

Dick French writes:

- > I'd like to learn how to make use of IDL objects. I'm not ready for object
  - > graphics yet, because I'd like to understand INITS and SELF and classes and
  - > methods before worrying about viewports and plots disappearing because I am
  - > not using the correct projection scheme.
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- > Someone must be out there just waiting to get rich writing a book on this
  - > topic.

Getting rich is the easy part. Watching your marriage fall apart and your kids become alienated while you labor away writing the darn thing days, nights, and weekends is the hard part.

And then, of course, you realize you are NOT going to get rich unless you put a lot more sex into the thing than it has now, so you wonder if maybe fame will make the cost worth it. In the end, you would have been further ahead to have just purchased the IDL T-shirt and have been done with it. :-)

The last chapter of my book has a decent introduction to objects, although I can see that the example I used might have a "why bother" feel to an astronomer. It is hard to find the right example. They have to be easy enough to be explained, but sophisticated enough to suggest real world problems.

In the Hawaii classes I resorted to writing slightly simplified versions of my Catalyst objects, and maybe the combination of me spilling all my secrets and the astronomers asking for certain functionality created some kind of synergy. All I know is that all of a sudden we were in a groove and writing programs that became significantly easier to write with objects than it would have been otherwise.

I have a feeling our Thanksgiving celebration will be abbreviated a bit tomorrow, so maybe I'll have time to add some annotations to the programs we wrote and make them available. (We have been celebrating Thanksgiving for 25+ years with some college friends, but this year they suddenly decided they are vegetarians and there would be no turkey! We tried this experiment 10 years ago and it was a disaster, but I guess they don't remember. Sigh...) Anyway, if my famous butternut squash dish doesn't take too long in the

morning, I'll see what I can do. :-)

Happy Thanksgiving!

David

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Coyote's Guide to IDL Programming: <http://www.dfanning.com/>

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