Twitter Thread by GeePaw Hill



GeePaw Hill
@GeePawHill

I got one of those messages I sometimes get from a reader, telling me that including my politics in my muses/blogs is off-putting.

As a general rule, I don't bother to respond to these. I gain and lose followers all the time, everyoen who makes content does, for all sorts of reasons, and that's just one more.

Today, though, surrounded by all of this, I feel like I want to give a more full statement on the matter.

So.

To Whom It May Concern:

Please regard 100% of what I write as deeply infused with the spirit of my positions on philosophy, politics and society, as I certainly do.

The software trade has a great many problems, but among the most debilitating and dangerous is the steadfast refusal to adequately incorporate the humanity of the makers into its culture, organization, and reasoning.

By a process of relentless abstraction and ruthless compartmentalization, we seek time and again to suppress, distract from, and minimize the most central fact of software development: humans make software.

I see the symptoms of this everywhere I look in the trade: Our appalling lack of sexual and racial diversity, the rise of Scrum & SAFe, the never-ending Jira-fication of everything, the prevalence of atemporal mechanical theory, the de-emphasis on community and autonomy...

...the mindless worship of numeric metrics, the attempts to substitute rules and rulesets for judgment, our non-existent support for learning, our persistent belief that typing is the bottleneck. Every one of these is thoroughly rooted in ignoring the humans who make software.

Software development is a fundamentally socio-technical enterprise. The strands are not separable in any way.

Everything I teach, about TDD, about agility, about continuous integration, even about using design patterns effectively, and most particularly about successfully implementing change, every word of it, derives from my philosophical and social views. Every word of it.

In case there's any question in your mind, my politics & philosophy are far more radical than anything that appears in any of my writing anywhere. I am not a liberal, but something far further left of that -- though "left/right" is largely a manipulative oversimplification.

In each of my internet threads over the last year, I have included two paragraphs, one near the beginning, and one at the end, which speak of my social and political views. You tell me that this troubles you. What troubles me is that I do so little of it.

It is decidedly not a free world, but in this respect at least, you are free to move on. You can choose to take your technical advice from those who avoid humans, or even those whose politics are the opposite of mine. Believe me, they're all around.

I will keep working for change, in my own tiny way in my own tiny niche, in alignment with my deep commitment to the value of kindness. If explicit references to this trouble you, please be aware that you're missing the many implicit ones.

Anyway, if you decide to stop engaging with my content, well, that's okay. It doesn't make us enemies. I'm not angry. It just means we don't see things the same way -- or close enough.

Take care...
GeePaw Hill