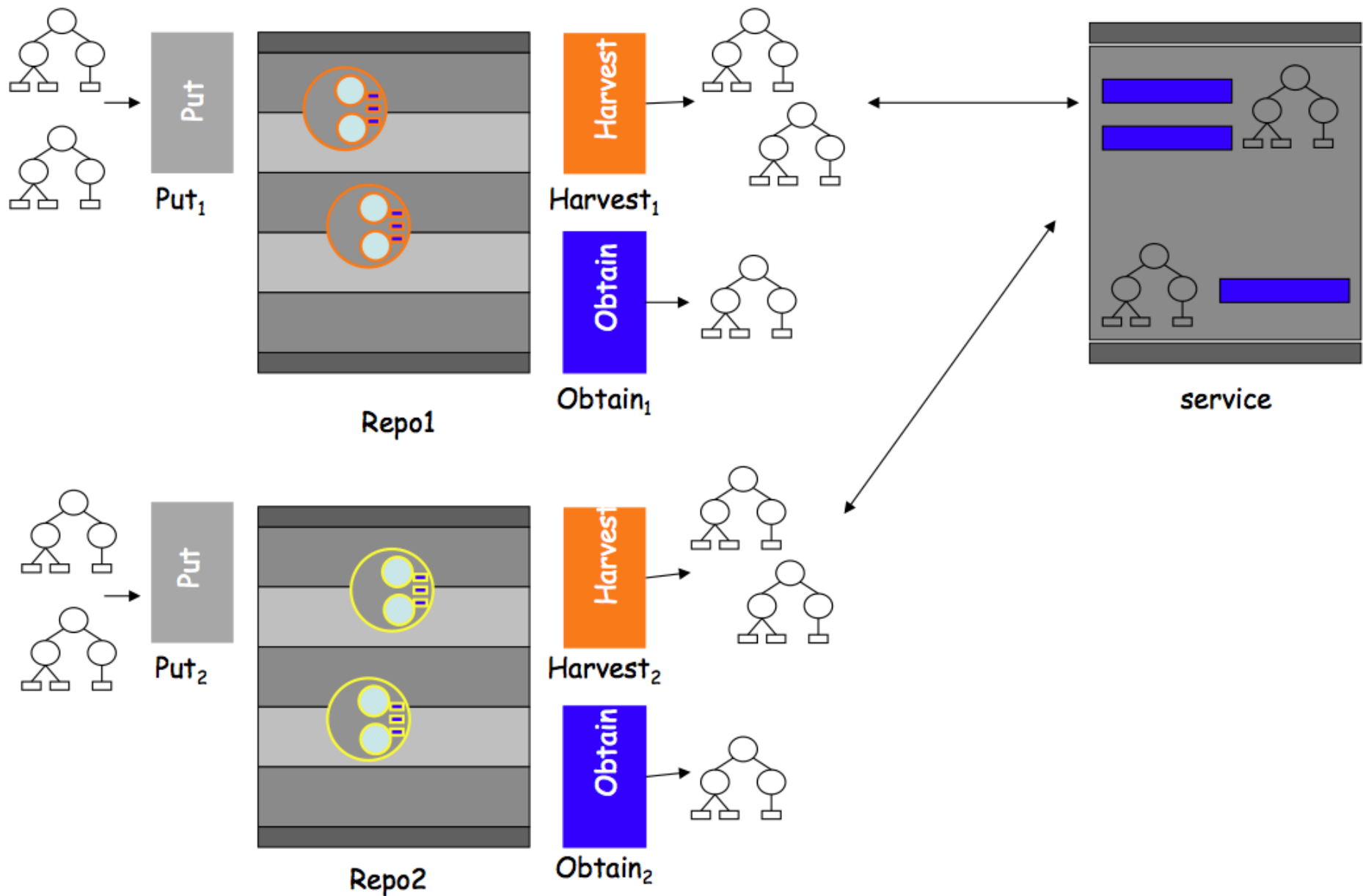
W3C  
Architecture of  
the World Wide  
Web

# Evolution of Our Thinking about Interoperability

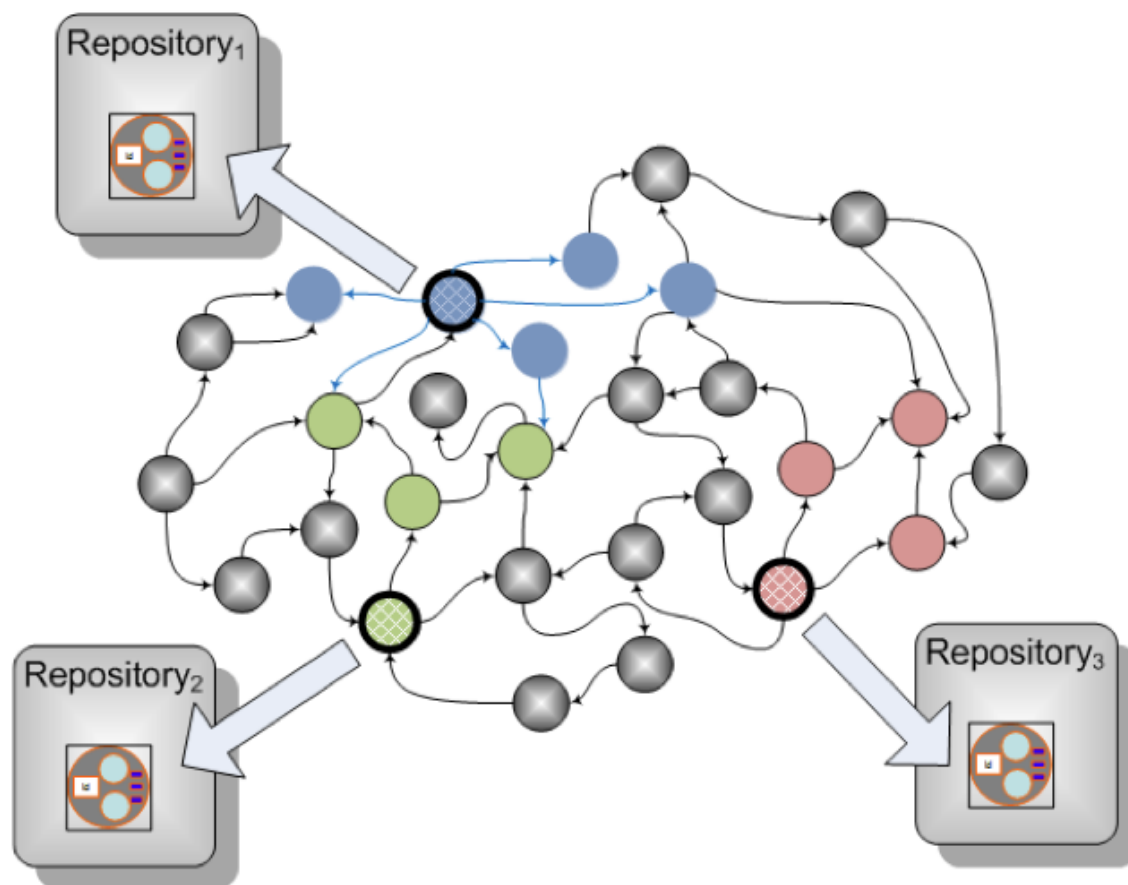


- OAI-ORE observation: Scholarly assets are rapidly becoming *compound*, consisting of multiple resources with various:
  - Relationships
  - Interdependencies
- How to convey this compound-ness in an interoperable manner so that applications can access, consume such assets?

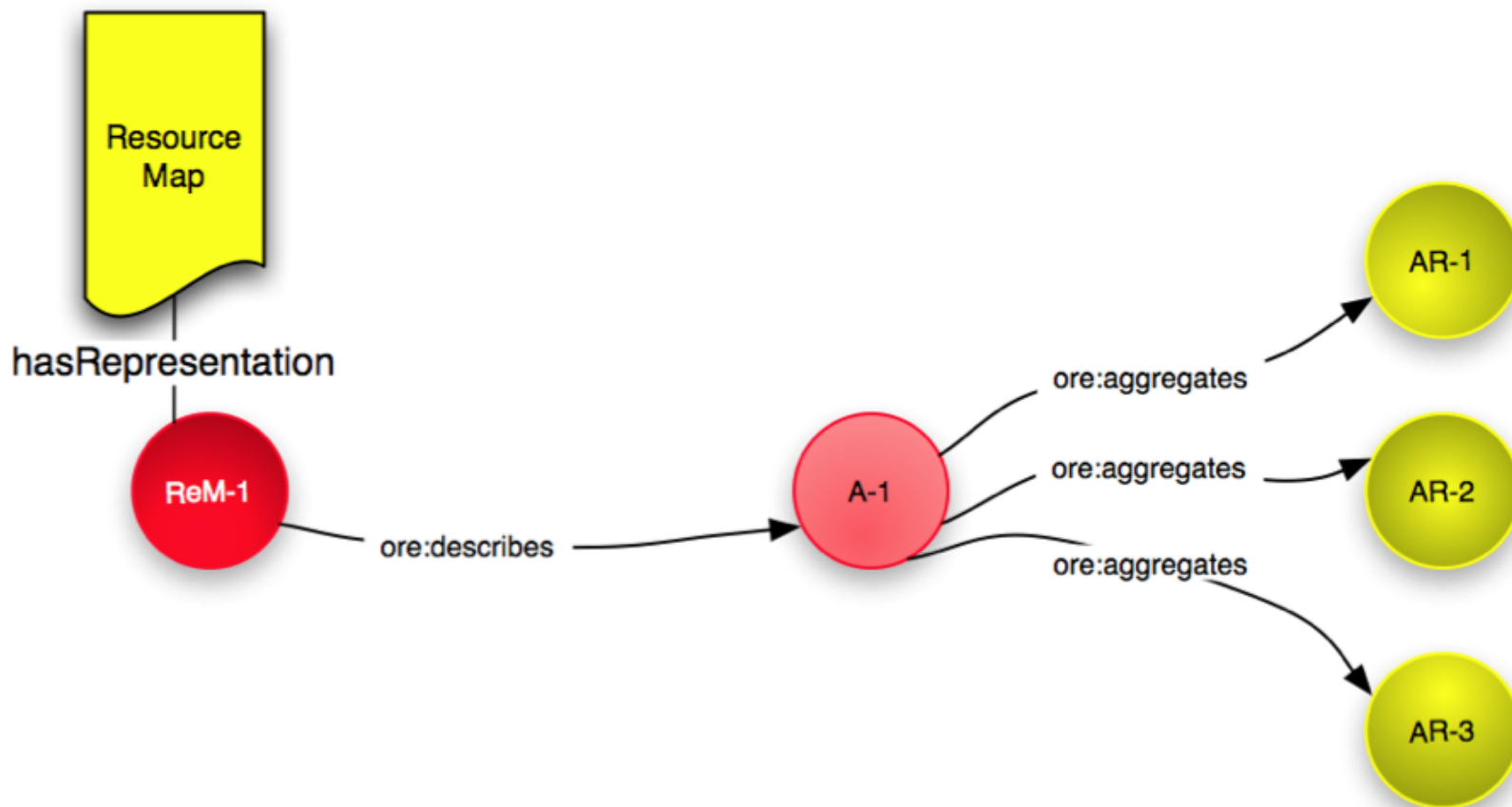




# ORE Will Allow Web Crawlers to Unambiguously Recover CDO Structure from the Web Graph



# Express the ore:describes relationship



# Tools of the Web-Centric Interoperability Trade – RDF Stack

- Resource
- URI
- HTTP as the API
- Representation
- Media Type
- Link
- Content Negotiation, e.g. for preferred Media Type
- Typed Link
- Controlled Vocabularies for Typed Links

W3C  
Architecture of  
the World Wide  
Web

RDF, RDFS,  
OWL

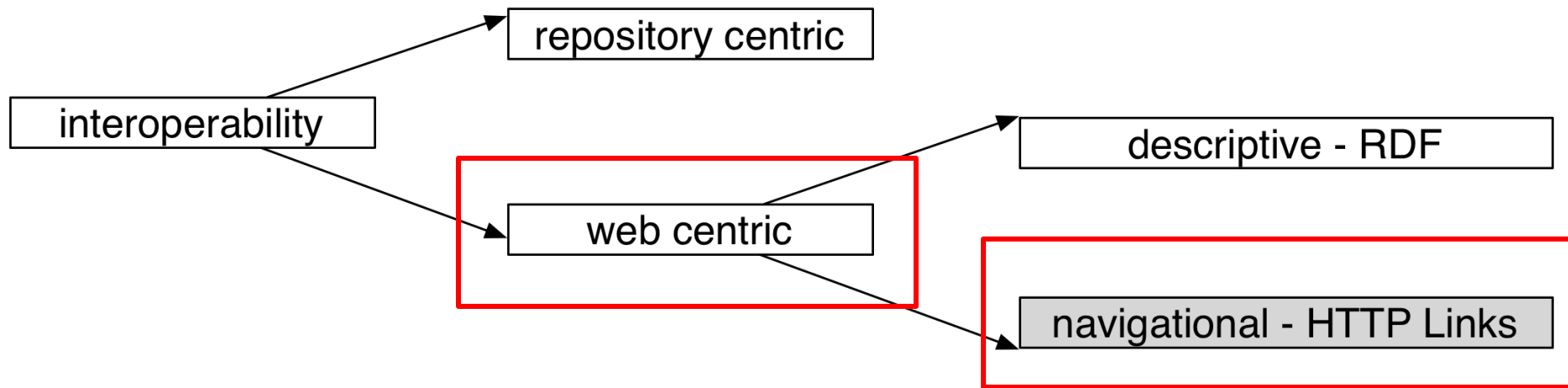


# Interoperability via RDF, RDFS, OWL Stack

Used by various interoperability efforts, e.g. OAI-ORE, Open Annotation, W3C PROV, Research Objects, ...

- Provides extensive expressiveness for description
- Typically based on publishing documents that adhere to a certain “profile” and reveal relations, properties, ...
- Non-Trivial barrier to entry as illustrated by slow adoption, likely related to unfamiliar technology stack

# Evolution of Our Thinking about Interoperability



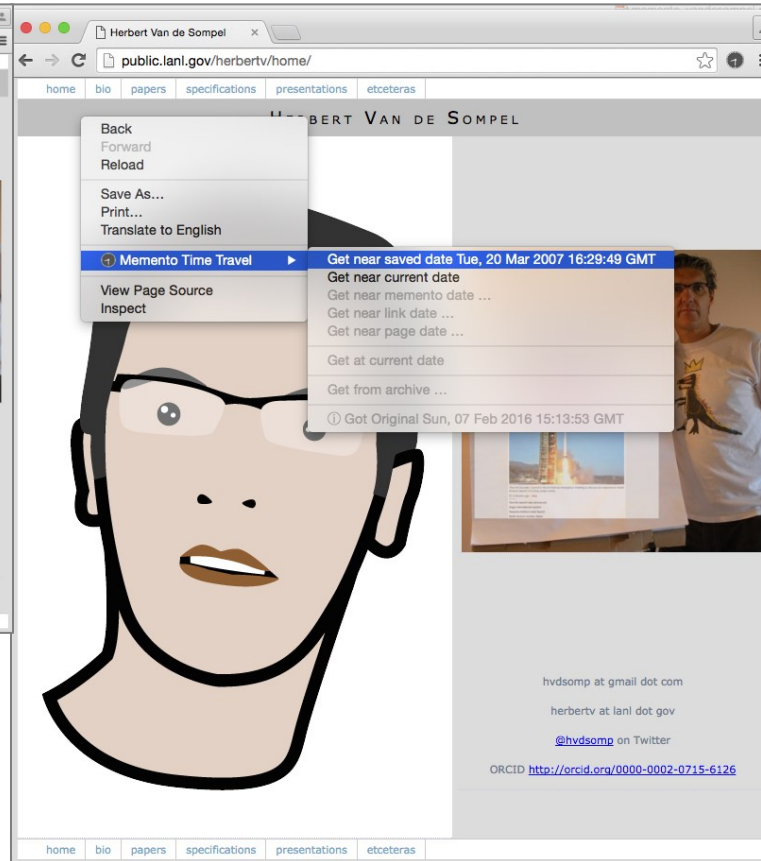
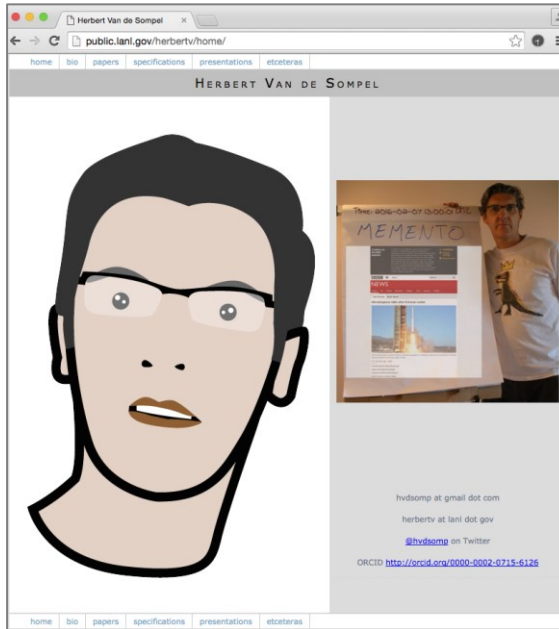
- Memento is about the Web and time:
  - Resources evolve over time
  - Only the current resource version is available from a resource's URI
  - How to seamlessly access prior versions, if they exist, using the resource's URI and a version datetime
- Memento looks at this problem for the Web, in general:
  - Time-Based access to resource versions across web archives, resource versioning systems



Today

Select Date Mar 20 2007

Apr 03 2007



From  
Internet Archive

Memento for Chrome at <http://bit.ly/memento-for-chrome>



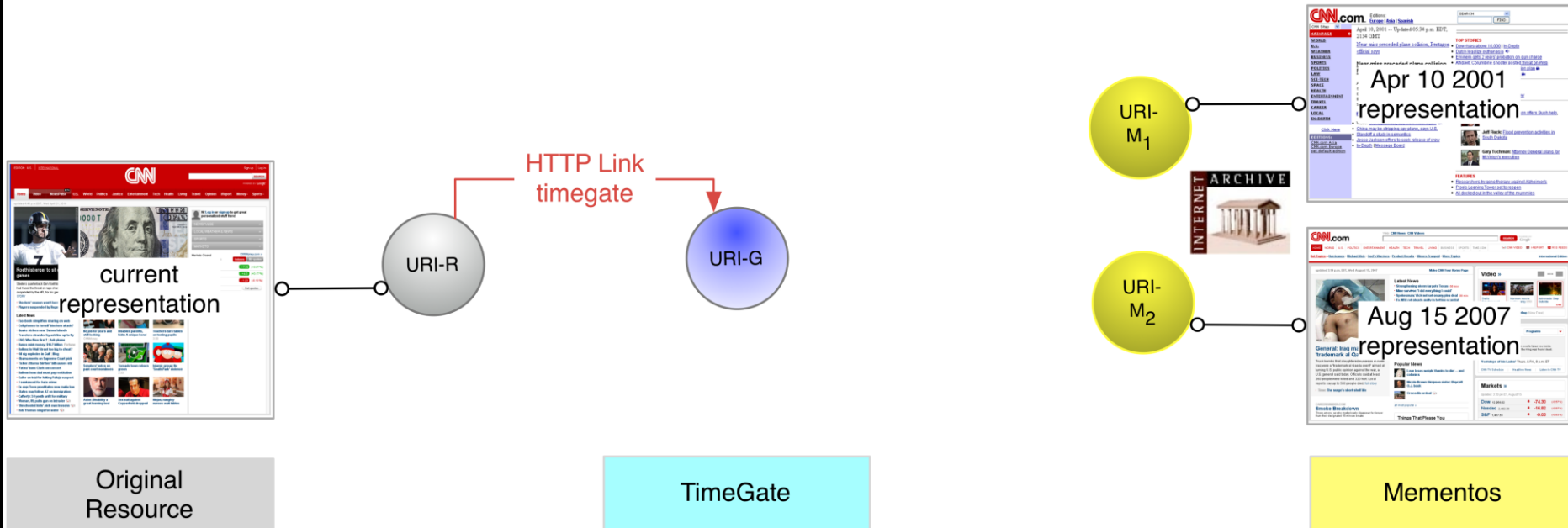
Herbert Van de Sompel  
COAR Annual Meeting, Vienna, Austria, 12/04/2016



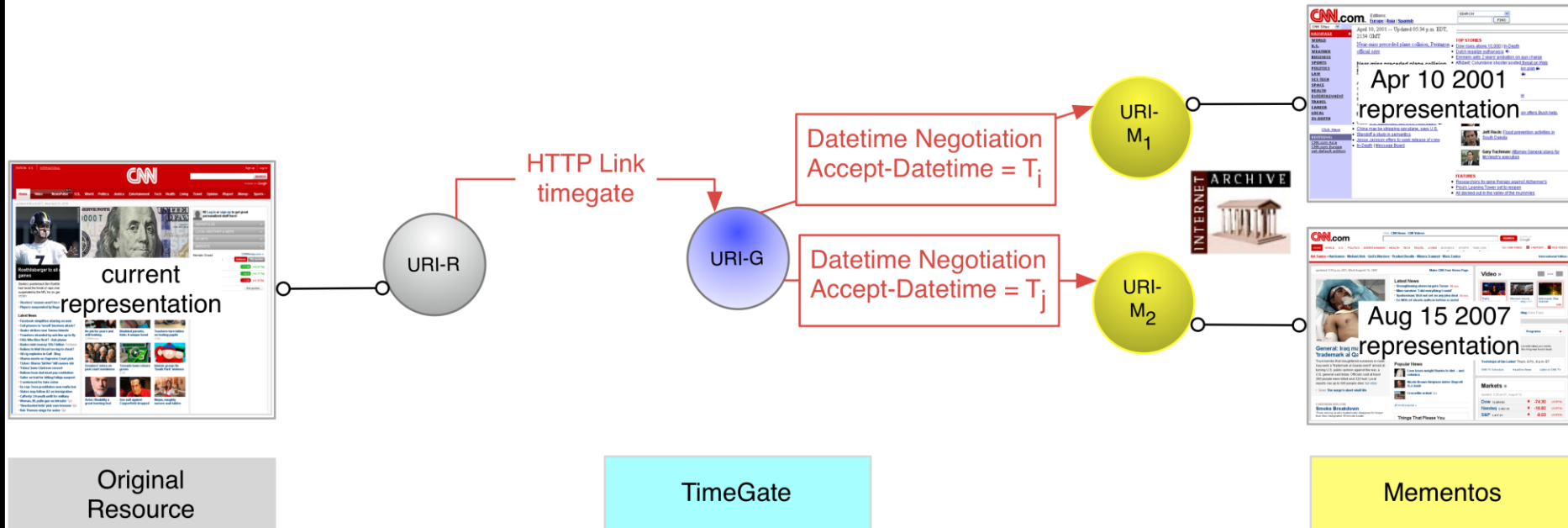
# Original Resource and Mementos



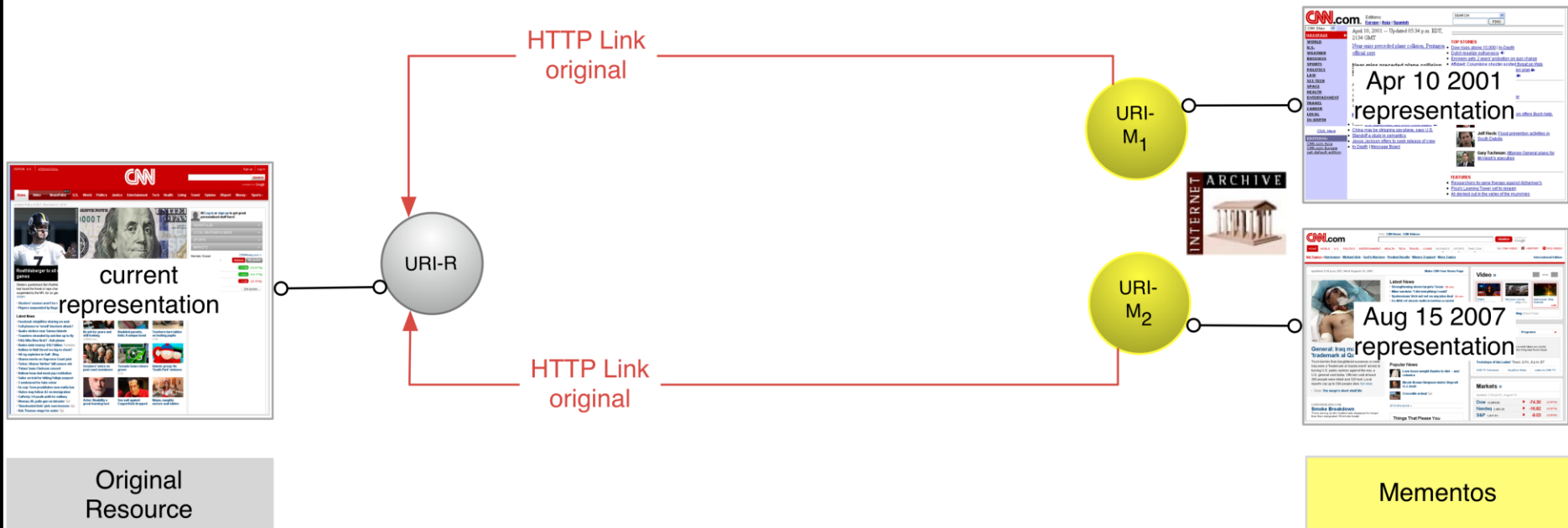
# Bridge from Present to Past



# Bridge from Present to Past



# Bridge from Past to Present





# Tools of the Web-Centric Interoperability Trade – HTTP Stack

- Resource
- URI
- HTTP as the API
- Representation
- Media Types
- Link
- Content Negotiation, e.g. for Media Type, Time
- Typed Link
- Controlled Vocabularies for Typed Links

W3C  
Architecture of  
the World Wide  
Web

HTTP Links,  
IANA link  
relation registry,  
community link  
relation types

HATEOAS – Hypermedia As The Engine Of Application State

# Interoperability via HTTP Links, IANA Link Relation Types

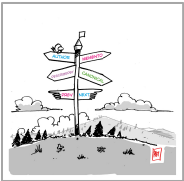
Used by Memento, ResourceSync, Signposting the Scholarly Web:

- Provides coarse expressiveness for navigation via IANA registered relation types (expressed as reserved terms)
  - Finer grained expressiveness via community-defined relation types (expressed as HTTP URIs)
- Typically based on publishing typed links that support a client to navigate among resources in an informed manner
- Low implementation barrier because of familiar technology stack

# Establishing New Levels of Interoperability: Examples



ResourceSync



Signposting the Scholarly Web



Robust Links

# ResourceSync



# Anurag Acharya Told Us Why We Need ResourceSync

## What does indexing need?

- List of all article urls
- Ability to fetch article urls
- What we index is what the user sees

Web search  
Scholar

- Identify scholarly articles
- Determine article metadata

Scholar

# Anurag Acharya Told Us Why We Need ResourceSync

## List of articles - IV

---

- Best practice: Year-month browse
  - Linked from homepage - EPrints
  - Helps crawlers as well as users
- Best practice: Article sitemap
  - Include urls for ALL articles
  - Linked from robots.txt or homepage
  - DSpace if sitemaps are enabled

# ResourceSync is Based on Sitemaps

- Sitemap is the document format used throughout the framework
  - Used widely by web servers to advertise their resources to search engines

```
<urlset xmlns="http://www.sitemaps.org/schemas/sitemap/0.9">  
  
  <url>  
    <loc>http://example.com/res1</loc>  
    <lastmod>2013-01-02T13:00:00Z</lastmod>  
  </url>  
  
  <url>  
    <loc>http://example.com/res2</loc>  
    <lastmod>2013-01-02T14:00:00Z</lastmod>  
  </url>  
  
  ...  
</urlset>
```

# ResourceSync, ANSI/NISO Z39.99-2014



Open Archives  
Initiative  
ResourceSync  
Framework  
Specification

**ResourceSync Framework Specification (ANSI/NISO Z39.99-2014)**  
21 April 2014

**This version:**  
<http://www.openarchives.org/rs/1.0/resourcesync>

**Latest version:**  
<http://www.openarchives.org/rs/resourcesync>

**Previous version:**  
<http://www.openarchives.org/rs/0.9.1/resourcesync>

**Abstract**

This ResourceSync specification describes a synchronization framework for the web consisting of various capabilities that allow third-party systems to remain synchronized with a server's evolving resources. The capabilities may be combined in a modular manner to meet local or community requirements. This specification also describes how a server should advertise the synchronization capabilities it supports and how third-party systems may discover this information. The specification repurposes the document formats defined by the Sitemap protocol and introduces extensions for them.

- Synchronization of resources from a Source to Destinations
  - Includes exposing repository content to aggregators, search engines
- Applies to any resource with an HTTP URI
- Leverages key ingredients of web interoperability, follow your nose, existing Search Engine Optimization practice



# Publish Inventory, Changes, Notifications

- Repository communicates about the state of its resources:
  - Publish inventory: snapshot of the state of resources at a moment in time
  - Publish changes: enumeration of resource changes that occurred during a temporal interval
  - Notify about changes: send notifications as changes occur

# Payload for Inventory, Changes, Notifications

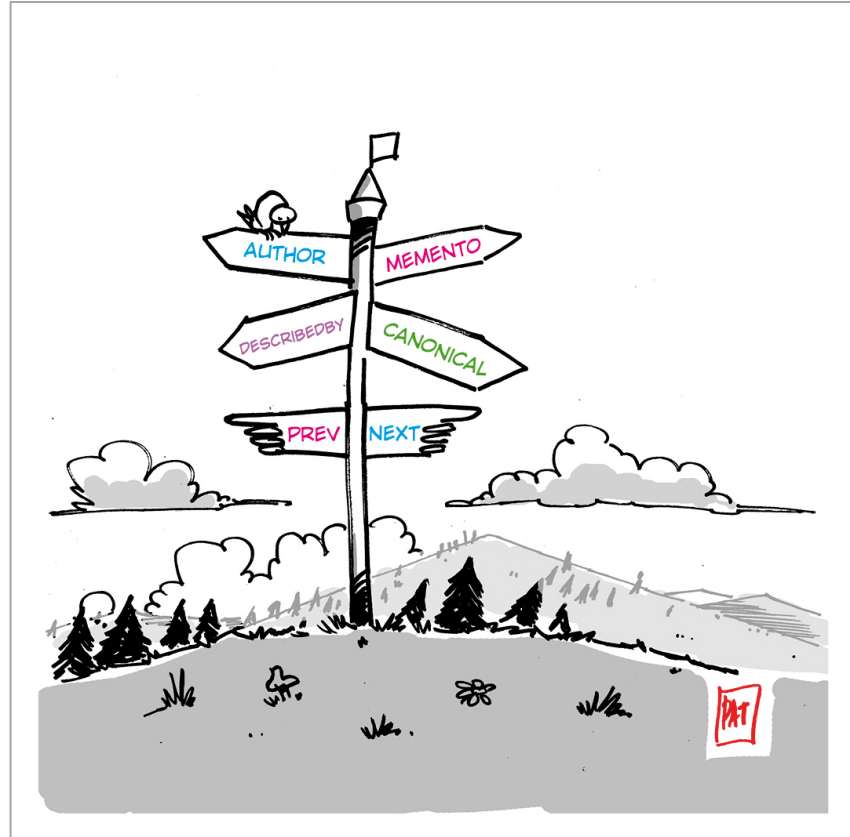
- A repository may communicate additional information pertaining to each resource:
  - Technical metadata about a resource: content encoding, content length, mime type, content-based hash
  - Links to related resources: mirror copies, alternate representations, resource versions, diff between current and previous version, metadata-to-content link, content-to-metadata link, collection membership, persistent identifier, etc.

# ResourceSync is Based on Sitemaps

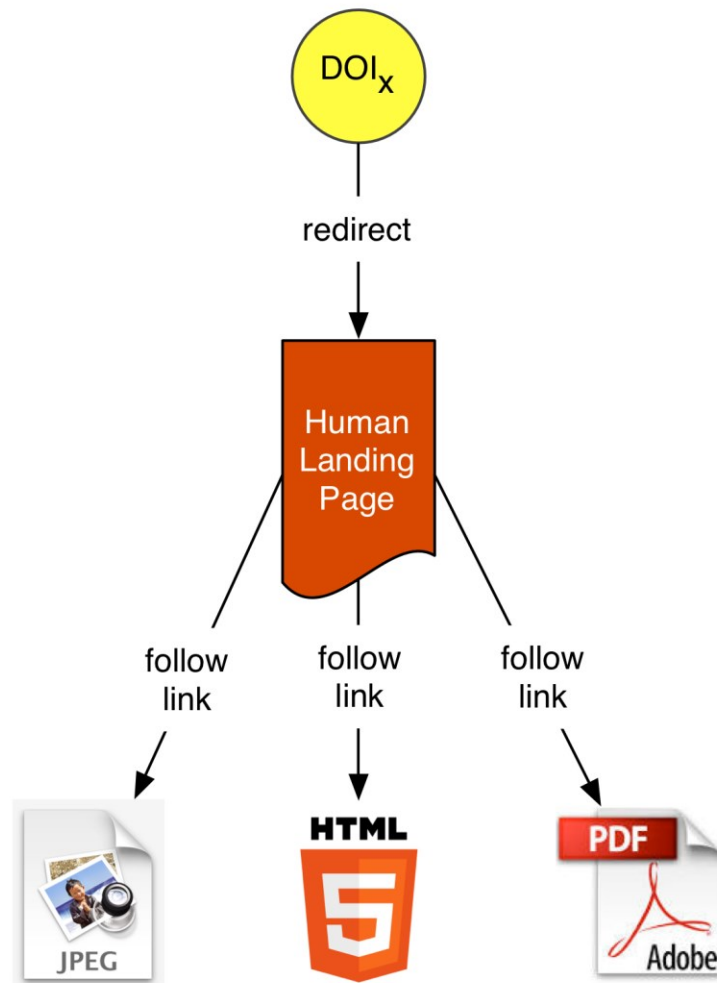
- Extensions to Sitemaps:
  - <rs:ln> for links
  - <rs:md> for metadata

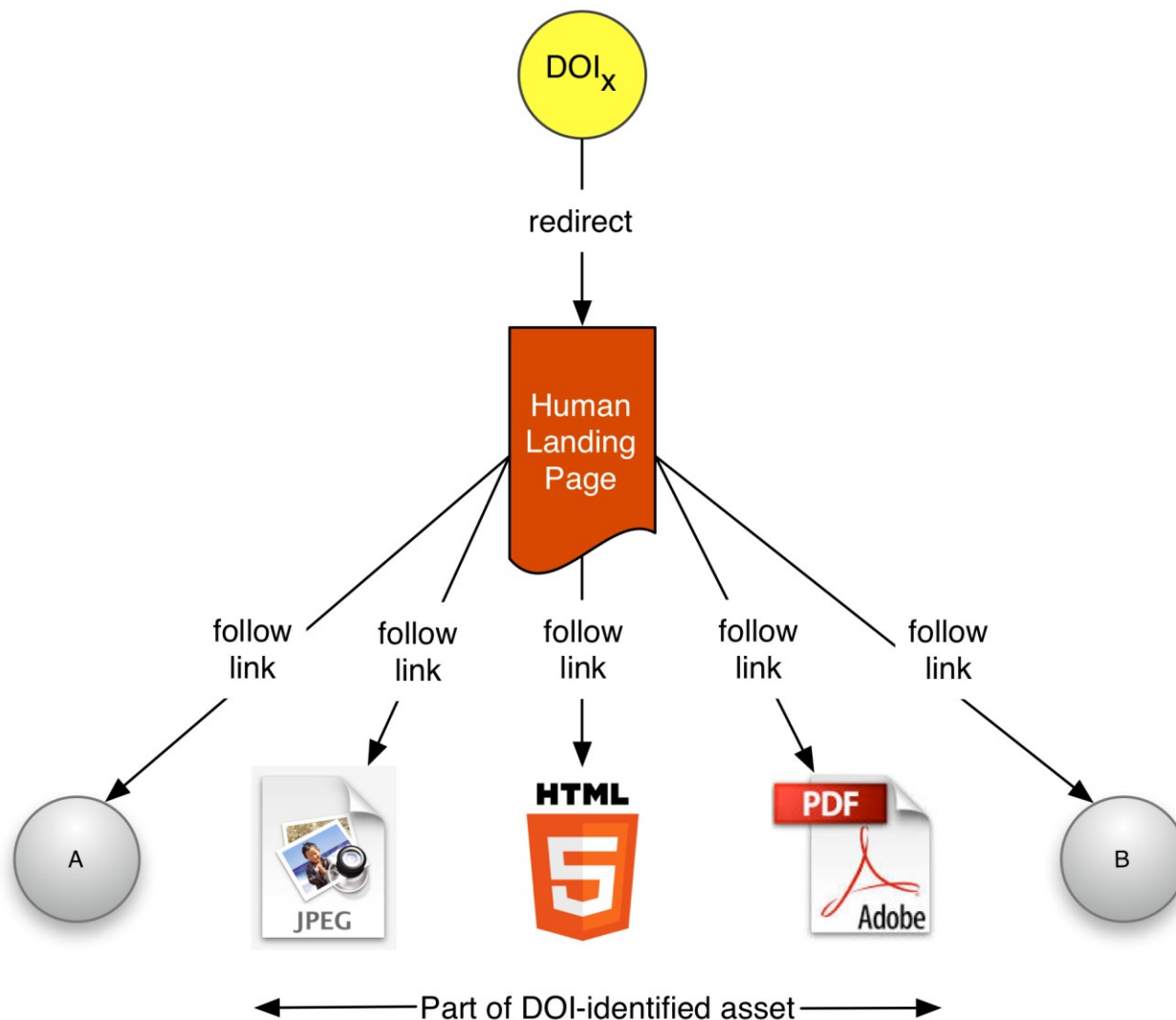
```
<urlset xmlns="http://www.sitemaps.org/schemas/sitemap/0.9">  
  xmlns:rs="http://www.openarchives.org/rs/terms/">  
  <rs:ln .../>  
  <rs:md .../>  
  
  <url>  
    <loc>http://example.com/res1</loc>  
    <lastmod>2013-01-02T13:00:00Z</lastmod>  
    <rs:ln .../>  
    <rs:md .../>  
  </url>  
  ...  
</urlset>
```

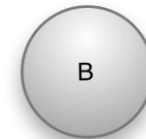
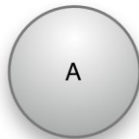
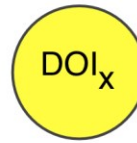
# Signposting the Scholarly Web

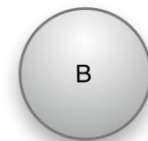
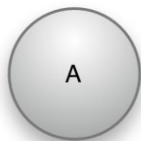
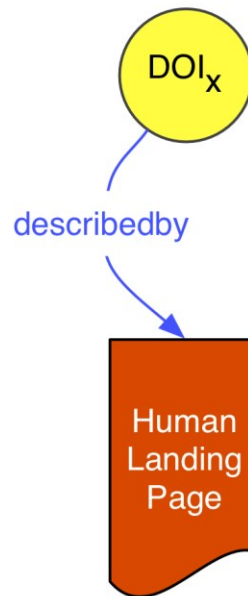


Example pattern: The PID, the Landing Page, the Stuff











# Response to HTTP HEAD on <http://dx.doi.org/10.2218/ijdc.v9i1.320>

HTTP/1.1 303 See Other

Server: Apache-Coyote/1.1

Date: Fri, 9 Jan 2015 16:31:46 GMT

Vary: Accept

Location: <http://www.ijdc.net/index.php/ijdc/article/view/320>

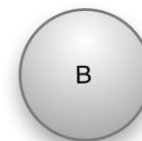
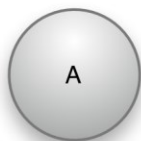
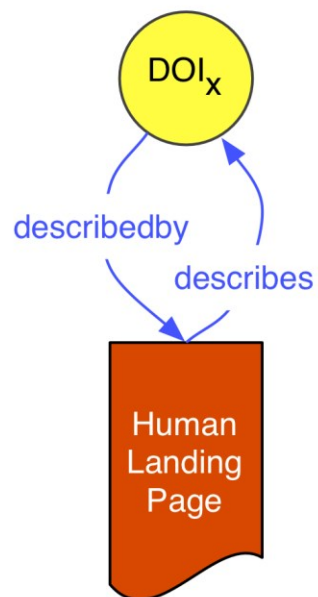
Link: <<http://www.ijdc.net/index.php/ijdc/article/view/320>>

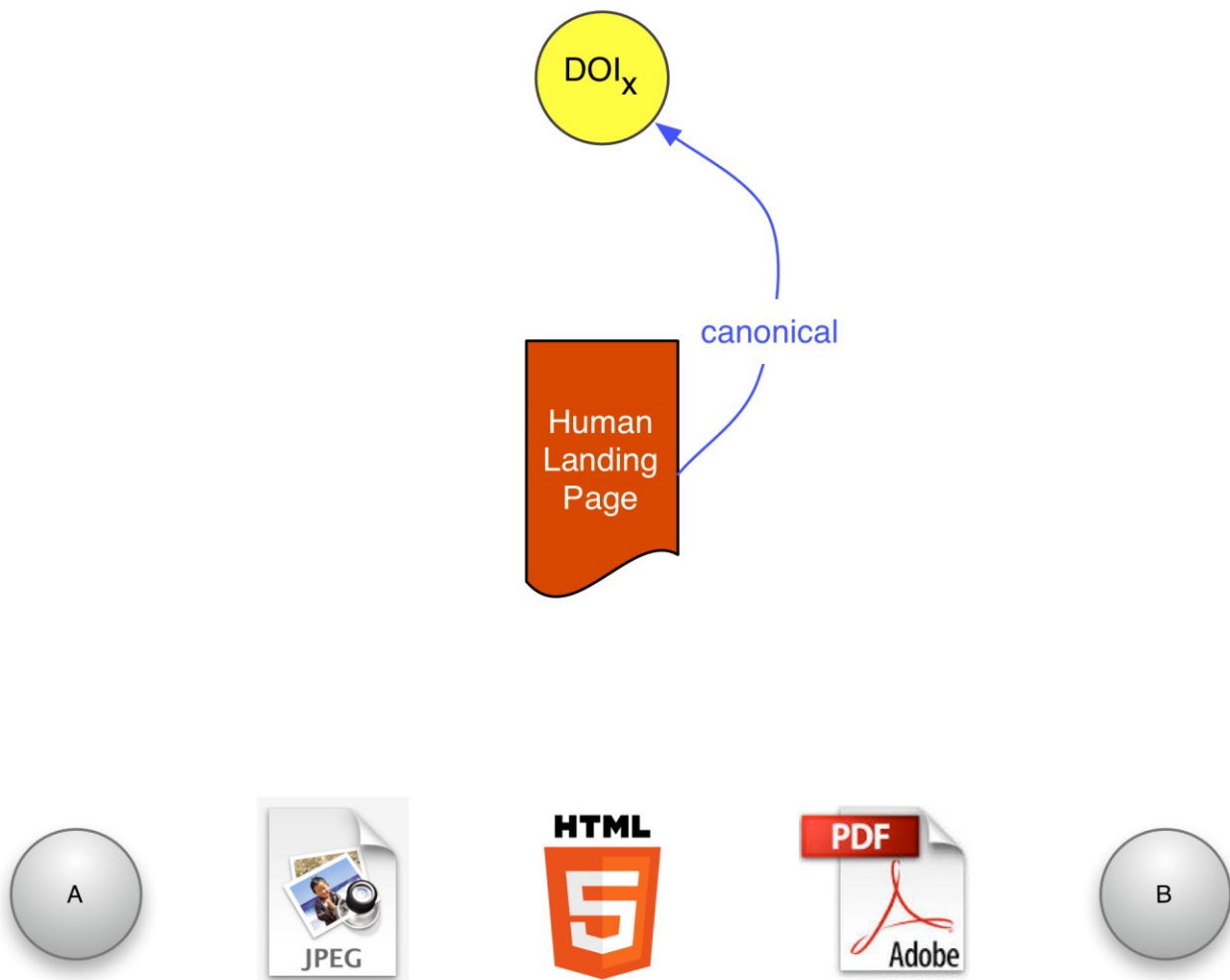
; rel="describedby"

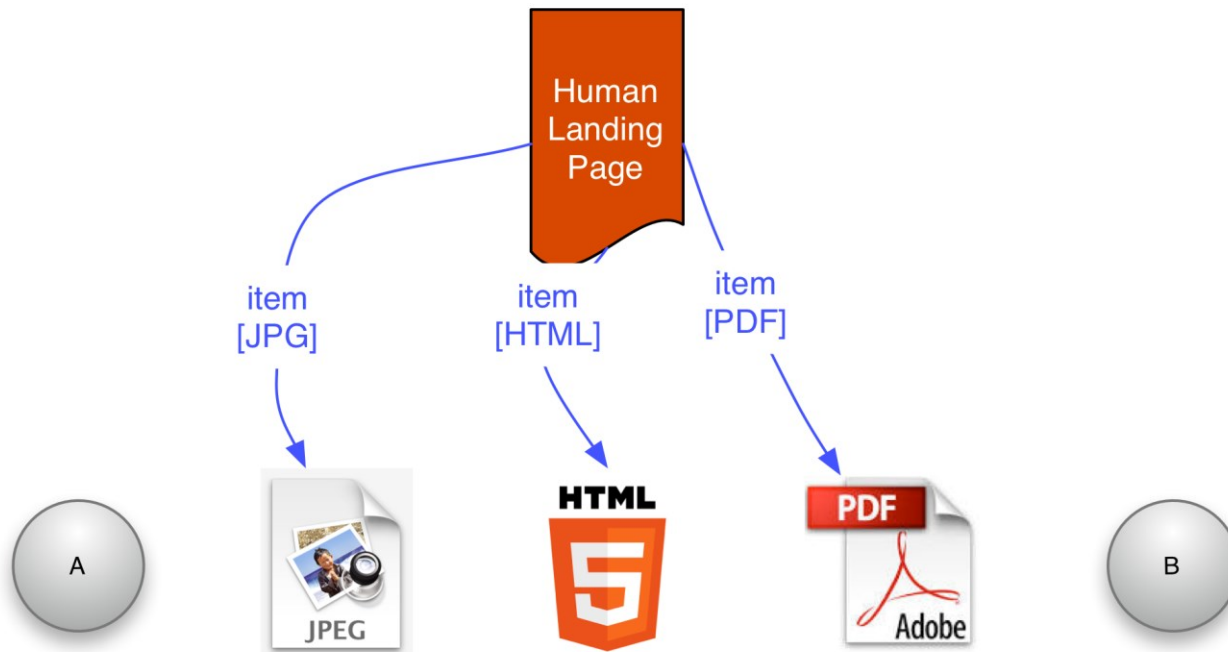
; type="text/html"

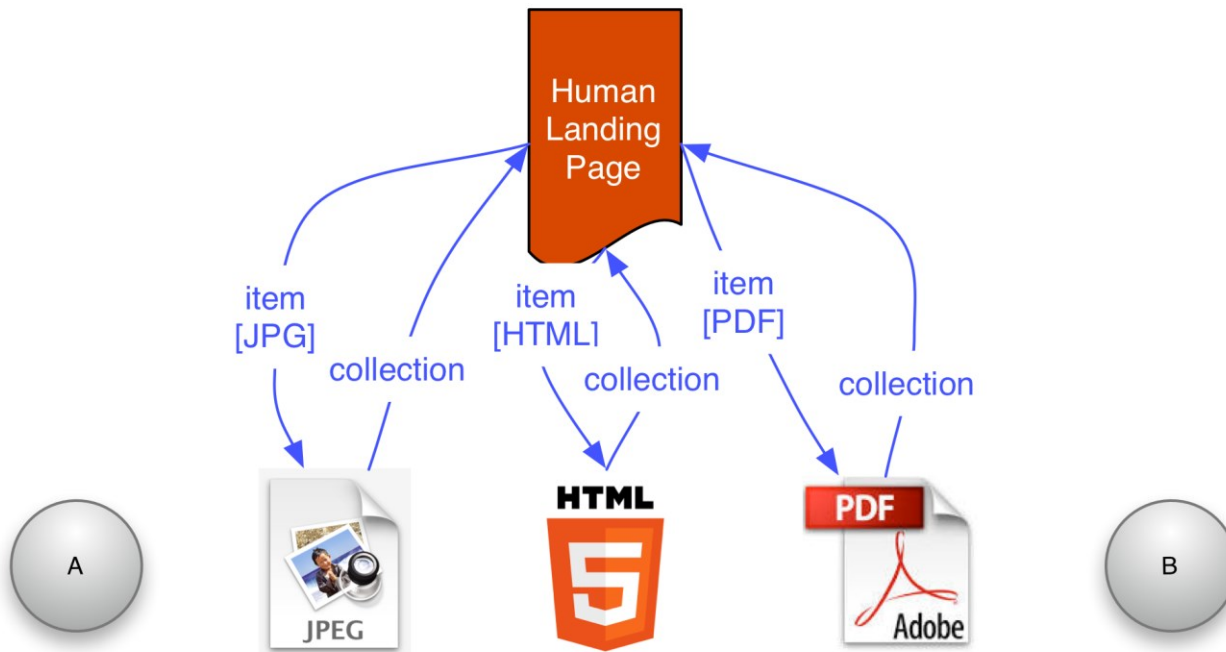
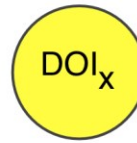
Content-Length: 188

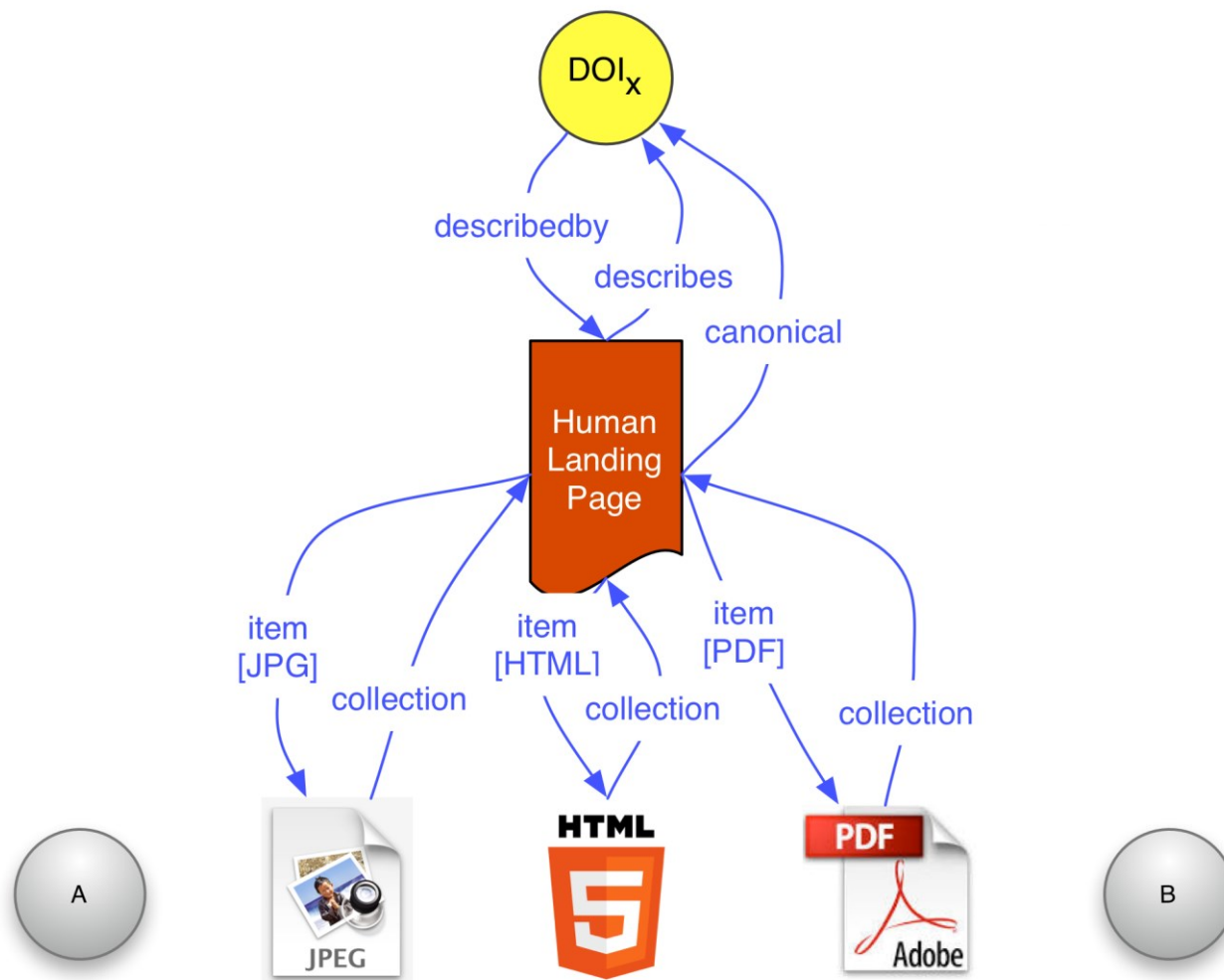












# This Allows a Machine Agent ...

- To understand that the splash page describes the DOI-identified asset
- To determine that resource A is not part of the DOI-identified asset
- To navigate towards the profile of the authors of the asset when landing on any of the constituent resources of the DOI-identified asset
- To understand that a DOI is associated with the PDF, HTML, and JPEG resources and that this DOI should preferably be used to refer to those resources
- To associate annotations made to the HTML page with the DOI

# Signposting: Work in Progress

[Home](#) [About](#) [Documentation](#) [Models](#)




Image courtesy of Patrick Hochstenbach.

## Signposting the Scholarly Web

Signposting aims to achieve meaningful interoperability for web-based scholarship.

Signposting is a collaboration between the Prototyping Team of the [Research Library](#) of the [Los Alamos National Laboratory](#) and the [Computer Science Department](#) of [Old Dominion University](#).

## Demo

Input any HTTP URI of a scholarly article, and hit Get Headers to see its corresponding signposting headers.



# Signposting: Work in Progress

## Demo

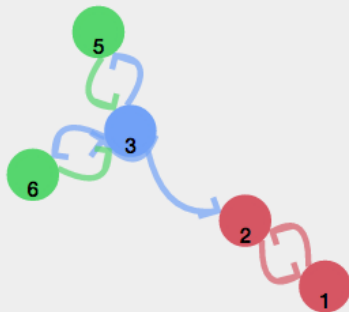
Input any HTTP URI of a scholarly article, and hit Get Headers to see its corresponding signposting headers.

<http://dx.doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0115253>

DOI

Get Headers ↗

## Signposting Headers for the Landing Page Pattern



Resource	Link Header
<b>Node: 5</b> <a href="http://journals.plos.org/plosone/article?id=10.1371/journal.pone.0115253.PDF">http://journals.plos.org/plosone/article?id=10.1371/journal.pone.0115253.PDF</a>	< <a href="http://journals.plos.org/plosone/article?id=10.1371/journal.pone.0115253">http://journals.plos.org/plosone/article?id=10.1371/journal.pone.0115253</a> >; rel="collection"
<b>Node: 4</b> <a href="http://journals.plos.org/plosone/article?id=10.1371/journal.pone.0115253">http://journals.plos.org/plosone/article?id=10.1371/journal.pone.0115253</a>	< <a href="http://dx.plos.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0115253">http://dx.plos.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0115253</a> >; rel="canonical", < <a href="http://journals.plos.org/plosone/article?id=10.1371/journal.pone.0115253.PDF">http://journals.plos.org/plosone/article?id=10.1371/journal.pone.0115253.PDF</a> >; rel="item"; type="application/pdf", < <a href="http://journals.plos.org/plosone/article?id=10.1371/journal.pone.0115253">http://journals.plos.org/plosone/article?id=10.1371/journal.pone.0115253</a> >; rel="item"; type="text/html", < <a href="http://journals.plos.org/plosone/article?id=10.1371/journal.pone.0115253.XML">http://journals.plos.org/plosone/article?id=10.1371/journal.pone.0115253.XML</a> >; rel="item"; type="text/xml"
<b>Node: 6</b> <a href="http://journals.plos.org/plosone/article?id=10.1371/journal.pone.0115253.XML">http://journals.plos.org/plosone/article?id=10.1371/journal.pone.0115253.XML</a>	< <a href="http://journals.plos.org/plosone/article?id=10.1371/journal.pone.0115253">http://journals.plos.org/plosone/article?id=10.1371/journal.pone.0115253</a> >; rel="collection"
<b>Node: 2</b> <a href="http://dx.plos.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0115253">http://dx.plos.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0115253</a>	< <a href="http://dx.doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0115253">http://dx.doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0115253</a> >; rel="pid"

# Signposting: Work in Progress

## Demo

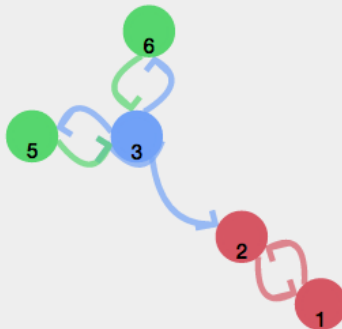
Input any HTTP URI of a scholarly article, and hit Get Headers to see its corresponding signposting headers.

<http://journals.plos.org/plosone/article?id=10.1371/journal.pone.0115253.pdf>

URI of PDF file

Get Headers ↗

## Signposting Headers for the Landing Page Pattern



### Resource

### Link Header

**Node: 5**  
<http://journals.plos.org/plosone/article?id=10.1371/journal.pone.0115253.PDF>

<<http://journals.plos.org/plosone/article?id=10.1371/journal.pone.0115253>>; rel="collection"

**Node: 4**  
<http://journals.plos.org/plosone/article?id=10.1371/journal.pone.0115253>

<<http://dx.plos.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0115253>>;  
rel="canonical",  
<<http://journals.plos.org/plosone/article?id=10.1371/journal.pone.0115253.PDF>>; rel="item";  
type="application/pdf",  
<<http://journals.plos.org/plosone/article?id=10.1371/journal.pone.0115253>>; rel="item";  
type="text/html",  
<<http://journals.plos.org/plosone/article?id=10.1371/journal.pone.0115253.XML>>; rel="item";  
type="text/xml"

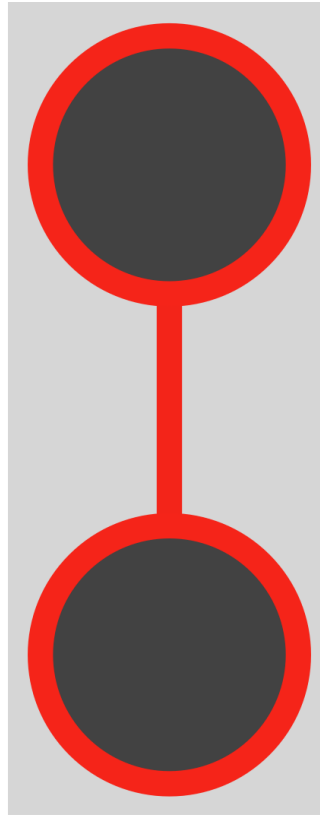
**Node: 6**  
<http://journals.plos.org/plosone/article?id=10.1371/journal.pone.0115253.XML>

<<http://journals.plos.org/plosone/article?id=10.1371/journal.pone.0115253>>; rel="collection"

**Node: 2**  
<http://dx.plos.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0115253>

<<http://dx.doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0115253>>;  
rel="pid"

# Robust Links

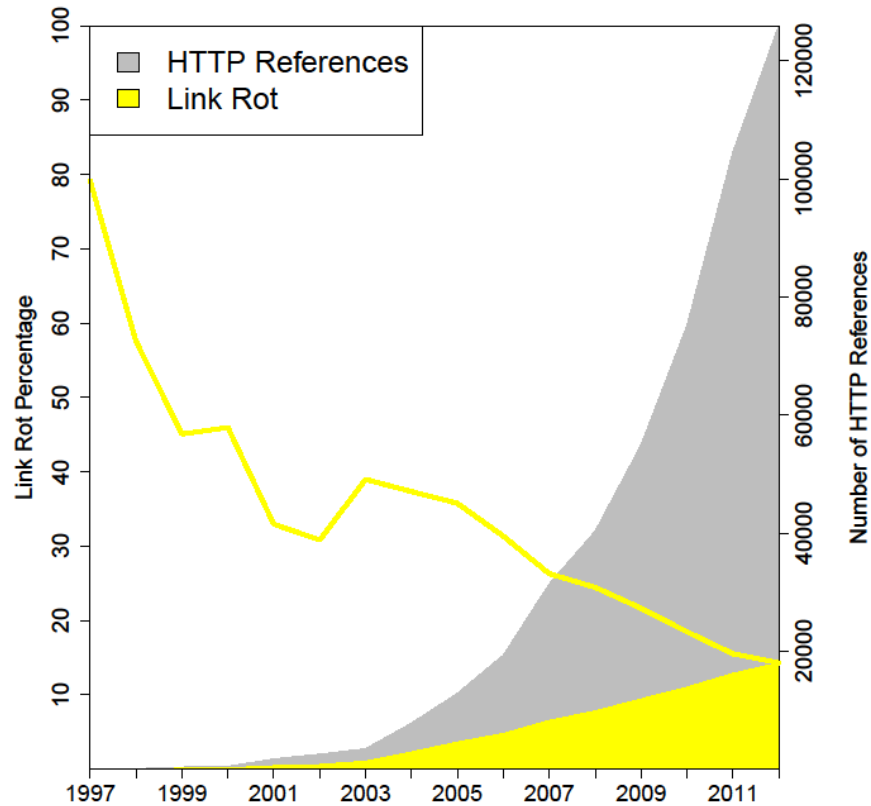


# Reference Rot

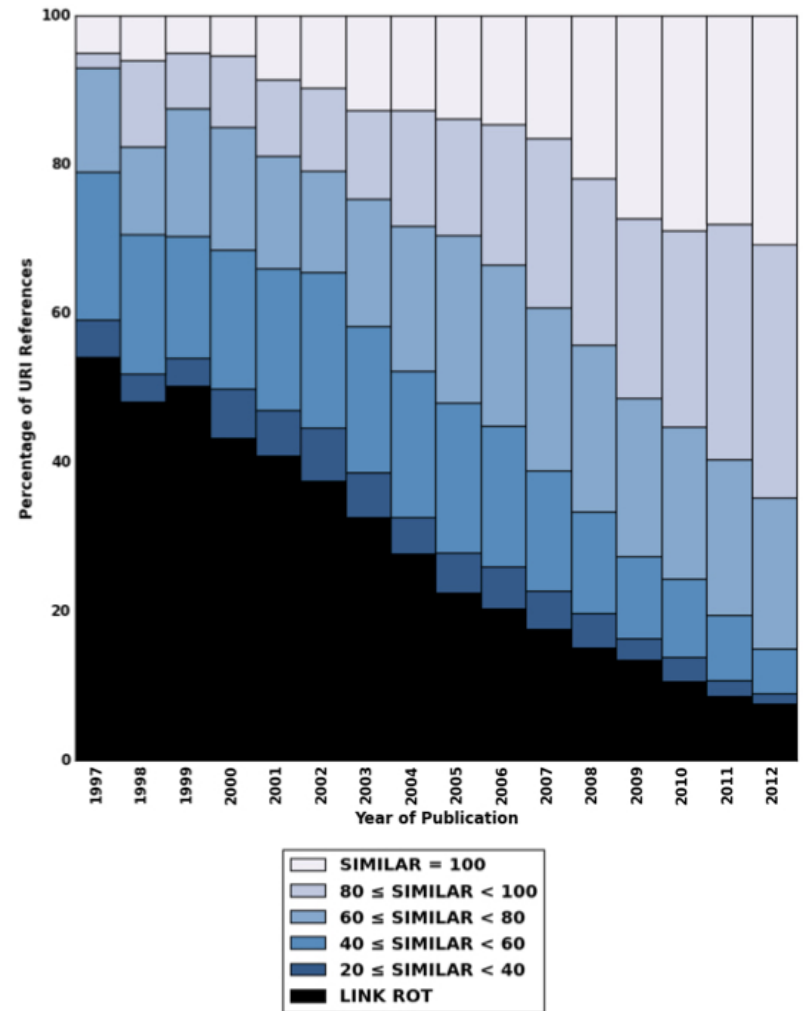
- Links to Web at Large resources are subject to Reference Rot:
  - Link Rot: Link stops working, e.g. HTTP 404 “Not Found”
  - Content Drift: Linked content changes over time
    - Possibly to the extent that it becomes no longer representative of the content that was initially referenced



# Link Rot



# Content Drift



# Combating Reference Rot

- ① Create a snapshot of the referenced resource in one of many web archives that support on-demand archiving (manual, API):
  - archive.today
  - Internet Archive
  - perma.cc
  - webcitation.org
- ② Reference snapshots actionably by using:
  - Original URI
  - Snapshot URI
  - Date/Time of snapshotin order to maximize link robustness

# Reference Resources Actionably

- When referencing resources, use Link Decorations to convey Original URI, Snapshot URI, Date/Time

```
<a href="http://hiberlink.org"  
  data-versionurl="https://archive.is/drFFu"  
  data-versiondate="2015-11-16" >
```

```
<a href="https://archive.is/drFFu"  
  data-originalurl="http://hiberlink.org"  
  data-versiondate="2015-11-16" >
```

- Legitimate in HTML5
- Can be made actionable with JavaScript, e.g. robustlinks.js

# See Robust Links at Work



## D-Lib<sup>®</sup> Magazine

The Magazine of Digital Library Research

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### D-Lib Magazine

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### Reminiscing About 15 Years of Interoperability Efforts

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DOI: 10.1045/november2015-vandesompel

<https://dx.doi.org/10.1045/november2015-vandesompel>



## See Robust Links at Work

ed" with actionable attributes as per the [Robust Links](#)  specification. snapshots of the referenced resources. These robust links can be linked content was around the time the original link was put in place. results from the Mellon-funded [Hiberlink project](#) . It leverages the

### – OAI-PMH (1999)



orm scholarly communicat  
d to be working towards t  
y available peer-reviewed  
e and commercial service

#### Robust Links

Get near page creation date 2015-11-16

Get near link date 2015-10-06

Get from archive.is

ility as a way to break ground for a universal adoption of e-print  
e discoverability of e-prints, actually making them easier to discover  
was [OAI-PMH](#) , a protocol for the recurrent exchange of metadata  
which was to an extent inspired by the [Dienst protocol](#) .

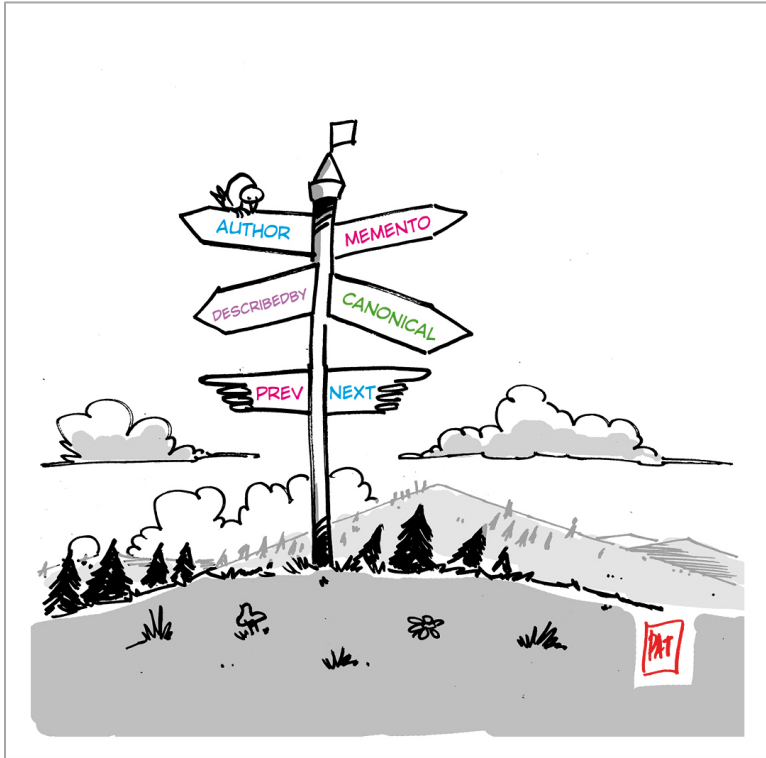
# Conclusion

There is no real conclusion. There are insights:

- One doesn't do interoperability because of interoperability but to enable cross-node applications that add value
- Establishing interoperability across a vast amount of nodes is a huge challenge. But meaningful levels of interoperability can be achieved via really basic approaches.
- Unfortunately, not even discovery is a solved problem (although the solution is available)
  - Anurag's keynote is a real embarrassment for our community

Leading organizations and projects should promote web-centric cross-repository interoperability

# Establishing New Levels of Interoperability for Web-Based Scholarship



Cartoon by:  
Patrick Hochstenbach

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