

# Test, Debug, Profile

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Based on a talk by Pietro Berkes



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# Scientific Programming

## Goal

- ▶ allow exploring many different approaches
- ▶ allow frequent changes and adjustments
- ▶ produce correct and reproducible results

## Requirements

- ▶ bugs must be noticed
- ▶ code can be modify easily
- ▶ others can run code too
- ▶ scientist's time is used optimally

## Effect of Software Errors



# Effect of Software Errors: Retractions

*Science* 22 December 2006:  
Vol. 314 no. 5807 pp. 1856-1857  
DOI: 10.1126/science.314.5807.1856

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## NEWS OF THE WEEK

### SCIENTIFIC PUBLISHING

## A Scientist's Nightmare: Software Problem Leads to Five Retractions

Greg Miller

Due to an error caused by a homemade data-analysis program, on page [1875](#), Geoffrey Chang and his colleagues retract three *Science* papers and report that two papers in other journals also contain erroneous structures. ([Read more.](#))

[The Scientist](#) » [News & Opinion](#) » [Daily News](#)

## PLoS journal retracts phylogenetics paper

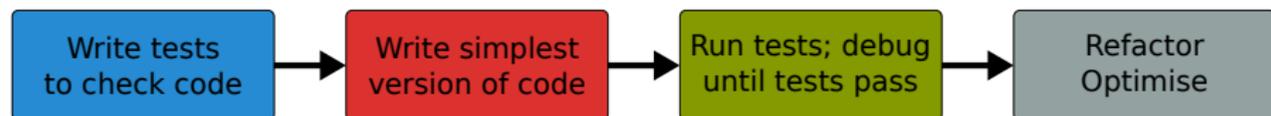
Computational Biology journal pulls paper about estimating the accuracy of phylogenetic trees, in what colleagues deem an exemplary process

By Graciela Flores | June 18, 2007

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PLoS Computational Biology is retracting a [paper](#) published in March that claimed that metrics used to measure the accuracy of phylogenetic trees don't work. Senior author [Barry Hall](#) from the Bellingham Research Institute in Bellingham, Washington requested the retraction after a colleague noticed a discrepancy, the fault of a software bug that upended the paper's conclusion. "We are retracting the paper because the conclusion that we came to was completely wrong," Hall told *The Scientist*. "We found no correlation between clade confidence and phylogenetic tree accuracy, but

# Outline



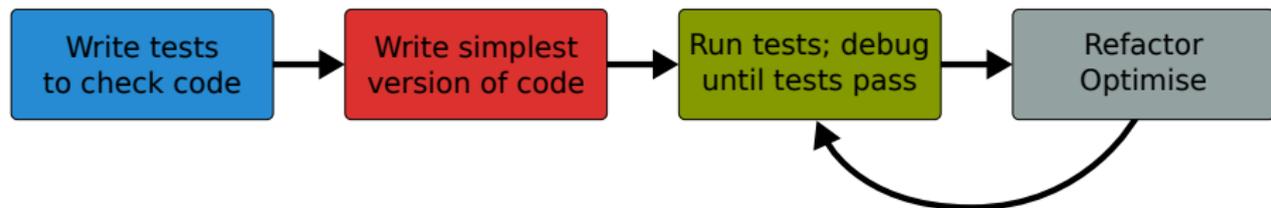
`unittest`  
`doctest`  
`coverage`

`pdb`

`timeit`  
`cProfile`  
`pstats`

- ▶ standard python tools
- ▶ ipython magic commands
- ▶ mostly command line

# Outline



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# Testing

Something you do anyway.

- ▶ run code and see if it crashes
- ▶ check if output makes sense
- ▶ run code with trivial input
- ▶ ...

## Formal Testing

- ▶ important part of modern software development
- ▶ unittest and integration tests
- ▶ tests written in parallel with code
- ▶ tests run frequently/automatically
- ▶ generate reports and statistics

```
[...]
```

```
replace predefined histogram ... ok  
add a legend; change line color of last histogram to red ... ok  
put title and axis labels ... ok
```

```
-----  
Ran 18 tests in 5.118s
```

```
OK  
GoodBye!
```

# Benefits

- ▶ only way to trust your code
- ▶ faster development
  - ▶ know where your bugs are
  - ▶ fixing bugs will not (re)introduce others
  - ▶ change code with out worrying about consistency
- ▶ encourages better code
- ▶ provides example/documentation

```
FAIL: test_result (__main__.FiboTest)
test 7th fibonacci number
```

```
-----
Traceback (most recent call last):
```

```
  File "test_demo.py", line 18, in test_result
    self.assertEqual(result, expect)
AssertionError: 21 != 13
```

## An Example

```
def remove(thelist, entry):  
    """ remove entry object from list """  
    for idx, item in enumerate(thelist):  
        if entry is item:  
            del thelist[idx]  
            break  
    else:  
        raise ValueError("Entry not in the list")
```

Assume we find this code in an old library of ours.

## An Example

```
def remove(thelist, entry):  
    """ remove entry object from list """  
    thelist.remove(entry)
```

We prefer to keep it simple! Everything fine, right?

## An Example

```
def remove(thelist, entry):  
    """ remove entry object from list """  
    thelist.remove(entry)
```

```
ERROR: test_remove_array (__main__.RemoveTest)
```

```
-----  
Traceback (most recent call last):
```

```
  File "list_tests.py", line 19, in test_remove_array  
    lrm.remove(1, x)
```

```
  File "../examples/list_removal.py", line 3, in remove  
    thelist.remove(entry)
```

```
ValueError: The truth value of an array with more than one  
element is ambiguous. Use a.any() or a.all()
```

# Start Testing

At the beginning, testing feels weird:

1. It's obvious that this code works
  2. The tests are longer than the code
  3. The test code is a duplicate of the real code
- it might take a while to get used to testing, but it will pay off quiet rapidly.

# Outline



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# unittest

- ▶ library for unittests
- ▶ part of standard python
- ▶ at the level of other modern tools

## Alternatives

- ▶ nosetests (often used just to run unittests)
- ▶ py.test

# Anatomy of a TestCase

```
import unittest

class DemoTests(unittest.TestCase):

    def test_boolean(self):
        """ tests start with 'test' """
        self.assertTrue(True)
        self.assertFalse(False)

    def test_add(self):
        """ docstring can be printed """
        self.assertEqual(2+1, 3)

if __name__ == "__main__":
    """ execute all tests in module """
    unittest.main()
```

# Summary on Anatomy

## Test Cases

- ▶ are subclass of `unittest.TestCase`
- ▶ group test units

## Test Units

- ▶ methods, whose names **start** with `test`
- ▶ should cover **one** aspect
- ▶ check behaviour with "assertions"
- ▶ rise exception if assertion fails

# Running Tests

Option 1 execute all test units in all test cases of this file

```
if __name__ == "__main__":  
    unittest.main(verbosity=1)
```

```
python3 test_module.py
```

Option 2 Execute all tests in one file

```
python3 -m unittest [-v] test_module
```

Option 3 Discover all tests in all submodules

```
python3 -m unittest discover [-v]
```

## TestCase.assertSomething

- ▶ check boolean value

```
assertTrue('Hi'.islower())           # fail
assertFalse('Hi'.islower())          # pass
```

- ▶ check equality

```
assertEqual(2+1, 3)                   # pass
""" assertEquals can compare all sorts of objects """
assertEqual([2]+[1], [2, 1])          # pass
```

- ▶ check numbers are close

```
from math import sqrt, pi
assertAlmostEqual(sqrt(2), 1.414, places=3) # pass
""" values are rounded, not truncated """
assertAlmostEqual(pi, 3.141, 3)          # fail
assertAlmostEqual(pi, 3.142, 3)          # pass
```

## TestCase.assertRaises

- ▶ most convenient with context managers

```
with self.assertRaises(ErrorType):  
    do_something()  
    do_some_more()
```

- ▶ Important: use most specific exception class

```
bad_file = "inexistent"  
with self.assertRaises(FileNotFoundError): # raises NameError  
    open(bad_fil, 'r')  
  
with self.assertRaises(Exception):  
    open(bad_fil, 'r') # pass
```

## TestCase.assertMoreThings

```
assertGreater(a, b)
```

```
assertLess(a, b)
```

```
assertRegex(text, regexp)
```

```
assertIn(value, sequence)
```

```
assertIsNone(value)
```

```
assertIsInstance(my_object, class)
```

```
assertCountEqual(actual, expected)
```

complete list at

<https://docs.python.org/3/library/unittest.html>

# TestCase.assertNotSomething

Most of the `assert` methods have a `Not` version

```
assertEqual  
assertNotEqual
```

```
assertAlmostEqual  
assertNotAlmostEqual
```

```
assertIsNone  
assertIsNotNone
```

## Testing with numpy

numpy arrays have to be compared elementwise

```
class SpecialCases(unittest.TestCase):
    def test_numpy(self):
        a = numpy.array([1, 2])
        b = numpy.array([1, 2])
        self.assertEqual(a, b)
```

```
=====
ERROR: test_numpy (__main__.SpecialCases)
```

```
-----
Traceback (most recent call last):
```

```
[..]
```

```
ValueError: The truth value of an array with more than one
element is ambiguous. Use a.any() or a.all()
```

## numpy.testing

- ▶ defines appropriate function

```
numpy.testing.assert_array_equal(x, y)
numpy.testing.assert_array_almost_equal(x, y, decimal=6)
```

- ▶ use numpy functions for more complex tests

```
numpy.all(x)           # True if all elements of x are true
numpy.any(x)           # True if any of the elements of x is true
numpy.allclose(x, y)  # True if element-wise close
```

### Example

```
""" test that all elements of x are between 0 and 1 """
assertTrue(all(logical_and(x > 0.0, x < 1.0)))
```

# Strategies for Testing

- ▶ What does a good test look like?
- ▶ What should I test?
- ▶ What is special for scientific code?

# What does a good test look like?

**Given** put system in right state

- ▶ create objects, initialise parameters, ...
- ▶ define expected result

**When** action(s) of the test

- ▶ one or two lines of code

**Then** compare result with expectation

- ▶ set of assertions

## What does a good test look like? – Example

```
import unittest

class LowerTestCase(unittest.TestCase):

    def test_lower(self):
        # given
        string = 'HeLlO wOrld'
        expected = 'hello world'

        # when
        result = string.lower()

        # then
        self.assertEqual(result, expected)
```

# What should I test?

- ▶ simple, general case

```
string = 'HeLl0 w0rld'
```

- ▶ corner cases

```
string = ''
```

```
string = 'hello'
```

```
string = '1+2=3'
```

often involves design decisions

- ▶ any exception you raise explicitly
- ▶ any special behaviour you rely on

## Reduce Overhead 1: Loops

```
import unittest

class LowerTestCase(unittest.TestCase):

    def test_lower(self):
        # given
        # Each test case is a tuple (input, expected)
        test_cases = [('HeLl0 w0rld', 'hello world'),
                      ('hi', 'hi'),
                      ('123 ([?', '123 ([?'),
                      ('', '')]

        for string, expected in test_cases:
            # run several subtests
            # when
            output = string.lower()
            # then
            self.assertEqual(output, expected)
```

## Reduce Overhead 1: Subtests

```
import unittest

class LowerTestCase(unittest.TestCase):

    def test_lower(self):
        # given
        # Each test case is a tuple (input, expected)
        test_cases = [('HeLl0 w0rld', 'hello world'),
                      ('hi', 'hi'),
                      ('123 ([?', '123 ([?'),
                      ('', '')]
        for string, expected in test_cases:
            with self.subTest(config = string):
                # when
                output = string.lower()
                # then
                self.assertEqual(output, expected)
```

## Reduce Overhead 2: Fixtures

- ▶ allow to use same setup/cleanup for several tests
- ▶ useful to
  - ▶ create data set at runtime
  - ▶ load data from file or database
  - ▶ create mock objects
- ▶ available for test case as well as test unit

```
class FixtureTestCase(unittest.TestCase):  
  
    @classmethod  
    def setUpClass(self):      # called at start of TestCase  
  
    def setUp(self):          # called before each test  
  
    def tearDown(self):       # called at end of each test
```

# What is special for scientific code?

often deterministic test cases very limited/impossible

## Numerical Fuzzing

- ▶ generate random input (print random seed)
- ▶ still need to know what to expect

## Know What You Expect

- ▶ generate data from model
- ▶ add noise to known solutions
- ▶ test general routine with specific ones
- ▶ test optimised algorithm with brute-force approach

# Test Driven Development (TDD)

## Tests First

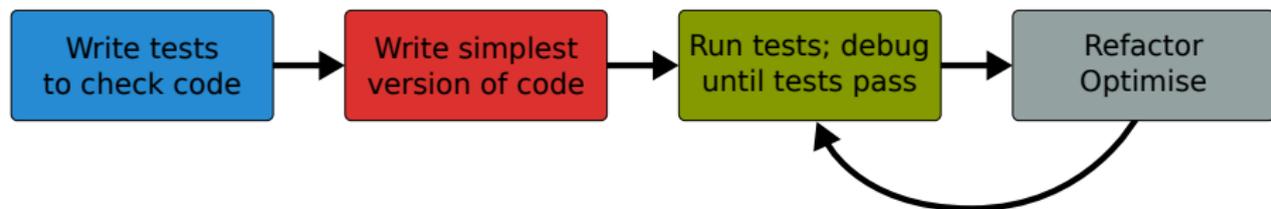
- ▶ choose next feature
- ▶ write test(s) for feature
- ▶ write simplest code

## Benefits

- ▶ forced to think about design before coding
- ▶ code is decoupled and easier to maintain
- ▶ you will notice bugs

DEMO

# Outline



`unittest`  
`doctest`  
`coverage`

`pdb`

`timeit`  
`cProfile`  
`pstats`

- ▶ standard python tools
- ▶ ipython magic commands
- ▶ mostly command line

# doctest

- ▶ poor man's unittest
- ▶ ensure docstrings are up-to-date

```
def add(a,b):  
    """ add two numbers
```

*Example*

-----

```
>>> add(40,2)
```

```
42
```

```
"""
```

```
return a+b
```

```
python3 -m doctest [-v] my_doctest.py
```

```
Trying:
```

```
    add(40,2)
```

```
Expecting:
```

```
    42
```

```
ok
```

```
1 items had no tests:
```

```
    my_doctest
```

```
1 items passed all tests:
```

```
    1 tests in my_doctest.add
```

```
1 tests in 2 items.
```

```
1 passed and 0 failed.
```

```
Test passed.
```

## Code Coverage

- ▶ it's easy to leave part untested
  - ▶ features activated by keyword
  - ▶ code to handle exception
- ▶ coverage tools track the lines executed

### coverage.py

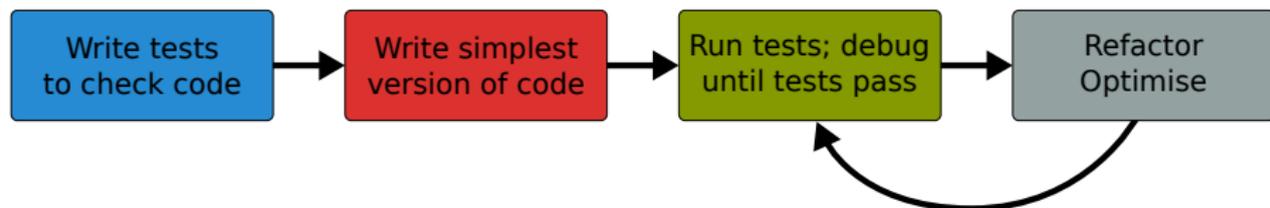
- ▶ python script
- ▶ produces text and HTML reports

```
python3 -m coverage run test_file.py
python3 -m coverage report [-m]
```

- ▶ not in standard library  
get from <http://coverage.readthedocs.io/en/latest/>

DEMO

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# Debugging

- ▶ use tests to avoid bugs and limit „search space”
- ▶ avoid `print` statements
- ▶ use debugger

## `pdb` – the Python debugger

- ▶ command line based
- ▶ opens an interactive shell
- ▶ allows to
  - ▶ stop execution anywhere in your code
  - ▶ execute code step by step
  - ▶ examine and change variables
  - ▶ examine call stack

# Entering pdb

- ▶ enter at start of file

```
python3 -m pdb myscript.py
```

- ▶ enter at statement/function

```
import pdb
# your code here
pdb.run(expression_string)
```

- ▶ enter at point in code

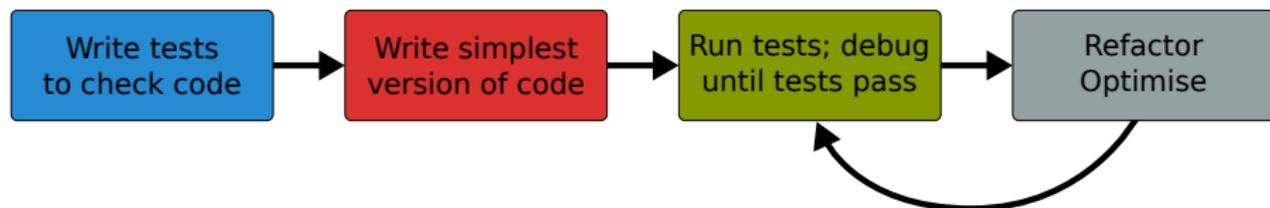
```
# some code here
# the debugger starts here
import pdb; pdb.set_trace()
# rest of the code
```

- ▶ from ipython

```
%pdb      # enter pdb on exception
%debug    # enter pdb after exception
```

DEMO

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# Optimising

1. don't rush into optimisation
2. identify time-consuming parts of code
3. only optimise those parts
4. keep running tests
5. stop as soon as possible

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## timeit

- ▶ precise timing for function/expression
- ▶ test different versions of a code block
- ▶ easiest with ipython's magic command

### `a**2` or `pow(a,2)`?

```
In [1]: a = 43563
```

```
In [2]: %timeit pow(a,2)
```

```
10000000 loops, best of 3: 139 ns per loop
```

```
In [3]: %timeit a**2
```

```
10000000 loops, best of 3: 72.3 ns per loop
```

## cProfile & Pstats

**Profiling** identify where most time is spent

**cProfile** standard python module for profiling

**pstats** tool to show profiling data

▶ run cProfile

```
python3 -m cProfile [-o myscript.prof] myscript.py
```

▶ analyse output from shell

```
python3 -m pstats myscript.prof
```

```
stats      # print statistics
sort       # change sort order
callers    # print callers
callees    # print callees
```

▶ different options for graphical displays, but no standard yet

DEMO

# Final Thoughts

- ▶ testing, debugging and profiling can help you a lot
- ▶ using the right tools makes life a lot easier
- ▶ python comes with good tools included
- ▶ it's as easy as it gets – there are no excuses