

# CS47300: Web Information Search and Management

Question Answering
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#### PURDUE Web Search in 2020?

The web, it is a changing.

What will people do in the 2020s?

- Type key words into a search box?
- Use the Semantic Web / Web 2.0
  - (and what will this be?)
- Speak to your computer with natural language search?
- Use social or "human powered" search?



#### Getting information

The common person's view? [From a novel]

"I like the Internet. Really, I do. Any time I need a piece of shareware or I want to find out the weather in Bogota ... I'm the first guy to get the modem humming. But as a source of information, it sucks. You got a billion pieces of data, struggling to be heard and seen and downloaded, and anything I want to know seems to get trampled underfoot in the crowd."



Michael Marshall. The Straw Men. HarperCollins,



#### "Information retrieval"

- The name "information retrieval" is standard, but as traditionally practiced, it's not really right
- All you get is document retrieval, and beyond that the job is up to you



#### The future?

 Some scattered ideas from the corporate world Courtesy Chris Manning

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## Google (2014-2015) What's been happening?

- "Mobilegeddon" (Apr 21, 2015):
  - "Mobile friendliness" as a major ranking signal
- "Pigeon" update (July 2014):
  - More use of distance and location in ranking signals
- "App Indexing" (Android, iOS support May 2015)
  - Search results can take you to an app
- Why?
  - About half of all searches are now from mobile
  - Making/wanting good changes, but obvious selfinterest in trying to keep people using mobile web rather than apps



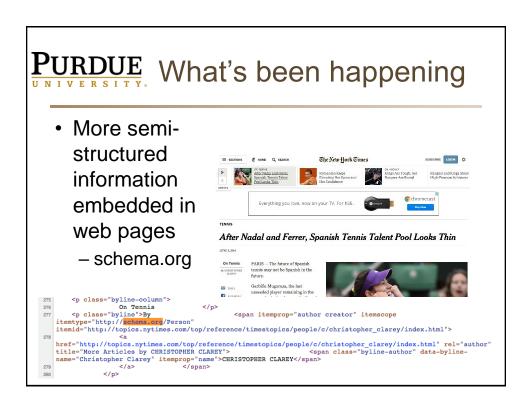
## Google: What's been happening? 2014

- New search index at Google: "Hummingbird"
  - http://www.forbes.com/sites/roberthof/2013/09/26/google-just-revamped-search-to-handle-your-long-questions/
- Answering long, "natural language" questions better
  - Partly to deal with spoken queries on mobile
- More use of the Google Knowledge Graph
  - Concepts versus words

#### PURDUE What's been happening

- Google Knowledge Graph
- Facebook Graph Search
- Bing's Satori
- Things like Wolfram Alpha

Common theme: Doing graph search over structured knowledge rather than traditional text search





#### PURDUE Towards intelligent agents

#### Two goals

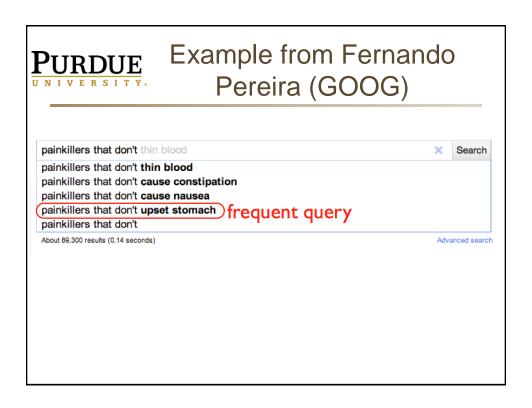
- Things not strings
- Inference not search

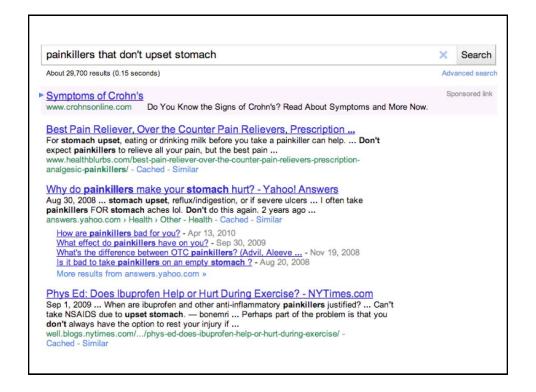
# PURDUE Two paradigms for question answering

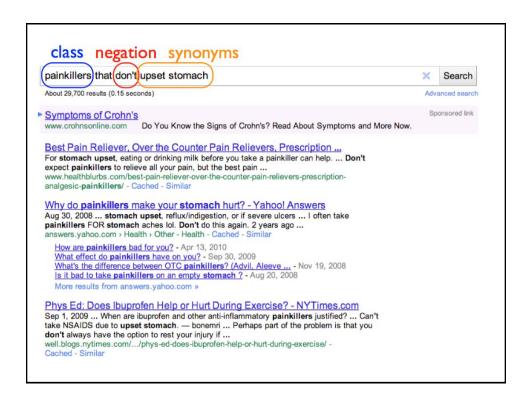
- Text-based approaches
  - TREC QA, IBM Watson
- Structured knowledge-based approaches
  - Apple Siri, Wolfram Alpha, Facebook Graph Search

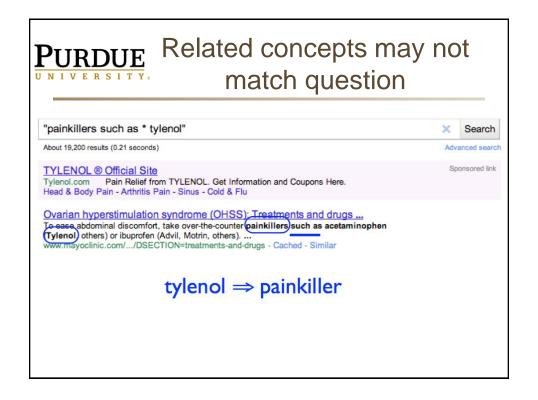
(And, of course, there are hybrids, including some of the above.)

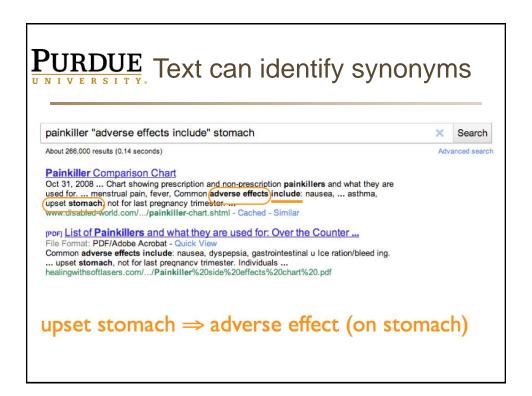
At the moment, structured knowledge is back in fashion, but it may or may not last

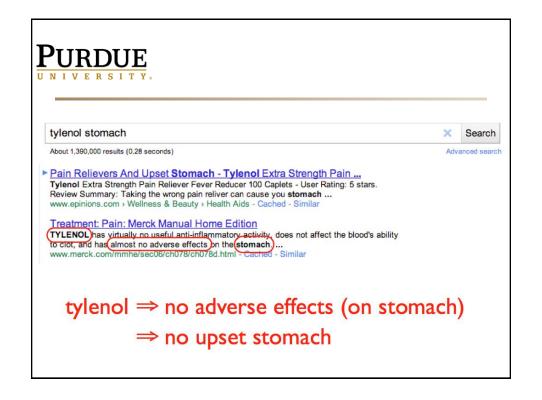






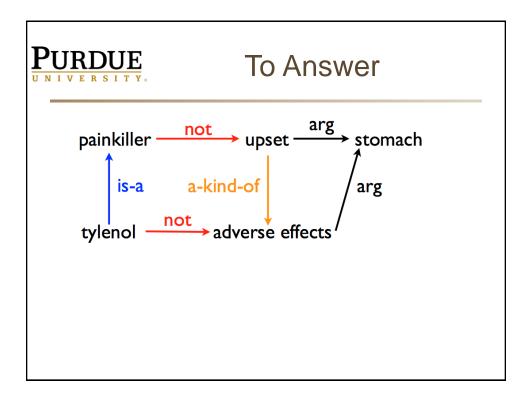






### PURDUE This took us from Query

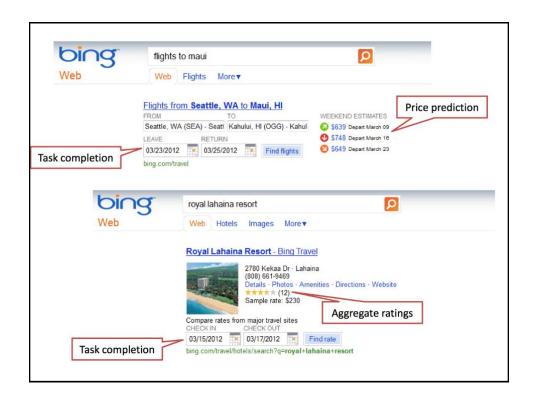
painkiller upset stomach

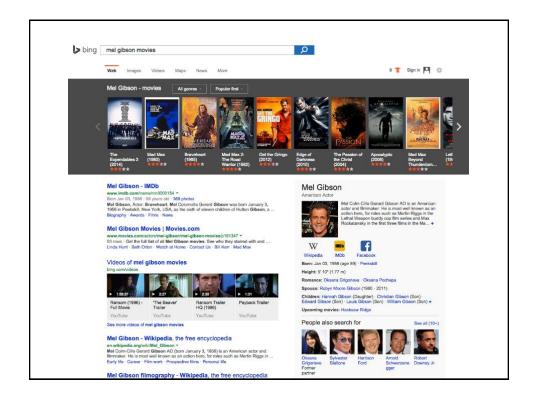


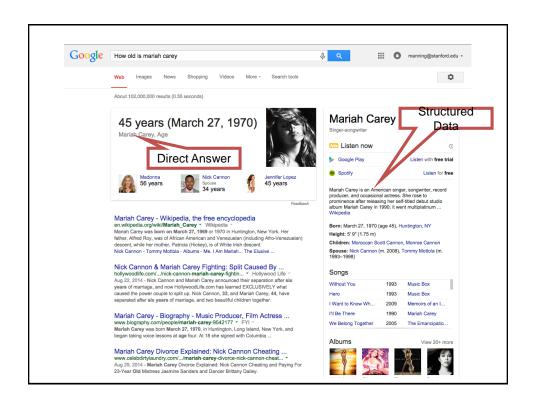
#### "Things, not strings"

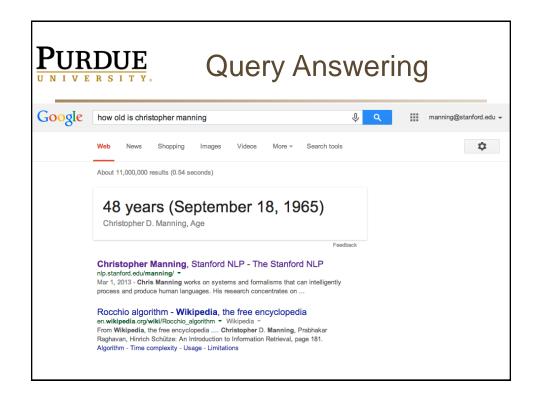
From	То	Requires
Term	Concept	Parsing, disambiguation, coreference
Term identity	Entailment	Concept relations
Co-occurrence	Syntactic relation	Document structure, parsing
Term index	Semantic index	Concept disambiguation, inference









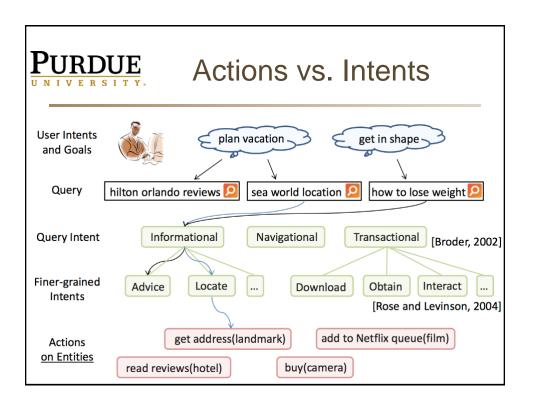


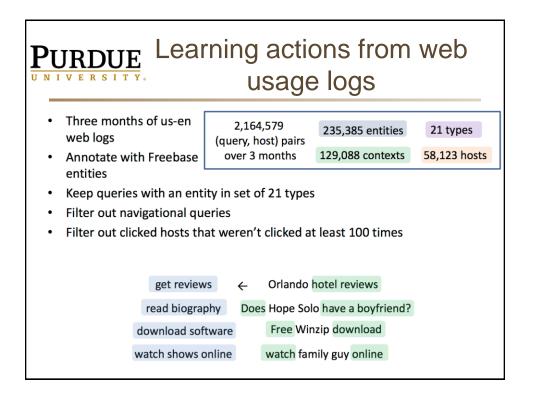


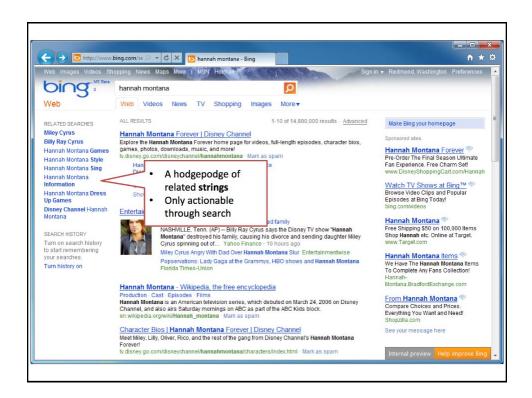


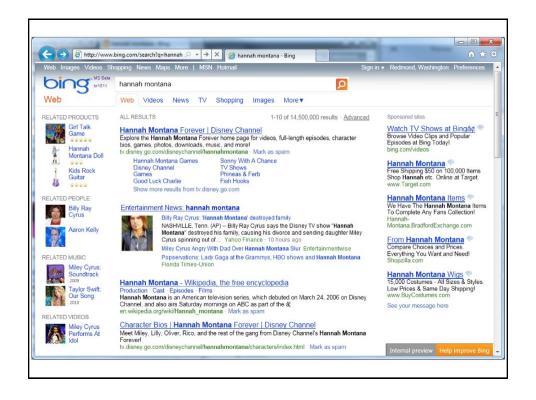




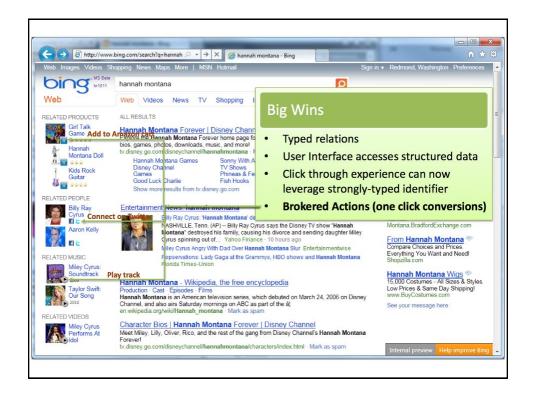










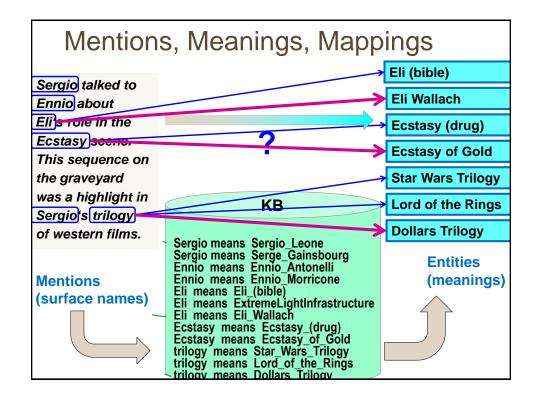


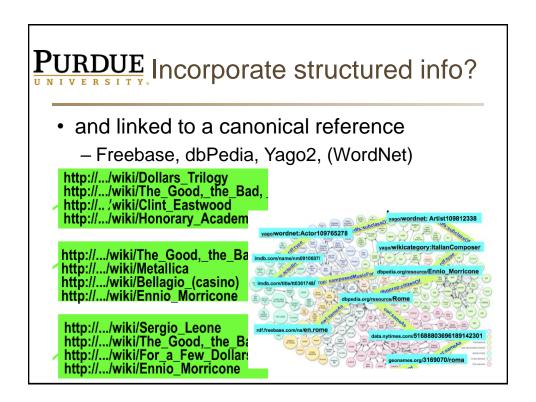
## Entity disambiguation and linking

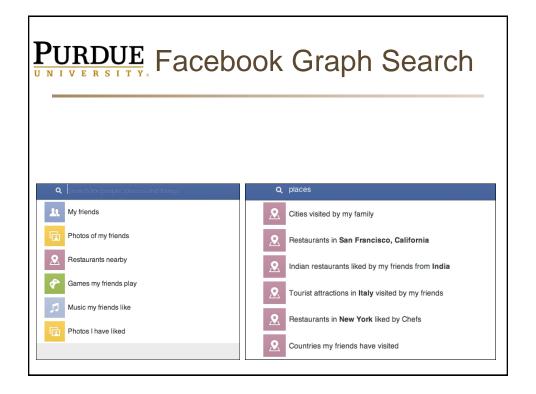
- · Key requirement is that entities get identified
  - Named entity recognition (e.g., Stanford NER!)
- · and disambiguated
  - Entity linking (or sometimes "Wikification")
    - · e.g., Michael Jordan the basketballer or the ML guy







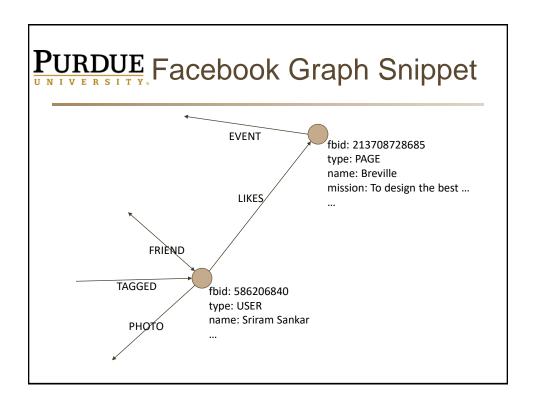






#### PURDUE The Facebook Graph

- Collection of entities and their relationships
- Entities (users, pages, photos, etc.) are nodes
- Relationships (friendship, checkins, tagging, etc.) are edges
- Nodes and edges have metadata
- Nodes have a unique id the fbid



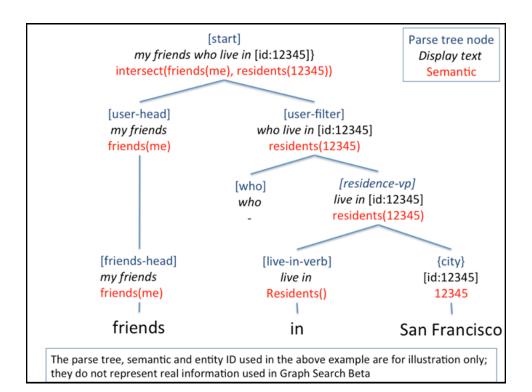




### PURDUE Facebook Graph Search

- Uses a weighted context free grammar (WCFG) to represent the Graph Search query language:
- [start] => [users] \$1
- [users] => my friend friends(me)
- [users] => friends of [users] friends(\$1)
- [users] => {user} \$1
- [start] => [photos] \$1
- [photos] => photos of [users] photos(\$1)
- A terminal symbol can be an entity, e.g., {user}, {city}, {employer}, {group}; it can also be a word/phrase, e.g., friends, live in, work at, members, etc. A parse tree is produced by starting from [start] and expanding the production rules until it reaches terminal symbols.

https://www.facebook.com/notes/facebook-engineering/under-the-hood-the-natural-language-interface-of-graph-search/10151432733048920 http://spectrum.ieee.org/telecom/internet/the-making-of-facebooks-graph-search



### PURDUE 3 approaches to question answering: Knowledge-based approaches (Siri)

- Build a semantic representation of the query
  - Times, dates, locations, entities, numeric quantities
- Map from this semantics to query structured data or resources
  - Geospatial databases
  - Ontologies (Wikipedia infoboxes, dbPedia, WordNet, Yago)
  - Restaurant review sources and reservation services
  - Scientific databases
  - Wolfram Alpha

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### Text-based (mainly factoid) QA

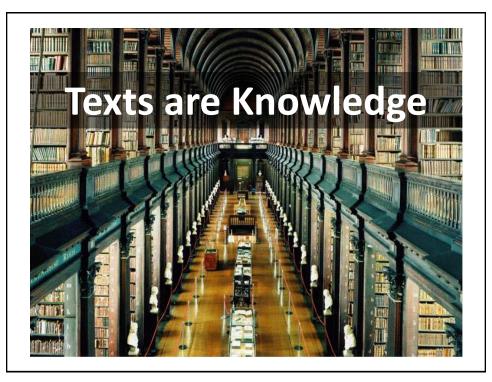
- QUESTION PROCESSING
  - Detect question type, answer type, focus, relations
  - Formulate queries to send to a search engine
- PASSAGE RETRIEVAL
  - Retrieve ranked documents
  - Break into suitable passages and rerank
- ANSWER PROCESSING
  - Extract candidate answers (as named entities)
  - Rank candidates
    - · using evidence from relations in the text and external sources

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## Hybrid approaches (IBM Watson)

- Build a shallow semantic representation of the query
- Generate answer candidates using IR methods
  - Augmented with ontologies and semi-structured data
- Score each candidate using richer knowledge sources
  - Geospatial databases
  - Temporal reasoning
  - Taxonomical classification

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### **PURDUE** Is the goal to go from language to knowledge bases?

- For humans, going from the largely unstructured language on the web to actionable information is effortlessly easy
- But for computers, it's rather difficult!
- This has suggested to many that if we're going to produce the next generation of intelligent agents, which can make decisions on our behalf
  - Answering our routine email
  - Booking our next trip to Fiji

then we still first need to construct **knowledge** bases

To go from languages to information

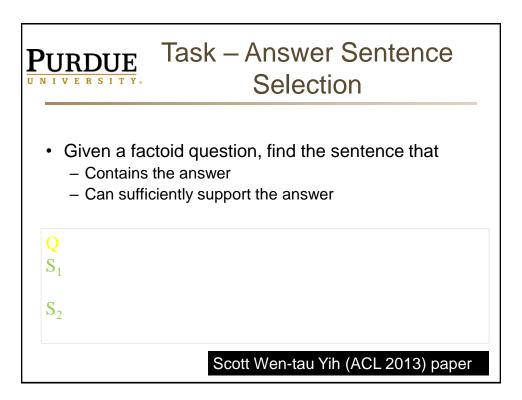
## Knowledge: Not just semantics but pragmatics

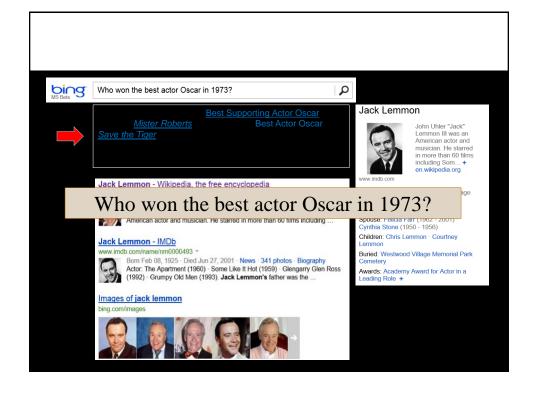
- Pragmatics = taking account of context in determining meaning
- Search engines are great because they inherently take into account pragmatics ("associations and contexts")
  - [the national] → The National (a band)
  - [the national ohio] → The National -Bloodbuzz Ohio – YouTube
  - [the national broadband] → www.broadband.gov

### PURDUE Inference directly in text: Natural Logic (van Benthem 2008, MacCartney & Manning 2009)

- Q Who is Beyoncé Knowles's husband?
- Q' Beyoncé Knowles's husband is X.
- A Beyoncé's marriage to rapper Jay-Z and portrayal of Etta James in Cadillac Records (2008) influenced her third album I Am... Sasha Fierce (2008).







Word Alignment for Question Answering: TREC QA (1999-2005)

What is the fastest car in the world?



 The Jaguar XJ220 is the dearest, fastest and most sought after car on the planet.

