Renaissance and Reformation
Renaissance et Réforme

Ingo Straub, creator. InfoRapid Search and Replace. Other

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Citer ce compte rendu

Ingo Straub, creator.
InfoRapid Search and Replace. Other.
Waiblingen, Germany: InfoRapid. Accessed 29 July 2021.
inforapid.de/html/searchreplace.htm.

In my work on authorship attribution studies, using many software programs offering text retrieval tools, I have had excellent, free service from InfoRapid Search and Replace.

It was created by the German software engineer Ingo Straub in 2000; the latest version is 3.1f (2003). It is one of the most powerful text retrieval programs currently available for Microsoft Windows. It has built-in Microsoft Office converters that enable it to search and preview HTML and RTF documents, including WinWord, Excel, and Lotus in their original layout. As the website explains:

> The advantages of InfoRapid Search & Replace lie in the diverse search options and in the simple operation and handiness. A click on a hypertext link in the search result list opens the corresponding file in the text viewer and jumps directly to the marked passage. Another click, this time with the right mouse button, brings you back to the search result list. You can browse through the search result list with the function keys F5 and F6, without shifting between the file viewer and the search result list every time. If you discover a word you want to look further on, a double click on it is sufficient to take it as [a] new search expression and start a new search. Up to 999 search result pages and search parameters can be stored in a database, from where they can be recalled via a register.[1]

Additional features:

> Several search expressions can be combined by using Boolean operators (AND, OR, NOT, NEAR X CHARACTERS).

> The program supports a phonetic search after similarly sounding words.

1. "Short Description of the Program," under "Search & Replace," inforapid.de/html/searchreplace.htm.

Regular expressions for pattern matching are supported.

You can replace many phrases in one step by using a batch file.

Several file masks can be combined (*.TXT | *.DOC | *.searches files with the extensions TXT, DOC and RTF).

Several directory names can be combined (C:\ | D:\ | E:\ searches the drives C:, D:, and E:).

Text and image files can be watched in the built-in file viewer. It supports the graphic formats BMP, JPEG, WMF, and EMF; GIF is locked because of the UNISYS patent. In text files, the hits are highlighted.

With a presetting file, you can configure the program so that it can be used only to search and not to replace text.

Finding a word or phrase in early modern drama

In 2005, while researching the canon of Thomas Kyd, I created a database of plays performed in public theatres between 1579 and 1596. I used the old-spelling texts from Literature Online (LION). To retain chronology, a crucial issue in attribution studies, I prefixed each play title with the abbreviated date of its first performance, relying on Harbage and Schoenbaum, *Annals of English Drama 975–1700*, revised edition (1964), with the two supplements edited by Schoenbaum. (If I were doing this today, I would of course use the far more accurate and comprehensive resource created by Martin Wiggins, in association with Catherine Richardson: *British Drama 1533–1642: A Catalogue*.) Thus 88 *Suleiman and Perseda*, 90 *King Leir*, 93 *Richard III*, etc. I then uploaded all fifty-four files into InfoRapid and started checking. Like other scholars, I had identified *1 Henry VI* as an expanded version of the original text that Henslowe called *harey the vi*, performed on 3 March 1592 by Lord Strange's Men.[1] My research confirmed that Thomas Nashe wrote act 1,[2] and I suspected

1. See Foakes and Rickert, 16, 341; Wiggins and Richardson, play no. 919 (3.160–67).

2. See Vickers, "Incomplete Shakespeare," and the edition of *1 Henry VI* by David Bevington and myself in Vickers, *The Complete Works of Thomas Kyd*. When Strange's Men collapsed in 1593, their playscripts

that Thomas Kyd wrote the remainder. To test this hypothesis, I started looking for matches to some rare words and phrases, such as *collop*, meaning a piece of meat. In act 5 scene 5, when the English forces that have captured Joan la Pucelle are trying to establish her identity, they examine an old shepherd who claims to be her father. She denies this but he avers that she is "a collop" of his. I entered the word in the "Enter Search Dialog" box, with this result:

> 88 *Suleiman and Perseda* They lopt a **collop** of my tendrest member.

> 89 *Mother Bombie* they should aske blessing on their knees, and the **collop**s of thine own

> 92 *1 Henry VI* God knowes, thou art a **collop** of my flesh,

Searching finished (0.29 seconds)

The parallel gives a matching four-word phrase, "a collop of my," which is unique in the drama of this period. Another unusual wording in *1 Henry VI* is the stage direction:

> *The French leape ore **the walles in** their shirts*

A search for the phrase "walles in" turned up this unique match from *Suleiman and Perseda*:

> *Perseda comes vpon **the walles in** mans apparel*

The words underlined show an additional match in content. A final example is this match:

> And like **a Peacock** sweepe along his **tayle**   *1H6*

> I in the eye of an infant, **a Peacocks taile** is glorious   *S&P*

were divided between the Admiral's Men and the Lord Chamberlain's Men, Shakespeare's company. At some point after 1594, Shakespeare enlarged the play; subsequent research suggested that he added three scenes (2.4, 4.2, 4.5).

That match shows how InfoRapid can cope with variant spellings. It is a flexible tool and can cope with vast amounts of text: 999 pages, the website claims. I warmly recommend it.

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Highlighting verbal similarities between texts has always featured prominently in attribution research, and parallel passages sometimes resonate better than statistical readouts of function word usage, graphs of metrical patterns, or other technical features that require mining for data at a different level than one typically experiences in literary works. Still, the more arcane mathematical approaches have multiplied in the last two decades and are unlikely to diminish in importance. In a 2001 article, MacDonald Jackson presented one possible method for bridging the quantitative-qualitative divide via comprehensive and methodical searching for