TERRITORIES NOT HIERARCHIES

USING STEVEN PRESSFIELD'S *THE WAR OF ART* AS A FRAME FOR MODERN LEADERSHIP
Drawings by John Garzón
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MOUSEION: SEAT OF THE MUSES
WAIT
HEY YOU POP CULTURE JUNKIES / GREEK MYTHOLOGY HATERS
WAIT
WHAT DOES ALL THIS HAVE TO DO WITH SOFTWARE DEVELOPMENT?

Well, from our point of view…

• “helping others [develop software]”
• “Individuals and interactions”
• “Customer collaboration”

(from the Agile Manifesto)
WHAT DOES ALL THIS HAVE TO DO WITH SOFTWARE DEVELOPMENT?

Also from our point of view…

• “satisfy the customer”
• “Welcome changing requirements”
• “Business people and developers must work together daily”
• “motivated individuals…must have support they need…trust”
• “face-to-face conversation”
• “emerge from self-organizing teams”
• “the team reflects”

(from the Twelve Principles of Agile Software that back the Manifesto)
GIVE ME A METAPHOR: BUILDING SOFTWARE IS...

• Building software is…[INVOKE THE MUSE FOR YOUR ANSWER HERE]

• Here’s the catch(?), you can’t use:
  • Manufacturing / assembly line / widget
  • Engineering / building / construction
  • Science

• Then we’ll share…
IT'S A METAPHOR.
SO BUILDING SOFTWARE IS...

• Collaborative?
• Teamwork?
• Creative?
• Art?
• Craft?

• Did I miss anything?
SO WE NEED A MUSE THEN?

• If what we do when we create software isn't engineering, isn't factory work, and isn't science - aren't we saying it's creative work? Art? Craft?
CREATING SOFTWARE != ENGINEERING || MANUFACTURING || SCIENCE

• Fowler’s “The New Methodology” (2000)
  • Software processes which separate out design and construction are fundamentally untenable
  • Unlike building a bridge, building electronics, etc.

• The manufacturing metaphor was broken from the very beginning
  • Assembly lines are optimized to produce many of the same exact thing
  • With custom software, you only ever build one
CREATING SOFTWARE = CREATIVITY || ART || CRAFT

• Multiple ways to achieve the same thing, from satisfying the customer down to writing the code – so...how do you choose?

• Scrum.org:
  • Scrum (n): A framework within which people can address complex problems, and productively and creatively deliver products of the highest possible value.

• Software Craftsmanship movement
  • *Pragmatic Programmer: From Journeyman to Master* – Hunt and Thomas
  • *Software Craftsmanship* – Pete McBreen
  • At Agile 2008, Bob Martin proposed a fifth value for the Agile Manifesto, namely "Craftsmanship over Crap"
MANIFESTO FOR SOFTWARE CRAFTSMANSHIP (“RAISING THE BAR”)

As aspiring Software Craftsmen we are raising the bar of professional software development by practicing it and helping others learn the craft.

Through this work we have come to value:

• Not only working software, but also well-crafted software
• Not only responding to change, but also steadily adding value
• Not only individuals and interactions, but also a community of professionals
• Not only customer collaboration, but also productive partnerships

That is, in pursuit of the items on the left we have found the items on the right to be indispensable.
SO WE NEED A MUSE THEN?

• If what we do when we create software isn't engineering, isn't factory work, and isn't science - aren't we saying it's creative work? Art? Craft?

• I don’t think we should be surprised that literature and techniques from the creative world – artists chasing the muse – have a lot to teach us in software and leadership
THE WAR OF ART

Break Through the Blocks and Win Your Inner Creative Battles

STEVEN PRESSFIELD
“"A vital gem...a kick in the ass." — Esquire

@GaryPedretti  Gary@sodotosolutions.com
THE WAR OF ART

• Resistance

• Artist’s Orientation
  • Hierarchy
  • Territory
AGENDA

• The Resistance
• (High School and) Hierarchies
• (Stevie Wonder and) Territories
• Territories and Modern Leadership, Territories and:
  • Organizational Structure
  • Self-Organization
  • Intrinsic Motivation
  • Vision, Craftsmanship, Agility, Others
WHO AM I? GARY PEDRETTI, WANNABE ARTIST

• Failed “rock star” – bass, drums, guitar

• Draw poorly, trace even worse

• Failed Theater major? No, I just used to play Dungeons & Dragons

• Wrote a poem once…for a girl

• Write a blog, but not nearly frequently enough for anyone to care

• Written computer programs since grade school
GARY PEDRETTI
OWNER, SODOTO SOLUTIONS

• SODOTO = See One, Do One, Teach One
• 16 years experience in a wide, generalized set of roles in the software industry
• Enterprise Agile Trainer and Coach
  • Professional Scrum Trainer: Scrum.org
  • Custom curriculum and workshops
  • Specialize in Agile Architecture, explaining the real value of technical practices, building rapport with tech teams, scaled Scrum, being reasonable
• http://blog.GaryPedretti.com
• @GaryPedretti
• Gary@SodotoSolutions.com
THE RESISTANCE
THE RESISTANCE

• The mental blocks that stop artists from starting, finishing, or entering work
• Blocked flow
• Think:
  • “Writer’s Block”
  • Procrastination
  • Attachment to Perfection
Resistance will tell you anything to keep you from doing your work.

Steven Pressfield
If you're are paralyzed with fear it's a good sign. It shows you what you have to do.

*Steven Pressfield*
BE READY FOR RESISTANCE. NEVER UNDERESTIMATE RESISTANCE. RESPECT RESISTANCE. FIGHT RESISTANCE. DO THE WORK.

DO THE WORK. DON'T THINK. ACT! THE ENEMY IS RESISTANCE. STAY PRIMITIVE. TRUST THE SOUP. SWING FOR THE SEATS.

BE READY FOR RESISTANCE. NEVER UNDERESTIMATE RESISTANCE. RESPECT RESISTANCE. FIGHT RESISTANCE. DO THE WORK.

DO THE WORK. DON'T THINK. ACT! THE ENEMY IS RESISTANCE. STAY PRIMITIVE. TRUST THE SOUP. SWING FOR THE SEATS.

BE READY FOR RESISTANCE. NEVER UNDERESTIMATE RESISTANCE.
THE RESISTANCE!

He eats your dreams.
THE RESISTANCE

How do we experience resistance...in bringing agility to the software world?

What stops us from starting?

What makes us doubt at every turn?

When do we get attached to perfection?
ARTIST “ORIENTATIONS”

• Pressfield talks a lot about overcoming resistance

• “Turning Pro” – ignoring resistance, plowing past, and doing what needs to be done regardless

• As part of this, he talks about “orientations” – really just mindsets or approaches or mental models

• He suggests that an orientation can help or hinder you in overcoming resistance
(HIGH SCHOOL AND) HIERARCHIES
Hierarchies

- High School
- Dweeb or Chess Club vs. Cheerleader or Jock
- Cliques
- Anything with a pecking order, really
AND WE KNEW WHAT THE PECKING ORDER WAS, RIGHT?
HIERARCHIES BREAK DOWN

When the numbers get too big – NYC, IBM, and Michigan State are too big to function as a hierarchy…or any other massive group
HIERARCHIES

Attachment to a hierarchy in these situations results in substitution with coarse status symbols...
HIERARCHIES

Those that define themselves by a place in the pecking order of a hierarchy will:

• Compete against all others by competing and advancing against those above him, while defending from those beneath

• Evaluate happiness/success/achievement by his rank within the hierarchy

• Act towards others based on their rank in hierarchy, exclusive of all other factors

• Evaluate every move solely on effect on others

Does this sound disastrous for an artist?

How about for us?
HIERARCHIES

The writing world has a type of person called a “Hack”

- Hacks write to what they think will play well with others - what's hot? What’s not?

- This is clearly hierarchically-oriented
HIERARCHIES

OK, I get it.

Hierarchies in creative work = BAD

Hierarchies in organizations = BAD ??
(STEVIE WONDER AND)
TERRITORIES
TERRITORIES

• Home turf

• A place of competence, centeredness, and flow

• Where you might do work-for-its-own-sake (aka you’re intrinsically motivated)
TERRITORY: CLEARING UP THE DEFINITION

TERRITORY: noun, a good thing, finding your territory

NOT

TERRITORIAL: verb, a bad, defensive behavior

 Doesn’t have to be physical at all, or physicality could only be one dimension

• Mental territory
• Skills territory
TERRITORIES

For example: Stevie Wonder?
TERRITORIES

For example: Van Gogh?
TERRITORIES

Characteristics:

- Provides sustenance
- Sustains us without any external input – we put in effort and love, it gives back as well-being
- Can only be claimed by work – craft
- Returns exactly what you put in, fair, never devalues or crashes
TERRITORIES: INDIVIDUAL OR TEAM?

• Consider the cross-functional teams we value so dearly
  • Coder has Coding Territory
  • Tester has Testing Territory

• Territories = Our Old Silos???? 😞
TERRITORIES: INDIVIDUAL OR TEAM?

- No, a team could have a Territory
  - AND its individuals could have their own personal territories too
  - Think: “Honor people for their specialties”
  - By being on the same team, personal territories will start to overlap (shared accountability, cross-training, empathy)
- Think back to the wolf – wolves run in packs, too
- This would involve a more complex system...
  - It might take longer for a team to “find” or build its territory than an individual
TEAM TERRITORIES

For example: The Beatles?
WHAT'S YOUR TERRITORY?

Me? Remember this from my bio?
Specialize in Agile Architecture, explaining the real value of technical practices, building rapport with tech teams…

What about YOU?
SO...TERRITORIES
WHY ARE WE TALKING ABOUT THIS AGAIN?

I think this idea of “territory” fits well – is a good metaphor for:

- **Modern Leadership**
  - Organizational structure, breaking down ineffective hierarchies
  - Self-organization
  - Intrinsic motivation
  - Product vision
- **Software Craftsmanship**
- **Agility**
- **Others??**
THINK ABOUT THE FOLLOWING SUBJECTS

• Organizational Structure
• Self-Organization
• Intrinsic Motivation

• I’ll ask you to come up with something creative in regards to them in a bit…
TERRITORIES AND ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE
ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE

• We’ve talked quite a bit in our community about loose, informal networks being better than hierarchies
  • Clearly hierarchies have a command/control history and connotation
• Are territories like the networks we talk about?
SMALL-WORLD NETWORKS

A small-world network is a type of mathematical graph in which most nodes are not neighbors of one another, but most nodes can be reached from every other by a small number of hops or steps.

Hub nodes (larger dots below) are not necessarily comprehensive.
SMALL-WORLD NETWORKS

Officially:

A network where the typical distance $L$ (the number of steps required) between two randomly chosen nodes grows proportionally to the logarithm of the number of nodes $N$ in the network.

$L \propto \log N$
SMALL-WORLD NETWORKS

• Think:
  • The rumor mill!
  • Social networks
  • The Internet
  • Gene networks
SMALL-WORLD NETWORKS

- Johanna Rothman has explicitly talked about small-world networks in the agile community (Agile Development Conference East, 2013)
COMPUTER NETWORKS

- Ring
- Mesh
- Star
- Fully Connected
- Line
- Tree
- Bus
MANY EXAMPLES

• Esther Derby “Six Rules for Change”: Activate networks to diffuse ideas throughout the system (Agile 2015)

• Rod Collins, “Leadership in a Wiki World”
  • “When leaders are facilitators, organizations adopt the disciplines of self-organized networks that are designed to leverage collective intelligence.”
  • Self-organized peer-to-peer networks are smarter, faster, and more efficient than top-down hierarchies
SO YES...!!

- Territories are very much like the networks we talk about
- I like to think of them as yet-another-metaphor for them
AND ALL THIS SCALING AGILE STUFF...

“In fact, I believe that scaling software development is first an exercise in understanding communication networks.”

- Vasco Duarte
AND ALL THIS SCALING AGILE STUFF...

“Hierarchies remove scaling properties from software development.”

- Vasco Duarte
SCALING APPROACHES

• The “scaling Scrum with Scrum” frameworks – those that follow from and extend the core principles – implicitly use networks and never hierarchies
  • Nexus
  • LeSS
  • Scrum Inc’s Scrum at Scale
TERRITORIES
AND SELF-ORGANIZATION
TERRITORIES AND SELF-ORGANIZATION

• Remember the “Team Territory” idea? The Beatles?

• WHY (product vision) and WHAT (product backlog) are to some extent “given” to the team (don’t discount collaboration here though, either), but HOW is fully owned by the development team

• Honoring people for their specialties
TERRITORIES AND INTRINSIC MOTIVATION
TERRITORIES AND INTRINSIC MOTIVATION

• Remember the “work-for-works-sake” characteristic?
• Van Gogh
• Daniel Pink “Drive” concepts
  • Autonomy (aka self-organization)
  • Mastery (aka craft)
  • Purpose (aka vision, WHY)
• Did anyone see David Mole’s “Drive: How we used Daniel Pink’s work to create a happier, more motivated workplace” (Agile 2015)?
WHAT DO YOU THINK?

• Come up with a new example of a Territory characteristic or example that creates or enables one of these:
  • Organizational Structure – the sort of change you’d like to make at a company
  • Self-Organization
  • Intrinsic Motivation

• Are these things easy to sell to traditional managers? NO!

• Come up with a “Territory Story,” using a metaphor of some sort, that could help you “sell” this sort of change – structure, organization, motivation – to the skeptical
OPTIONAL: WHAT DO YOU THINK?

• How about:
  • Product Vision?
  • Craftsmanship?
  • Agility in general?
CLOSING
THINGS TO CONSIDER

• Modern business and software are creative, artistic endeavors

• An artist's mindset and toolset can help tackle common software and leadership issues

• Connections between The War of Art and software/leadership provide a rich set of metaphors for organizational change and learning
THE INVOCATION REVISITED

O Divine Poesy
Goddess-daughter of Zeus,
Sustain for me
This song of the various-minded man,
Who after he had plundered
The innermost citadel of hallowed Troy
Was made to stray grievously
About the coasts of men,
The sport of their customs good or bad,
While his heart
Through all the seafaring
Ached in an agony to redeem himself
And bring his company safe home.

Vain hope – for them!
For his fellows he strove in vain,
Their own witlessness cast them away;
The fools,
To destroy for meat
The oxen of the most exalted sun!
Wherefore the sun-god blotted out
The day of their return.

Make the tale live for us
In all its many bearings,
O Muse.
DON’T PROFANE YOUR MUSE, MAKE YOUR TALE LIVE!!!
LET ME KNOW WHAT YOU THINK: @GARYPEDRETTI
GARY@SODOTOSOLUTIONS.COM

CONTACT ME REGARDING TRAINING AND WORKSHOPS IN THE MIDWEST (CHICAGO, MILWAUKEE, MADISON, MINNEAPOLIS, ST. LOUIS)

WATCH FOR A LEADERSHIP / TEAM DYNAMICS WORKSHOP WITH ME AND ESTHER DERBY – WINTER 2015/2016, CHICAGOLAND AREA

CHECK OUT THE SCRUM.ORG BOOTH! SCALING WITH NEXUS! BECOME A TRAINER!

THANK YOU!
IMAGE CREDITS

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