



Quickly Testing Legacy Code

Clare Macrae (She/Her)
CPPP Conference, Paris: 15 June 2019



@ClareMacraeUK



Contents

- **Introduction**
- Legacy Code
- Golden Master
- Approval Tests
- Example
- Resources
- Summary





Llewellyn Falco

@LlewellynFalco

As part of expanding my c++ I was thinking of improving [#ApprovalTests](#) and making it work with GoogleTest. Anyone interested in pairing on that?

12:52 PM - 26 Nov 2017



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12:52 PM - 26 Nov 2017



Clare Macrae

@ClareMacraeUK

Replying to [@LlewellynFalco](#)

Would be interested in hearing more.

2:46 PM - 26 Nov 2017

18 months of remote pairing later...

Goal:
**Share techniques for easier testing
in challenging scenarios**

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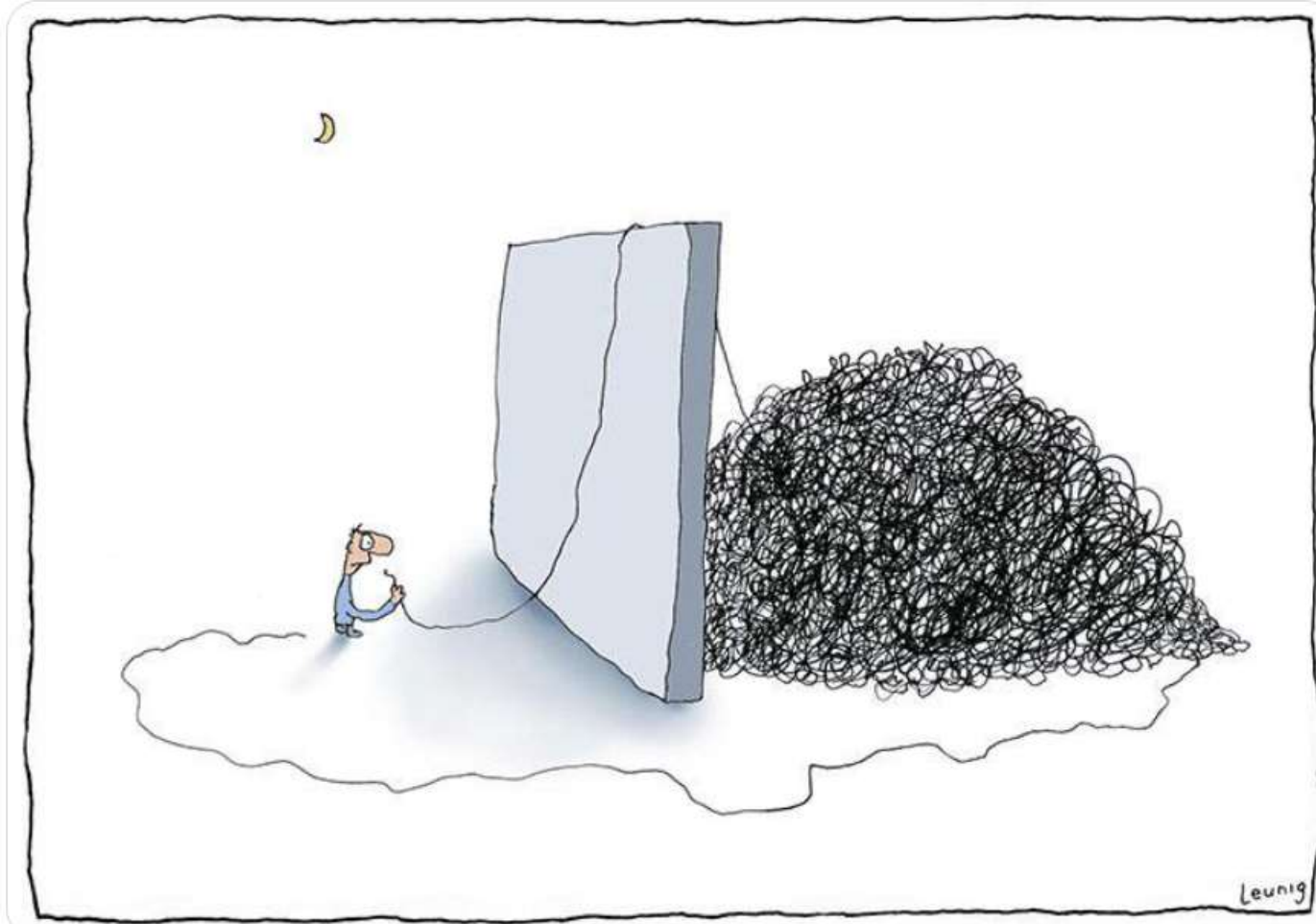


Quickly Testing **Legacy Code**

kenbot
@KenScambler



Legacy. Looks easy; should be done in half an hour I reckon.



What does Legacy Code really mean?

- **Michael Feathers**

- “code **without unit tests**”

- **J.B. Rainsberger**

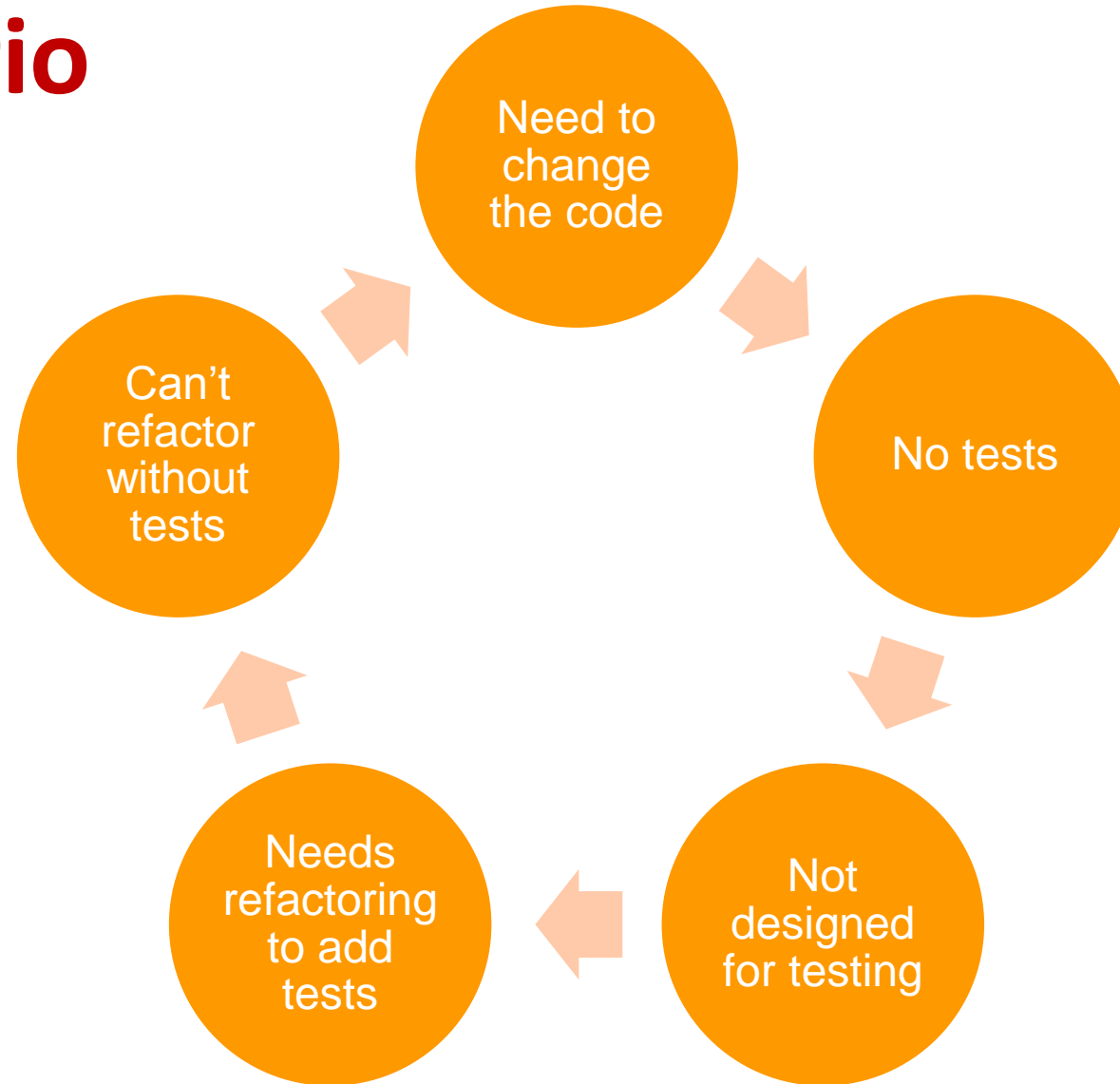
- “**profitable code** that we feel afraid to change.”

- **Kate Gregory**

- “any code that you **want to change, but are afraid to**”

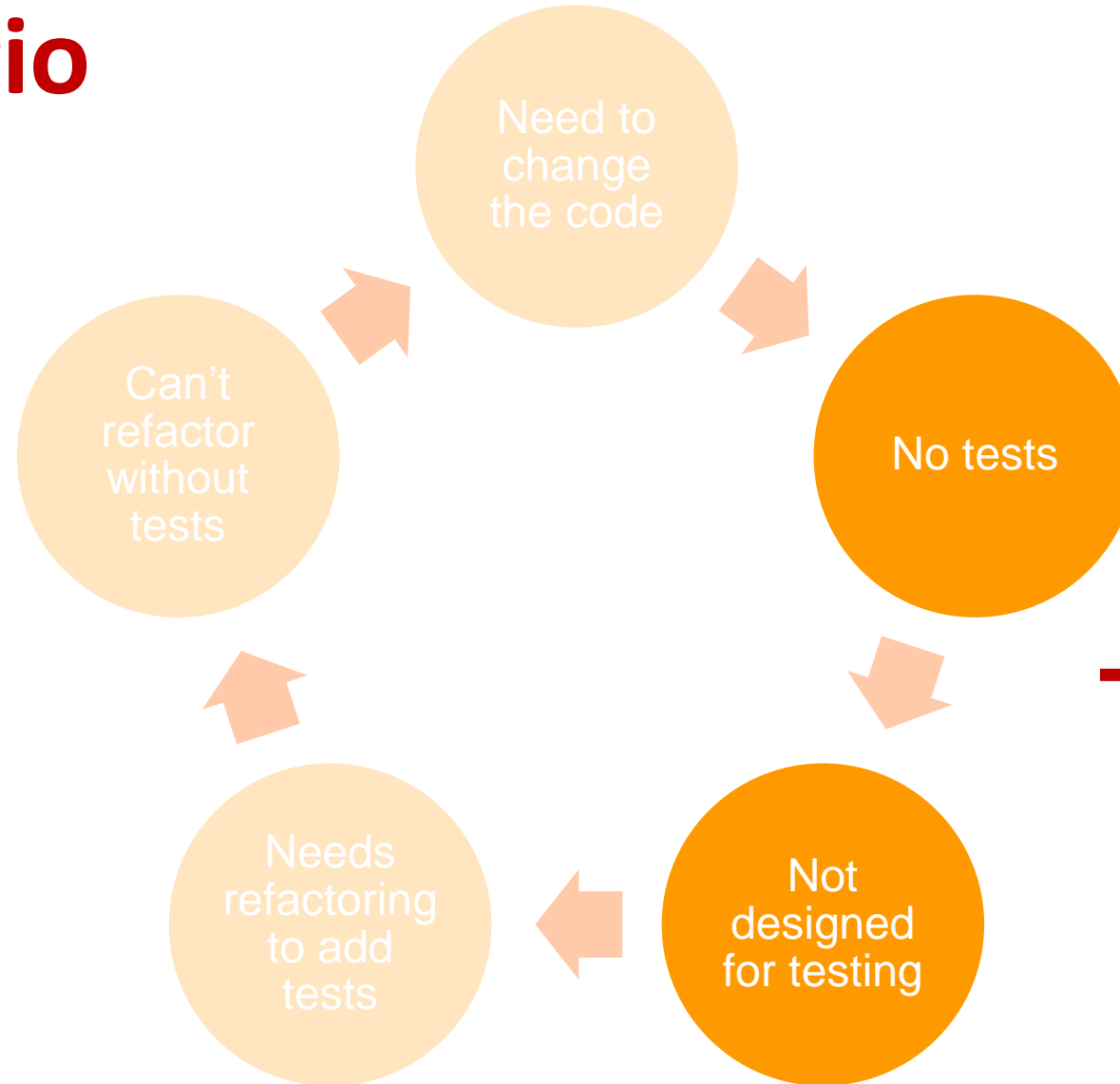
Typical Scenario

- I've inherited some legacy code
- It's valuable
- I need to add feature
- Or fix bug
- How can I ever break out of this loop?



Typical Scenario

- I've inherited some legacy code
- It's valuable
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- Or fix bug
- How can I ever break out of this loop?



**Topics of
this talk**

Assumptions

- Value of automated testing
- No worries about types of tests
 - (unit, integration, regression)

Any existing tests?

What, no tests?

- If absolutely no tests...
- Stop now!
- Set one up!
- Existing framework

Popular Test Frameworks

Google Test



- Google's C++ test framework
- <https://github.com/google/googletest>

Catch



- Phil Nash's test framework
- <https://github.com/catchorg/Catch2>

Modern C++ Programming with Test-Driven Development

Code Better,
Sleep Better



Jeff Langr

Foreword by Robert C. Martin
(Uncle Bob)

Edited by Michael Swaine

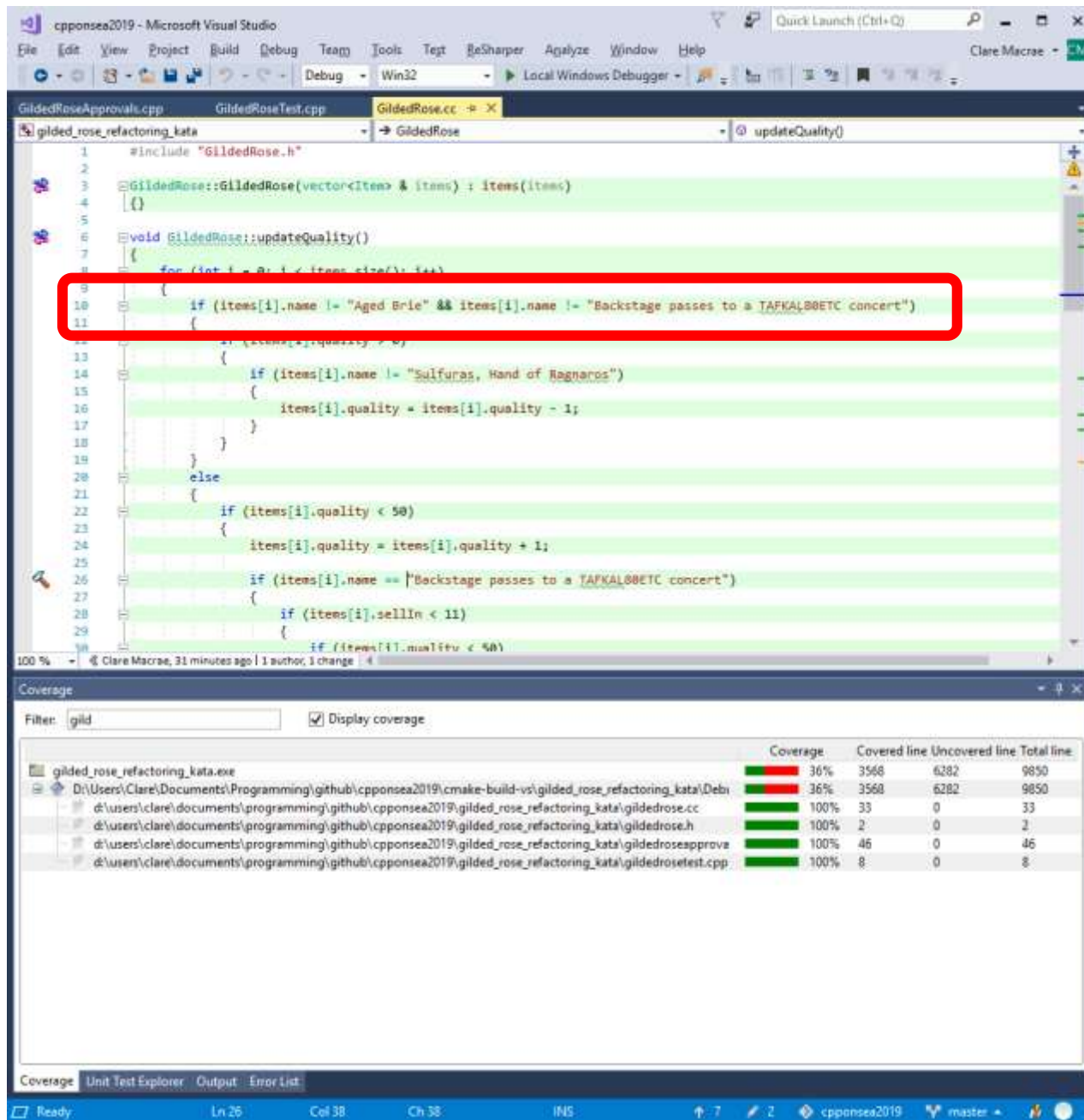
How good are your existing tests?

First evaluate your tests

- If you do have tests....
- **Test the tests!**
- In area you are changing
- Reliable?

Code Coverage

- Caution!
- Unexecuted code
- **Techniques**
- Debugger
- Code coverage tool
 - What to measure?



100% Test Coverage

Or is it?

OpenCppCoverage does not show branch/condition coverage.

test.cov - BullseyeCoverage Browser

File Edit View Go Region Tools Help

d:/builds/github/cpponse2019/gilded_rose_refactoring_kata/GildedRose.cc

```

1 #include "GildedRose.h"
2
3 GildedRose::GildedRose(vector<Item> & items) : items(items)
4 {}
5
6 void GildedRose::updateQuality()
7 {
8     for (int i = 0; i < items.size(); i++)
9     {
10a         if (
10b             items[i].name != "Aged Brie" &&
10c             items[i].name != "Backstage passes to a TAFKAL80ETC cc
11         {
12             if (items[i].quality > 0)
13             {
14                 if (items[i].name != "Sulfuras, Hand of Ragnaros")
15                 {
16                     items[i].quality = items[i].quality - 1;
17                 }
18             }
19         }
20     else
21     {
22         if (items[i].quality < 50)
23         {
24             items[i].quality = items[i].quality + 1;
25         }
26         if (items[i].name == "Backstage passes to a TAFKAL80ETC concert")
27         {
28             if (items[i].sellIn < 11)
29             {
30                 if (items[i].quality < 50)
31                 {

```

updateQuality() | Function coverage 100% | Uncovered functions 0 | Condition/decision coverage 73% | Uncovered conditions/decisions 10

Coverage build enabled

BullseyeCoverage:

Unrolls If conditions
(line 10)

73% of conditions
covered

Mutation testing: Sabotage the code!

- Test the tests
- Small changes
- Re-run tests
- Fail: 😊
- Pass: ☹️

Mutation testing approaches

- By hand,
 - e.g. + to -
- By tool
 - e.g. Mutate++
 - https://github.com/nlohmann/mutate_cpp
 - e.g. Mull – see CppCast episode 198, Alex Denisov
 - <https://cppcast.com/2019/05/alex-denisov/>
 - <https://github.com/mull-project/mull>
 - Awesome Mutation Testing:
 - <https://github.com/theofidry/awesome-mutation-testing>

If tests need improving...
And unit tests not viable...

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Quickly **Testing** Legacy Code

Key Phrase :
“Locking Down Current Behaviour”

Writing Unit Tests for Legacy Code

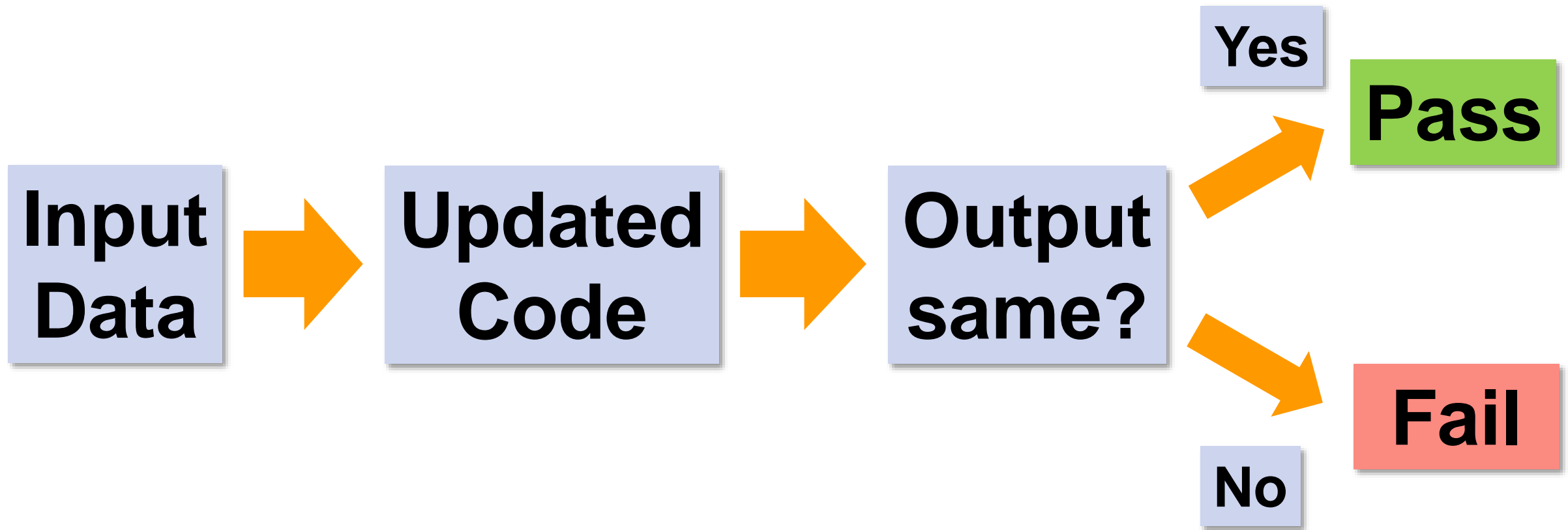
- Time-consuming
- What's intended behaviour?
- Is there another way?

Alternative: Golden Master Testing

Golden Master Test Setup



Golden Master Tests In Use



Thoughts on Golden Master Tests

- Good to start testing legacy systems
- Poor Person's Integration Tests
- Depends on ease of
 - Capturing output
 - Getting stable output
 - Reviewing any differences
 - Avoiding overwriting Golden Master by mistake!
- Doesn't matter that it's not a Unit Test

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Quickly Testing Legacy Code

One approach: “ApprovalTests”

- Llewellyn Falco’s convenient, powerful, flexible Golden Master implementation
- Supports many language

GO

Java

Lua

.NET

.Net.ASP

NodeJS

Objective-C

PHP

Perl

Python

Swift

And now C++!

ApprovalTests.cpp

- New C++ library for applying Llewellyn Falco's "Approval Tests" approach
- For testing cross-platform C++ code (Windows, Linux, Mac)
- For legacy and green-field systems
- It's on github

ApprovalTests.cpp

- Header-only
- Open source - Apache 2.0 licence

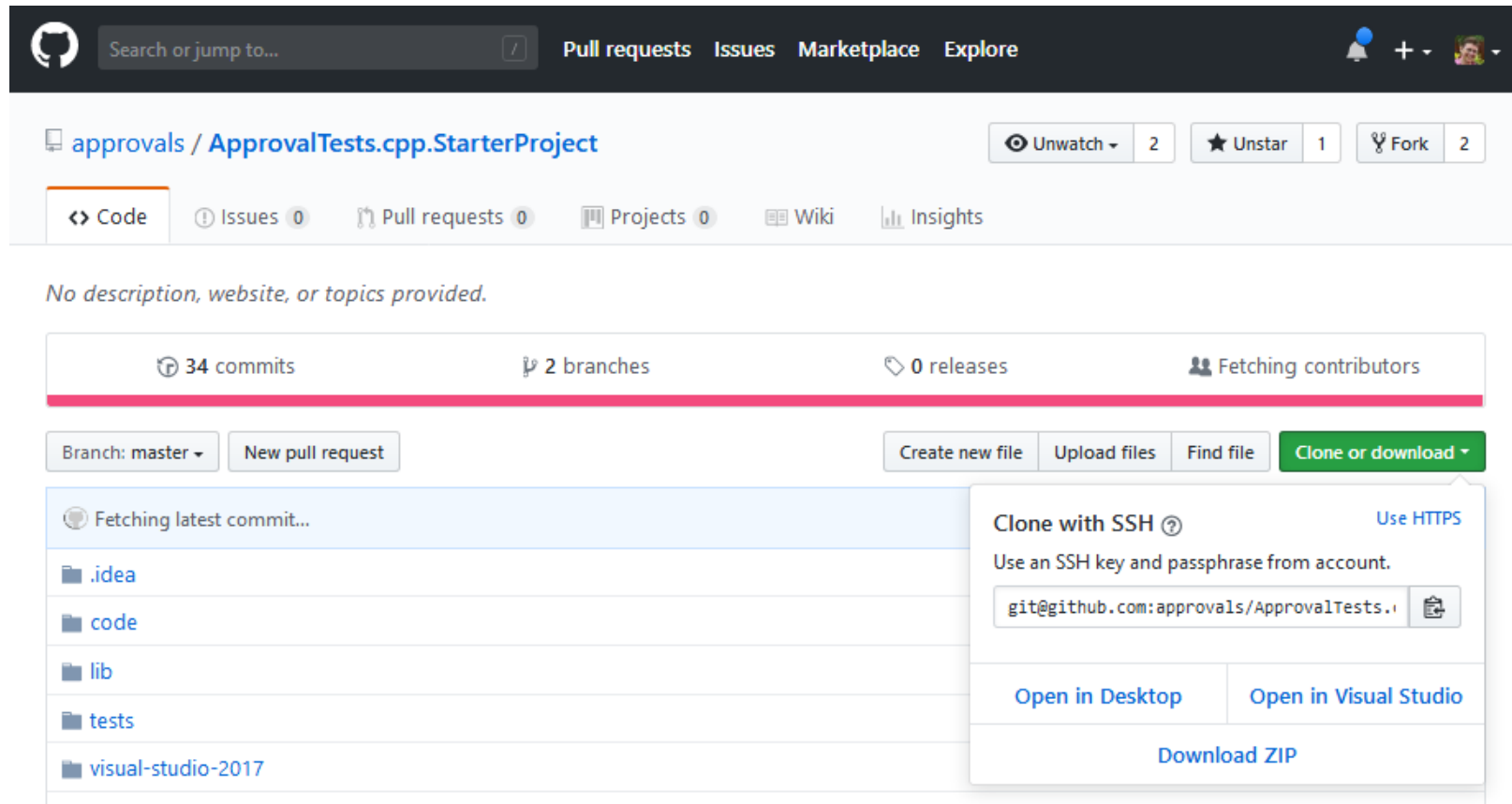
ApprovalTests.cpp

- Works with a range of testing frameworks
- Currently supports Catch1, Catch2, Google Test and Okra

Getting Started with Approvals in C++

StarterProject with Catch2

- <https://github.com/approvals/ApprovalTests.cpp.StarterProject>
- Download ZIP



Download it Yourself...

GitHub - approvals/ApprovalTest: x +

← → ↻ 🔒 GitHub, Inc. [US] <https://github.com/approvals/ApprovalTests.cpp> ☆ ☁ 🌐 👤 ⋮

Why GitHub? ▾ Enterprise Explore ▾ Marketplace Pricing ▾ Search / Sign in Sign up

📄 approvals / **ApprovalTests.cpp** Watch 12 Star 34 Fork 2

Code Issues 3 Pull requests 0 Security Insights

Native ApprovalTests for C++ on Linux, Mac and Windows

c-plus-plus cpp11 testing header-only single-file approval-test approval-testing regression-testing golden-master snapshot-testing

🕒 546 commits 🌿 3 branches **📦 13 releases** 👤 4 contributors 📄 Apache-2.0

Branch: master ▾ New pull request Find File Clone or download ▾

👤 claremacrae t Make a google test more readable Latest commit d4f42c5 4 days ago

📁 ApprovalTests	B fix compilation error	11 days ago
📁 ApprovalTests_Catch1_Tests	e Switch back to user #includes, to see compiler warnings	2 months ago
📁 ApprovalTests_Catch2_Tests	B Fix Windows CI build	11 days ago

Releases · approvals/ApprovalTests

GitHub, Inc. [US] | <https://github.com/approvals/ApprovalTests.cpp/releases>

Why GitHub? Enterprise Explore Marketplace Pricing Search Sign in Sign up

approvals / **ApprovalTests.cpp**

Watch 12 Star 34 Fork 2

Code Issues 3 Pull requests 0 Security Insights

Releases Tags

Latest release

v.3.4.0
a3a0bb9

Single Hpp File

claremacrae released this 11 days ago · 2 commits to master since this release

- Breaking changes
 - None
- New features
 - Added [AutoApproveIfMissingReporter](#)

- Added a mechanism to shorten the names of output files, by omitting redundant Test Case Names, when using Google Test.
- Started adding hooks for TCR in Catch: (test && commit || revert)
- Bug fixes
 - Added virtual destructors for base classes with virtual methods
 - Suppress most unused-parameter warnings
 - Included `<stdexcept>` for `std::runtime_error` to fix build on Clang 5
- Other changes
 - In `ApprovalTestNamer` :
 - Added `getSourceFileName()`
 - Added `getOutputFileBaseName()`
 - Deprecated `getFileName()`

▼ Assets 3

 ApprovalTests.v3.4.0.hpp	73.1 KB
 Source code (zip)	
 Source code (tar.gz)	

Naming Options

- About that version number in the download...

- Could just call it by your preferred convention:

`ApprovalTests.h`

`ApprovalTests.hpp`

- Or use a wrapper and keep the version number, e.g.:

```
// In ApprovalTests.hpp
```

```
#include "ApprovalTests.v.3.4.0.hpp"
```

Getting Started with Approvals in C++



How to use it: Catch2 Boilerplate

- Your main.cpp

```
// main.cpp:  
#define APPROVALS_CATCH  
#include "ApprovalTests.hpp"
```

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```

Pure Catch2 Test

- A test file

```
#include "Catch.hpp"
```

```
// Catch-only test
```

```
TEST_CASE( "Sums are calculated" )  
{  
    REQUIRE( 1 + 1 == 2 );  
    REQUIRE( 1 + 2 == 3 );  
}
```

Pure Catch2 Test

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}
```

Approvals Catch2 Test

- A test file (Test02.cpp)

```
#include "ApprovalTests.hpp"
#include "Catch.hpp"

// Approvals test - test static value, for demo purposes
TEST_CASE( "TestFixtureInput" )
{
    Approvals::verify("Some\nMulti-line\noutput");
}
```

Approvals Catch2 Test

- A test file (Test02.cpp)

```
#include "ApprovalTests.hpp"  
#include "Catch.hpp"
```

```
// Approvals test - test static value, for demo purposes  
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Approvals Catch2 Test

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TEST_CASE( "TestFixedInput" )  
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    Approvals::verify("Some\nMulti-line\noutput");  
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Approvals Catch2 Test

- A test file (Test02.cpp)

```
#include "ApprovalTests.hpp"  
#include "Catch.hpp"
```

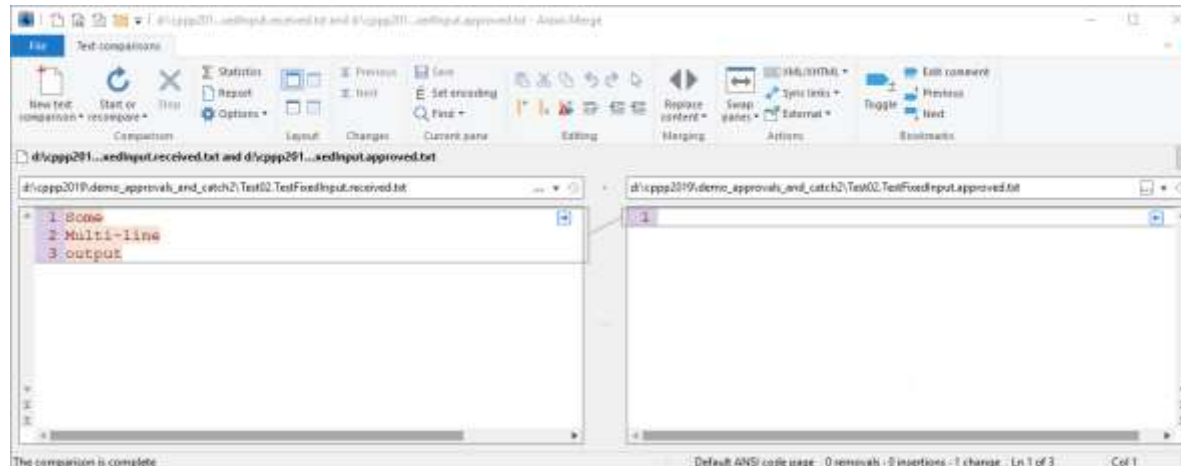
```
// Approvals test - test static value, for demo purposes  
TEST_CASE( "TestFixedInput" )  
{  
    Approvals::verify("Some\nMulti-line\noutput");  
}
```

First run

- 1. TestFixedInput failed

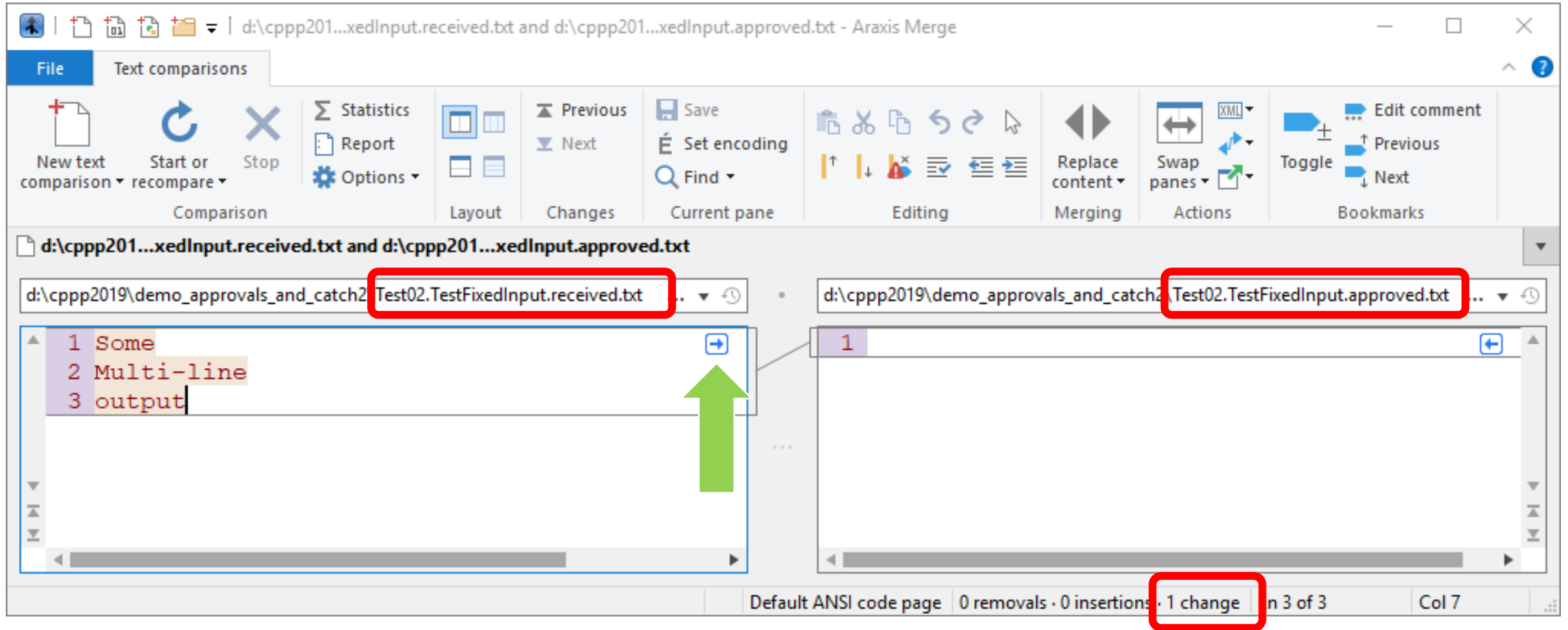
```
d:\c\ppp2019\demo_approvals_and_catch2\test02.cpp(5): exception: Failed Approval:  
Approval File Not Found  
File: "d:\c\ppp2019\demo_approvals_and_catch2\Test02.TestFixedInput.approved.txt"
```

- 2. Differencing tool pops up (Araxis Merge, in this case)



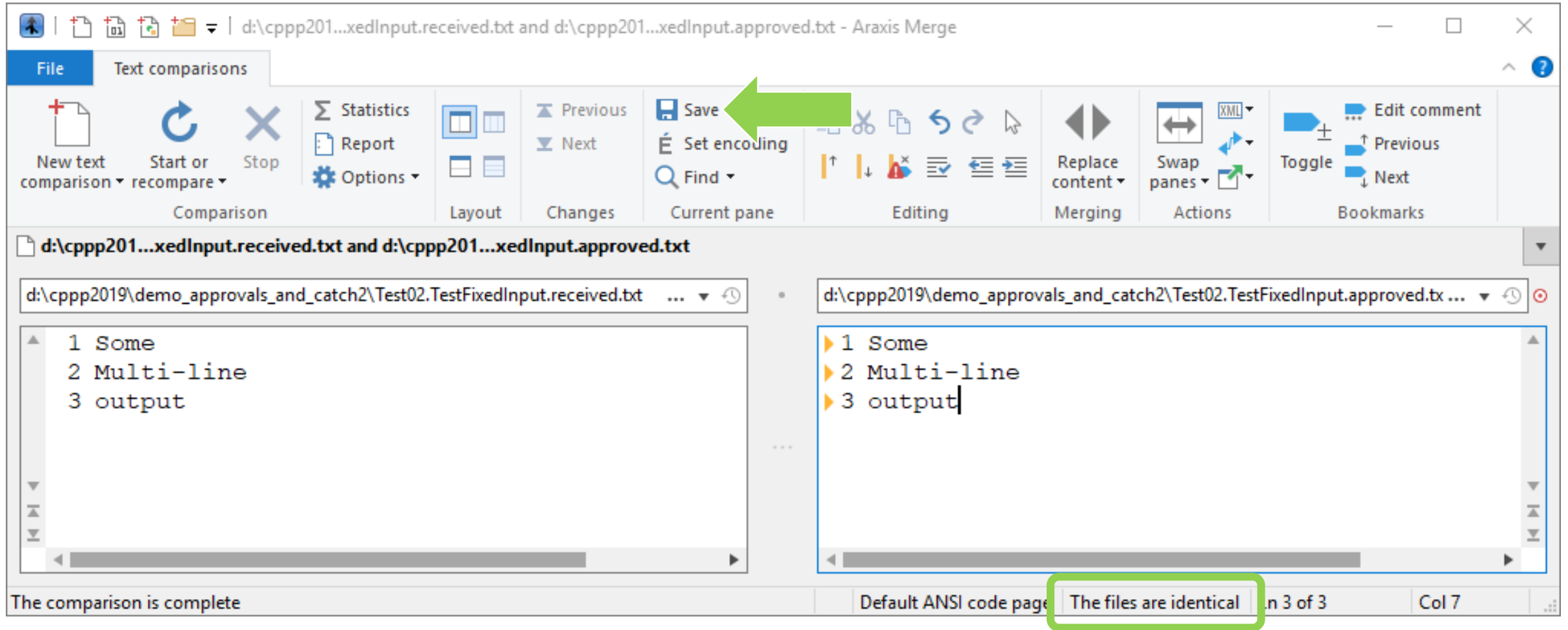
Actual/Received

Expected/Approved



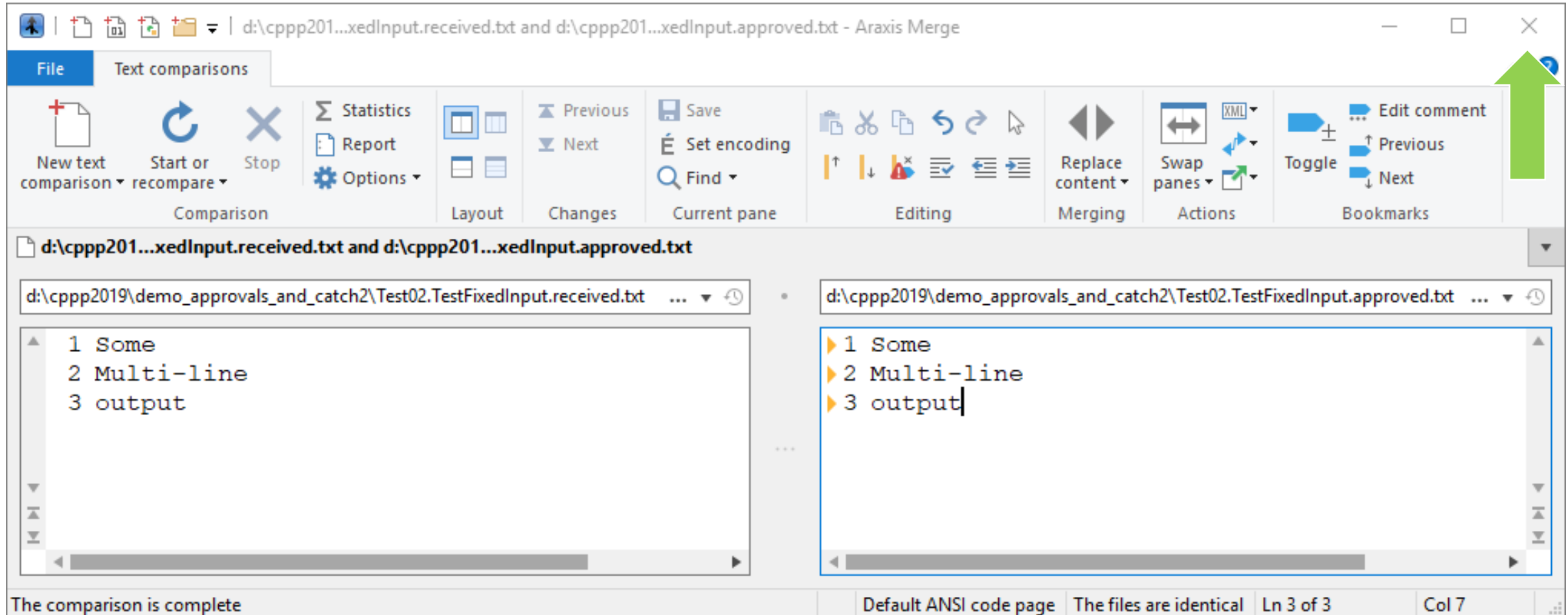
Actual/Received

Expected/Approved



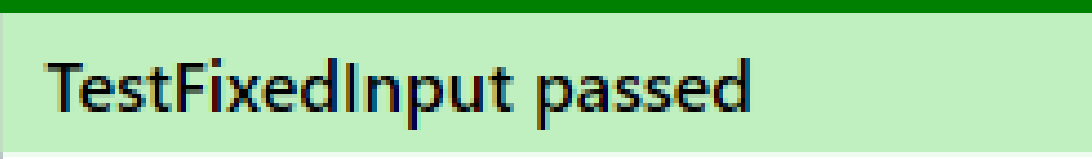
Actual/Received

Expected/Approved



Second run

- I approved the output



```
TestFixtureInput passed
```

- Then we commit the test, and the approved file(s) to version control
- The diffing tool only shows up if:
 - there is not (yet) an Approved file or
 - the Received differs from the Approved

What's going on here?

- It's a very convenient form of Golden Master testing
- Objects being tested are stringified – that's a requirement
- Captures snapshot of current behaviour
- Useful for locking down behaviour of existing code
 - Not intended to replace Unit Tests

Example test directory

Test02.cpp

Test02.TestFixedInput.approved.txt

Test03CustomReporters.cpp

Test03CustomReporters.UseCustomReporter.approved.txt

Test03CustomReporters.UseQuietReporter.approved.txt

Test03CustomReporters.UseSpecificReporter.approved.txt

Test04ConsoleReporter.cpp

Test04ConsoleReporter.UseConsoleReporter.approved.txt

Test04ConsoleReporter.UseConsoleReporter.received.txt

How to use it: Catch2 Boilerplate

- Your main.cpp

```
#define APPROVALS_CATCH  
#include "ApprovalTests.hpp"
```

```
// Put all approved and received files in "approval_tests/"  
auto dir =  
    Approvals::useApprovalsSubdirectory("approval_tests");
```

Example test directory

Test02.cpp

Test03CustomReporters.cpp

Test04ConsoleReporter.cpp

approval_tests/

Test02.TestFixedInput.approved.txt

Test03CustomReporters.UseCustomReporter.approved.txt

Test03CustomReporters.UseQuietReporter.approved.txt

Test03CustomReporters.UseSpecificReporter.approved.txt

Test04ConsoleReporter.UseConsoleReporter.approved.txt

Test04ConsoleReporter.UseConsoleReporter.received.txt



Delving Deeper

Reference: Evolving User Guide

- <https://github.com/approvals/ApprovalTests.cpp/tree/master/doc#top>

ApprovalTests.cpp User Guide

Contents

- Introduction
- Setup
- Writing Tests
- Customising behaviour
- Common Challenges
- Common Scenarios
- Extras
- Advanced Topics

Reference: Evolving User Guide

Setup

- Obtaining ApprovalTests.cpp
 - Get a test framework
 - Downloading the latest release
 - Adding a wrapper header
 - Renaming the header file to remove version number
 - [ApprovalTests.cpp.StarterProject](#)
 - Cloning repo and using CMake
- [Getting Started](#) - setting up `main()`
- [Using Approval Tests With Catch](#)
- [Using Approval Tests With Google Tests](#)

Reference: Evolving User Guide

Writing Tests

- Tutorial
- Testing single objects
- Testing containers
- Testing exceptions
- Testing combinations - containers of containers (of containers...)
- To String
- Worked example of getting to 'make the thing; verify the thing' - 'do; verify'
- Features

Reference: Evolving User Guide

Extras

- [Troubleshooting](#)
- 4 benefits of testing
 - Spec
 - Feedback
 - Regression
 - Granularity

Advanced Topics

- [Supporting a new test framework](#)
- [Contributing to ApprovalTests.cpp](#)

A note on Tools

- I'll be using a variety of tools in the talk
- I'll mention them as I go
- Slides of references at the end

How does this help with legacy code?

Applying this to legacy code

```
TEST_CASE("New test of legacy feature")
{
    // Standard pattern:
    // Wrap your legacy feature to test in a function call
    // that returns some state that can be written to a text file
    // for verification:
    const LegacyThing result = doLegacyOperation();
    Approvals::verify(result);
}
```

Implementation

```
class LegacyThing;

std::ostream &operator<<(std::ostream &os, const LegacyThing &result) {
    // write interesting info from result here:
    os << result...;
    return os;
}

LegacyThing doLegacyOperation() {
    // your implementation here..
    return LegacyThing();
}
```

Feature: Consistency over machines

- Naming of output files
- Approved files version controlled

Feature: Consistency over Operating Systems

- Line-endings

Feature: Consistency over Languages

- Consistent concepts and nomenclature in all the implementations

Feature: Quick to write tests

```
TEST_CASE("verifyAllWithHeaderBeginEndAndLambda")
{
    std::list<int> numbers{ 0, 1, 2, 3};
    // Multiple convenience overloads of Approvals::verifyAll()
    Approvals::verifyAll(
        "Test Squares", numbers.begin(), numbers.end(),
        [](int v, std::ostream& s) { s << v << " => " << v*v << "\n" ; });
}
```


Feature: Quick to get good coverage

```
TEST_CASE("verifyAllCombinationsWithLambda")
{
    std::vector<std::string> strings{"hello", "world"};
    std::vector<int> numbers{1, 2, 3};
    CombinationApprovals::verifyAllCombinations<
        std::vector<std::string>,           // The type of element in our first input container
        std::vector<int>,                   // The type of element in our second input container
        std::string>(                       // The return type from testing one combination of inputs
            // Lambda that acts on one combination of inputs, and returns the result to be approved:
            [](std::string s, int i) { return s + " " + std::to_string(i); },
            strings,                         // The first input container
            numbers);                       // The second input container
}
```

All values in single output file:

`(hello, 1) => hello 1`

`(hello, 2) => hello 2`

`(hello, 3) => hello 3`

`(world, 1) => world 1`

`(world, 2) => world 2`

`(world, 3) => world 3`

Customisability: Reporters

- Reporters act on test failure
- Very simple but powerful abstraction
- Gives complete user control over how to inspect and act on a failure
- If you adopt Approvals, do review the supplied reporters for ideas

Feature: Change the Reporter in one test

```
TEST_CASE("Demo custom reporter")
{
    std::vector<std::string> v{"hello", "world"};
    Approvals::verifyAll(v, MyCustomReporter());
}
```

Feature: Change the default Reporter

```
// main.cpp - or in individual tests:
```

```
#include <memory>
```

```
auto disposer = Approvals::useAsDefaultReporter(  
    std::make_shared<Windows::AraxisMergeReporter>() );
```

```
auto disposer = Approvals::useAsDefaultReporter(  
    std::make_shared<GenericDiffReporter>(  
        "E:/Program Files/Araxis/Araxis Merge/Compare.exe") );
```

Feature: Change the default Reporter

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auto disposer = Approvals::useAsDefaultReporter(  
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        "E:/Program Files/Araxis/Araxis Merge/Compare.exe" ) );
```

Feature: Don't run GUIs on build servers

```
// main.cpp
```

```
auto disposer = Approvals::useAsFrontLoadedReporter(  
    BlockingReporter::onMachineNamed("MyCIMachineName") );
```


Feature: Convention over Configuration

- Fewer decisions for developers
- Users only specify unusual behaviours

Challenge: Golden Master is a log file

- Dates and times?
- Object addresses?

2019-01-29 15:27

Options for unstable output

- Introduce date-time abstraction?
- Customised comparison function?
- Or: strip dates from the log file

Tip: Rewrite output file

Table 4.1: Timing of the Five Year Plans

Year	1990-1991
1991-1992	1992-1993
1993-1994	1994-1995
1995-1996	1996-1997
1997-1998	1998-1999
1999-2000	2000-2001
2001-2002	2002-2003
2003-2004	2004-2005
2005-2006	2006-2007
2007-2008	2008-2009
2009-2010	2010-2011
2011-2012	2012-2013
2013-2014	2014-2015
2015-2016	2016-2017
2017-2018	2018-2019
2019-2020	2020-2021

2019-01-29 15:27



Table 4.1: Timing of the Five Year Plans

Year	1990-1991
1991-1992	1992-1993
1993-1994	1994-1995
1995-1996	1996-1997
1997-1998	1998-1999
1999-2000	2000-2001
2001-2002	2002-2003
2003-2004	2004-2005
2005-2006	2006-2007
2007-2008	2008-2009
2009-2010	2010-2011
2011-2012	2012-2013
2013-2014	2014-2015
2015-2016	2016-2017
2017-2018	2018-2019
2019-2020	2020-2021

[date-time-stamp]

Customisability: ApprovalWriter interface

```
class ApprovalWriter
{
public:
    virtual std::string getFileExtensionWithDot() = 0;
    virtual void write(std::string path) = 0;
    virtual void cleanUpReceived(std::string receivedPath) = 0;
};
```

Flexibility gives non-obvious power

- Approval Tests approach is deceptively simple
- Is a lot more than Golden Master
- Reporter could:
 - Convert numbers to picture for comparison
 - Or Excel file
- ApprovalWriter could:
 - Write out a hash value of contents of very large file

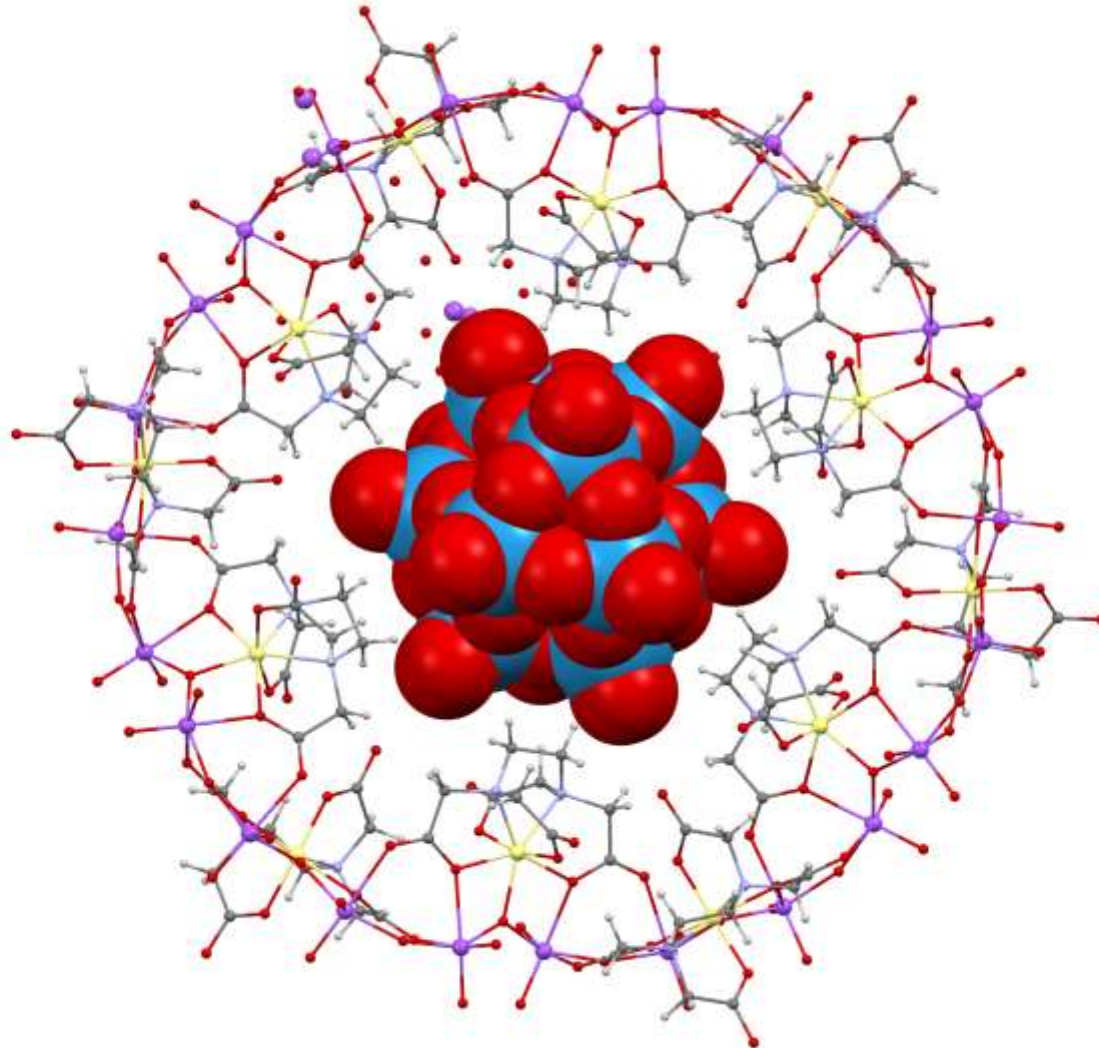
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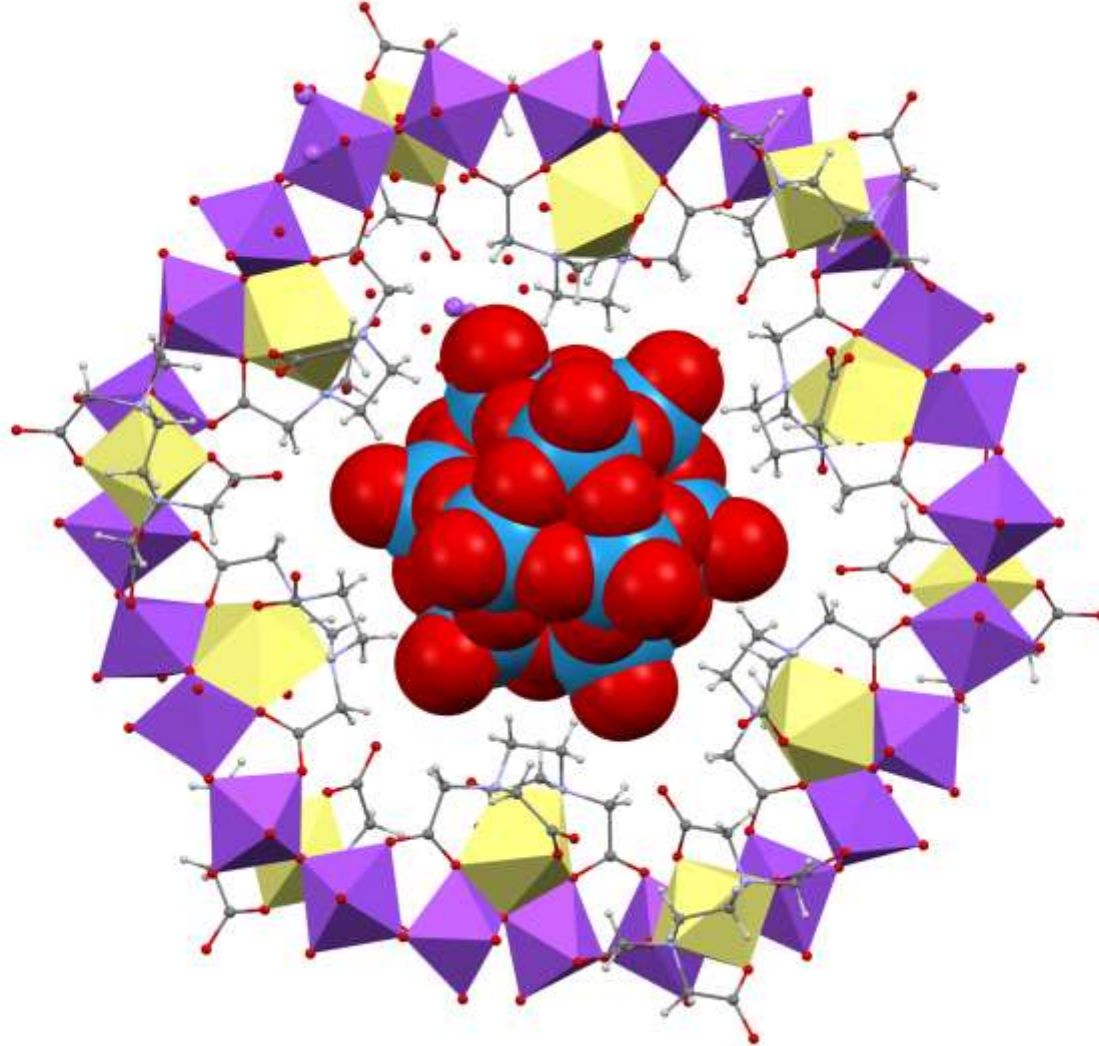


Requirement

What I could do:



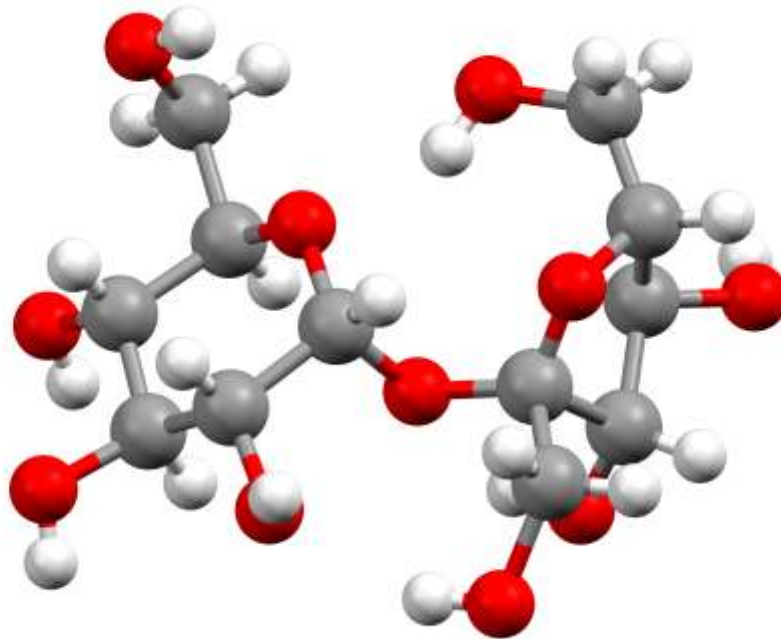
What I needed to do:



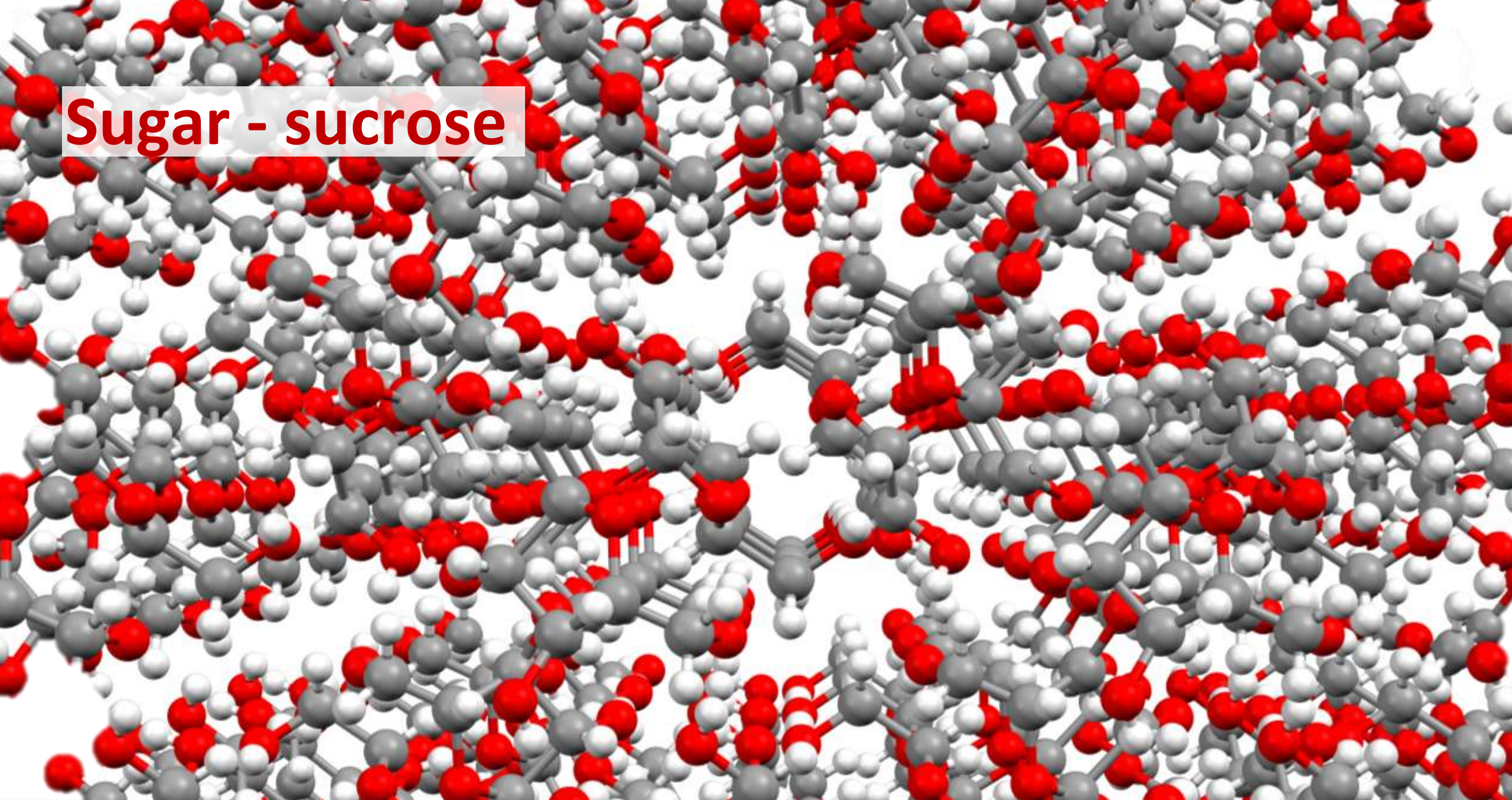
Sugar - sucrose



Sugar - sucrose



Sugar - sucrose



Approving Images

What I'm aiming for

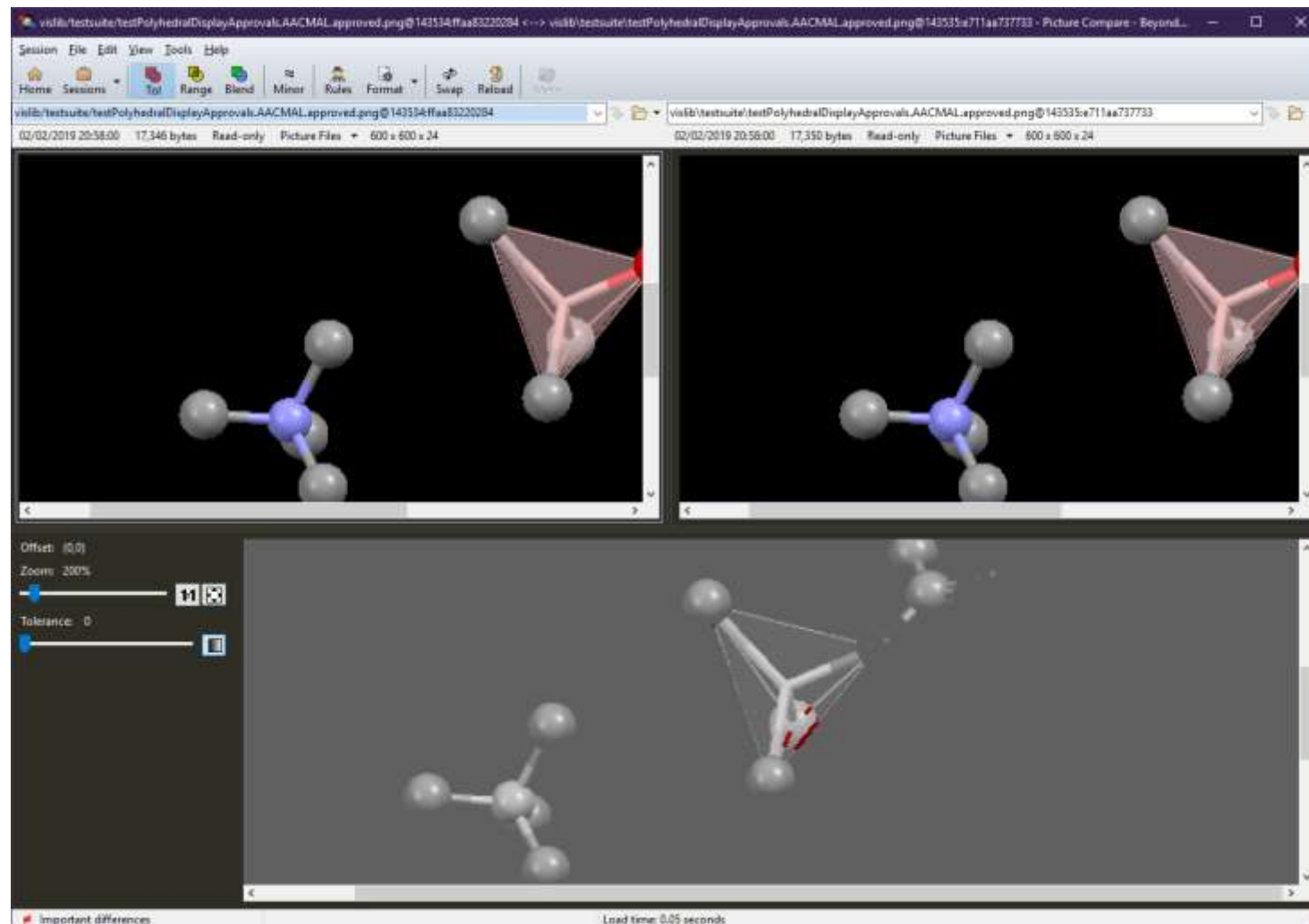
```
TEST(PolyhedralGraphicsStyleApprovals, CUVXAT)
{
    // CUVXAT identifies a crystal structure in the database
    // For code, please download the slides
    const QImage crystal_picture = loadEntry("CUVXAT");
    verifyQImage(crystal_picture, *currentReporter());
}
```


Foundation of Approval tests

```
void FileApprover::verify(  
    ApprovalNamer& namer,  
    ApprovalWriter& writer,  
    const Reporter& reporter);
```

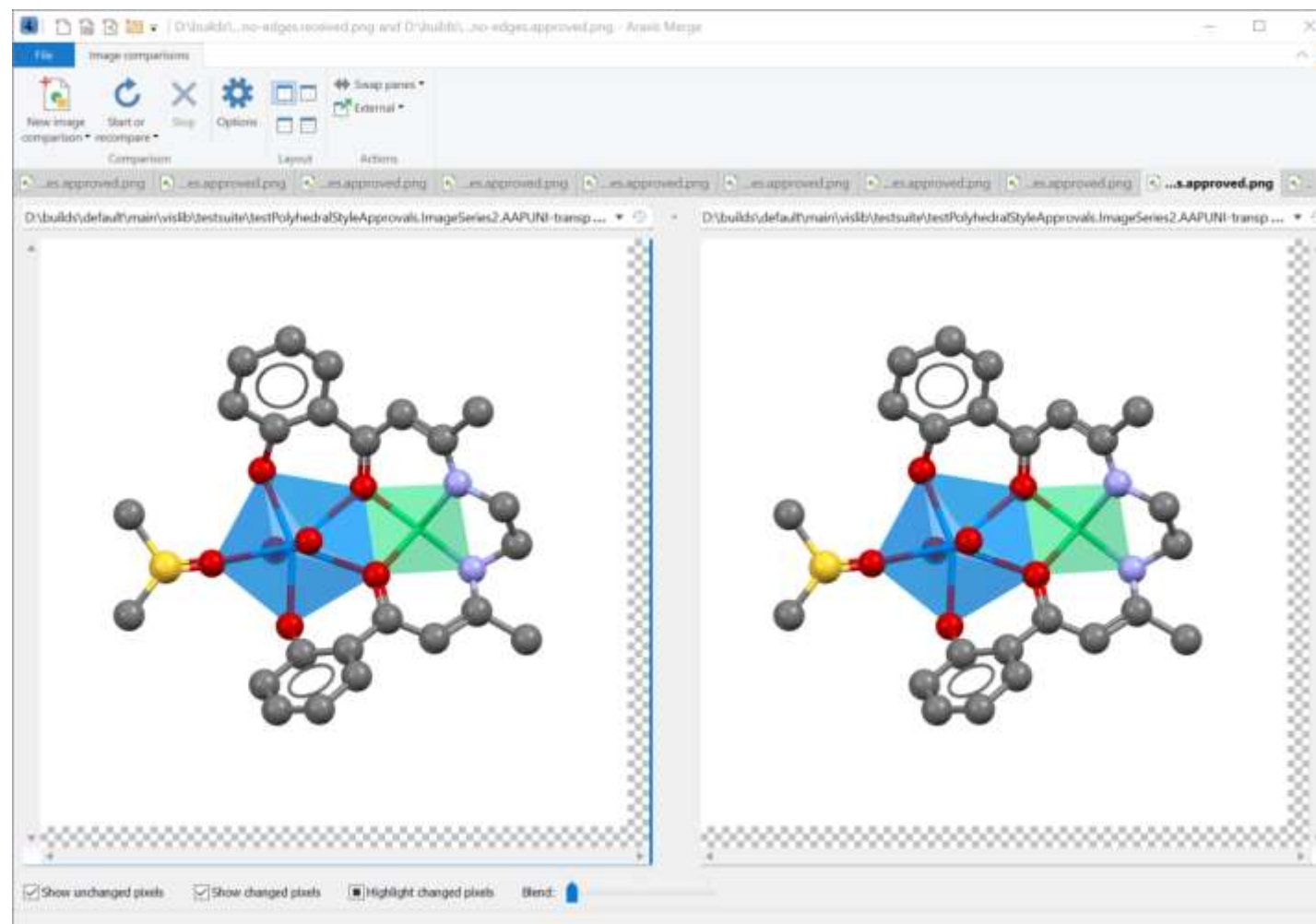

Useful feedback

BeyondCompare 4

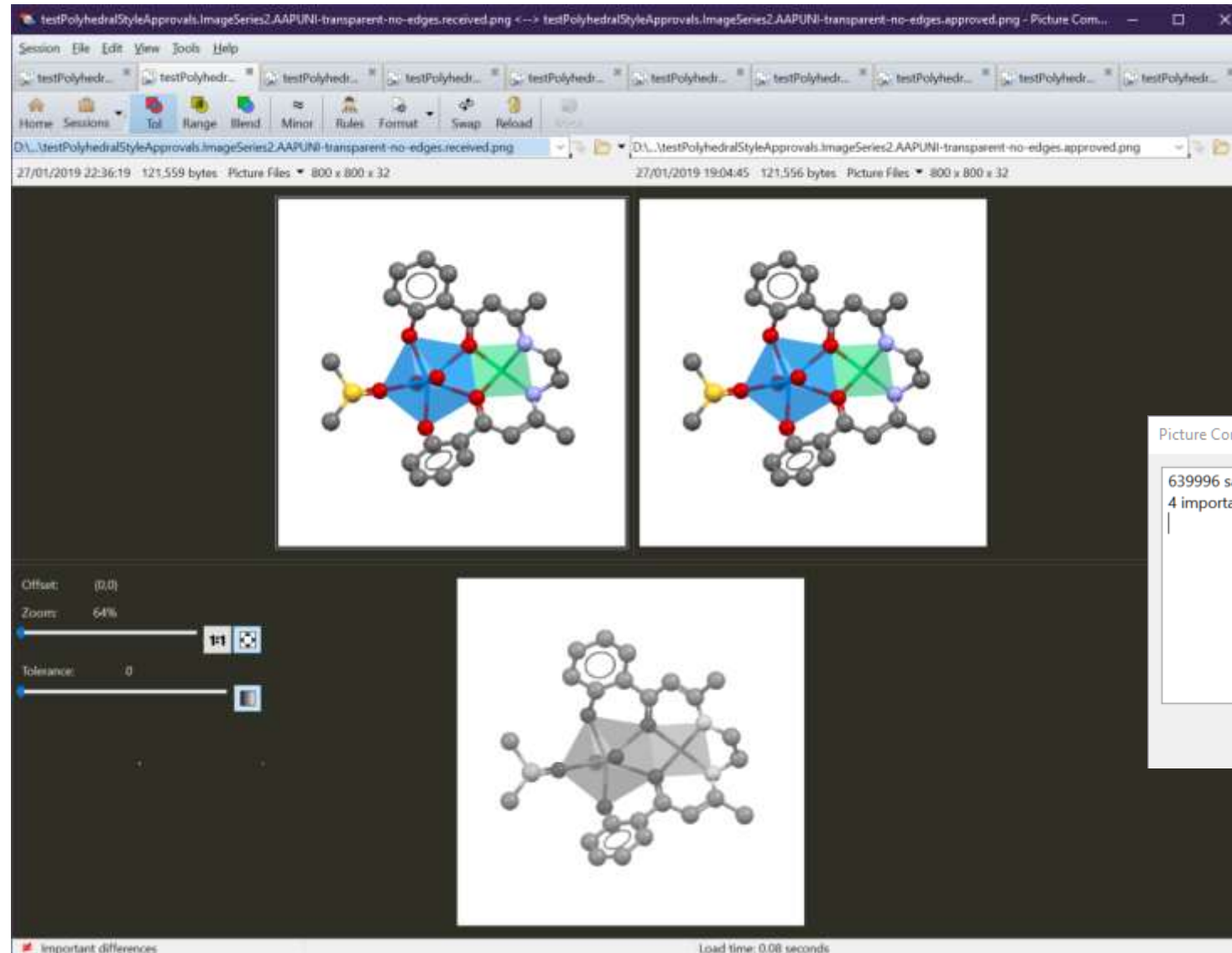


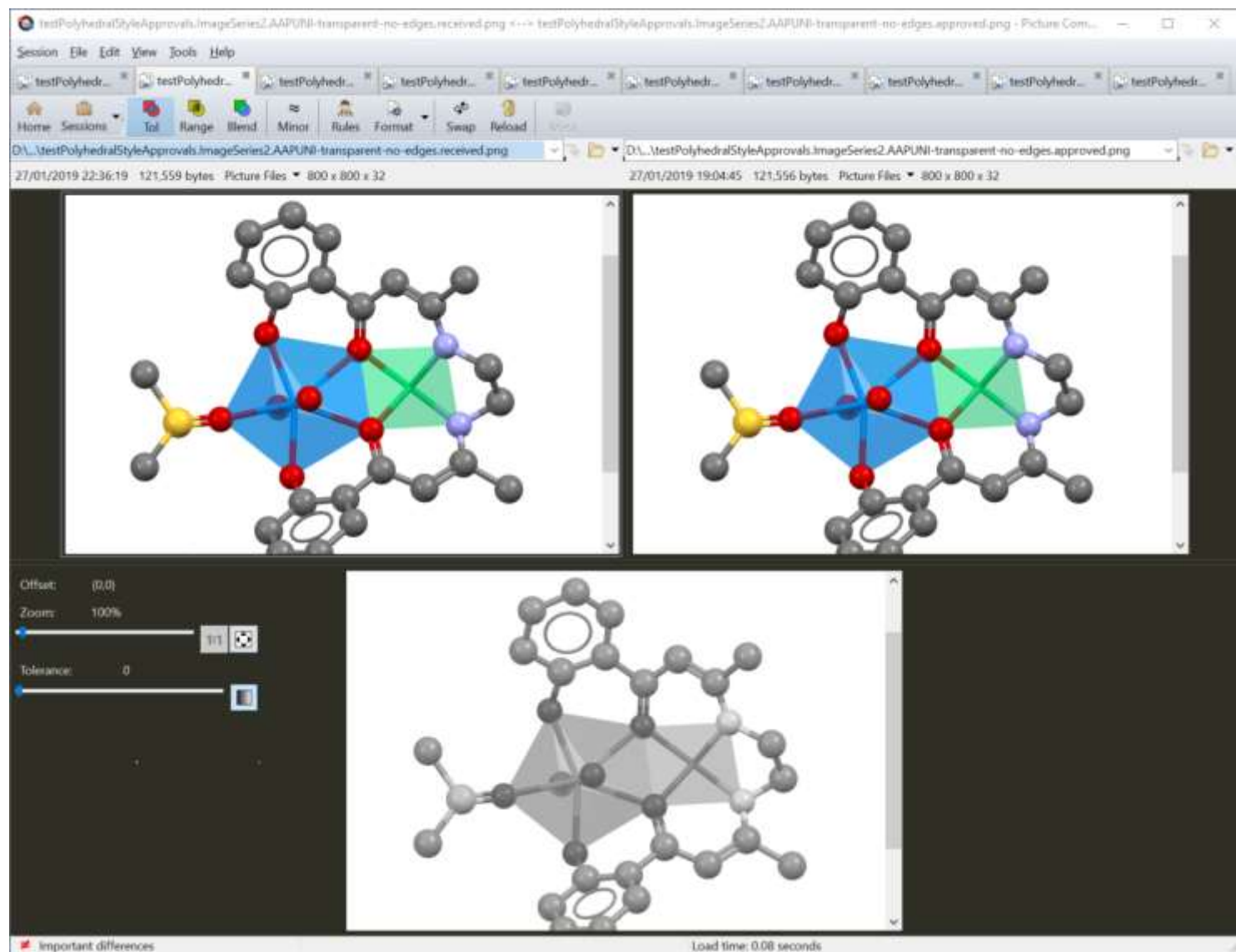
What? Re-running now gives random failures

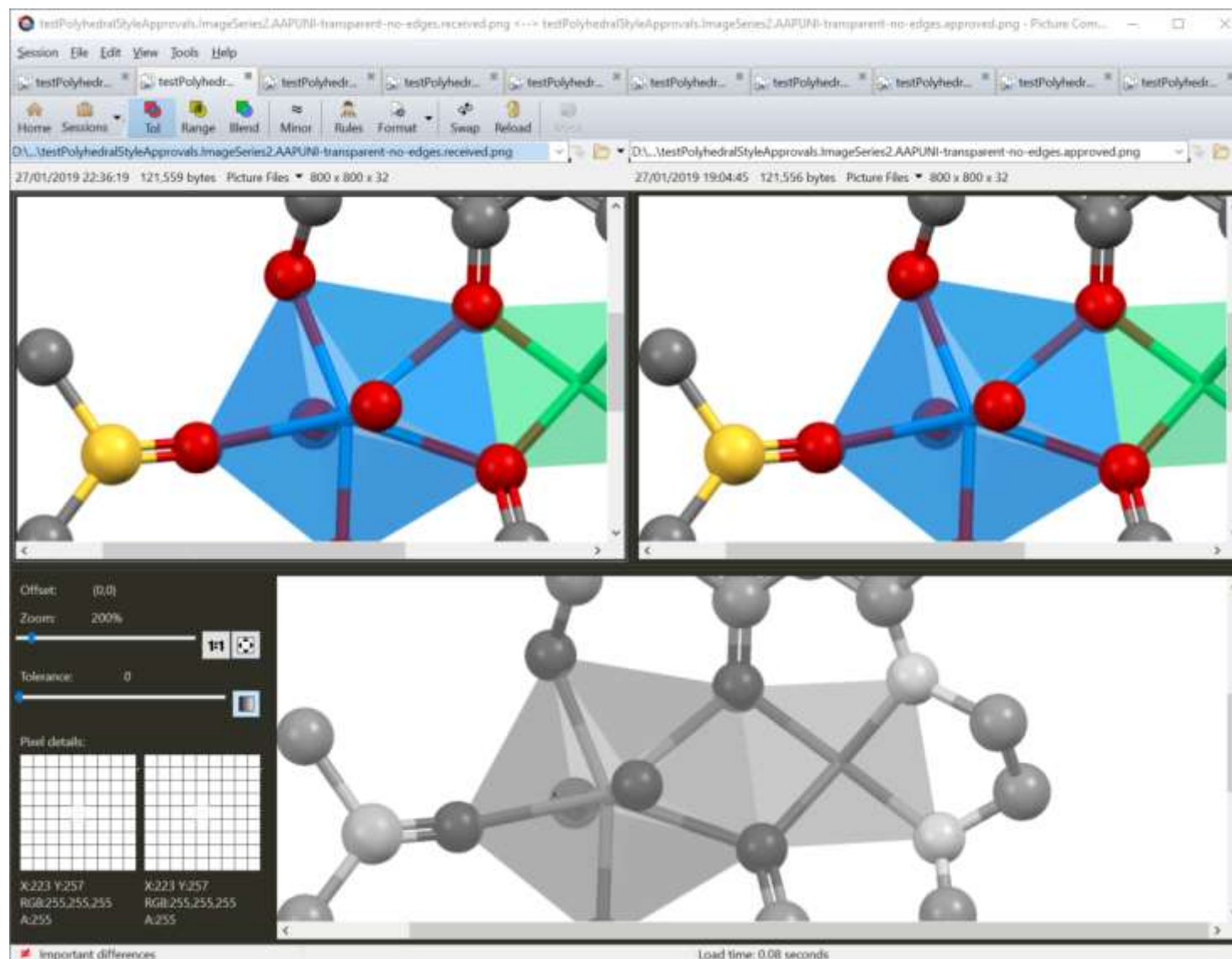
Araxis Merge

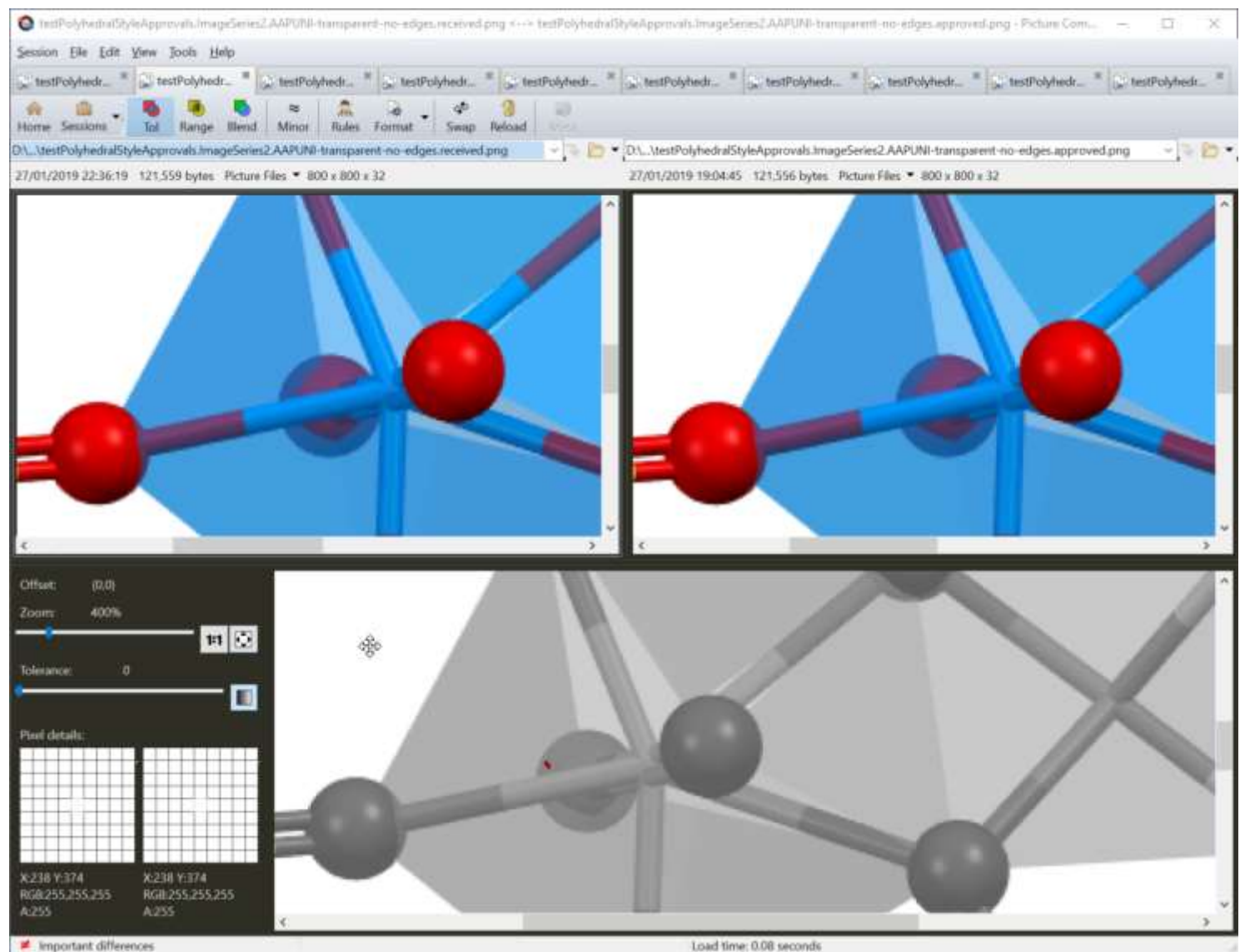


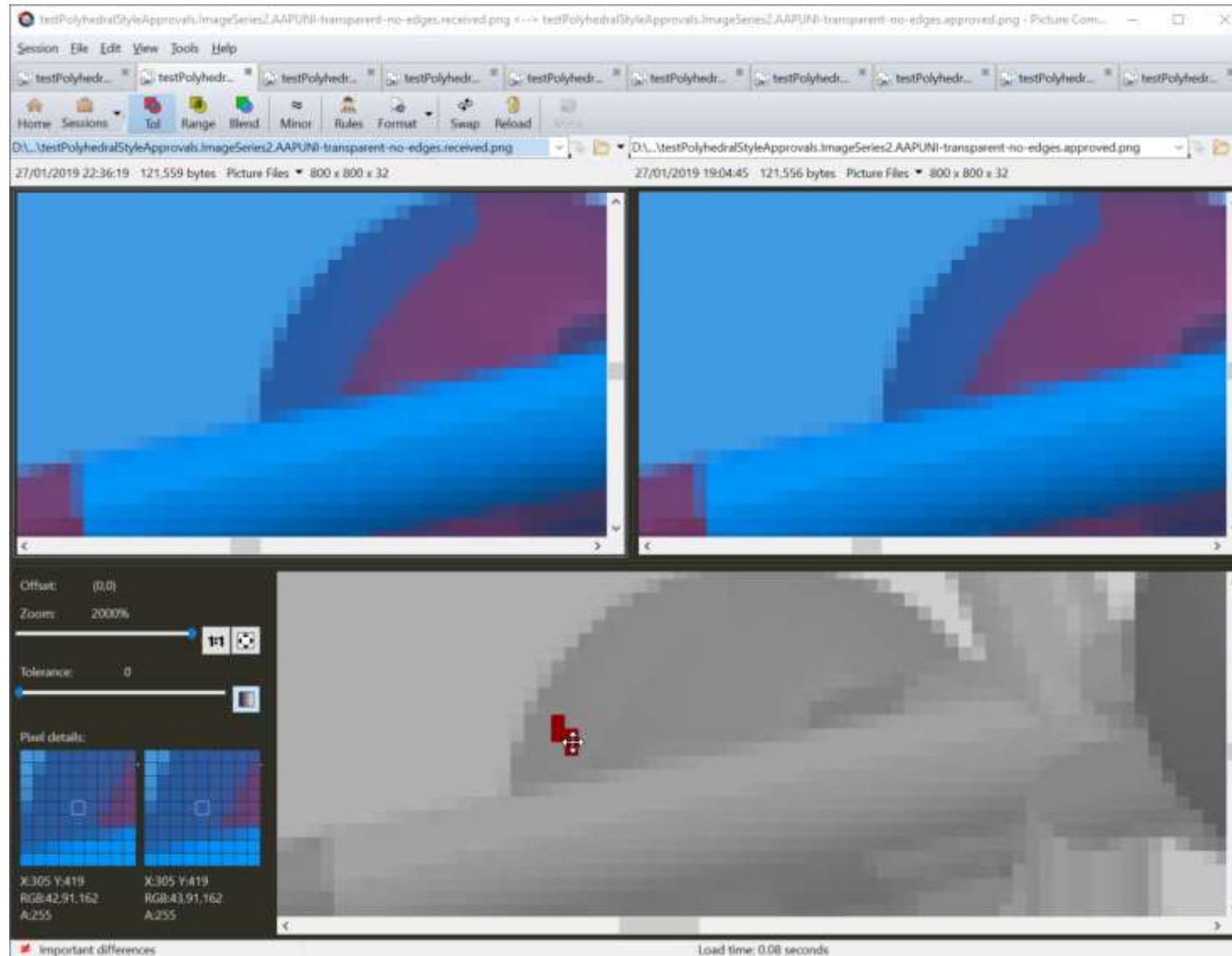
BeyondCompare 4

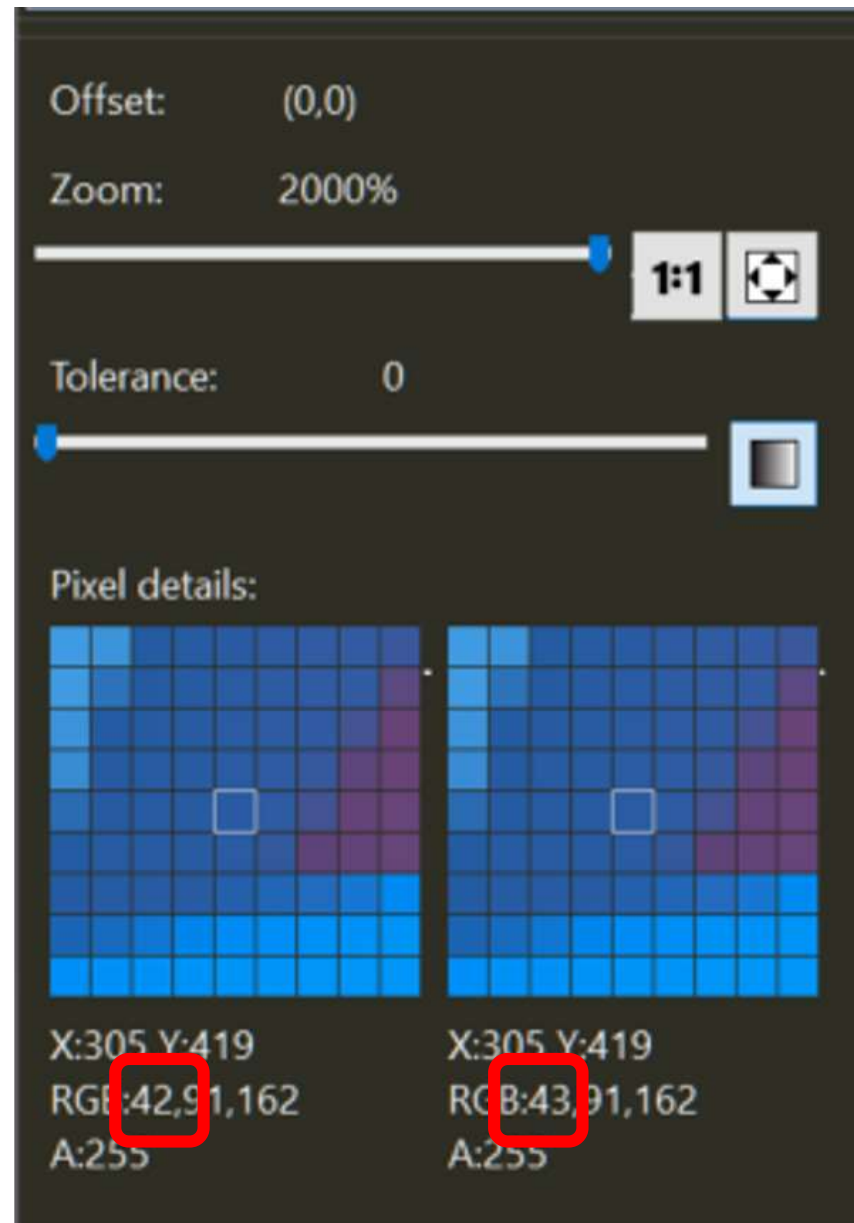












Customisability: ApprovalComparator

```
class ApprovalComparator
{
public:
    virtual ~ApprovalComparator() = default;

    virtual bool contentsAreEquivalent(std::string receivedPath,
                                       std::string approvedPath) const = 0;
};
```

Create custom QImage comparison class

```
// Allow differences in up to 1/255 of RGB values at each pixel, as saved in 32-bit images
// sometimes have a few slightly different pixels, which are not visible to the human eye.
class QImageApprovalComparator : public ApprovalComparator
{
public:
    bool contentsAreEquivalent(std::string receivedPath, std::string approvedPath) const override
    {
        const QImage receivedImage(QString::fromStdString(receivedPath));
        const QImage approvedImage(QString::fromStdString(approvedPath));

        return compareQImageIgnoringTinyDiffs(receivedImage, approvedImage);
    }
};
```

Register the custom comparison class

```
// Somewhere in main...
```

```
FileApprover::registerComparator(  
    ".png",  
    std::make_shared<QImageApprovalComparator>());
```

Does the difference matter?

- Legacy code is often brittle
- Testing makes changes visible
- Then decide if change matters
- Fast feedback cycle for efficient development

Looking back

- User perspective
- Learned about own code
- Enabled unit tests for graphics problems
- Approvals useful even for temporary tests

ApprovalTests Customisation Points

- Reporter
- ApprovalWriter
- ApprovalComparator
- ApprovalNamer

- More documentation of these coming soon

Contents

- Introduction
- Legacy Code
- Golden Master
- Approval Tests
- Example
- **Resources**
- Summary



References: Tools Used

- Diffing
 - Araxis Merge: <https://www.araxis.com/merge/>
 - Beyond Compare: <https://www.scootersoftware.com/>
- Code Coverage
 - OpenCppCoverage and Visual Studio Plugin: <https://github.com/OpenCppCoverage>
 - BullseyeCoverage: <https://www.bullseye.com/>

Beautiful C++: Updating Legacy Code

- <https://app.pluralsight.com/library/courses/cpp-updating-legacy-code/table-of-contents>



The Legacy Code Programmer's Toolbox

- <https://leanpub.com/legacycode>
- The Legacy Code Programmer's Toolbox: Practical skills for software professionals working with legacy code, by Jonathan Boccara

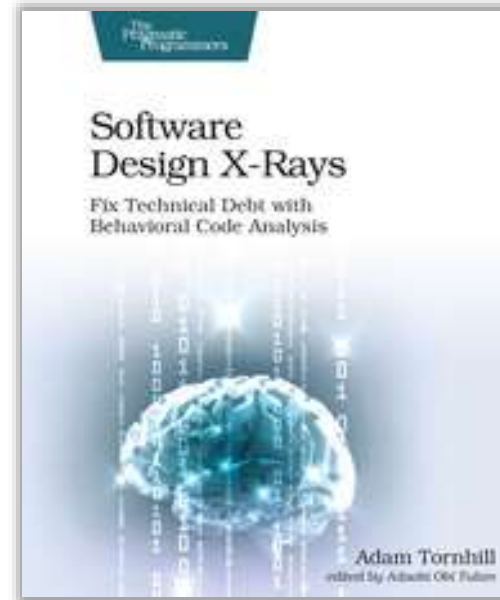


Videos



Adam Tornhill's Books

- Mining actionable information from historical code bases (by Adam Tornhill)
 - Your Code as a Crime Scene
 - Software Design X-Rays: Fix Technical Debt with Behavioural Code Analysis



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Adopting legacy code

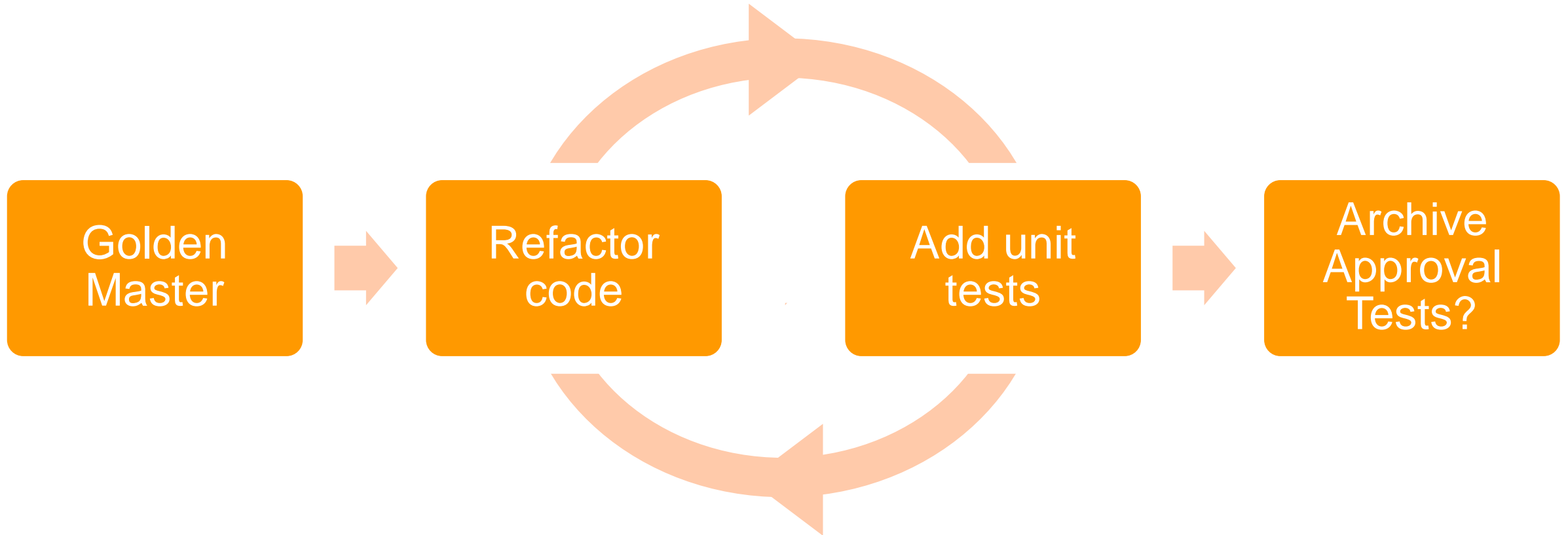
- You can do it!
- Evaluate current tests
- Quickly improve coverage with Golden Master
- ApprovalTests.cpp makes that really easy
- Even for non-text types

ApprovalTests

- Powerful Golden Master tool
- `verify()`, `verifyAll()`, `verifyAllCombinations()`
- Adjust output files, after writing, to simplify comparison

ApprovalTests.cpp

- Not (always) a replacement for Unit Tests!



Thank You: Any Questions?

- Example Code: <https://github.com/claremacrae/cppp2019/>
- Slides: <https://www.slideshare.net/ClareMacrae>
 - (early next week)
- ApprovalTests.cpp
 - <https://github.com/approvals/ApprovalTests.cpp>
 - <https://github.com/approvals/ApprovalTests.cpp.StarterProject>