

"The Software Project Considered Harmful"

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Projects:

Projects:

default descriptor (and model) for s/w work,
many proven resources,
team crucible

Roles :

Roles:

RACI,

PM,

**large (non s/w) constituency - and profession,
scale**

Effect:

Effect:

reverse metamorphosis

focus on efficiency

technical work is closely 'supervised'

tech. staff perceived as a commodity

PM incursions

'profession' (???) is suppressed

surplus management

...and business intrusion

Symptoms :

Symptoms :

population

literature

academic community, and courses

SIGs

'professional' organizations

shared memory

shared data

gurus

s/w dev culture

...and business intrusion

What to do:

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nothing - maybe s/w dev is simply a set of skills?

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or

1. search for or acknowledge alternative words to 'project'...

...allow choice of models (incl. projects when appropriate)

2. look to s/w specific alternatives: early agile, 'system symbiosis', 'chief programmer'...

3. look to other 'creatives': architecture, film, medical, games...

www.osel.co.uk/papers/spuch.pdf

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•“I think it is extraordinarily important that we in computer science keep fun in computing. When it started out it was an awful lot of fun. Of course, the paying customers got shafted every now and then, and after a while we began to take their complaints seriously. We began to feel as if we really were responsible for the successful error free perfect use of these machines. I don't think we are....”

Alan Perlis

...writing in the dedication of 'Structure & Interpretation of Computer Programs'
by Abelson & Sussman

'If Software Metrics leads to something like Taylorian "scientific management" in software development, I for one, will bow my head in shame.'

Gerald M. Weinberg

...writing in the foreword of Tom Gilb's 'Software Metrics', the first s/w metrics book

" I know very well that in a great many circles the man who does not enter with a neatly arranged plan, with a set of doctrines, with a rounded sonorous formula, and with assurance about everything, is set down as something of an old fogey, perhaps reactionary, certainly not one of the elect who are 'doing things' and providing guidance for the race. I must assume the risk. I have no formula. [But I shall resist] those who have a formula for so many things and who seek avidly to force it down the throat of everyone else."

...Matthew Woll, "Standardization" , Annals (America Academy of Political and Social Science, Philadelphia) 137 (May 1928), p. 47

