Software methodology and snake oil

- programming is hard
  - programs are very expensive to create
  - full of errors
  - hard to maintain
- how can we design and program better?

- a fruitful area for people selling "methodologies"
  - for at least 30 years
- each methodology has the germ of a useful idea
- each claims to solve major programming problems
- some are promoted with religious fervor
- in fact most don’t seem to work well
- or don’t seem to apply to all programs
- or can’t be taught to others
- a few are genuinely useful and should be part of everyone’s repertoire

Examples...

- modularity, information hiding (Parnas)
  - coupling, cohesion (Constantine)
- structured programming (programming without goto’s)
  - top-down development, successive refinement
  - structured everything
  - design, analysis, requirements, specification, walkthroughs...
  - chief programmer teams, egoless programming
- CASE tools (Computer Aided Software Engineering)
  - UML (Unified Modeling Language)
  - message sequence charts, state diagrams
- formal methods
  - verification, validation, proof of correctness
- object-oriented programming
  - object-oriented everything
  - design, analysis, requirements, specification, walkthroughs...
  - CRC cards (Class, Responsibilities, and Collaborators)
- RAD (rapid application development)
  - components, COTS (Components off the Shelf)
  - 4th generation languages, automatic programming
  - X by example, graphical programming
- extreme programming, refactoring, ...
- design patterns
  - patterns of everything
Design patterns

• "Design patterns ... describe simple and elegant solutions to specific problems in object-oriented software design."
  - Design Patterns: Elements of Reusable Object-Oriented Software, by Gamma, Helm, Johnson, Vlissides (the "Gang of Four")

• successful among broad group of programmers

• increasingly used to describe software structure

Bridge pattern

• "Decouple an abstraction from its implementation so that the two can vary independently"

• C++ string class: separate handle from body
  - implementation can be changed without changing abstraction of "string"

```cpp
class String {
    private:
        Srep *p;
    public:
        ...
};
class Srep {
    char *sp;       // data
    int n;         // ref count
    ...
};
```

• sometimes called "Handle / Body"

• similar examples:
  - FILE * in C stdio
  - RE * in regexp interface
  - connection in MySQL interface
Bridge pattern, continued

• change of implementation has no effect on client
  - can even switch implementation at run time

• (in C and C++) hides implementation completely
  - C: hidden behind opaque type
  - C++: implementation class is invisible

• can share implementation among multiple objects without revealing the sharing
  - e.g., reference counting
  - e.g., sharing of open files in FILE*

Adapter pattern

• "Convert the interface of one class into another interface that clients expect"

• maps one interface into another
  - more or less at the same level

• e.g., in the C stdio package:
  fread(buf, objsize, nobj, stream)
  fwrite(buf, objsize, nobj, stream)

  are wrappers around
  read(fd, buf, size)
  write(fd, buf, size)

• also known as "wrapper" pattern

• real-world examples:
  - electrical plugs, various other connectors
Decorator pattern

• “Attach additional responsibilities to an object dynamically”

• decorator conforms to interface it decorates
  - transparent to clients
  - forwards some requests
  - usually does some actions of its own before or after
• e.g., Java Swing JScrollPane class

```java
JTextArea tpay = new JTextArea(15, 45);
JScrollPane jsp = new JScrollPane(tpay,
        JScrollPane.VERTICAL_SCROLLBAR_ALWAYS,
        JScrollPane.HORIZONTAL_SCROLLBAR_ALWAYS);
```

Other structural patterns

• Facade: "Provide a unified interface to a set of interfaces in a subsystem."
  - provides a higher-level interface to something underneath that remains visible and accessible
  - Perl CGI package (and others)
  - simplified socket package (Perl and others)
  - graphics interfaces
    - (X widgets -> X toolkits -> X intrinsics -> Xlib)
    - ...

• Proxy: "Provide a surrogate or placeholder for another object to control access to it."
  - smart pointers
  - implicit initialization
  - load on demand (lazy evaluation)
  - ...

• how do we tell all of these patterns apart?
  - distinctions are not always clear
### Iterator

- "Provide a way to access the elements of an aggregate object sequentially without exposing its underlying representation"

- the basis of algorithms in C++ STL

```c++
template <class InputIterator>
class OutputIterator
OutputIterator mycopy(InputIterator first, InputIterator last, OutputIterator result)
{
    while (first != last)
        *result++ = *first++;
    return result;
}
```

- in Java, tokenizers and explicit iterators

```java
StringTokenizer st = new StringTokenizer(str);
while (st.hasMoreTokens()) {
    String s = st.nextToken();
    ...
}
```

### Interpreter

- "Given a language, define a representation for its grammar along with an interpreter that uses the presentation to interpret sentences in the language"

- regular expression processor
  - variations of grep
    ```c
    int match(char *regexp, char *text) ...
    ```

- eval(…) or execute(…) in many languages

- printf format strings?
Observer (/observable)

- "Define a one-to-many dependency between objects so that when one object changes state, all its dependents are notified and updated automatically"

- Java ActionListener mechanism:

  button.addActionListener(this)
  - tells button to notify this container when event happens
  - usually called by container that contains object that will get the event
  - can have more than one listener

  void actionPerformed(ActionEvent e) { ... }
  - called when event occurs
  - determines type or instance that caused event
  - handles it

Others...

- Abstract Factory: "Provide an interface for creating families of related or dependent objects." (also Factory)

- Singleton: "Ensure a class only has one instance"
  - Java System, Runtime, Math classes

- Visitor: "Represent an operation to be performed on the elements of an object structure"
  - almost any tree walk that does some evaluation at each node
  - draw() where one kind of "Shape" is an entire picture made of Shapes

- Memento: "Without violating encapsulation, capture and externalize an object's internal state so that the object can be restored to this state later"
  - Java serialization