

PREFACE

It was dawn and the local told him it was down the road a piece, left at the first fishing bridge in the country, right at the appletree stump, and onto the dirt road just before the hill. At midnight he knew he was lost. -Anonymous

Welcome to the Medley Lisp Development Environment, a collection of powerful tools for assisting you in programming in Lisp, developing sophisticated user interfaces, and creating prototypes of your ideas in a quick and easy manner. Unfortunately, along with the power comes mind-numbing complexity. The Medley documentation set describes all the tools in detail, but it would be unreasonable for us to expect a new user to wade through all of it, so this primer is intended as an introduction, to give you a taste of some of the features.

We developed this primer to provide a starting point for new Medley users, to enhance your excitement and challenge you with the potential before you. We're going to make some assumptions about you. For starters, we're going to assume that you're sitting at a workstation that can run Medley. All of the examples in the book figure that you're going to want to try things out. We're also going to assume that you've had some exposure to Lisp, hopefully Common Lisp.

Medley actually consists of two complete Lisp implementations, Common Lisp and InterLisp. All the screen I/O and some of the system functions are in InterLisp. However, thanks to the package system, you can call back and forth between the two languages by simply including a package delimiter in front of a symbol name. This sounds complicated, but it will become clearer once we do some examples.

Throughout we make reference to the *Interlisp-D Reference Manual* by section and page number. The material in the primer is just an introduction. When you need more depth, use the detailed treatment provided in the manual.

While only you can plot your ultimate destination, you will find this primer indispensable for clearly defining and guiding you to the first landmarks on your way.

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