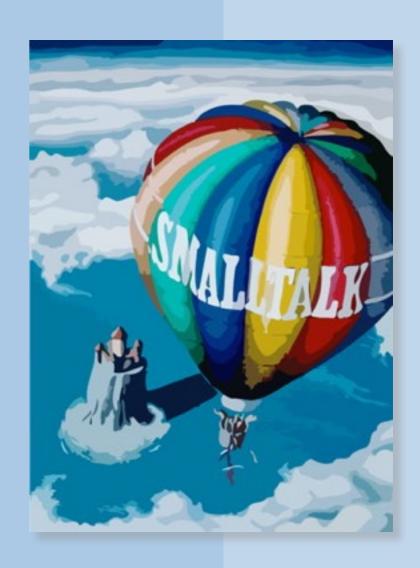


UNIVERSITÄT BERN

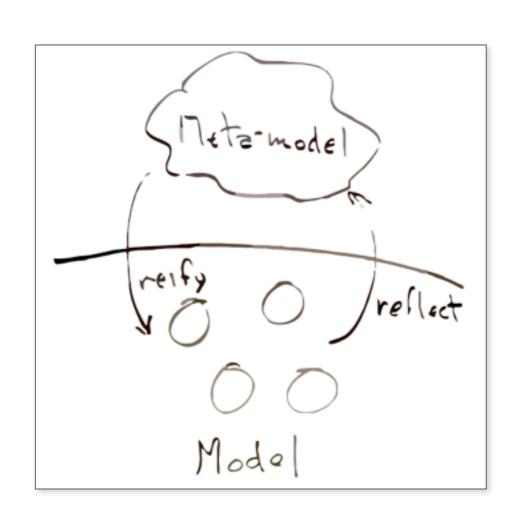
2. Smalltalk — a reflective language

Oscar Nierstrasz



Birds-eye view





Smalltalk is still today one of the few fully reflective, fully dynamic, objectoriented development environments.

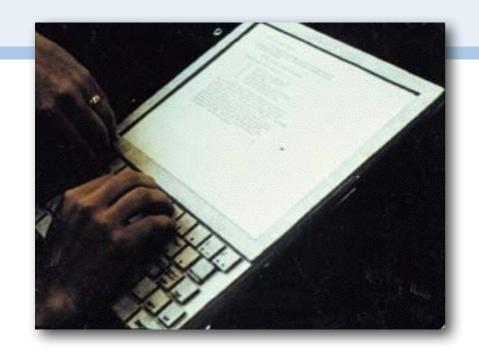
We will see how a simple, uniform object model enables live, dynamic, interactive software development.

Roadmap



- > Smalltalk Basics
- > Demo: modeling Call Graphs

The origins of Smalltalk



Dynabook project (1968)

"simple things should be very simple, ... and, complex things should be very possible"



Smalltalk was invented to support the development of a new generation of graphical hardware devices. It was designed to be object-oriented "from the ground up".

The DynaBook project imagined a future handheld device that could hold huge libraries of information. The Xerox PARC Smalltalk project started by building graphics workstations, with a view to a DynaBook-like device in the future.

http://esug.org/data/HistoricalDocuments/Smalltalk80/SmalltalkHistory.pdf

Excerpt from Alan Kay. *Personal Computing*. In "Meeting on 20 Years of Computing Science", pp. 2-30, Instituto di Elaborazione della Informazione, Pisa, Italy, 1975:

Smalltalk is a very simple, comprehensive way of simulating dynamic models. The built-in primitives of most programming languages (such as numbers, files, data structures, etc.), in Smalltalk, are actually simulations built from more comprehensive ideas, including states-in-process, communication using messages, and classes and instances.

Two of its basic goals are that simple things should be very simple, one should not have to read a manual to do obvious things; and, complex things should be very possible, comprehensive interactive systems should be easily programmed without 'hair or prayer'.

http://scgresources.unibe.ch/Literature/Smalltalk/Kay75a.pdf

What is interesting about Smalltalk?

- > Everything is an object
- > Everything happens by sending messages
- > All the source code is there all the time
- > You can't lose code
- You can change everything
- > You can change things without restarting the system
- > The Debugger is your Friend

How does Smalltalk work?

Image

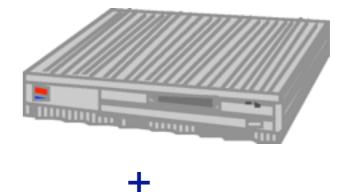




Changes



Virtual machine





Sources

A running Smalltalk systems consists of 4 parts:

- 1. The *image* contains all the objects (the "heap")
- 2. The *changes file* logs all the source code changes you make (i.e., classes and methods)
- 3. The *virtual machine* executes bytecode and manages objects in the image
- 4. The "sources file" contains all system source code of the base image

Note that the image and changes file must be kept together. Although the VM and sources may be shared by multiple users, nowadays all four files are commonly kept together within a single "one-click" application.

Don't panic!

New Smalltalkers often think they need to understand all the details of a thing before they can use it.

Try to answer the question

"How does this work?"

with

"I don't care".

Alan Knight. Smalltalk Guru

This is actually a paraphrase of:

Try not to care — Beginning Smalltalk programmers often have trouble because they think they need to understand all the details of how a thing works before they can use it. This means it takes quite a while before they can master Transcript show: 'Hello World'. One of the great leaps in OO is to be able to answer the question "How does this work?" with "I don't care".

http://alanknightsblog.blogspot.ch/2011/10/principles-of-oo-design-or-everything-i.html

Two things to remember ...

Everything is an object

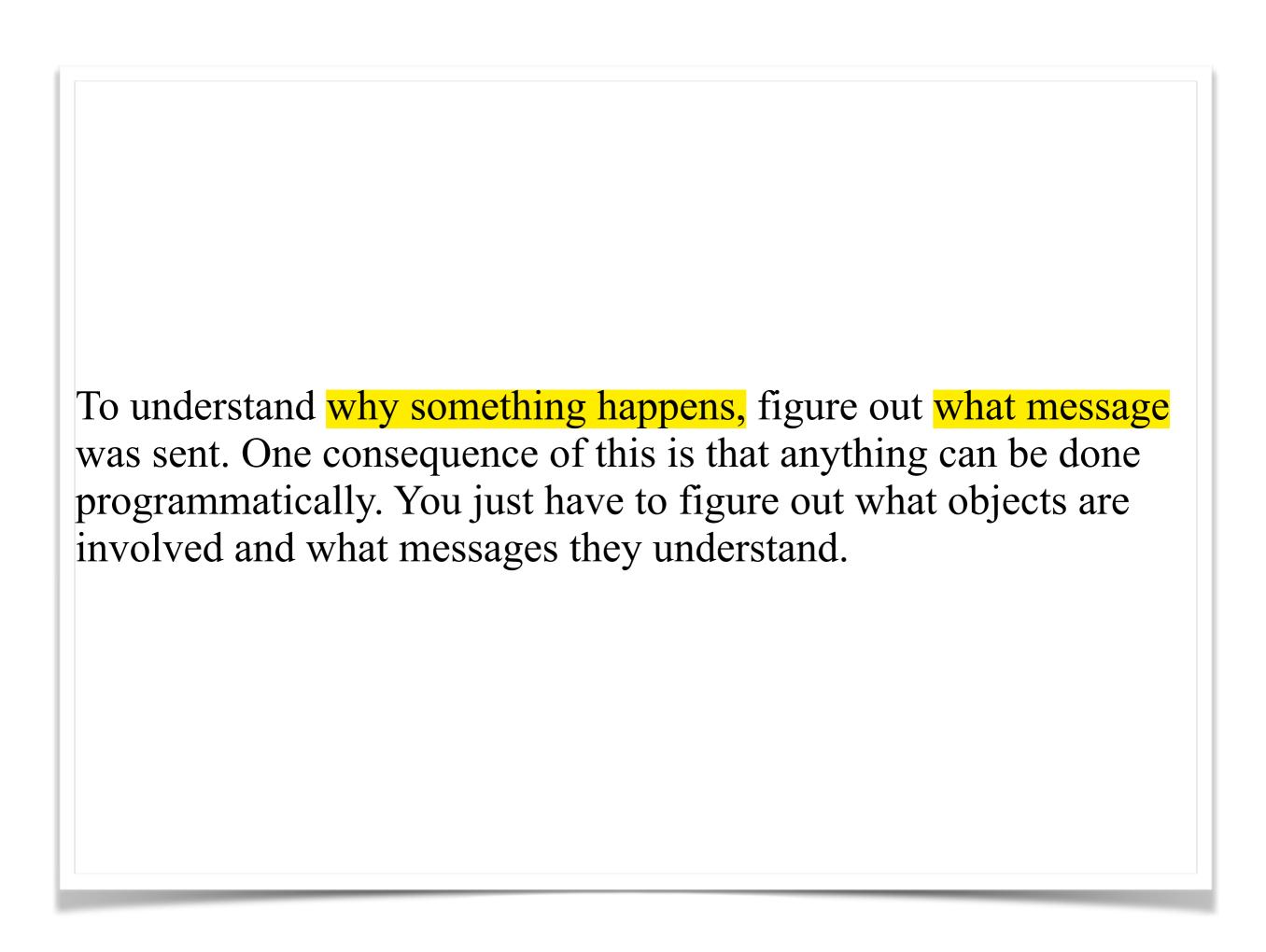
Integers, Booleans, classes, methods, compiled methods, the tools, you name it, they are all objects. When you finally understand deeply that everything in the Smalltalk system is an object, you start to think differently about how to interact with that world.

Here's a relevant fake quote from A Brief, Incomplete, and Mostly Wrong History of Programming Languages:

1980 — Alan Kay creates Smalltalk and invents the term "object oriented." When asked what that means he replies, "Smalltalk programs are just objects." When asked what objects are made of he replies, "objects." When asked again he says "look, it's all objects all the way down. Until you reach turtles."

http://james-iry.blogspot.ch/2009/05/brief-incomplete-and-mostly-wrong.html

Everything happens bysending messages



The Smalltalk object model

> Every object is an instance of one class

- ... which is also an object
- Single inheritance

> Dynamic binding

All variables are dynamically typed and bound

> State is private to objects

- "Protected" for subclasses
- Encapsulation boundary is the object, not the class!

> Methods are public

— "private" methods by convention only

Smalltalk Syntax

Every expression is a message send

> Unary messages

> Binary messages

> Keyword messages

```
Transcript show: 'hello world'
2 raisedTo: 32
'hello' at: 1 put: $y
```

Precedence

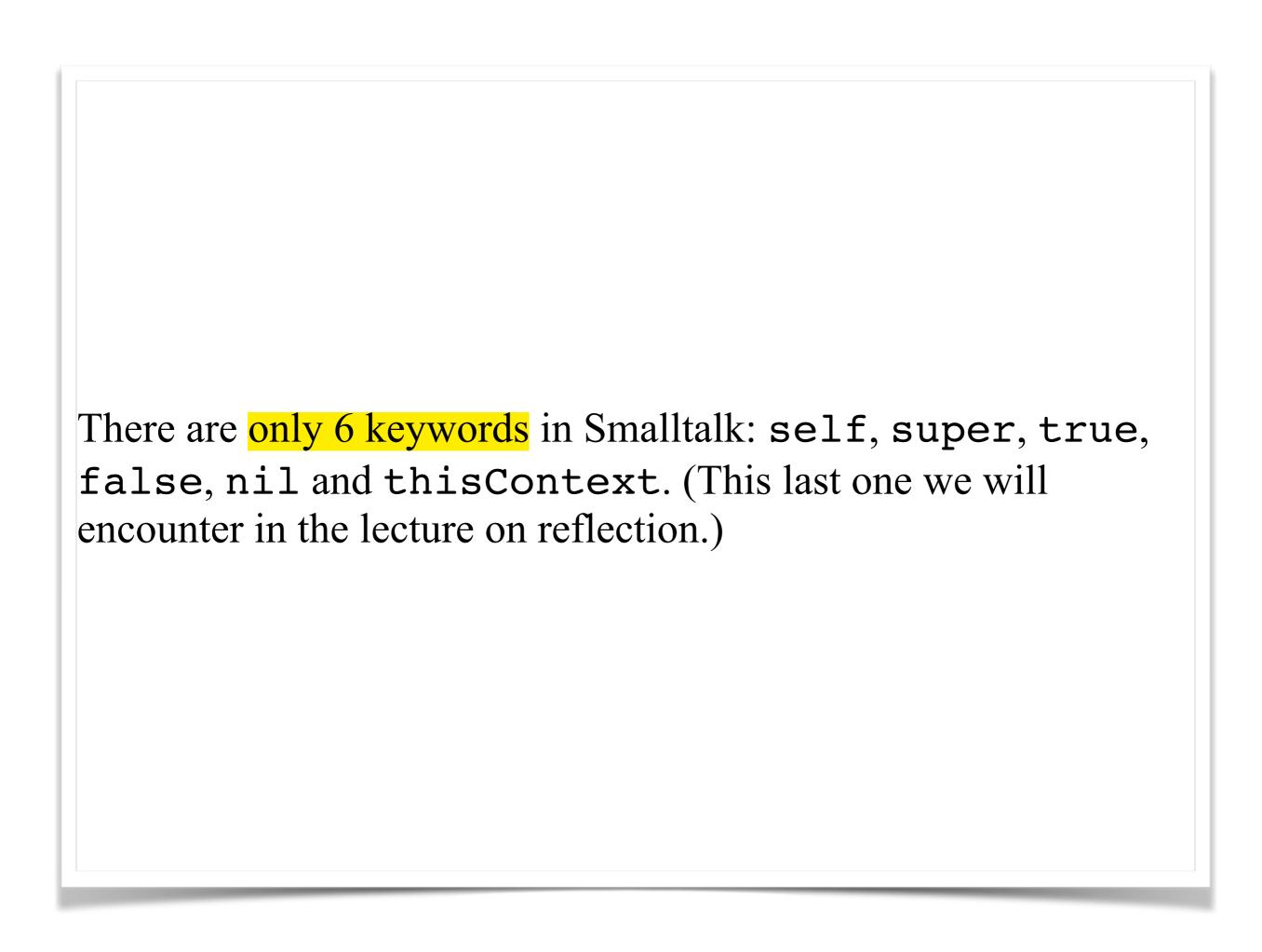
First unary, then binary, then keyword:

128

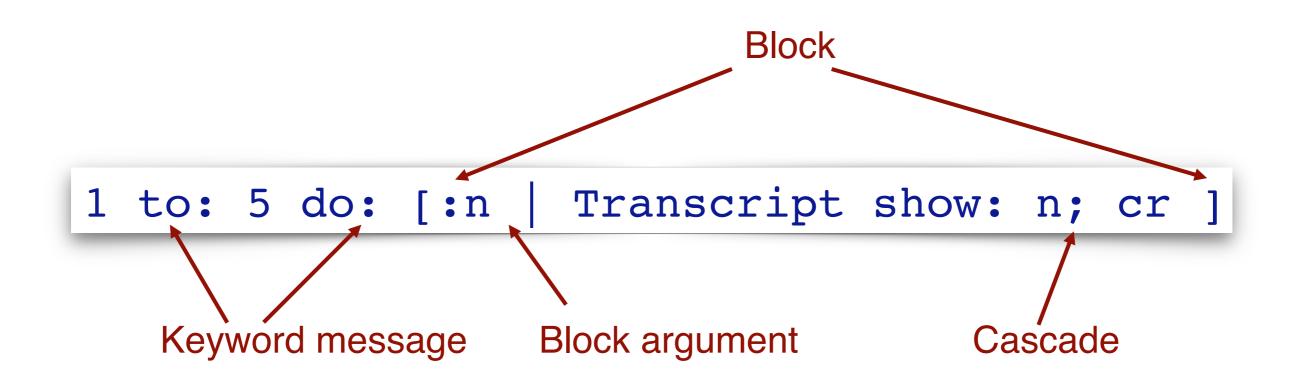
Use parentheses to force order:

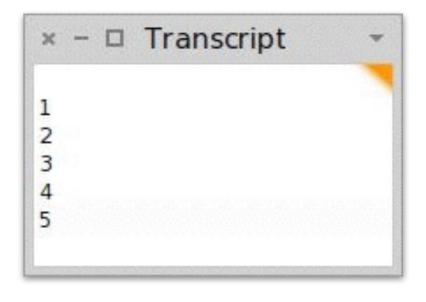
Literals and constants

Strings & Characters	'hello' \$a
Numbers	1 3.14159
Symbols	#yadayada
Arrays	#(1 2 3)
Pseudo-variables	self super
Constants	true false



Blocks





Roadmap

- > Smalltalk Basics
- > Demo: modeling Call Graphs
 - The call graph model
 - The Pharo environment
 - Implementing the CallGraph class
 - Version control in Pharo
 - Modeling Calls, Methods and Classes
 - The Debugger is your Friend!
 - Expressing queries



Roadmap

- > Smalltalk Basics
- > Demo: modeling Call Graphs
 - The call graph model
 - The Pharo environment
 - Implementing the CallGraph class
 - Version control in Pharo
 - Modeling Calls, Methods and Classes
 - The Debugger is your Friend!
 - Expressing queries



Task: analyze call graph logs

```
Return type

"Owner"

Called method
Formal argument types

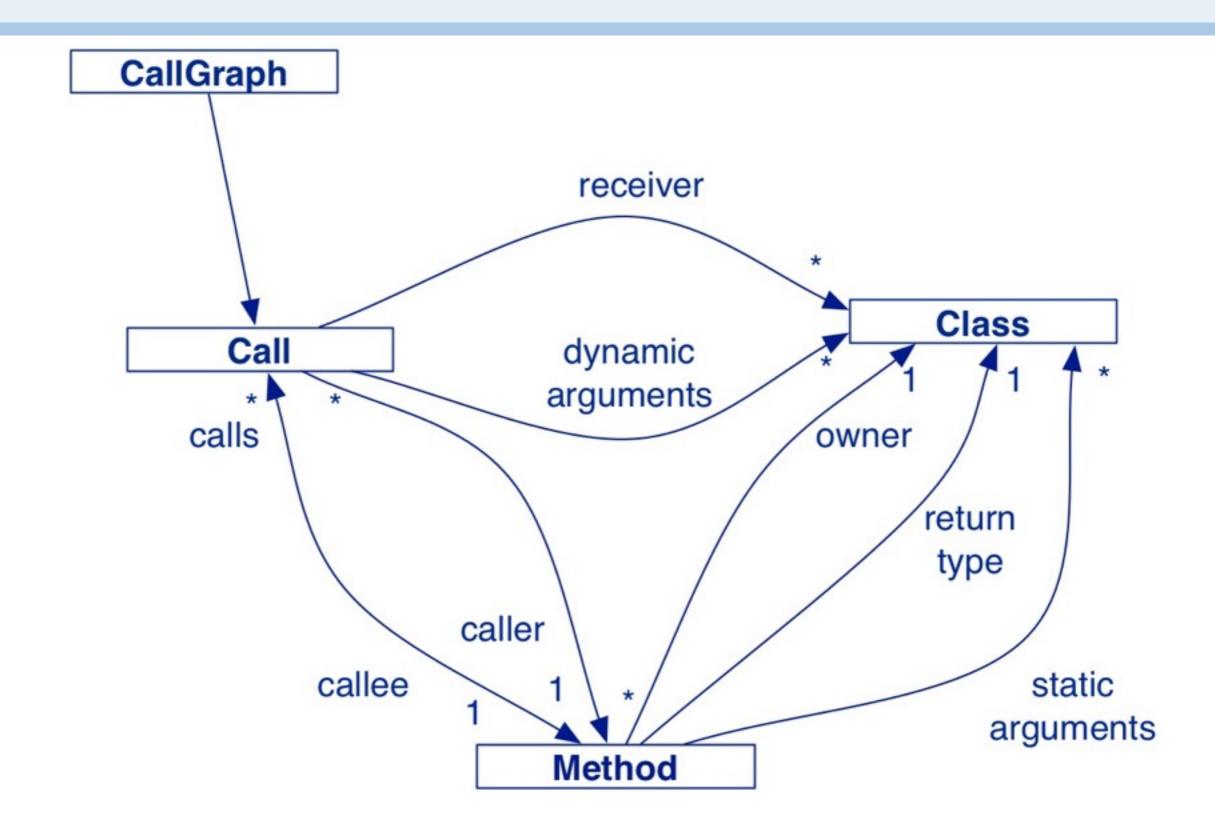
| java.lang.String:org.clapper...HTMLUtil.convertCharacterEntities: java.lang.String
| STATIC_METHOD
| java.lang.String
| org.clarper...convertHTMLEntities: 47
...

Dynamic argument types

Call site (method + line #)
```

The data is generated from Java code instrumented using Javassist and written to a mysql log. This is a dump of the resulting mysql table. http://jboss-javassist.github.io/javassist/

How to reconstruct the model from the log?



Our goal is to reconstruct from the run-time log an objectoriented model of the call graph that can be queried to asnwer questions about the calling relationships.

This UML class diagram summarized the information encoded in the log:

A Method is implemented in a Class (its owner). The arguments and return types are also statically-known classes.

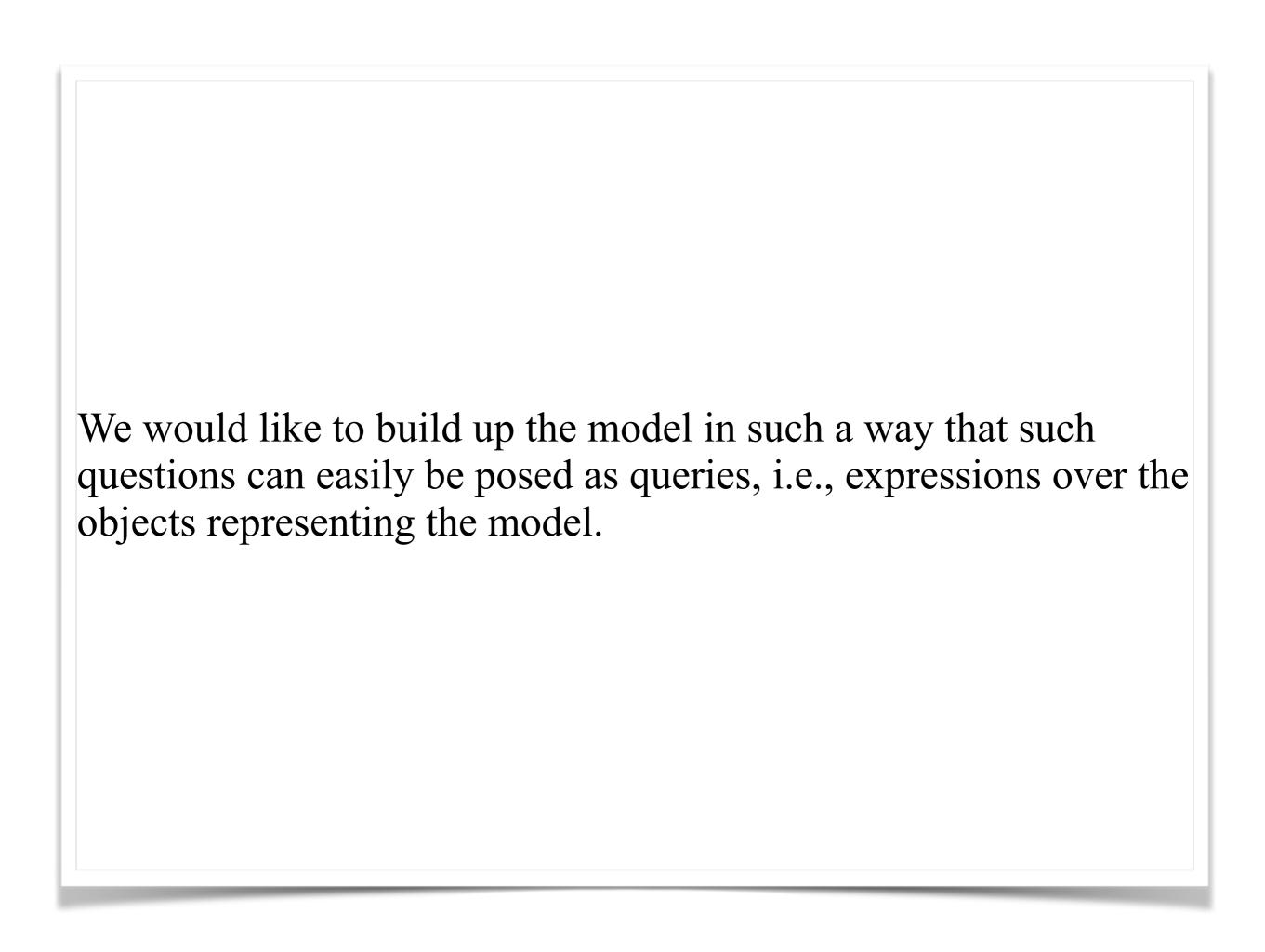
A Call is a run-time activation of a specific Method (caller) calling another Method (callee). The receiver and the arguments are instances of specific classes (which may not be identical to the owner or static arguments of the caller!).

There may be multiple Calls of the same Method.

Questions of interest

- > How many calls are there?
- > How many methods are called?
- > How many classes are accessed?
- > Which methods are static?
- > Which methods are called most frequently?
- > What is the depth of the call graph?
- > Which methods are called by more than one caller?
- > Which methods are potentially polymorphic? (multiple receivers/implementations)
- > What are the polymorphic call sites? (methods called with different receiver/argument types)

> ...

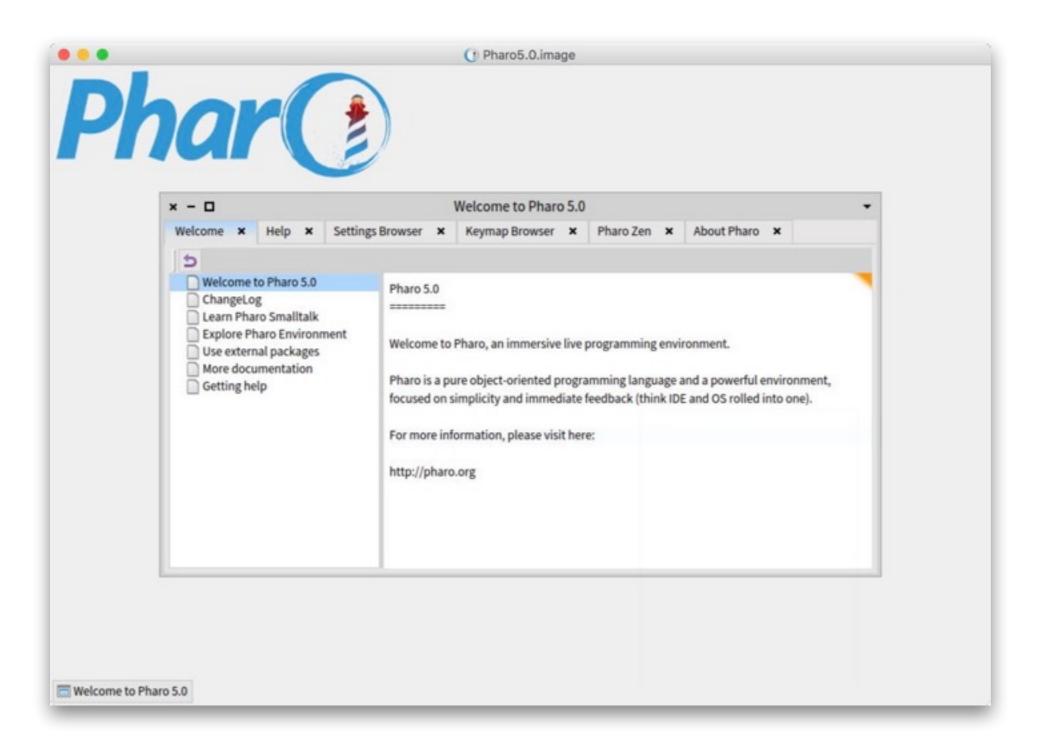


Roadmap

- > Smalltalk Basics
- > Demo: modeling Call Graphs
 - The call graph model
 - The Pharo environment
 - Implementing the CallGraph class
 - Version control in Pharo
 - Modeling Calls, Methods and Classes
 - The Debugger is your Friend!
 - Expressing queries



Pharo — a modern Smalltalk







Pharo is an open-source evolution of Smalltalk-80.

Download it from:

http://pharo.org

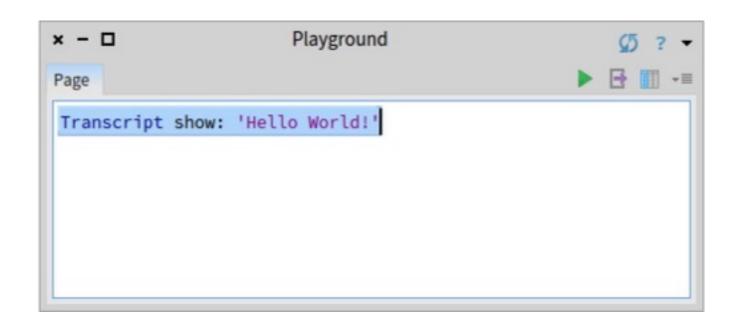
To learn how to use Pharo, start with the open-source book, *Pharo by Example:*

http://files.pharo.org/books/

Caveat: the book is not in sync with the latest version of Pharo, so don't be surprised if things don't match exactly. (The book is being updated ...)

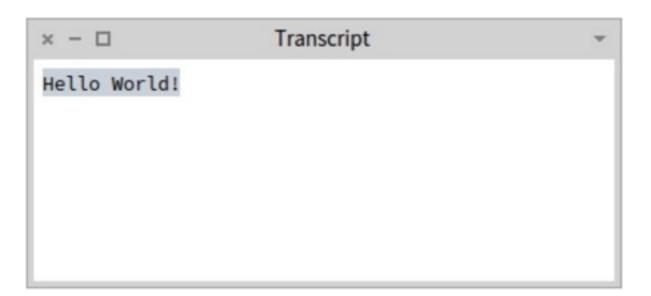
To learn about more advanced features, continue with *Deep into Pharo*

The Workspace and the Transcript



The Playground is a place to evaluate arbitrary Smalltalk expressions

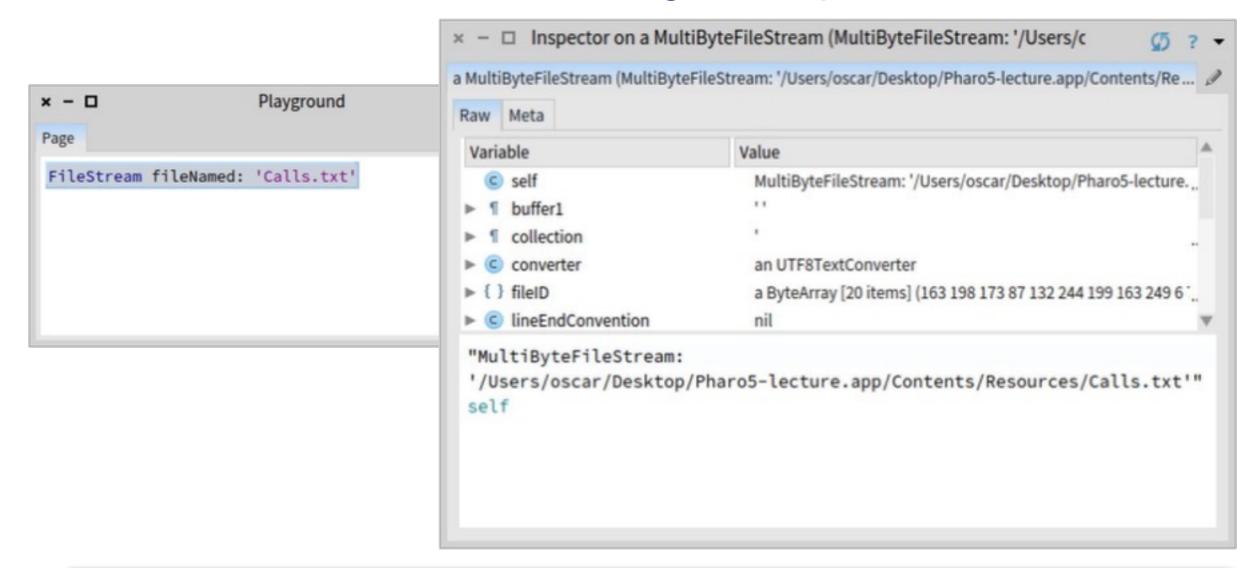
The Transcript is a place to print diagnostic messages



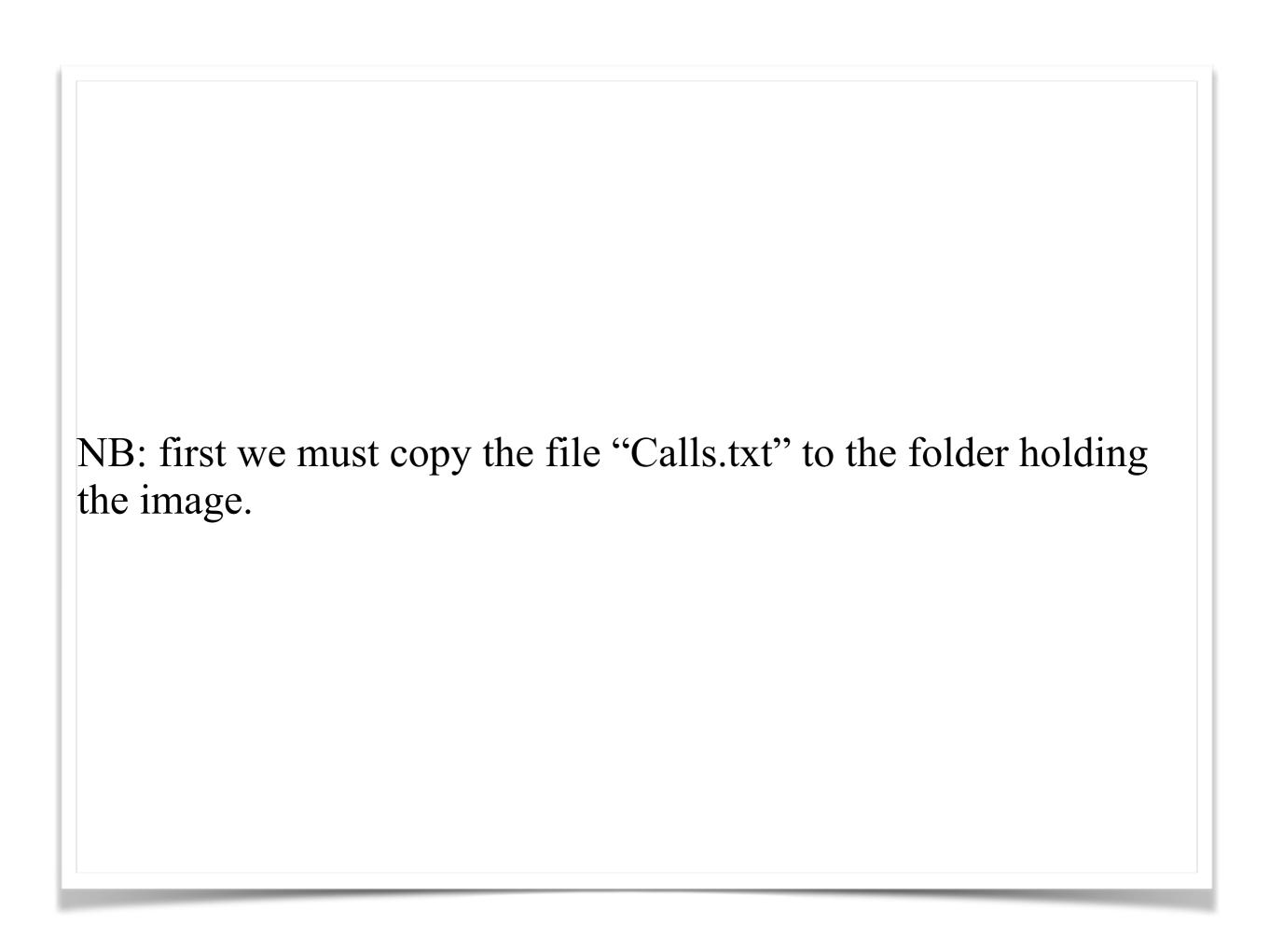
You can select an expression in the Workspace and "do it", "print it" or "inspect it".	
NB: use the keyboard shortcuts instead of the menu!	

Accessing a file from a Workspace

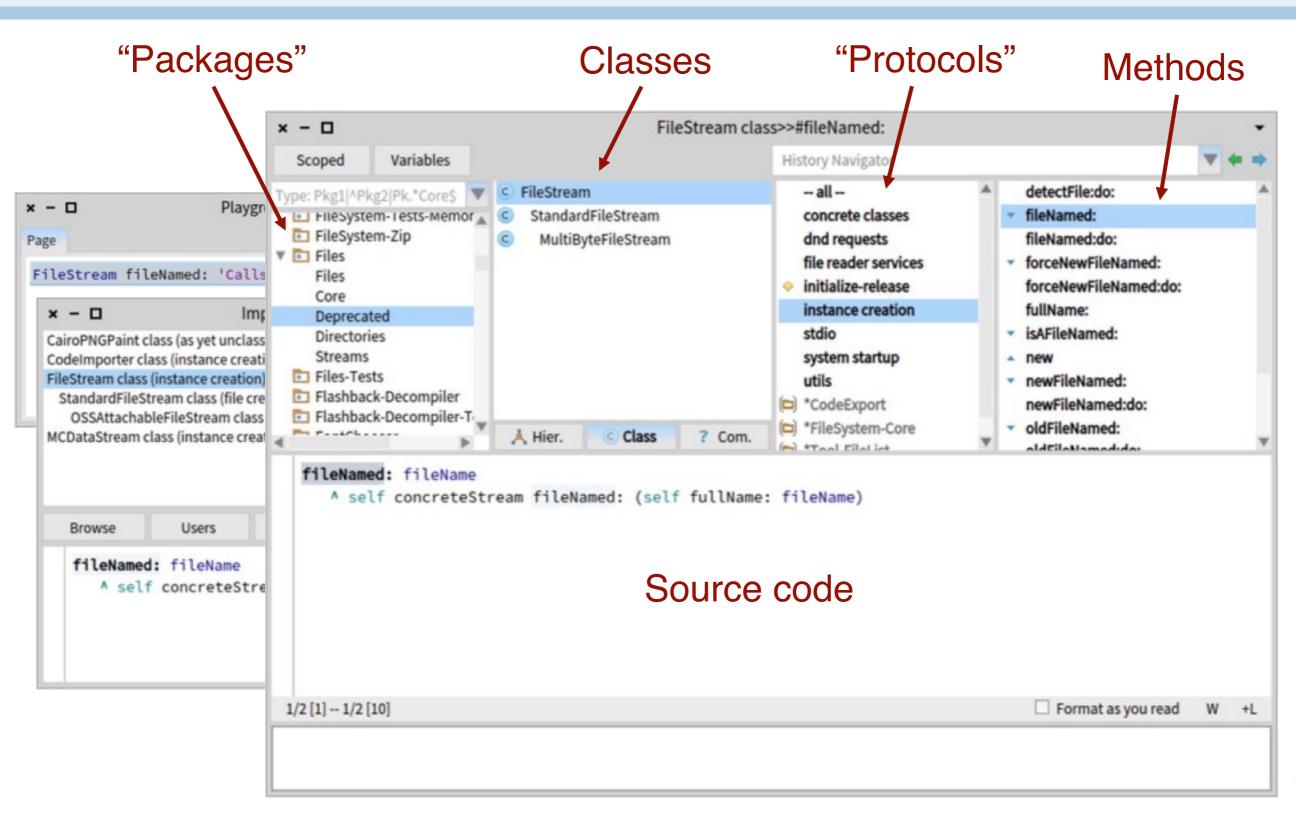
We can open a FileStream object on the Calls.txt file and extract its contents using an *Inspector*



We should encapsulate this data in a ClassGraph object



Navigating to "implementors" or "senders"



We can navigate to an existing class by selecting its name anywhere and right-clicking to "browse it".

Similarly you can select a method name and browse its implementors (tip: shortcuts exist for both operations).

Since everything is an object, you can also browse the class of an object in the inspector by evaluating:

self class browse

Let's browse implementations of #fileNamed: by selecting the name in the Playground and navigating to its implementors.

(Aside: to refer to the name of a method in Smalltalk, we use its symbol, starting with #, rather than a string.)

From the list of methods we can navigate to the *System Browser* for exploring the classes and methods of the entire system.

At the top there are four panes showing:

- Packages and subpackages (collections of classes)
- Classes (FileStream is in the "Deprecated" subpackage of the "Files" package)
- Protocols (groups of related methods)
- Methods (#fileNamed: is in the instance creation protocol)

Under the class pane you can also select a hierarchical (tree) view, you can ask to see the "class side" of a class (methods of the class rather than its instances), and you can select the class comment.

Below these panes there is a pane showing the source code of a method (or the code to define a class).

Below that there is a small pane with "code critiques".

Roadmap

- > Smalltalk Basics
- > Demo: modeling Call Graphs
 - The call graph model
 - The Pharo environment
 - Implementing the CallGraph class
 - Version control in Pharo
 - Modeling Calls, Methods and Classes
 - The Debugger is your Friend!
 - Expressing queries



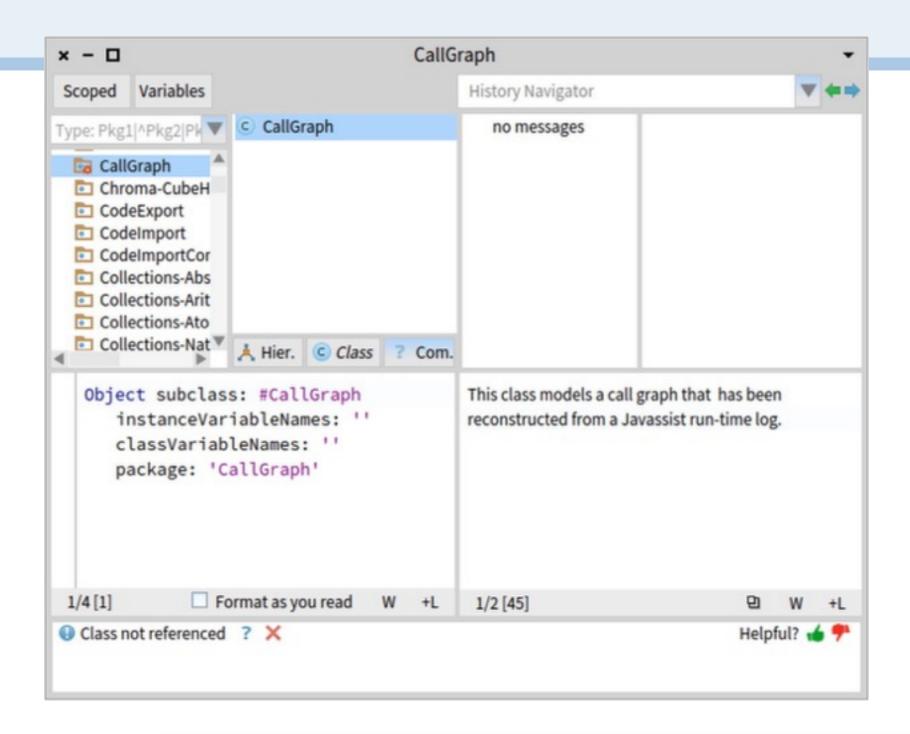
Creating a new class

```
Object subclass: #CallGraph
instanceVariableNames: ''
classVariableNames: ''
package: 'CallGraph'
```

To create a new class, send a message to its superclass in the system browser

Select an arbitrary class to see its the class creation code. Since everything happens by sending messages, it follows that this is also true for creating a class. To create (or update) a class, you simply send a message to its (already existing) superclass. Note that since the new subclass may not exist yet, you must refer to it using a symbol (i.e., #ClassGraph, not CallGraph).

Class comments

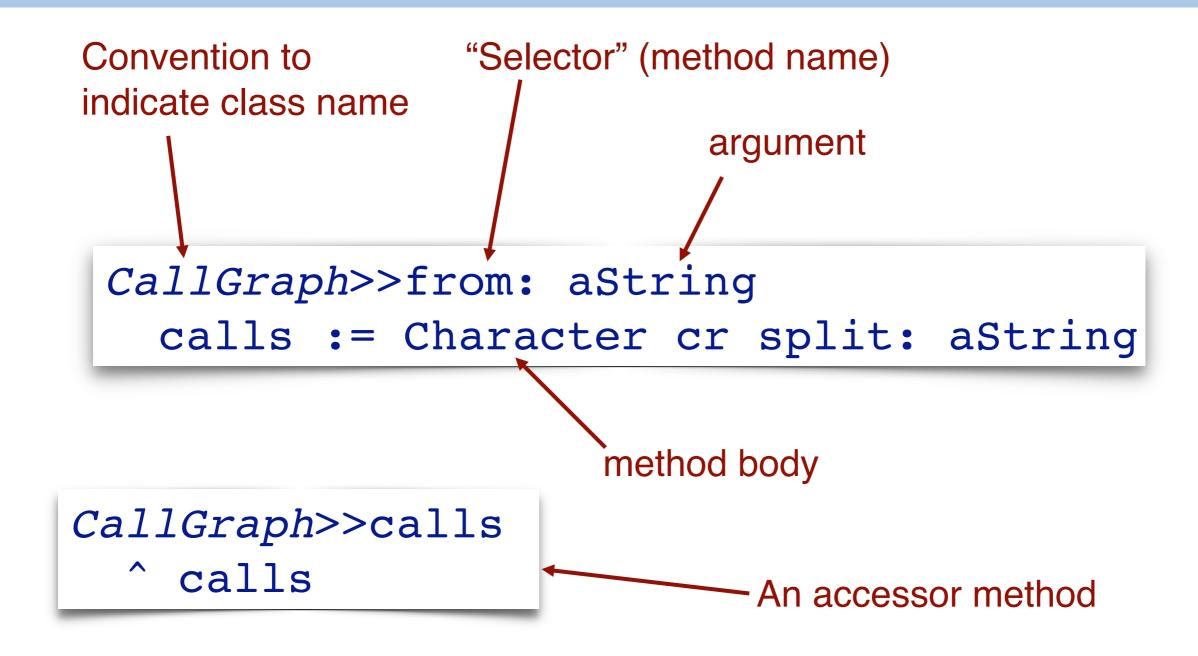


NB: Be sure to write a *class comment*!

In general the idea in Smalltalk is to write literate code that does not require additional comments. Nevertheless, it is very important to write a class comment for every class you introduce, and to keep the comment up-to-date.

The class comment is a good place to put some *code snippets* to illustrate how to use the class, or to give pointers to class-side methods to run examples.

Defining methods



NB: always put methods in a well-named "protocol"

Note that in the slides we usually prefix method names with the class name (CallGraph>>from: aString) to make it clear which class it belongs to. This is only a convention for slides, books and papers. It is not needed in the browser because there you can always see what class a method belongs to.

It is good practice to categorize your methods into common protocols, such a "initialization", and "accessors" (browse the system to see what common names are used).

Tip: The menu item "categorize all uncategorized" will often find the right protocol.

How many calls are there in the call graph?

```
| cg |
cg := CallGraph new from: (FileStream fileNamed: 'Calls.txt') contents.
cg calls size 2476
```

Let's improve the instantiation interface

Factory methods and other "static" methods are defined on the *class side*

```
(CallGraph fromFile: 'Calls.txt') calls size. 2476
```

Let's turn this into a test!

Now we must define a class-side method. #fromFile: is a message understood by the CallGraph class (as opposed it its instance). We click on the "Class" button to switch to the class-side methods.

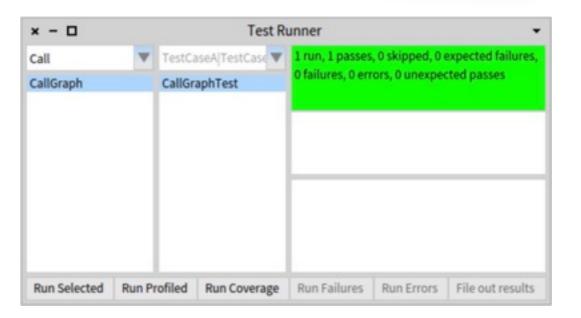
Note that the method Callgraph class>>#fromFile: must return an instance of CallGraph. Instead of evaluating CallGraph new, we evaluate self new (self is anyway this class, but we would also like the code to work for eventual subclasses!).

Creating a simple test

a 5-line excerpt from Calls.txt

```
TestCase subclass: #CallGraphTest
  instanceVariableNames: ''
  classVariableNames: ''
  package: 'CallGraph'
```

CallGraphTest>>testNumberOfCalls
 self assert: CallGraph example calls size equals: 5



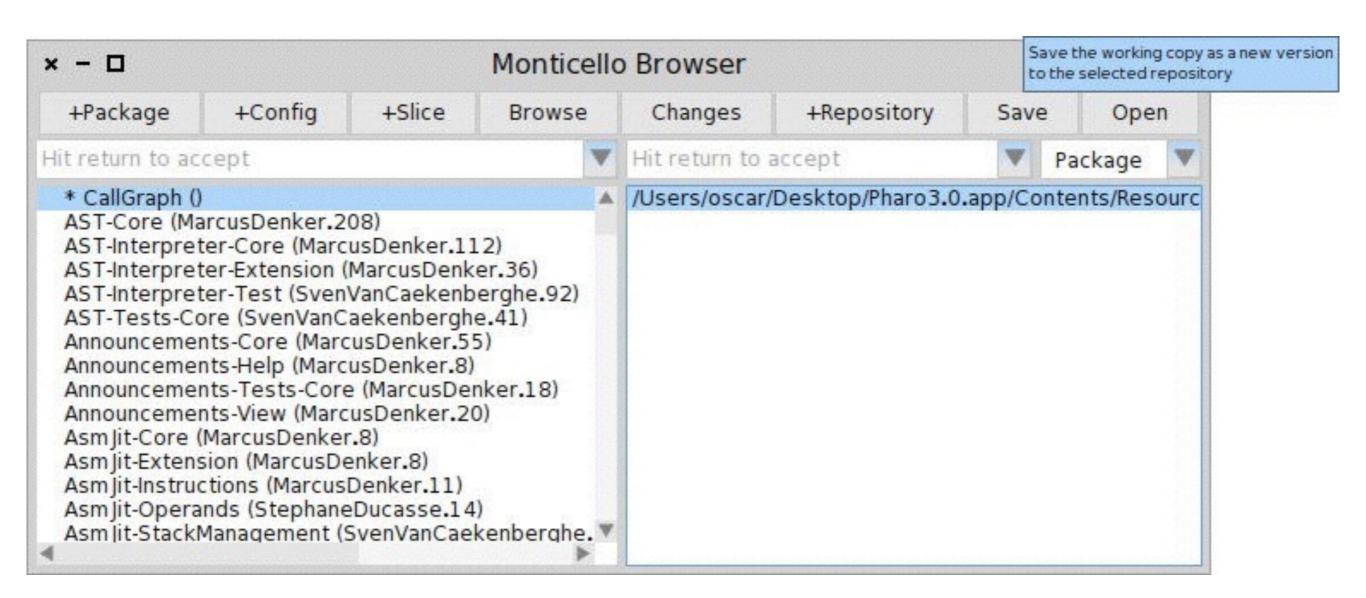
Test classes inherit from TestCase and are usually named after the class they test + "Test". You can run tests from the TestRunner tool, or directly from the System Browser (by clicking the button next to a test method or a test class).

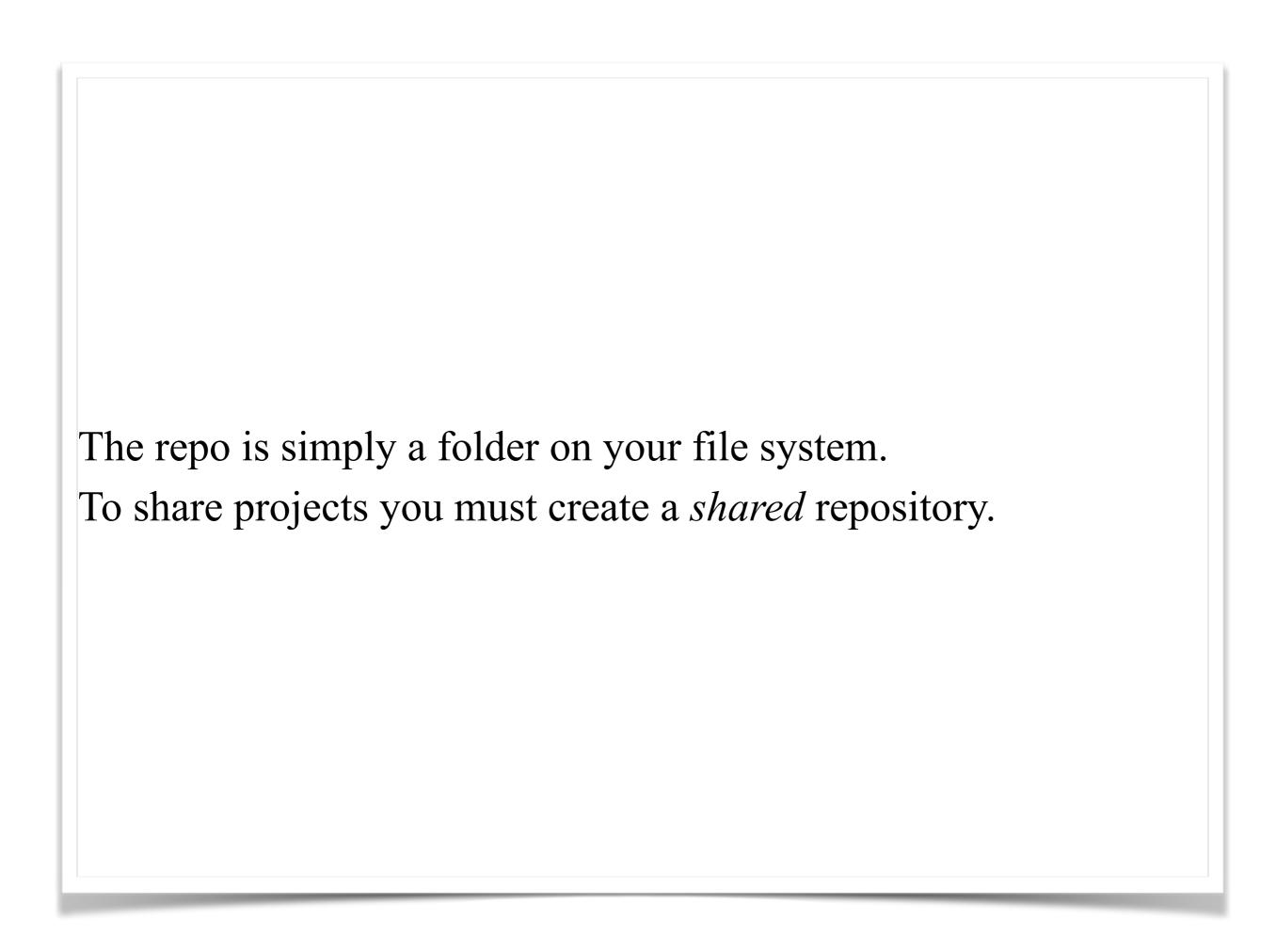
Roadmap

- > Smalltalk Basics
- > Demo: modeling Call Graphs
 - The call graph model
 - The Pharo environment
 - Implementing the CallGraph class
 - Version control in Pharo
 - Modeling Calls, Methods and Classes
 - The Debugger is your Friend!
 - Expressing queries

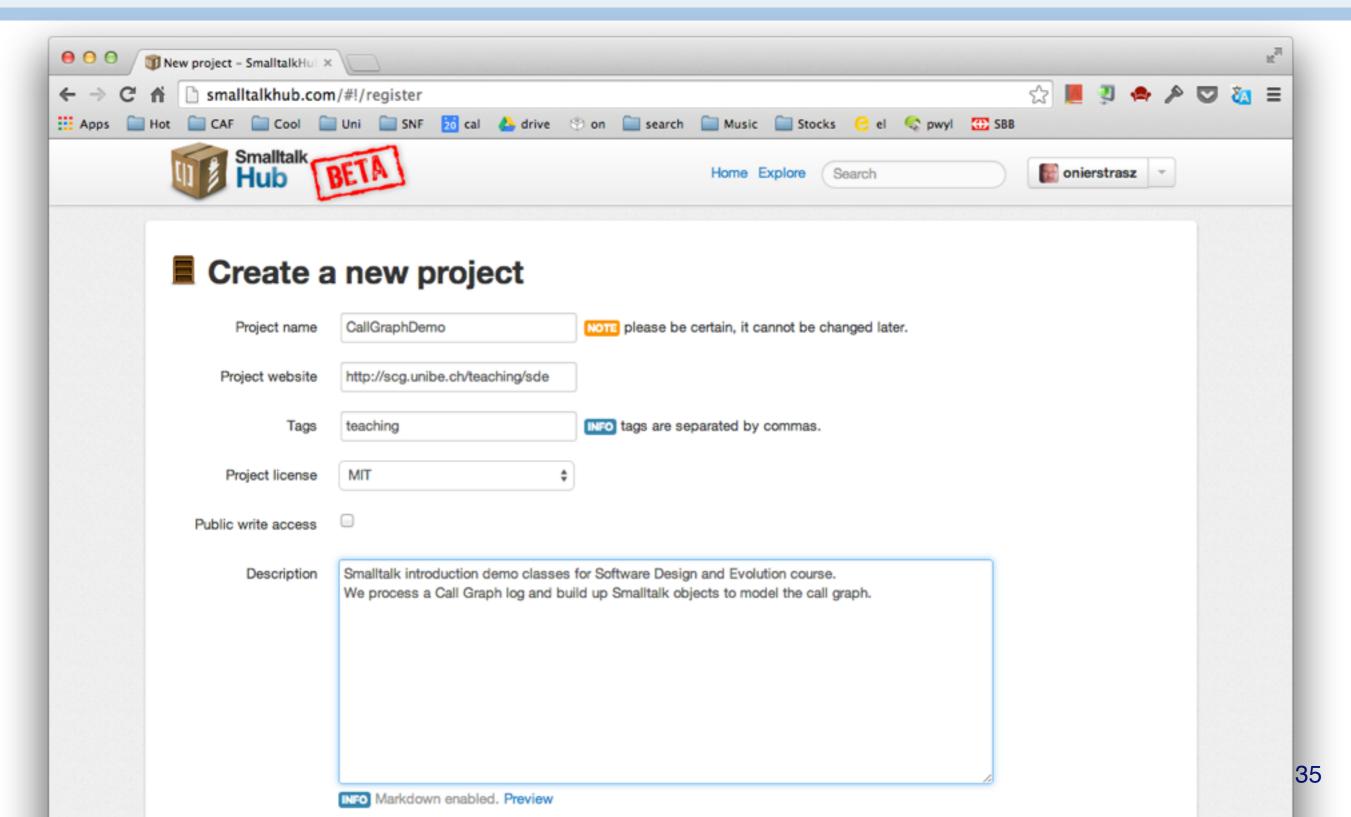


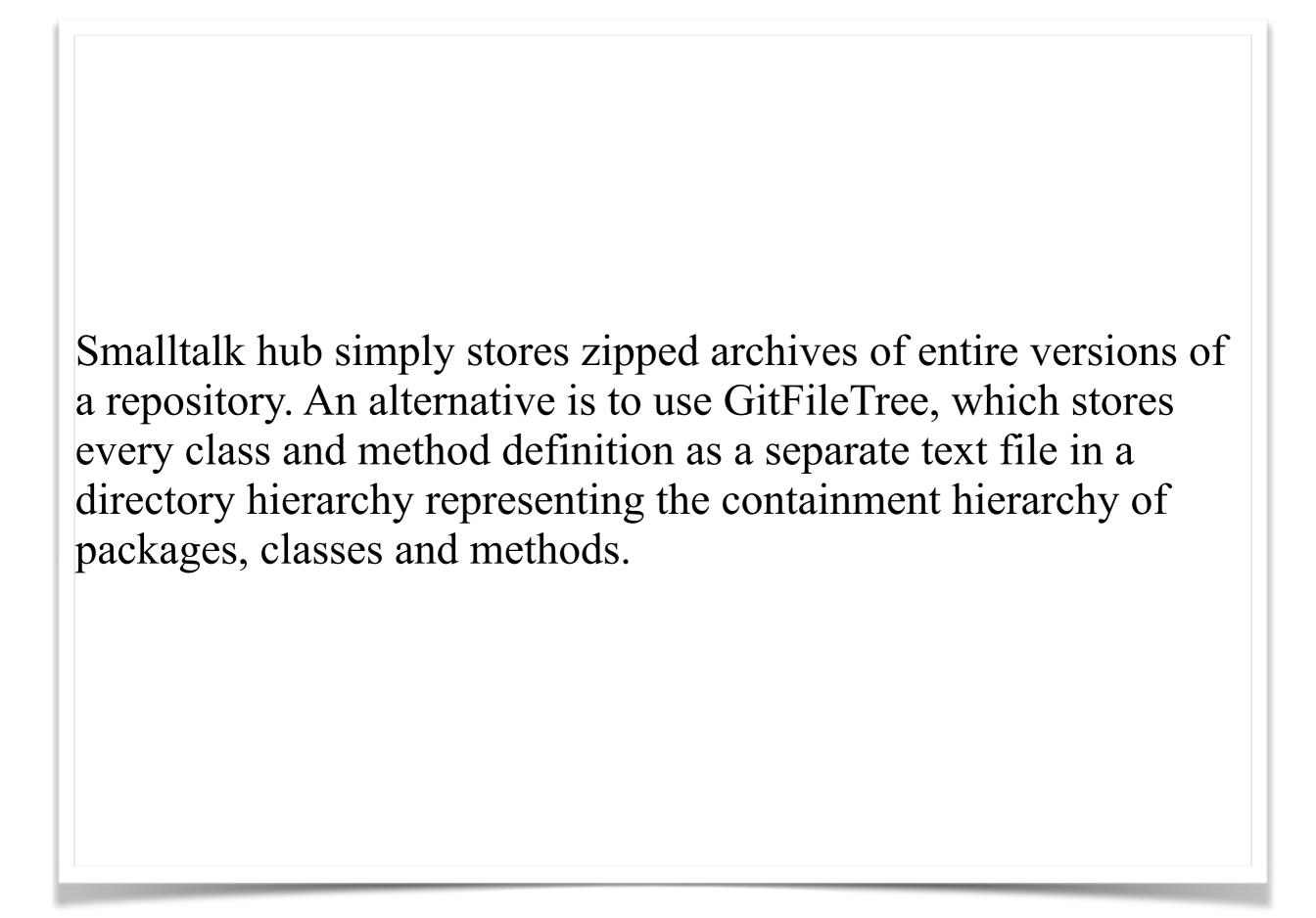
Monticello is a version control system for Smalltalk



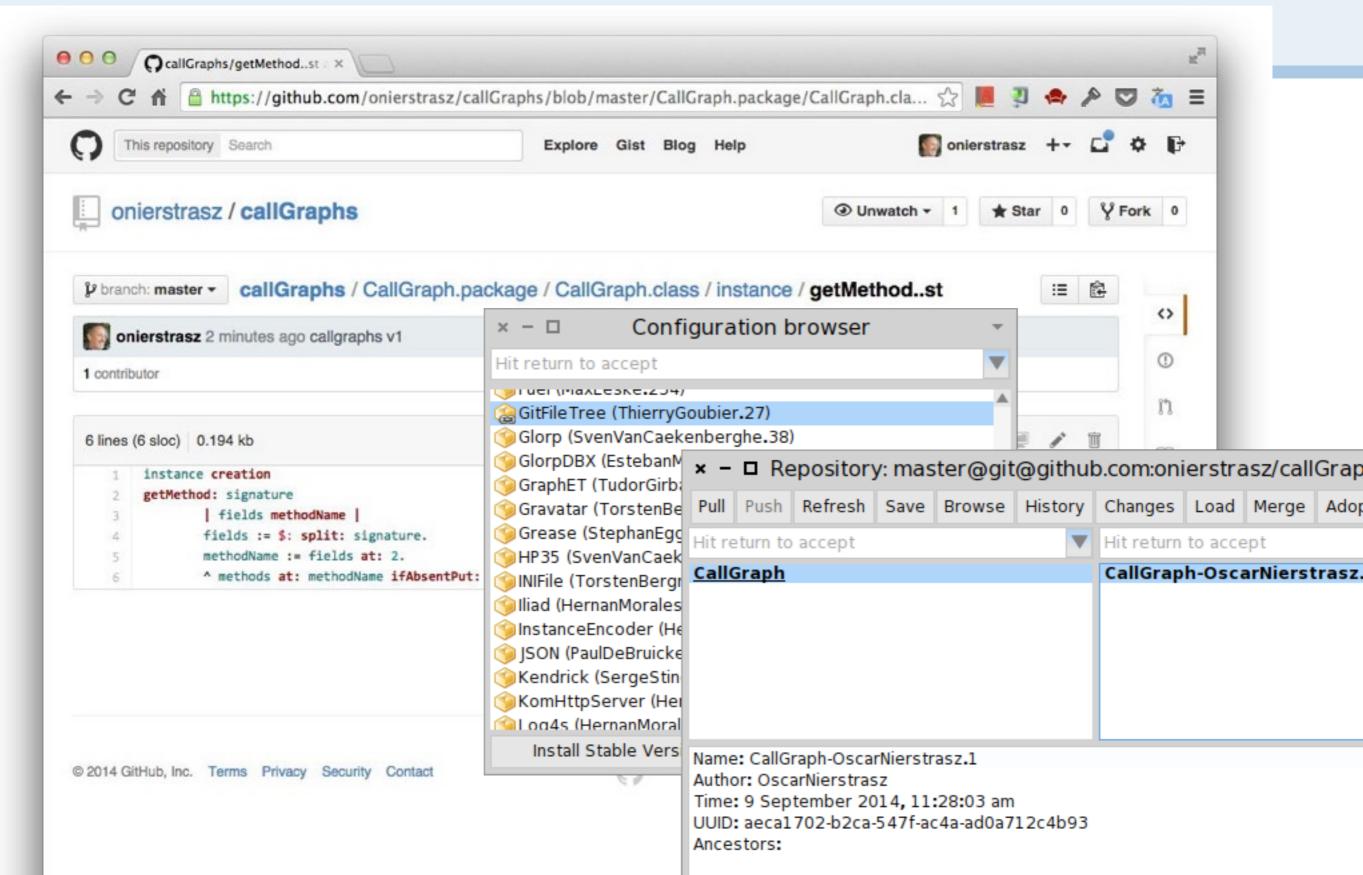


Smalltalkhub is a web site for sharing monticello projects





GitFileTree provides git integration



Q How do I use GitFileTree?

- create and initialize a git repo
- load GitFileTree (with the Configuration Browser)
- add a Remote git repo with Monticello and give it a name [name: '...']
- add your package to the repo
- save and *push*

Roadmap

- > Smalltalk Basics
- > Demo: modeling Call Graphs
 - The call graph model
 - The Pharo environment
 - Implementing the CallGraph class
 - Version control in Pharo
 - Modeling Calls, Methods and Classes
 - The Debugger is your Friend!
 - Expressing queries



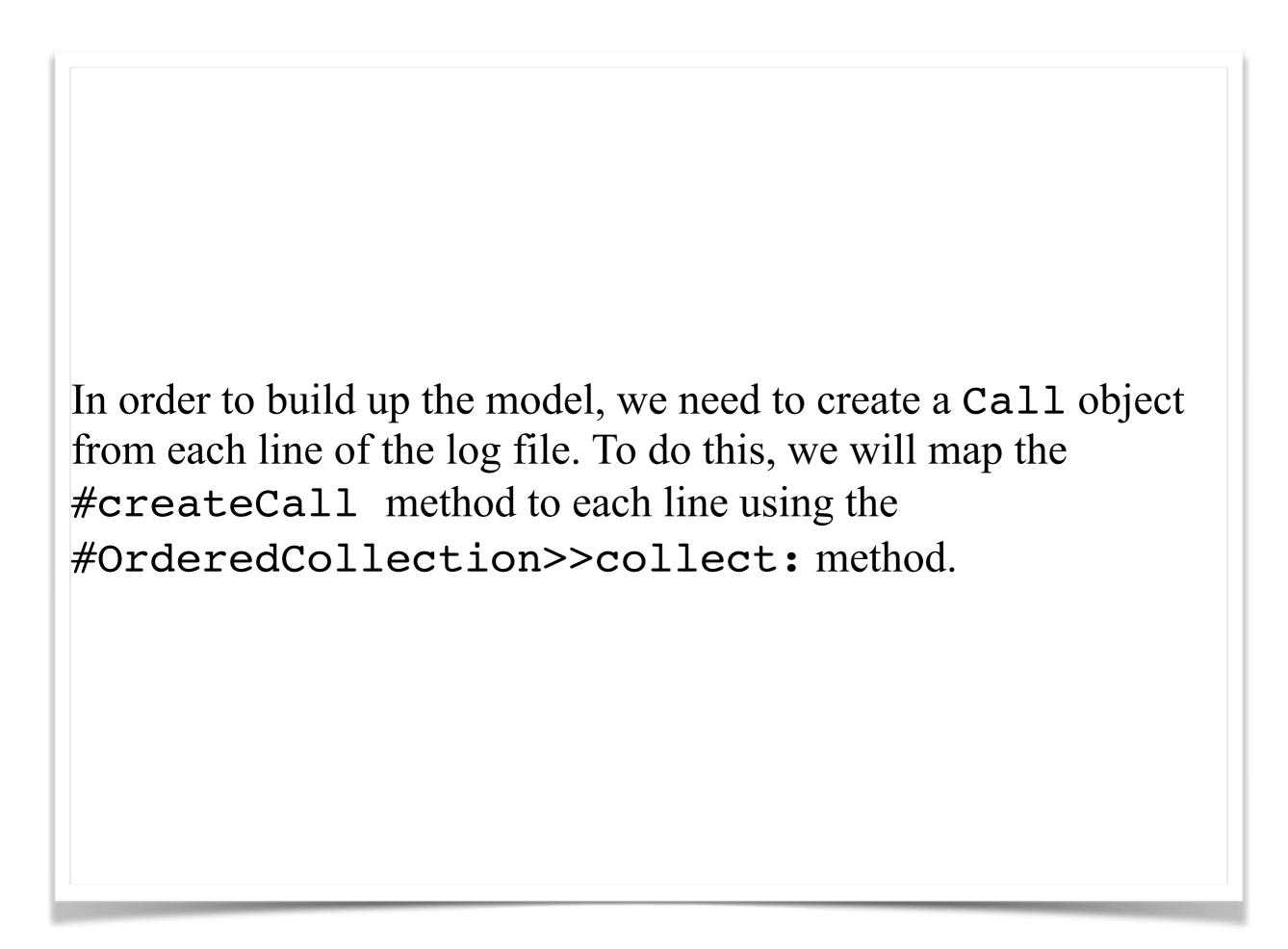
Modeling Calls, Methods and Classes

We want to build up a Call object for each line of the log

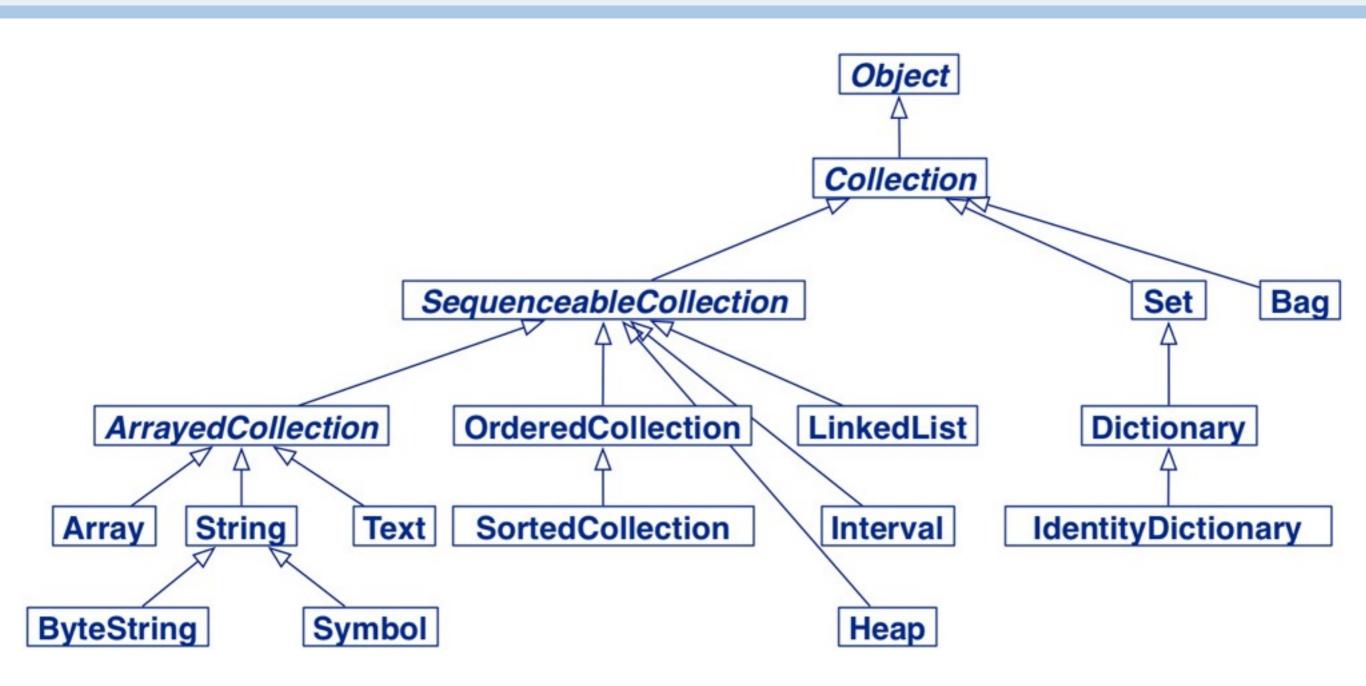
```
CallGraph>>from: aString
  calls := (Character cr split: aString)
  collect: [ :each | self createCall: each ]
```

```
'hello' collect: [ :each | each uppercase ] 'HELLO'
```

Let's look at Collections first



Collections



Resist the temptation to program your own collections!

The Smalltalk collection hierarchy offers a mature library of classes to manage various kinds of collections.

Hint: if you need to manage some kind of ordered list, you should normally use the OrderedCollection class (i.e., rather than Array or LinkedList).

The collection hierarchy is described in detail in chapter 9 of *Pharo by Example*:

http://files.pharo.org/books/pharo-by-example/

Common messages

```
#(1 2 3 4) includes: 5
#(1 2 3 4) size
#(1 2 3 4) isEmpty
#(1 2 3 4) contains: [:some | some < 0 ]
#(1 2 3 4) do:
    [:each | Transcript show: each ]
#(1 2 3 4) with: #(5 6 7 8)
    do: [:x : y | Transcript show: x+y; cr]
#(1 2 3 4) select: [:each | each odd ]
#(1 2 3 4) reject: [:each | each odd ]
#(1 2 3 4) detect: [:each | each odd ]
#(1 2 3 4) collect: [:each | each odd ]
#(1 2 3 4) inject: 0
    into: [:sum :each | sum + each]</pre>
```

```
false
4
false
false

x 	 Transcript

1234

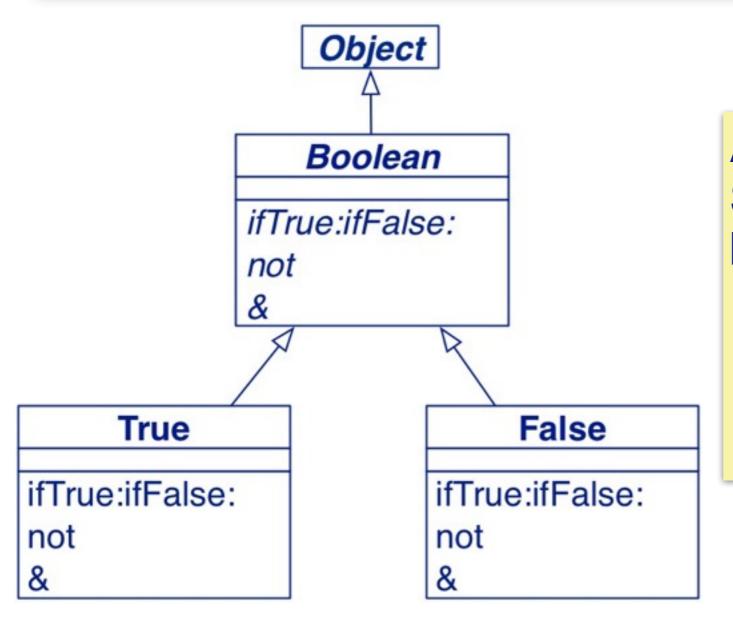
# (1 3)
# (2 4)
1
{false.true.false.true}
```

Most of these methods should be obvious:

- #select: and #reject return subcollections matching the block (or not)
- #detect: returns the first matching element or raises an error
- #collect: is more commonly knows as "map" it returns a new collection of the same size by mapping the argument block to each element https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Map_(higher-order_function)
- #inject:into: is also known as "fold" it takes an initial value and iteratuvely applies the two-argument block to that value and each element in the collection, producing, for example, a sum or a product https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Fold (higher-order function)

Conditionals

```
(11 factorial + 1) isPrime ifTrue: [ 'yes' ] ifFalse: [ 'no' ]
    'yes'
```



All control constructs in Smalltalk are implemented by message passing

- No keywords
- Open, extensible
- Built up from Booleans and Blocks

Since everything is an object in Smalltalk, it should not come as a surprise that Booleans are objects too. You might ask, "Well, how do you implement Booleans if you don't have them as primitives?"

Actually the implementation closely follows the standard encoding in the lambda calculus. A Boolean is simply an object that can make a choice between two alternatives: true and false just make opposite choices.

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Church_encoding

The objects true and false are (unique) instances of the classes True and False. Each implements methods like #ifTrue:ifFalse: in its own way.

Have a look at the implementation of these methods in the system.

Creating Calls, Methods and Classes

```
CallGraph>>createCall: callString
                                      temporary (local) variables
    fields callee | -
  fields := $ | split: callString.
                                                  assertions (not tests)
  self assert: fields size = 5. -
  self assert: (fields at: 1) size = 0.
  callee := self getMethod: (fields at: 2).
  ^ Call new callee: callee
                                                           a comment
  "TODO -- handle the remaining fields!"
 CallGraph>>initialize
                                             cache the methods!
   super initialize.
   methods := Dictionary new
     CallGraph>>getMethod: signature
         fields methodName
       fields := $: split: signature.
       methodName := fields at: 2.
       ^ methods at: signature
         ifAbsentPut: [ JMethod new name: methodName ]
            CallGraph>>methods
               methods
```

To create the call graph, we must split each line of the log into its individual fields by the \$ | character.

Each Call object stores a reference to its callee, a JMethod object representing the called Java method. Since each method may be called multiple times, but we only want to have a unique JMethod instance representing that method, we cache these objects in a dictionary indexed by the method signature (field 2 of the log).

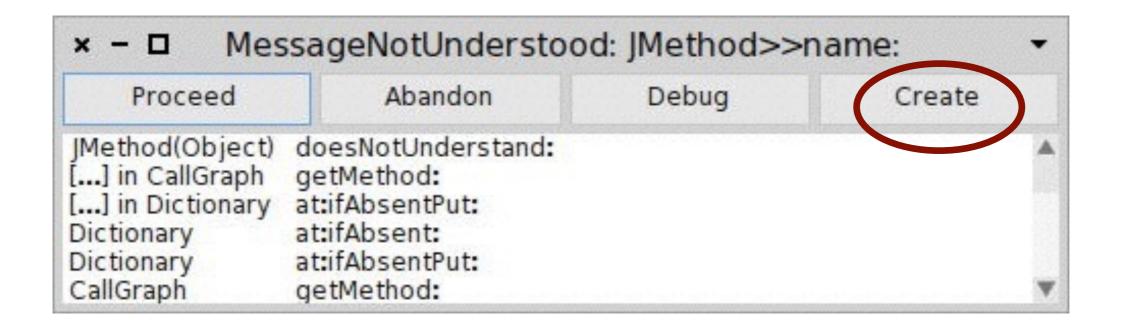
Roadmap

- > Smalltalk Basics
- > Demo: modeling Call Graphs
 - The call graph model
 - The Pharo environment
 - Implementing the CallGraph class
 - Version control in Pharo
 - Modeling Calls, Methods and Classes
 - The Debugger is your Friend!
 - Expressing queries



The debugger is your friend!

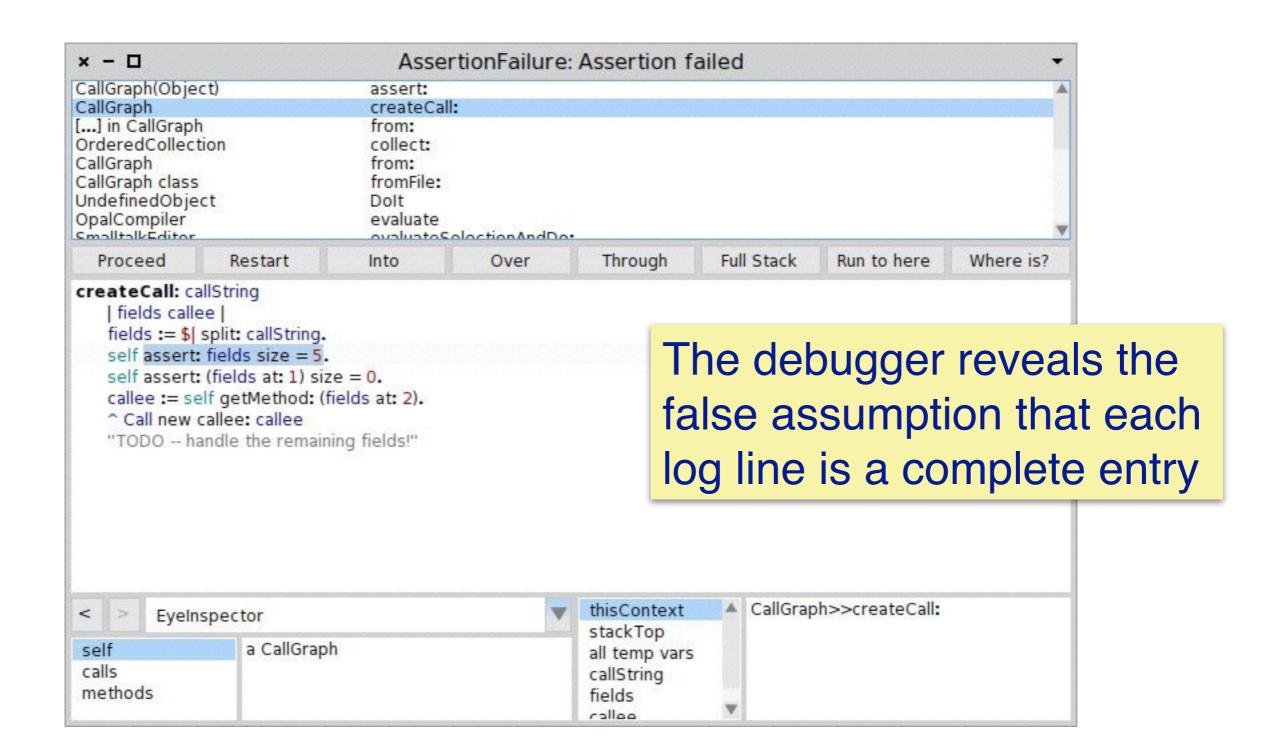
(CallGraph fromFile: 'Calls.txt') methods size.



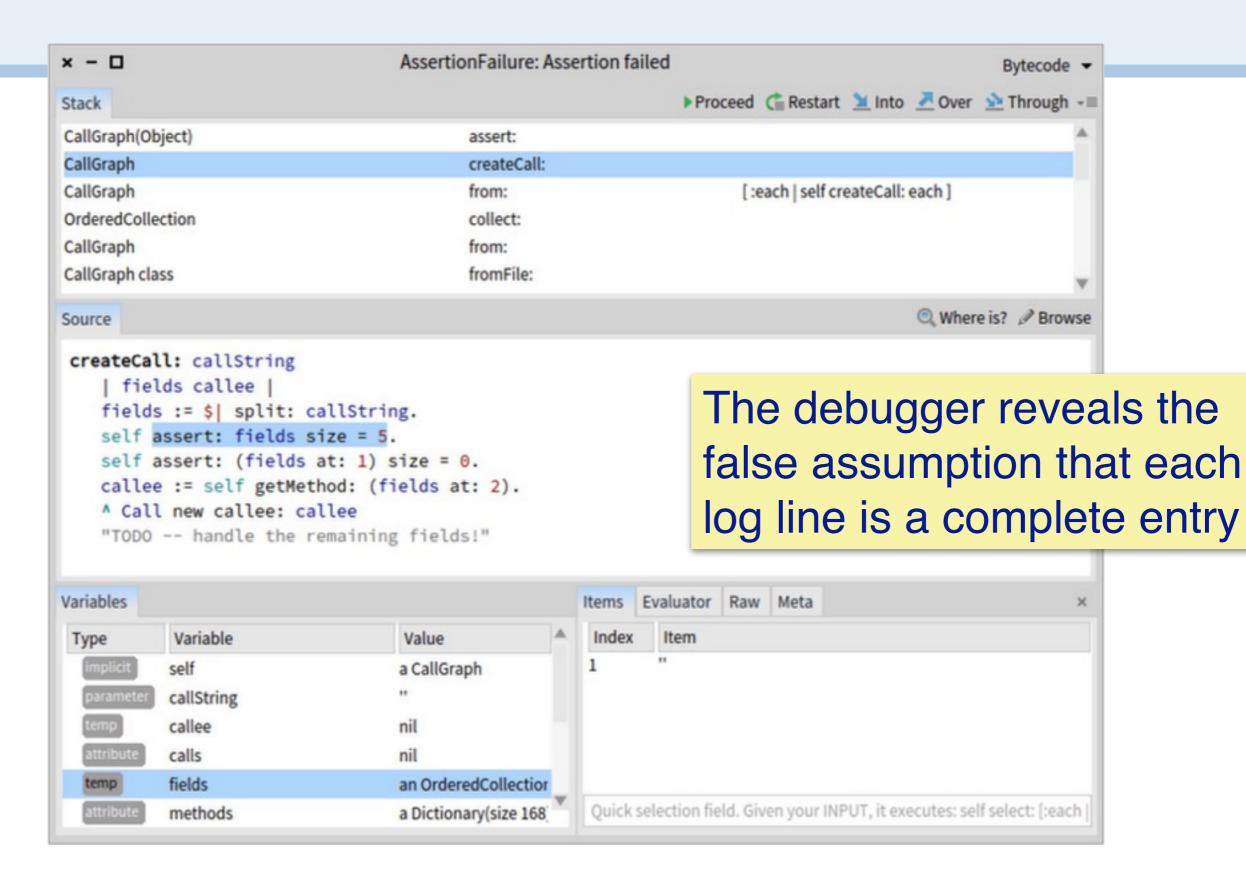
When we evaluate this snippet, it turns out that we have forgotten to implement some methods. (In this case #JMethod>>name:) The Debugger window pops up and offers us the possibility to create the missing method.

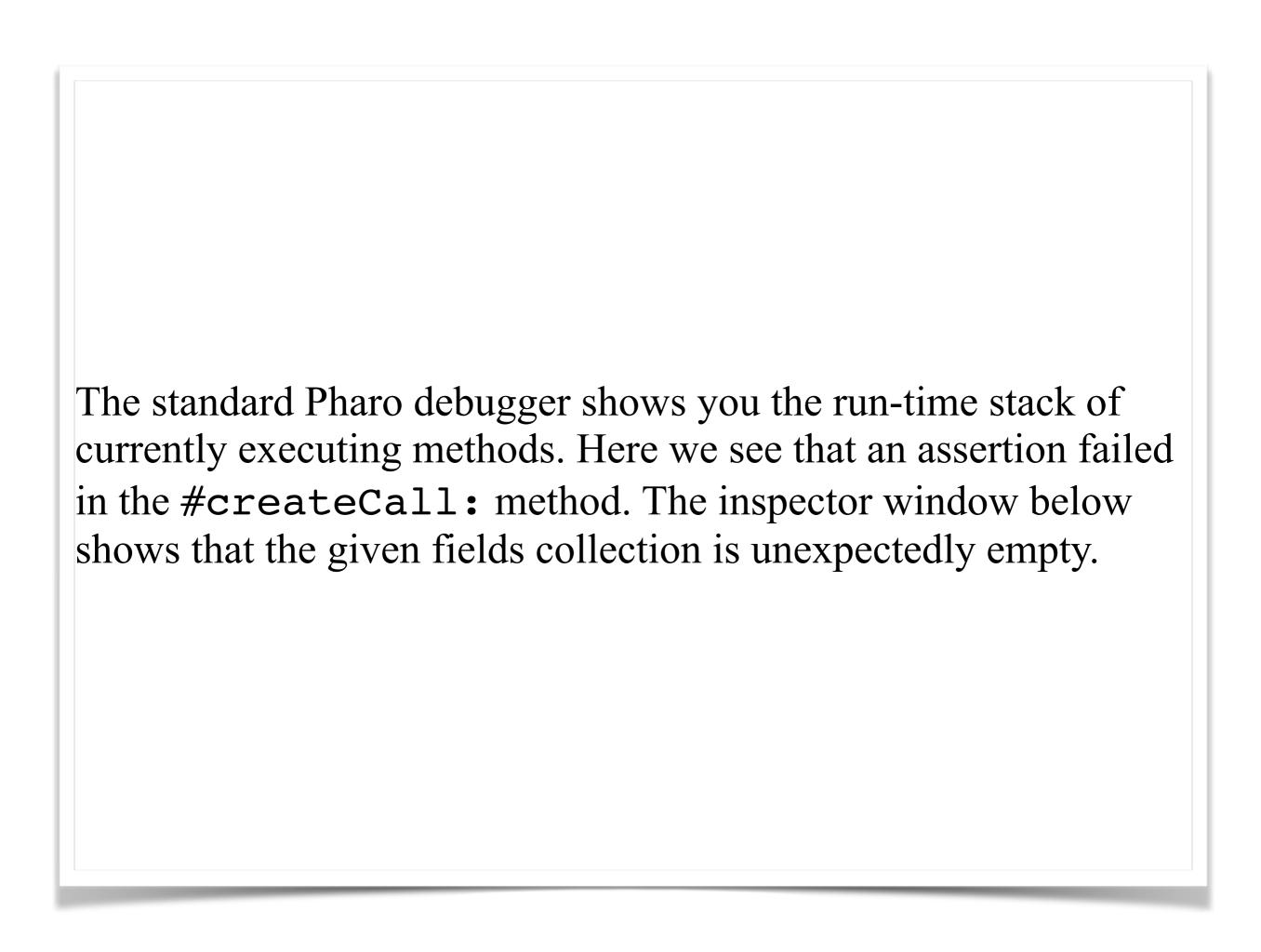
Aside: this offers you an effective way to follow TDD (test-driven development) in Pharo — implement some tests, then run them, and use the Debugger to prompt you to implement the missing classes and methods.

Using the debugger



Using the debugger





Roadmap

- > Smalltalk Basics
- > Demo: modeling Call Graphs
 - The call graph model
 - The Pharo environment
 - Implementing the CallGraph class
 - Version control in Pharo
 - Modeling Calls, Methods and Classes
 - The Debugger is your Friend!
 - Expressing queries



Duck Typing in Smalltalk

Behaves like:

since symbols also understand value:

"Duck typing" refers to one object masquerading as another by implementing its interface. ("If it quacks like a duck, it must be a duck".)

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Duck_test

Here we are using a symbol (#notEmpty) where we would normally expect a one-argument block. This works simply because the Symbol class implements the #value: method used to evaluate a block.

Duck typing is unique to dynamically-typed languages like Smalltalk and Ruby. In a statically-typed language like Java you would achieve the same effect by defining an *interface* for objects that can be evaluated with an argument (e.g.,

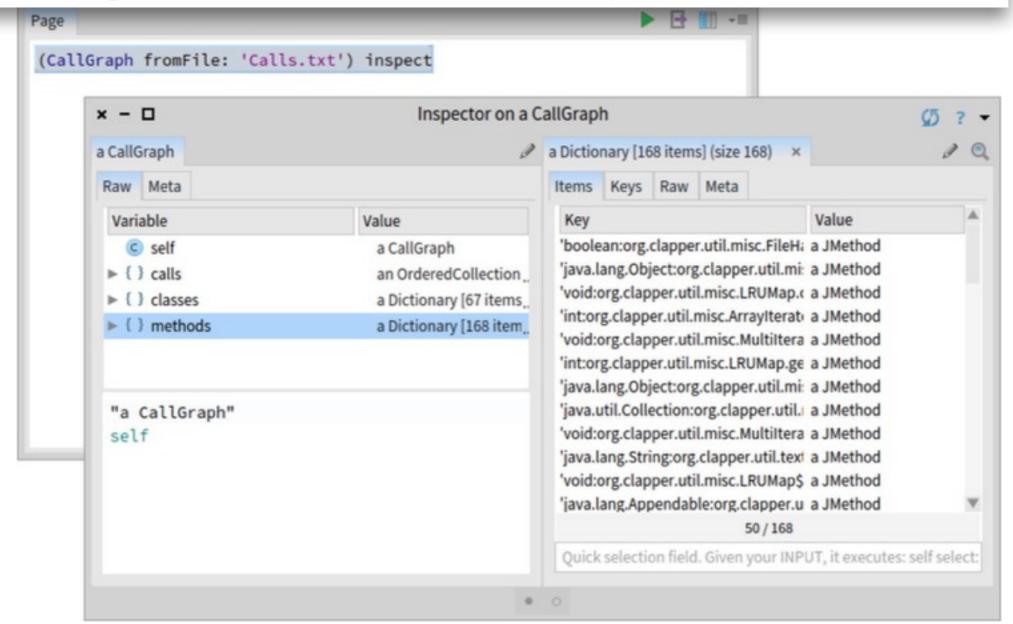
IOneArgumentBlock) and ensuring that the relevant classes (Block, Symbol) implement that interface.

Number of methods

CallGraphTest>>testNumberOfMethods

self assert: CallGraph example methods size equals: 5

(CallGraph fromFile: 'Calls.txt') methods size. 168



To do ...

- > Model classes (introduce JClass class)
- > Model argument and return types of methods
- > Track which methods are static
- > Determine which methods are polymorphic

To continue from here we introduce a class JClass to represent all the Java classes we encounter as owners of methods, or as argument and return types. ('STATIC_METHOD' is a dummy class to represent static methods.)

We extend CallGraph>>#createCall: and #CallGraph>>#getMethod: to track classes as well as methods. CallGraph>>#getClass: caches the JClass instances with a dictionary, just as we did with #getMethod.

We can recognize static methods by checking if their owner is static. A *polymorphic* method is one that takes arguments of different types, so we look at the set of arguments from the calls and check if that set is greater than 1.

Queries

```
(CallGraph fromFile: 'Calls.txt') methods size. 168
   (CallGraph fromFile: 'Calls.txt') classes size. 209
((CallGraph fromFile: 'Calls.txt') methods
      select: [ :m | m calls size > 1 ]) size. 141
    ((CallGraph fromFile: 'Calls.txt') methods
          select: #isPolymorphic) size. 10
```

What you should know!

- > What's the difference between a *method*, a *selector* and a *message*?
- > What are *categories* and *protocols*? What are they for?
- > How do you create a new class in Smalltalk?
- > What's the difference between CallGraph and CallGraph class?
- > What are "class side" methods for?
- > How is a block like a lambda?
- > What's the difference between a string and a symbol?

Can you answer these questions?

- > Can a class access the fields of one of its instances?
- > Can you name something that is not an object in Smalltalk?
- > What happens to existing instances of a class if you add new fields at run time?
- > What will happen if you change the implementation of core classes (like Booleans or Strings)?
- > What's the difference between self and super?



Attribution-ShareAlike 4.0 International (CC BY-SA 4.0)

You are free to:

Share — copy and redistribute the material in any medium or format

Adapt — remix, transform, and build upon the material for any purpose, even commercially.

The licensor cannot revoke these freedoms as long as you follow the license terms.

Under the following terms:



Attribution — You must give appropriate credit, provide a link to the license, and indicate if changes were made. You may do so in any reasonable manner, but not in any way that suggests the licensor endorses you or your use.



ShareAlike — If you remix, transform, or build upon the material, you must distribute your contributions under the same license as the original.

No additional restrictions — You may not apply legal terms or technological measures that legally restrict others from doing anything the license permits.

http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-sa/4.0/