Session 7d: Textbook review

What did we agree with?
What did we disagree with?
What did we not understand?
What was hopelessly obsolete?

Q: Who was Fred Brooks?

- What did he do in the 1960s?
  - Where did he do it?
  - What was the end product?
- Was it successful?
- Where is he now?

Highlights of the assigned chapters

- What was each chapter about?
- How did it relate to the class discussions that week?
- How was it helpful to you?

Chapter 1

- Why did Brooks call it "The Tar Pit"?
- Why is programming fun? (p. 7)
- What are "the woes of the craft"? (pp 8-9)
Chapter 2

- What's "mythical" about the man-month
  
- "But false scheduling to match the patron's desired date is much more common in our discipline than elsewhere in engineering."  --(p. 21)

  Why is that?

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Chapter 3

- Why did Brooks call it "The Surgical Team"?
- "Programming managers have long recognized wide productivity variations between good programmers and poor ones. But the actual measured magnitudes have astounded all of us."  --(p. 30)

  How big are those differences?

- What are some essential roles in a project?  -(pp 32-35)

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Chapter 4

- Importance of project-wide standards.
- Opportunities for parallel activity:  (p 49)
  - architecture
  - implementation
  - realization.

  Do we agree?  Why or why not?

  How does that fit with our phased life cycle?

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Chapter 7

- Communication within the project team is critical.

- We must have a project workbook.  (p 75)

- Brooks's project had a severe magnitude problem?
  - Why?
  - How did they correct it?  Did that work?
  - Is that typical?
Chapter 8

- Why did everyone underestimate? (p.89)
- Only 50% of time actually spent doing planned tasks!
- The rest was unscheduled "down time"
  - meetings
  - sickness & personal time
  - higher-priority short unrelated jobs
  - machine downtime
  - etc. etc.

Chapter 11

- "Issues with maintenance, corrections:
  "All repairs tend to destroy the structure, to increase the entropy and disorder of the system. Less and less effort is spent on fixing original design flaws; more and more is spend on fixing flaws introduced by earlier fixes. . . " (p.122)
  - Is that surprising?
  - Why or why not?

Summary

- Do we find Dr. Brooks's insights and advice helpful
  - a. in this course?
  - b. in our future work?

- Questions and general comments?