

# Code is for Humans

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**Level: Introductory / Intermediate**



# Session Survey

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# Coding for Humans

The computer doesn't care what code looks like.  
All that matters is that the code compiles.

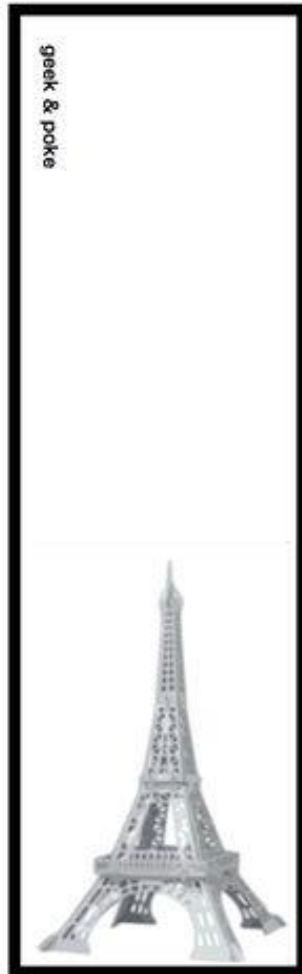
But what about the humans?



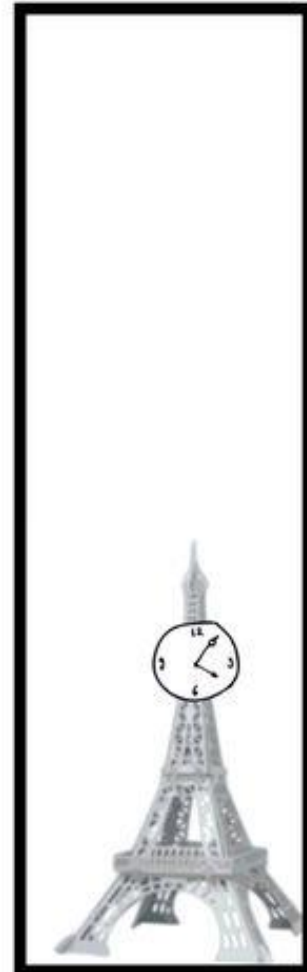
Why Do We Care?

There's no such thing  
as write-once code

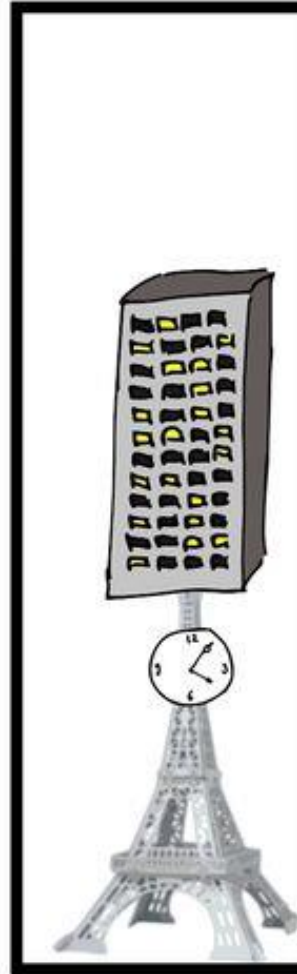
1889



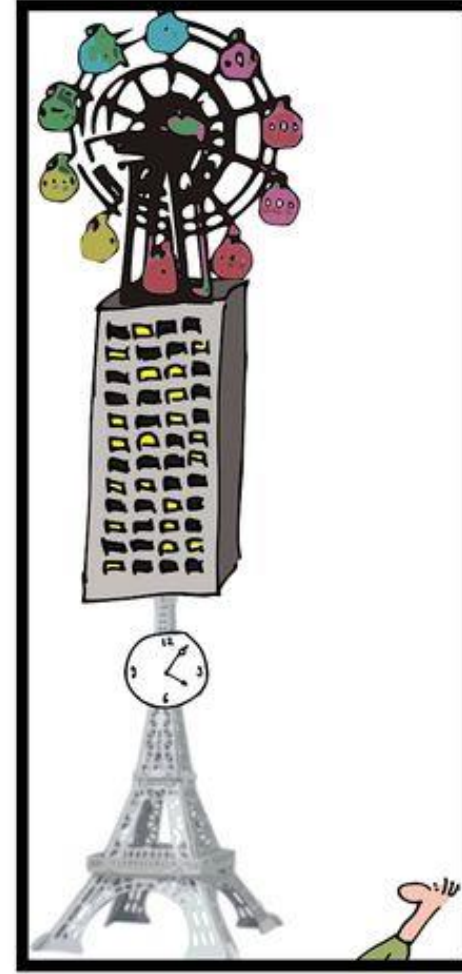
1893



1897



1903



Thank god not everything is software



# Why Do We Care?

There's no such thing  
as write-once code

- Bug Fixes
- Business Changes
- Enhancements
- New Functionality



# Qualities

- Readable
- Maintainable
- Testable
- Elegant





# Blockers

- Ignorance
- Stubbornness
- Short-Timer Syndrome
- Arrogance
- Job Security
- Scheduling



# Blockers

Number one reason:

“I’ll clean it up later.”

Pro Tip: “Later” never comes.

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# The Truth about Coding for Humans

- Human readable code saves time.
- We can't take a short-term view of software.
- We need to look at the lifespan of the application.



# Inspiration

- Rule of Thumb:

Imagine that the developer  
who comes after you  
is a homicidal maniac  
who knows where you live.

-Unknown



# The Next Developer

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This Might  
Take Awhile





# The Problem

- Readable (by mere mortals)
- Maintainable
- Testable
- Elegant

All of these qualities are subjective.





**“Best Practices”**





# The Dry Principle

## Don't Repeat Yourself

- copy/pasta = spaghetti code

# Naming



# Intentional Naming

- **theList**
  - Not very good
- **ProductList**
  - A bit better
- **ProductCatalog**
  - Good

# Naming

- Use Nouns for Variables, Properties, Parameters
  - `indexer`, `currentUser`, `PriceFilter`
- Use Verbs for Methods and Functions
  - `SaveOrder()`, `getDiscounts()`, `RunPayroll()`
- Pronounceable and Unambiguous
  - `recdptr1` = received patrol? record department role?





**Joseph Wade**  
@cordialwombat

Hey Walmart? I have a very important question to ask...



# Naming Standard

- camelCase?
- PascalCase?
- snake\_case?
- kebab-case?

It doesn't matter  
**Have a Standard**  
**Be Consistent**

# Comments

```
// Determine if End of Day Time for Last Date  
// has been reached  
// If Last Date is null use Converted Date  
// Based on Today's Date > Last Date  
// And Curr Time >= End of Day Time
```



# Comments

- Rule #1: Comments lie
  - Code is updated or moved, but not the comments



# Comments Lie

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# Comments

- Rule #1: Comments lie
  - Code is updated or moved, but not the comments
- Rule #2: Comments do not make up for bad code
  - If the code is that unclear, rewrite the code

# Good Comments

- Can be used to describe intent or clarification
  - Ex: `// Sample input: Oct 5, 2025 - 13:54:15 PDT`
- Can be used to give warnings or consequences
  - Ex: `// We do a deep copy of this collection to make`  
`// sure that updates to one copy do not affect`  
`// the other`

# Good Comments

- Can be used for TODOs
  - Especially useful when the IDE supports it
  - These should be temporary

# Know Your Tools

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# Bad Comments

- Do not comment out code
  - Code no longer in use should be deleted
  - If needed, you can always retrieve it from source control

# Know Your Tools



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# Functions and Methods

```
142 private void DoDataSync()  
1535 ...
```

# Functions and Methods

- Keep methods short
  - Should fit on a single screen
  - Prefer methods no longer than 10 lines

Do one thing!



# Multiple Levels of Methods

- High level
  - Overview of functionality
- Mid-level
  - More details, but not too deep
- Detail
  - The “weeds” of the functionality



## Work in Small Chunks

If you aren't writing incremental code,  
you are writing excremental code.



# What is Refactoring?

Making code better  
without changing the functionality

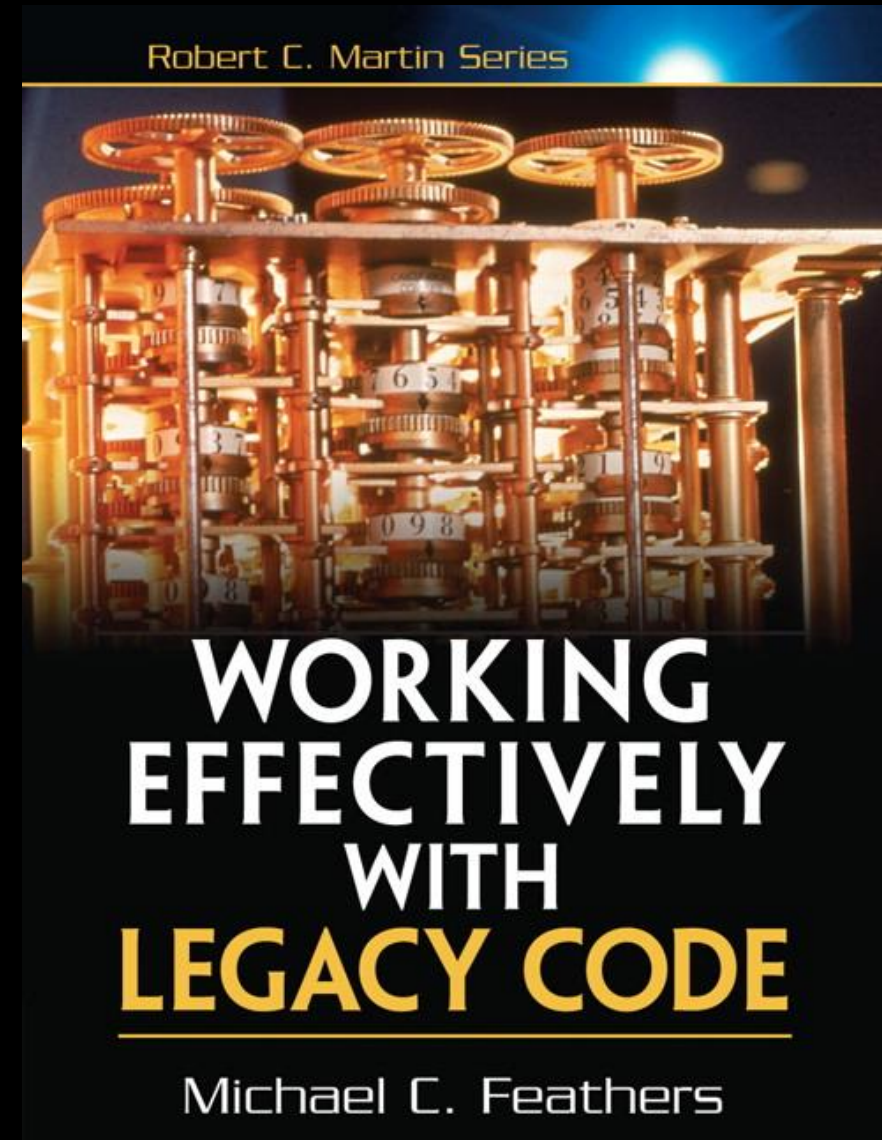
# Refactoring and Unit Testing

- If you don't have unit tests, you don't know what your code does.
- Refactoring Step 1:
  - Bring your code under test.
- Refactoring Step 2:
  - Safely and confidently update the code.



# Working Effectively with Legacy Code

- Michael C. Feathers

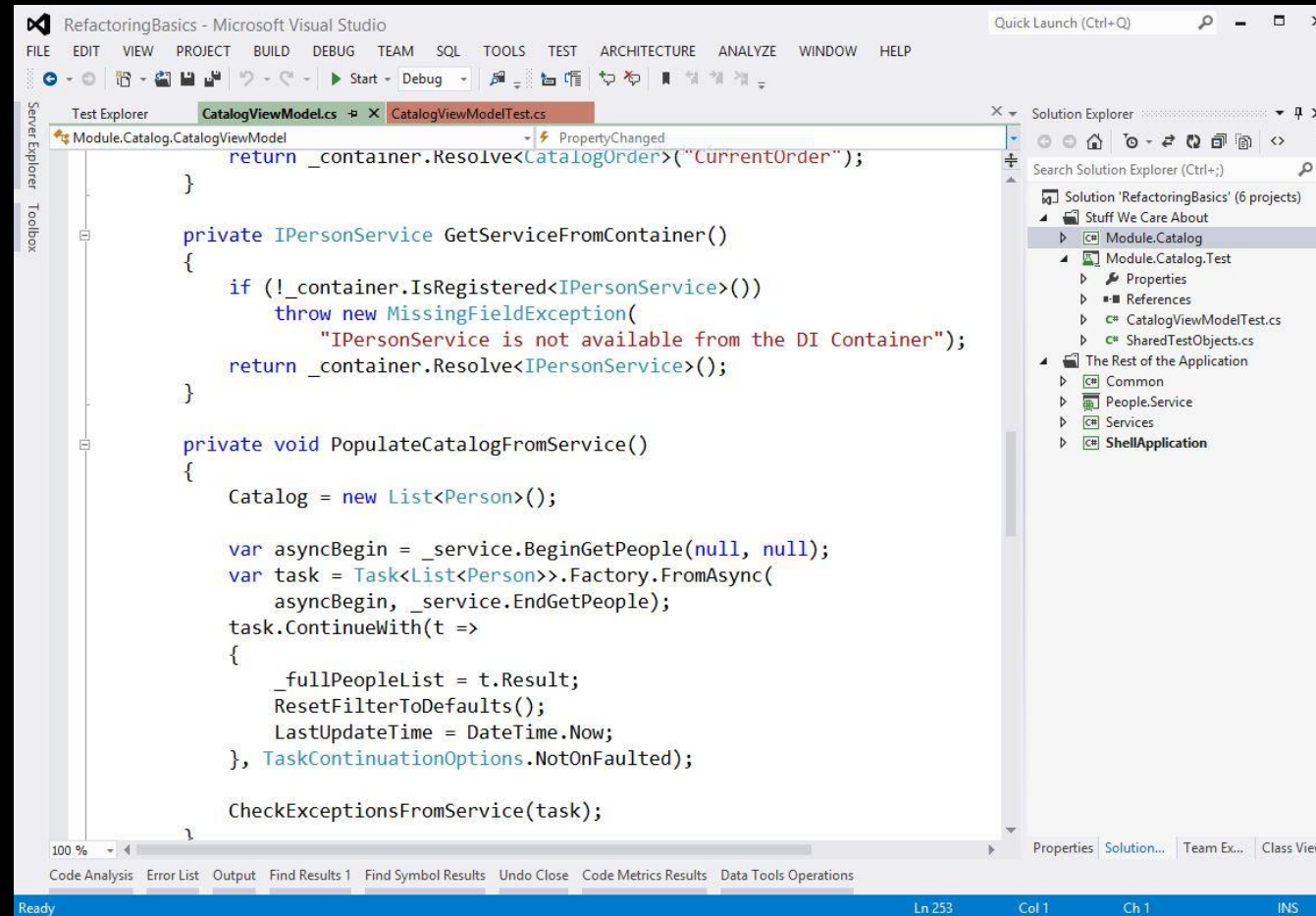


The Watcher

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# Coding for Humans



```
RefactoringBasics - Microsoft Visual Studio
FILE EDIT VIEW PROJECT BUILD DEBUG TEAM SQL TOOLS TEST ARCHITECTURE ANALYZE WINDOW HELP
Start Debug
Test Explorer CatalogViewModelTest.cs CatalogViewModelTest.cs
Module.Catalog.CatalogViewModel
Property Changed
return _container.Resolve<CatalogOrder>("CurrentOrder");
}
private IPersonService GetServiceFromContainer()
{
    if (!_container.IsRegistered<IPersonService>())
        throw new MissingFieldException(
            "IPersonService is not available from the DI Container");
    return _container.Resolve<IPersonService>();
}
private void PopulateCatalogFromService()
{
    Catalog = new List<Person>();

    var asyncBegin = _service.BeginGetPeople(null, null);
    var task = Task<List<Person>>.Factory.FromAsync(
        asyncBegin, _service.EndGetPeople);
    task.ContinueWith(t =>
    {
        _fullPeopleList = t.Result;
        ResetFilterToDefaults();
        LastUpdateTime = DateTime.Now;
    }, TaskContinuationOptions.NotOnFaulted);

    CheckExceptionsFromService(task);
}
100 %
Code Analysis Error List Output Find Results 1 Find Symbol Results Undo Close Code Metrics Results Data Tools Operations
Ready Ln 253 Col 1 Ch 1 INS
```



## Wrap Up

- There's no such thing as write once code
- Be nice to the humans who have to change your code (it may be you)



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Thank You!

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<https://github.com/jeremybytes/vslive2024-orlando>