# TYPES ARE LIKE THE WEATHER, TYPE SYSTEMS ARE LIKE WEATHERMEN

### MATTHIAS FELLEISEN, RACKETEER

#### TYPES @ STRANGE LOOP

sing:

Two four six eight. Who do we appreciate? Types We think it's Types



Reserved and Advent in W1. Tangan Annunger, Printer Aris, Streptus DA, Handbar S, B. 2011 Keyl South Voluming, NY, Y 24 Augdre Dealering



Mr. Misunderstood

#### MY OWN PATH TO APPRECIATION

	1978	Algol 60, Simula 67, Pascal, C	
	1981	Prolog	
	1984	Scheme 84	
1985		Russel	
	1987	Types for Scheme	Robert "Corky" Cartwright
	1991	The Meaning of Types	
1993		CMU: ML	Harper, Lee, Reynolds & Scott
	1994	Soft Scheme, HM-based inference	Andrew Wright
	1995	Racket, née PLT Scheme	Matthew Flatt
	1997	MrSpidey, SBA-based inference	Cormac Flanagan
	2005	Typed Racket, big-bang & universe	Sam Tobin-Hochstadt

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In some languages (C), types are merely instructions to the compiler.



int x = 10;

In others (ML), types assist developers with maintaining software

#### Maintain >>500,000 of Racket

int x = 10;

In others (ML), types assist developers with maintaining software

#### TWO MEANINGS OF "DEVELOP"



### **TYPES ARE LIKE THE WEATHER ...**

THERE IS NOTHING YOU CAN DO ABOUT IT. WEATHER HAPPENS.











THERE IS NOTHING YOU CAN DO ABOUT IT. COMPUTATION HAPPENS.



#### Windows

An error has occurred. To continue:

Press Enter to return to Windows, or

Press CTRL+ALT+DEL to restart your computer. If you do this, you will lose any unsaved information in all open applications.

Error: OE : 016F : BFF9B3D4

Press any key to continue \_

#### HP-UX 11i v3 coreadm \*

# coreadm

global core file pattern: init(1M) core file pattern: global core dumps: disabled per-process core dumps: enabled global setid core dumps: disabled per-process setid core dumps: disabled

#### Salesforce.com Integration Error





Fault Code (0). java.lang.NullPointerException at common.udd.object.XmlRpcEntityDescribe.addFields(XmlRpcEntityDescribe.java:515) at common.udd.object.XmlRpcEntityDescribe.getDescribe(XmlRpcEntityDescribe.java:75) at common.adi.object.EntityObject.getXmlRpcDescribe(EntityObject.java:4137) at common.api.xmlrpc.XmlRpcDispatcher.innerDispatch(XmlRpcDispatcher.java:396) at common.api.xmlrpc.XmlRpcDispatcher.dispatch(XmlRpcDispatcher.java:280) at common.api.xmlrpc.XmlRpcDispatcher.innerExecute(XmlRpcDispatcher.java:255) at common.api.xmlrpc.XmlRpcDispatcher.execute(XmlRpcDispatcher.java:118) at helma.xmlrpc.XmlRpcServer\$Worker.execute(XmlRpcDispatcher.java:118) at helma.xmlrpc.XmlRpcServer\$Worker.execute(XmlRpcServer.java:161) at common.api.xmlrpc.Api.doPost(Api.java:253) at javax.servlet.http.HttpServlet.service(HttpServlet.java:152) at com.caucho.server.dispatch.ServletFilterChain.doFilter(ServletFilterChain.java:99) at com.caucho.server.dispatch.ServletFilterChain.doFilter(ServletFilterChain.java:99) at system.filter.PreGzipFilter



user=> (pst)					
clojure.core/eval core.clj:	2852				
• • •					
user/eval2007 REPL Input					
<pre>user/make-exception user.clj:</pre>	31				
user/update-row user.clj:	23				
<pre>user/make-jdbc-update-worker/reify/do-work user.clj:</pre>	18				
<pre>user/jdbc-update user.clj:</pre>	7				
java.sql.SQLException: Database failure					
SELECT FOO, BAR, BAZ					
FROM GNIP					
failed with ABC123					
SQLState: "ABC"					
errorCode: 123					
java.lang.RuntimeException: Failure updating row					
<pre>java.lang.RuntimeException: Request handling exception</pre>					
nil					
user=>					

### TYPE SYSTEMS ARE LIKE THE WEATHERMEN



- This prediction is *partial* but *useful*.
- It is mostly accurate.



hurricane

on mostly in accurate



- This prediction is *partial* but *useful*.
- It is mostly accurate.



- Types are the language of prediction.
- Type systems use them to make more predictions.
- The questions are:
  - Is that useful?
  - Is it meaningful?

### THE MEANING OF TYPES ~ SOUNDNESS

#### A COMPUTATION IS A RANDOM WALK IN THE UNIVERSE OF BITS.



(def main [] (+ x 23) ...) Star Yes, in an Unsafe Language. And Life Goes on. Bits are bits. 0110 1110





#### IN AN UNSOUND LANGUAGE SUCH AS C++:



#### IN AN UNSOUND LANGUAGE SUCH AS C++:



#### Problematic bit manipulations may escape discovery during testing, even if your testing covers the particular path on which things go wrong.

## Now imagine a program that controls your grandmother's heart pacemaker.





#### IN AN SOUND LANGUAGE SUCH AS ML:






- ▶ in an unsound language
- As a user, don't trust anything a program outputs.

- in an sound language
- As a user, consider yourself lucky when you encounter an exception.

- As a developer, beware of programs that seem work.
- Even segfaults can happen far, far away in different galaxy.

 As a developer, an EXN
 The benefits of soundness make up a wide spectrum, but they shouldn't be ignored. Clojure comes with a single type: "the program will run".

Bob Harper citing Dana Scott

A language with a single type can be sound.

Matthias with Andrew Wright

# THE USEFULNESS OF TYPES

A single type isn't very useful, except that it frees the developer from writing it down everywhere.



In an imperative world, *Void* is almost like the one type that some languages provide.



Clojure developers have many types in their mind. They just don't have a language to write them down.



Developers have these thoughts because this is how they 'predict' that their programs work correctly. But some languages do not provide the means to write down these thoughts other than in comments.

And that is a problem, because code is written for others to understand the developers thoughts, and it accidentally runs on computers.







- ;; start reading here:
- (: compile-block [Listof Declarations] [Listof Statement] [Listof Symbol] [Listof Symbol] Boolean



... even in an Untyped language such as Clojure ...

#### **MIT** Press



#### ccs.neu.edu/home/matthias/HtDP2e/

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### All developers "think" types while they create code.

- In some languages they can't write down those thoughts and get them cross-checked with the program.
- If they can't write down types, they must reconstruct them.
- That costs time (with spouses, kids, vacation) and money.
  - What can we do about this?

# **CAN'T WE JUST INFER THE TYPES?**

### No.

## No, it's really not a good idea.

## Why are you asking again? I said 'no' twice.

after 15 years of research

- Hindley-Milner type inference (ML, Haskell)
- Hindley-Milner with revised type algebra
- type inference with set-based analysis
- With S FUNDAMENTALLY, WE NEED A LANGUAGE OF TYPES FIRST, AND UNTYPED LANGUAGES DON'T HAVE ONE BY DEFINITION.

# ADDING TYPES TO AN UNTYPED LANGUAGE

#### Incremental

When you have a code base of 500,000 lines, you *cannot* add types to all of this at once.

#### Idiomatic

Just add types. Otherwise code must not change, because it works.

Sound

The addition of types ought to narrow down the source of exceptions to cut down on future development time.

#### SOUNDNESS IN AN UNTYPED WORLD





#### SOUNDNESS IN AN TYPED WORLD



#### UNTYPED IDIOMS COME FROM SET-BASED THINKING AND BASIC LOGIC



#### A TYPE SYSTEM FOR AN UNTYPED LANGUAGE MUST UNDERSTAND THIS TOO.



In *Typed Racket*, developers must equip *entire modules* with type annotations. In Reticulated
Python, developers
may add types to
any name, whenever,
wherever .





#lang racket
(require "redo.rkt")
.. (delete s0 n0) ..
.. (delete s1 n1) ..



- .. (delete s0 n0) ..
- .. (delete s1 n1) ..











### What happens if we don't generate contracts?



WHAT'S THE PROBLEM HERE?

And that's precisely what *Typed Clojure* does ~ it masks the bugs.

Without contracts, you get all the unsoundness of C++ back.
Types for Untyped languages

- ... must speak the grown idioms.
- .. must allow gradual addition
- .. ought to come with *soundness* because

THE COST IS AN OPEN PROBLEM.

- it reduces developer time
- it won't mask errors

## THE BIG TAKE-AWAY

## Always code as if the guy who ends up maintaining your code will be a violent psychopath who knows where you live. John F. Woods

UNTYPED Programming makes For a good start

> ADD TYPES IF YOU Value Your Developer's time.

ADD TYPES IF YOU VALUE YOUR GRANDMOTHER'S LIFE.

WE ARE BUILDING HYBRID LANGUAGES BUT TO SOME EXTENT, IT'S ALL STILL RESEARCH.

## THE END

Matthew Flatt, the Racket Man

- Robby Findler, Dr. Racket, a Man with Contracts
- Cormac Flanagan, Mr. Spidey

Stevie Strickland, with Class

Sam Tobin-Hochstadt, Typed

Asumu Takikawa, TOOR

Ben Greenman and Max New, Performance Matters

Alex Knauth, Alexis King, 2 wonderful freshmen

... and many many others for contributions to the code base

and even more for theoretical underpinnings, ideas, etc.

## **QUESTIONS?**