Hi Ron,

I'm writing from the Artificial Intelligence conference in France to keep you up to date on our dissemination of information about the Faulty.

I gave my paper at the workshop on innovative applications yesterday, where it was well received. It had been given two positive reviews and one neutral one in May when it was accepted, the objection being that I hadn't put Faulty in the context of other projects of a similar type. An appropriate objection, but the reviewers thought I was a computer scientist - everyone else at the workshop was - . I'm learning some interesting things about the field of expert systems, particularly their connections with the newer database management systems. However, I've noticed that, at least as represented at this conference, there are a lot of completed expert systems that work at the scale of ours, nor at its speed. The Workshop was particularly interested in the fact that we could reason in time (we calculate trends) and that we are not CPU-cycle bound (Faulty could run on a 80386). Combining non-AI pieces of the program (signature analysis) with the rest of the diagnosis section to achieve speed is a recognized though unadvertised part of some other systems, although the versatility of our approach was recognized.

The conference in New Zealand was somewhat less successful; I was told the day before I left Narrabri that I would have to give my talk as a poster, but I had no time to change the format of my presentation, so I just put up photocopies of my paper that I had sent to Ravi Sood for publication in the Proceedings of the Q ASA. It looked undistinguished, and no one asked me about it except Brad Carter. The papers at the sessions, I thought were quite good. (Jessica's was an example).

I've been invited to give two lectures in Russia next month. One at the Institute for Applied Astronomy on Faulty - apparently the Institute is building a 30-meter telescope and would like to hear about diagnosis. The other at the Institute for Theoretical Astronomy on general principles of AI, about which I know two beans, but I'm told the Institute is interested in learning about AI and only know one bean. We'll see.

Working with my managers at the AT was difficult, as you know. People like Russell and Mike Hayes kept me going by being enthusiastic users and my own motivation helped. But you also kept me going, and I've been trying to analyze what it is about your approach that keeps so many people so loyal. I think it was because you gave me information, even if it might not be (or especially because it might not be) relevant - it created trust and a feeling of collaboration. If I left Faulty useful, a third of the credit is yours.

Cheers,
-Rob
Date: Fri, 05 Nov 1993 16:06:12 +1100
From: Ron Ekers <REKT@atnf.csiro.au>
Subject: Fault diagnosis system - report from Rob Landau in France
To: rfrater@iise.csiro.au
Content-Type: TEXT/PLAIN; CHARSET=ISO-8859-1
Content-Transfer-Encoding: BASE64
WOW!