*"Those who cannot remember the past are condemned to repeat it"*

***– George Santayana, “Life of Reason”***

# CONTROL

*Andrew Robinson, Senior IT Support Manager*

*K.K. Krene / Opn Holdings Co., Ltd., Tokyo*
*MacSysAdmin, October 1st, 2026*

# Recently in Tokyo…

KODŌ

# 鼓童









# www.kodo.or.jp

KODO



## > About Kodo

HOME > About Kodo

The taiko: a traditional Japanese drum with limitless rhythmic possibilities. Kodo's mission is to explore these possibilities, and in the process forge new directions for a vibrant living art-form. In Japanese, the word "Kodo" holds a double meaning. It can be translated as "heartbeat," the primal source of all rhythm. Indeed, the great taiko is thought to be reminiscent of a mother's heartbeat as felt from the womb, and babies are often lulled to sleep by its thunderous vibrations. If read in a different context however, Kodo can also mean "children of the drum," which reflects the group's desire to play the drums with the simple heart of a child.

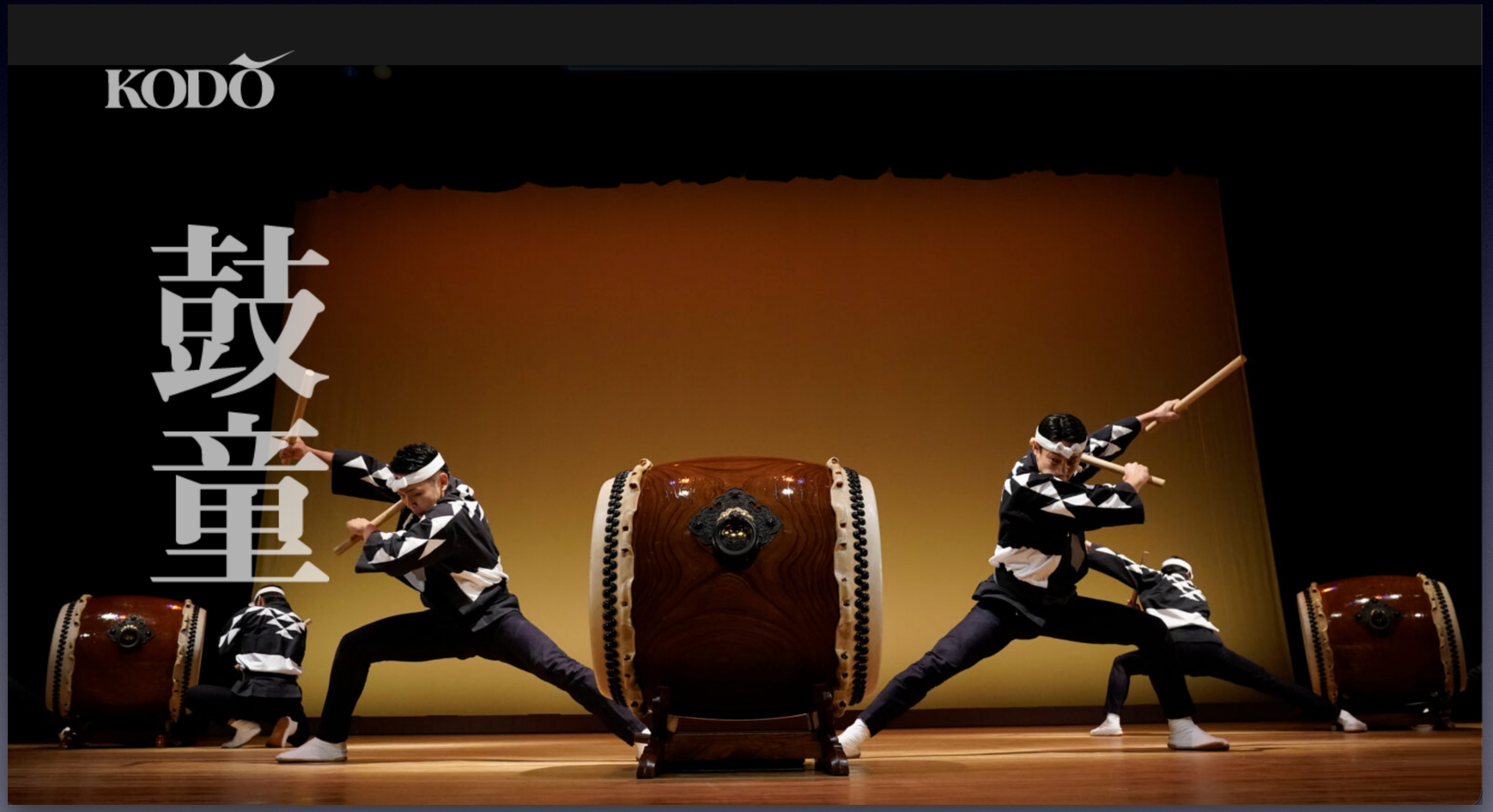
Since the group's debut at Berliner Festspiele in 1981, Kodo has given over 7,500 performances in more than 50 countries and regions on five continents. This figure includes 4,200 performances under the "One

日本語

> About Kodo

- Kodo One Earth Music
- Kodo Performances
- Greetings
- Members of Kodo Taiko Performing Arts Ensemble

# Kodo - Discipline vs Control



# Kodo - Discipline vs Control



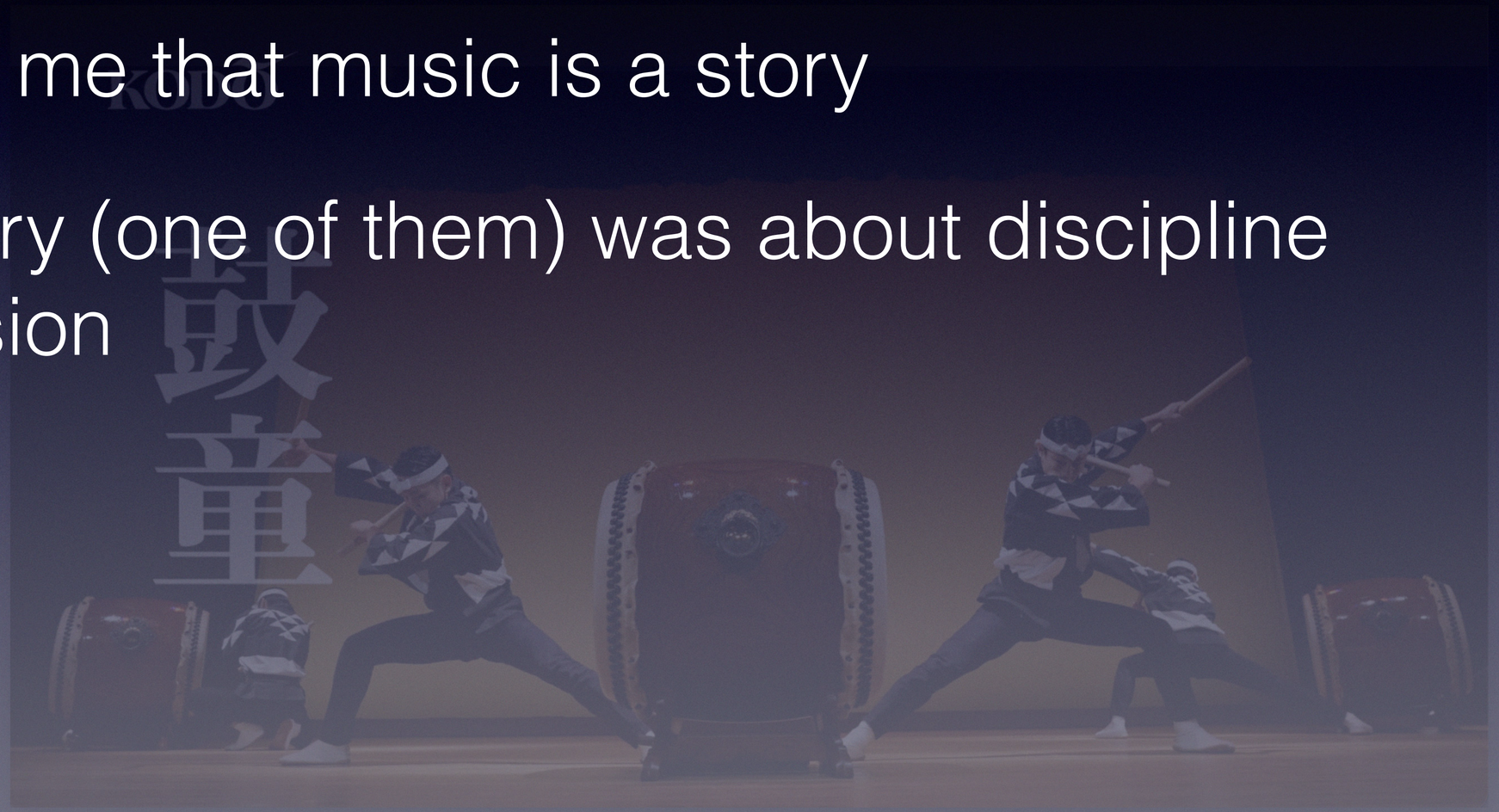
# Kodo - Discipline vs Control

- Reminded me that music is a story



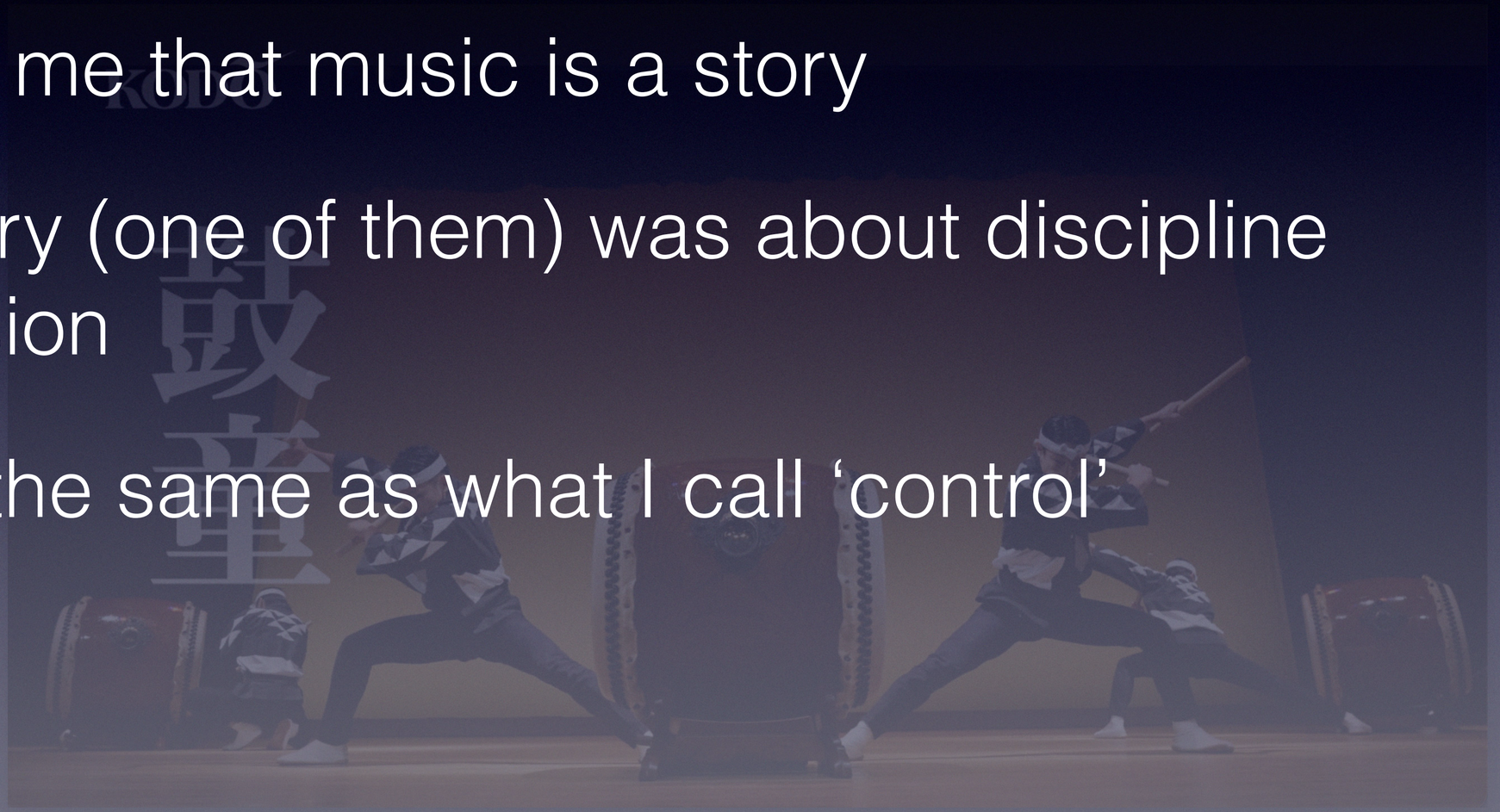
# Kodo - Discipline vs Control

- Reminded me that music is a story
- Kodo’s story (one of them) was about discipline and precision



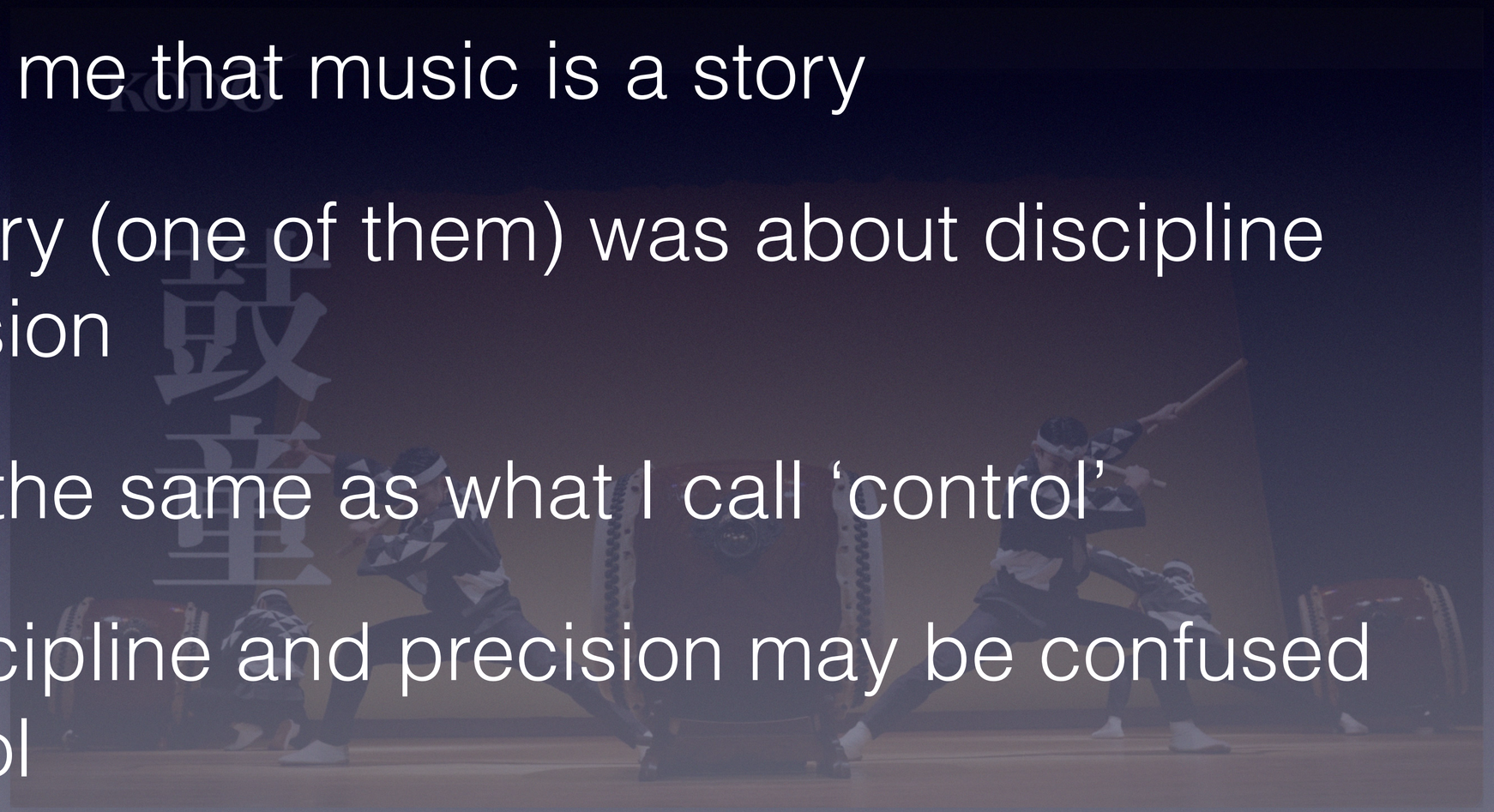
# Kodo - Discipline vs Control

- Reminded me that music is a story
- Kodo’s story (one of them) was about discipline and precision
- Not really the same as what I call ‘control’



# Kodo - Discipline vs Control

- Reminded me that music is a story
- Kodo's story (one of them) was about discipline and precision
- Not really the same as what I call 'control'
- … But discipline and precision may be confused with control



# Kodo reminded me…

# Kodo reminded me…

*Control is not always what we think*

# *Introductions…*

## ***Andrew Robinson***

- Senior IT Support Manager in Tokyo, Bangkok & other parts of Asia
- ***@Andrew*** in MacAdmins Slack



# Disclaimer

“The opinions expressed may not be those of my employer”

# Disclaimer, part 2

# What ***is*** Control?

# What Control is Not

# What Control is Not

- Control is NOT ***restriction***

# What Control is Not

- Control is NOT ***restriction***
- Control is NOT ***blocking access***

# What Control is Not

- Control is NOT ***restriction***
- Control is NOT ***blocking access***
- Control is NOT ***enforcement***

# What Control is Not

- Control is NOT ***restriction***
- Control is NOT ***blocking access***
- Control is NOT ***enforcement***
- Control is NOT (necessarily) ***order***

# What is Control?

# What is Control?

- Control is ***external***

# What is Control?

- Control is ***external***
- Control should follow ***rules***

# What is Control?

- Control is ***external***
- Control should follow ***rules***
- Control is applied via ***authority***

# What is Control?

# What is Control?

- Control is an exercise of ***power***

# The use of Power is not the same everywhere

# MSA 2020 - culture and technology

## “Computers Are Easy, People Are Hard”*

*Looking at technology through the lens of culture*

***Andrew Robinson***

*IT Consultant; Senior Facilitator & Associate Partner,*
*Hofstede Insights Japan*

MAC · SYS · ADMIN · GOTHENBURG

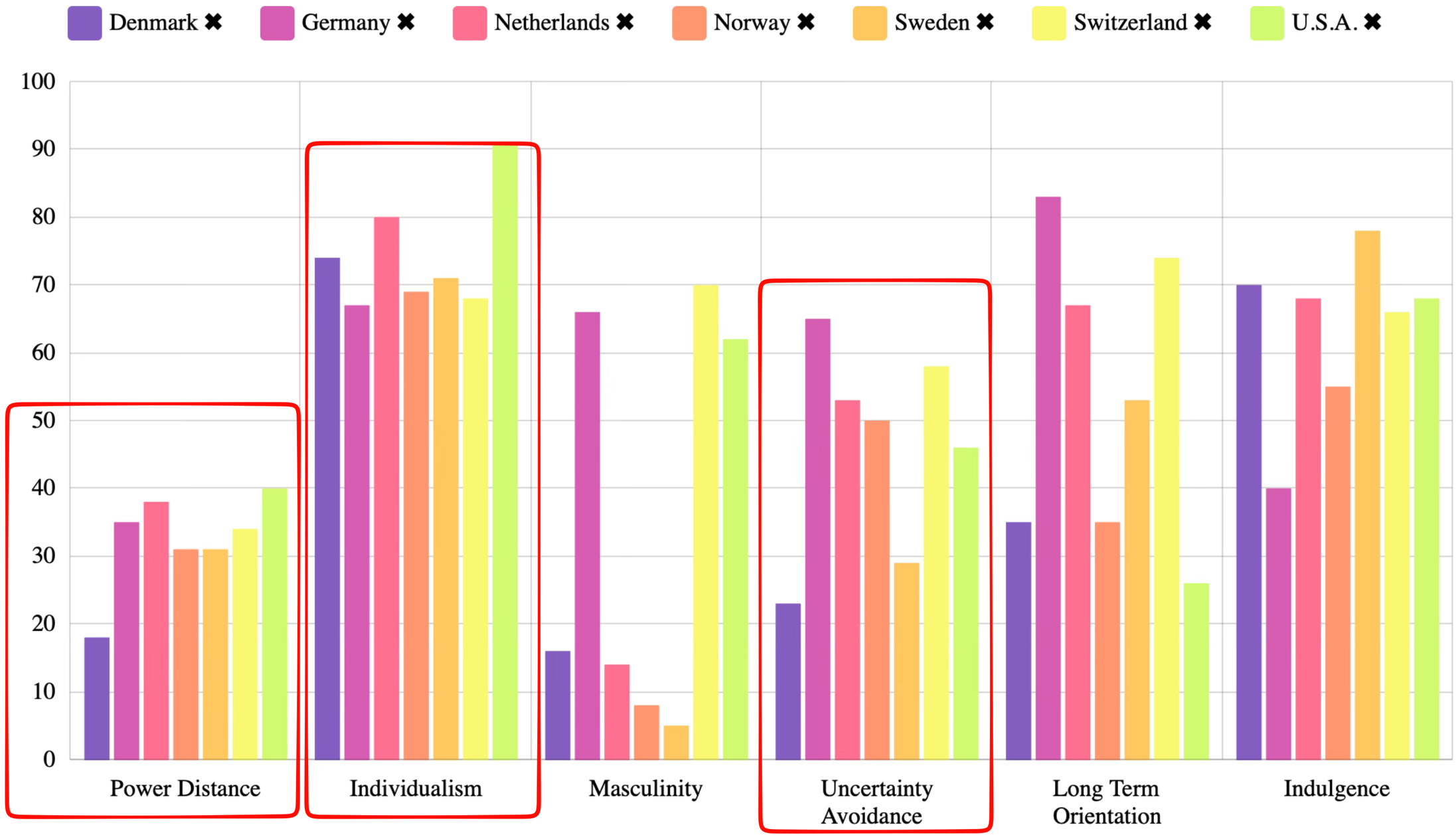


# Differences in national culture ***matter***

# *Top 7 National Cultures at MSA **

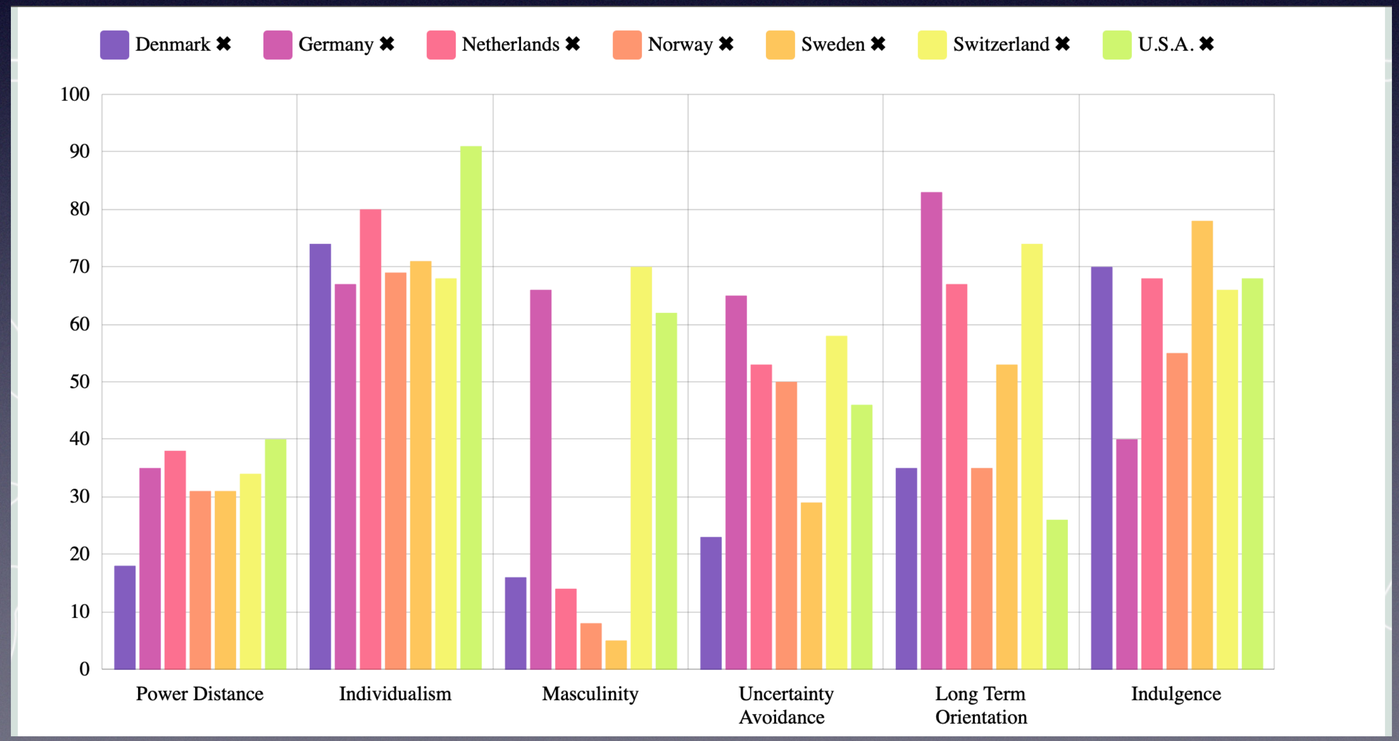
| Country | Participant Count | Percentage |
|---|---|---|
| Sweden | 67 | 27.90% |
| Norway | 30 | 12.50% |
| Germany | 27 | 11.30% |
| United States | 25 | 10.40% |
| Denmark | 21 | 8.80% |
| Switzerland | 18 | 7.50% |

* anonymous, aggregated data only


Denmark ✖
Germany ✖
Netherlands ✖
Norway ✖
Sweden ✖
Switzerland ✖
U.S.A. ✖
100
90
80
70
60
50
40
30
20
10
0
Power Distance
Individualism
Masculinity
Uncertainty Avoidance
Long Term Orientation
Indulgence

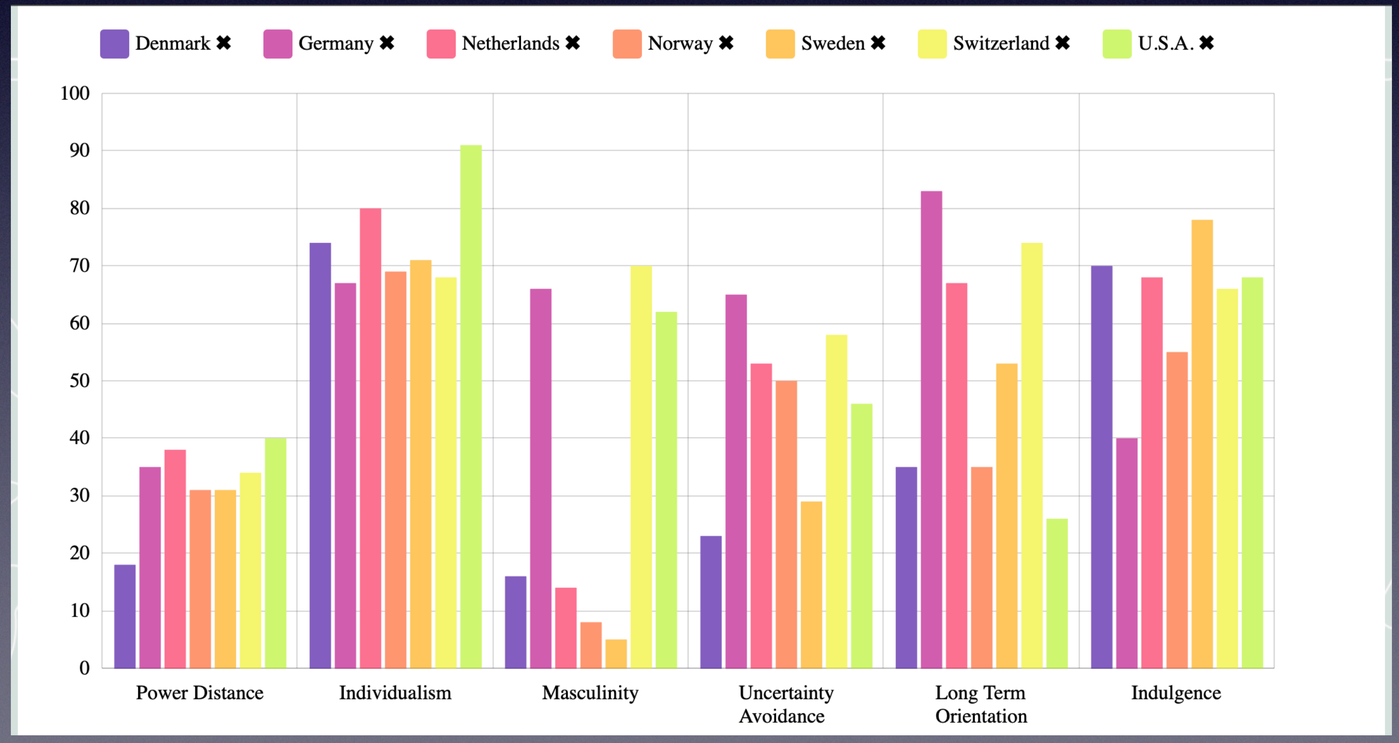
# What does this tell us?

- *Low Power Distance*
  - *Authority is not ‘top-down’*
  - *‘Buy-in’ is needed*
  - *Can’t rely on forcing compliance*



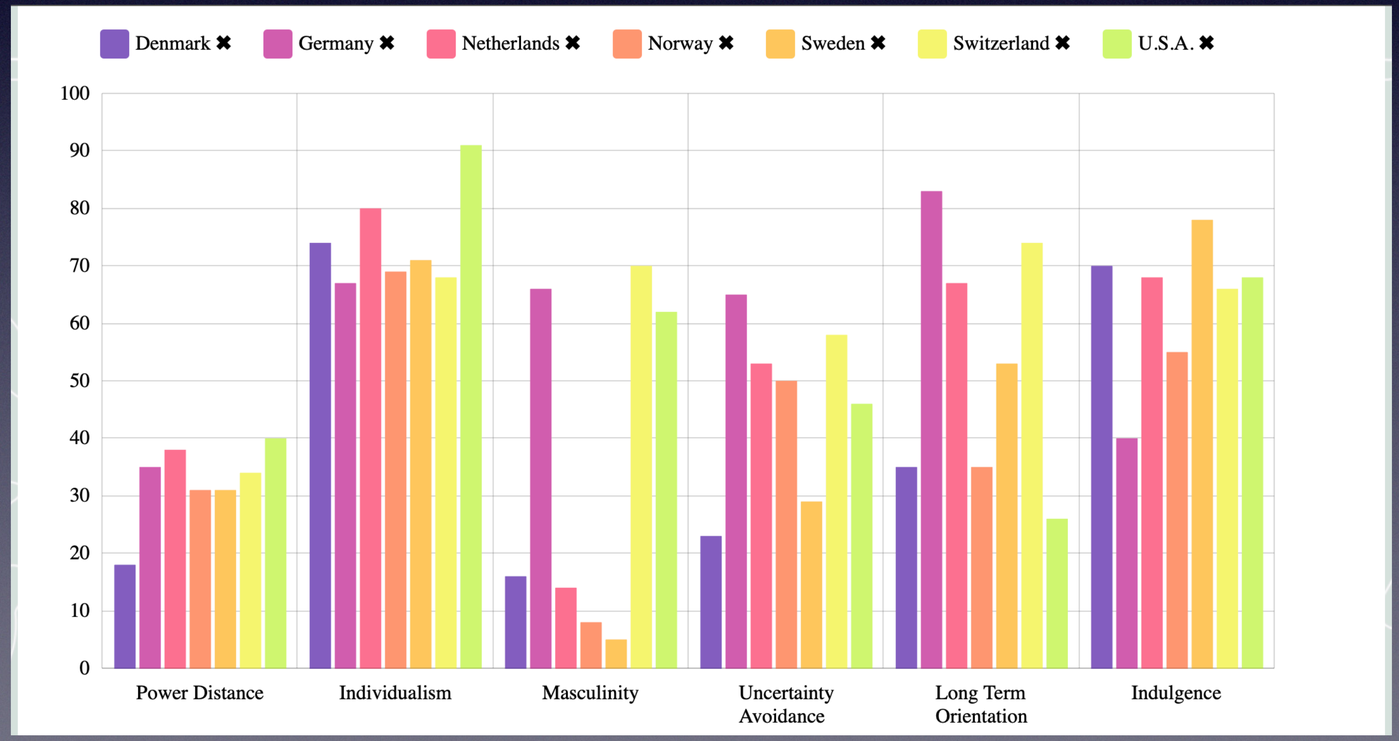
# What does this tell us?

- *High Individualism*
  - *Less team-oriented*
  - *Motivation is more personal*
  - *One-by-one focused compliance*



# What does this tell us?

- *Mid- to low range Uncertainty Avoidance*
  - *Rules are somewhat valued*
  - *Risk-aversion varies*
    - *Risk-taking accepted*
  - *In-place processes subject to change*



# *You'll need more than The Cap of Command…*

⌘



How we impose rules is at least ***impacted*** by national culture

‘Culture matters’

*“**Xerxes**: Come Leonidas, let us reason together. […] There is much our cultures could share.*

***Leonidas**: Haven't you noticed? We've been sharing our culture with you all morning.”*

**– “300” Zack Snyder (director), original comic by Frank Miller**

# What if Control ***itself*** is not the actual goal?

# What if ***Compliance*** is the actual goal?

We’d want that Compliance to be ***voluntary***

Because Humans are
***messy*** & ***complex***

The Authority we have is ***given***, not imposed *

* in some national cultures…

As long as humans are involved, full & absolute Control is not likely

*“…the kind of control you're attempting simply is... it's not possible…life, uh... finds a way…”*

**– Dr Ian Malcolm, “Jurassic Park”**

# Here’s an (unfortunately) familiar story…

# When a new system or app comes along…

…which is outside current guardrails…

…which leadership / management don’t understand…

…we need to decide:

# Leave it be, or…

# Apply a restriction, a limit, a Control

Many times this is a
***Reactive*** response

*“…One day it's fine, and next it's black*

*So if you want me off your back*

*Well, come on and let me know*

*Should I stay, or should I go?…”*

**– “Should I Stay or Should I Go,” The Clash**

# ***Classic*** technology issue

‘***Fix*** the root problem?’

‘Or apply a ***patch*** / band-aid’

(I really hate band-aids)

# Short-term

# Lazy

Require more band-aids ***later***

…*annnnd* we're back — ***again***

# Band-aids end up being the job,

# Because time to think slowly and carefully ISN’T taken

# How do we know we are On The True Path?

(Is there a True Path?)

Technologists are ***good*** at enforcement… at Controls

# We might not be as good at planning that enforcement

# The ‘why’ of the Controls

# The answer is up to you

# ‘Outside’ resources may help

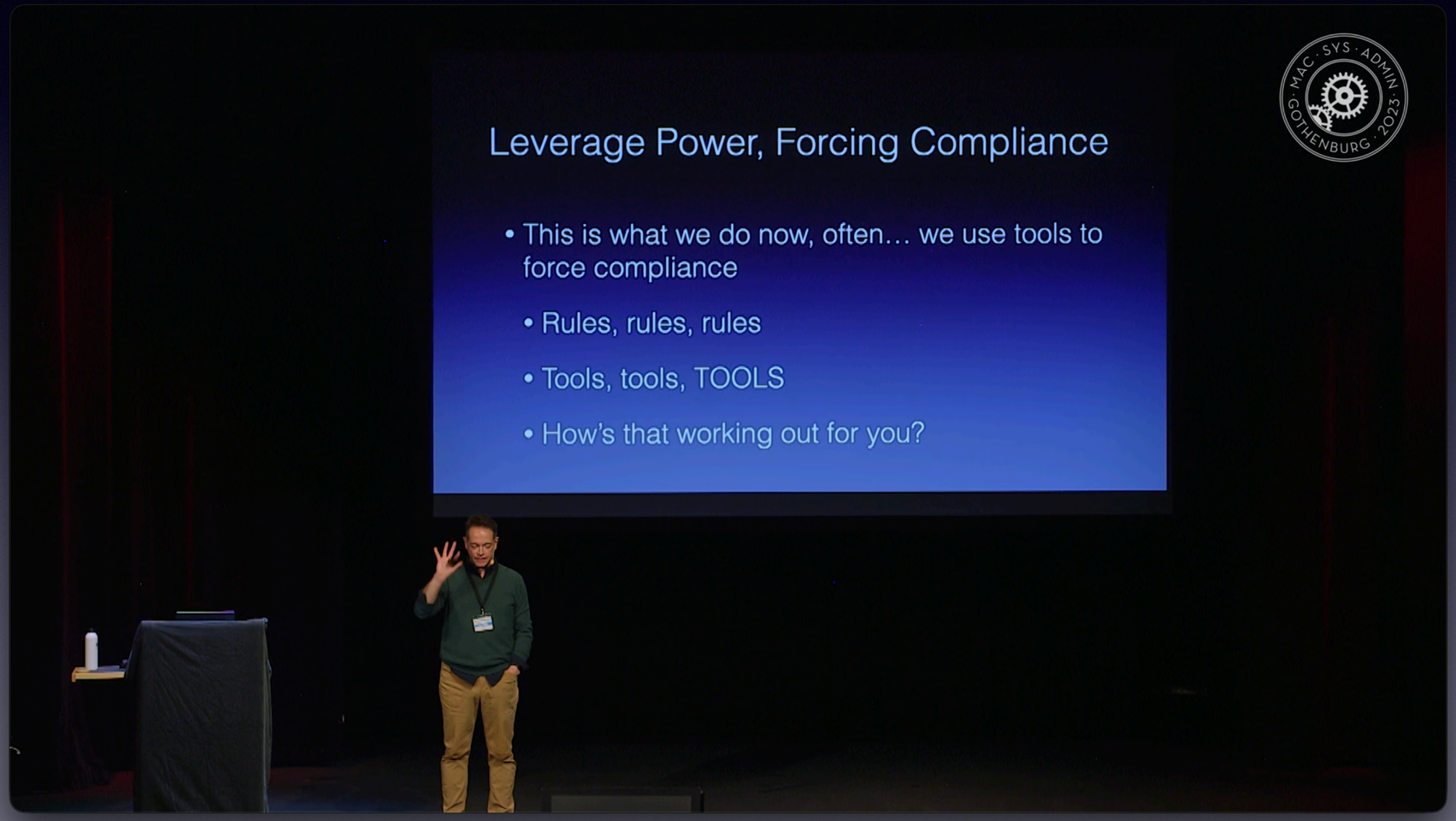
# ***Objectivity*** vs subjective ‘blindness’

# Is Full Control Possible?
# (Or even wanted?)

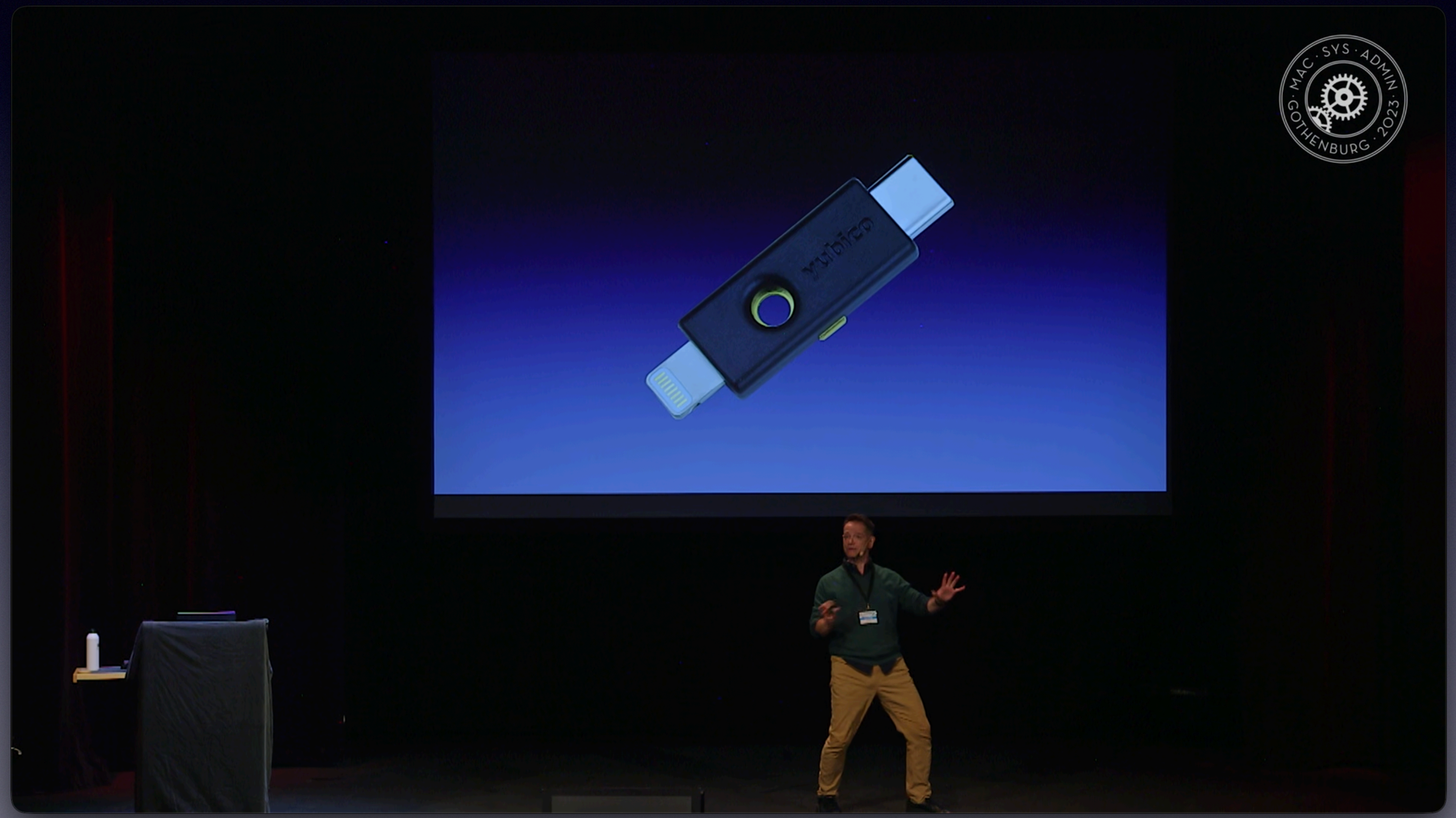
# We’re not the police

Are we really able to ***Control*** behavior?

# MSA 2023 - compliance & cooperation



# MSA 2023 - Stories are useful!



# Stories are the original documentation

# Documentation is storytelling

There are ***great*** stories about Power and Control

# Stories to inspire & teach

*“… And how you tried to set them free*

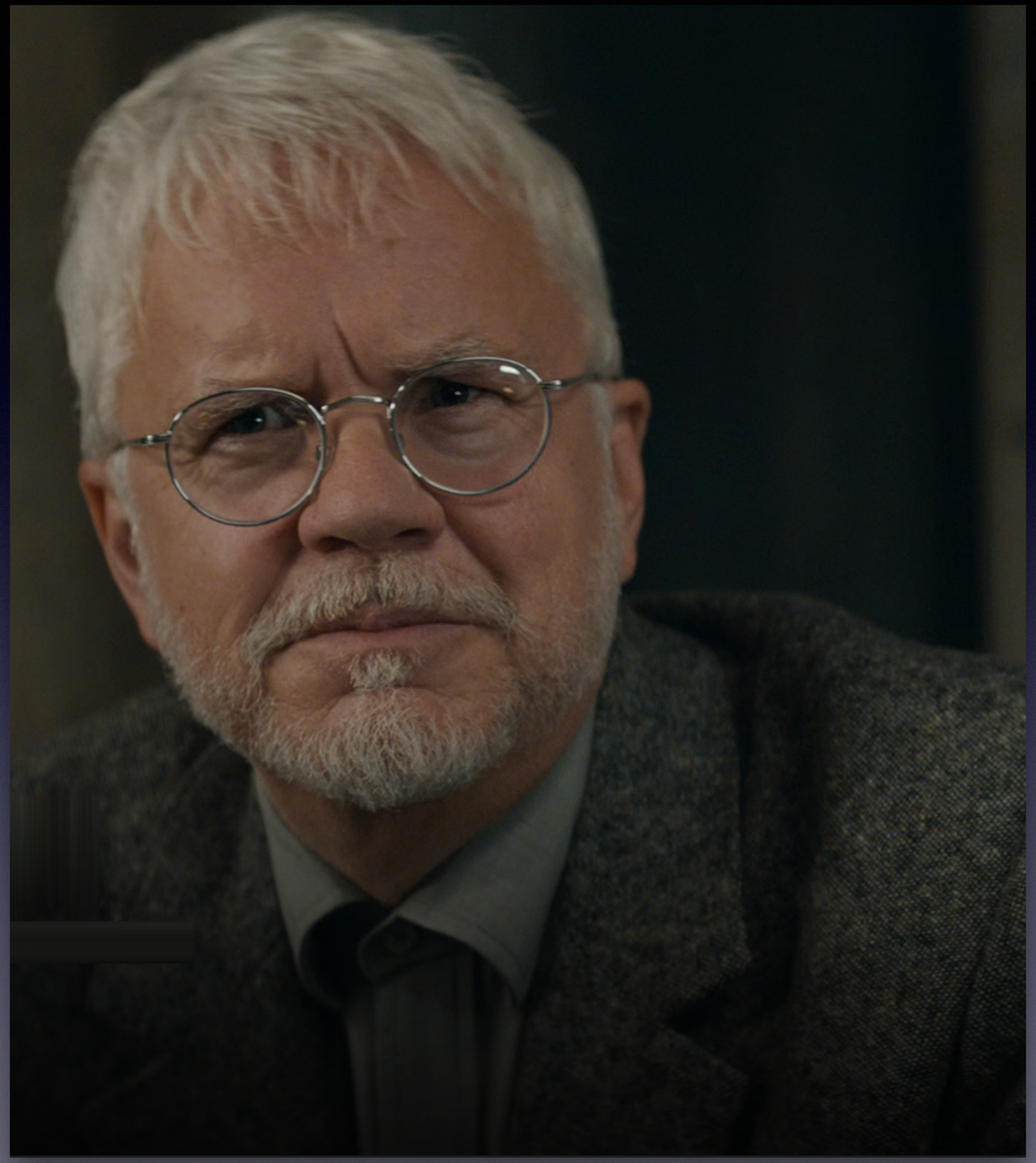
*They would not listen, they did not know how*

*Perhaps they'll listen now…”*

**– “Vincent” Don McLean**


tv
SILO
THE KEY TO THE FUTURE
LIES IN THE PAST

# Bernard Holland
# Head of IT



# What does Silo’s Bernard teach us?

# What does Silo's Bernard teach us?

- Control at the ***expense of accountability***

# What does Silo's Bernard teach us?

- Control at the ***expense of accountability***
- Freedom vs (almost) ***absolute Control***

# What does Silo's Bernard teach us?

- Control at the ***expense of accountability***
- Freedom vs (almost) ***absolute Control***
  - …until ***rebellion***

# What does Silo's Bernard teach us?

- Control at the ***expense of accountability***
- Freedom vs (almost) ***absolute Control***
  - …until ***rebellion***
- ***This is what you get when IT runs everything***

# The Matrix Movies



# The Oracle

# What's *up* with The Oracle?

# What's *up* with The Oracle?

- She's a ***program***, not human

# What's *up* with The Oracle?

- She's a ***program***, not human
- She's part of the ***Control system***

# What's *up* with The Oracle?

- She's a ***program***, not human
- She's part of the ***Control system***
- She ***manipulates*** through emotion and psychology

She’s a ***psychological*** &
***emotional*** system of Control

*"…There is only one constant, one universal,*

*it is the only real truth: causality.*

*Action, reaction.*

*Cause, and effect…"*

**– The Merovingian, "The Matrix Reloaded"**

# The Merovingian



# The Merovingian



# The Merovingian

- Deterministic



# The Merovingian

- Deterministic
- Fatalistic



# The Merovingian

- Deterministic
- Fatalistic
- Static



# He’s also a method of Control

*“…Choice is an illusion created between those with power and those without…”*

**– The Merovingian, “The Matrix Reloaded”**



# Maia, from Lord of the Rings

# Sauron
*(‘Mairon’)*



# Sauron
# *(‘Mairon’)*

- Ultimate domination



# Sauron
## *(‘Mairon’)*

- Ultimate domination
- Seductive yet cruel



# Sauron
## *(‘Mairon’)*

- Ultimate domination
- Seductive yet cruel
- Power as ‘might is right’



# Saruman
*(‘Curumo’)*



# Saruman
# *(‘Curumo’)*

- Autocratic



# Saruman
# *(‘Curumo’)*

- Autocratic
- Jealous and proud



# Saruman
# *(‘Curumo’)*

- Autocratic
- Jealous and proud
- Betrayal of his mission



# Gandalf
*(‘Olórin’)*



# Gandalf
# *(‘Olórin’)*

- Humble



# Gandalf
# *(‘Olórin’)*

- Humble
- Thoughtful



# Gandalf
# *(‘Olórin’)*

- Humble
- Thoughtful
- Advisor



# Summary…

# Finding our purpose, our ‘Why’

# Power is applied differently depending on where you are

# What's the ***flavor*** of Control we want?

***Who*** do you want to be?

# Bernard, head of IT of Silo 17?

# The Oracle?

# The Merovingian?

# Sauron?

# Saruman?

# Gandalf…

# Choose wisely

*“…But choose wisely, for while the true Grail will bring you life, the false Grail will take it from you…”*

**– The Grail Knight, “Indiana Jones and the Last Crusade”**

# Thank you!

# Link references

- **Kodo's** 'O-Daiko' performances (there are a few versions… make sure you watch at least one the whole way through!)
  - https://www.youtube.com/@KodoHeartbeat/featured (**Kodo's Channel**)
  - https://youtu.be/q_A6W0tNP6o?si=Ep-nyfmdfAlVd4qA
  - https://youtu.be/C7HL5wYqAbU?si=4rmYXS_nkCYpkDwm
  - …and so many, many more
- **Geert Jan Hofstede's** *Country Comparison online tool* - https://geerthofstede.com/country-comparison-bar-charts/

# Link references - 2

- **Nerd of the Rings** - https://www.youtube.com/@NerdoftheRings/featured - for diving into the history and lore of Tolkien's legendarium, this Channel is an incredibly detailed and in-depth resource

- **In Deep Geek** - https://www.youtube.com/@InDeepGeek - a must-visit channel 'in nerdy detail' about LotRs, The Witcher and A Song of Ice & Fire…check it out; you'll be welcome!

# Link references - 3

- **The Matrix Movies -** There are many, many references found all OVER the ‘net on The Matrix, but for insightful videos that made up some of my research on The Oracle & The Merovingian (as well as many other topics that didn’t quite make it in…), check out:
  - **Stories That Inspire** - **https://www.youtube.com/@storiesthatinspire662**

# *My Presentation's 'Report Card'*

*Here I wanted to self-report the usage of so-called 'AI tools' in how this presentation was created…*

*…note the following slides were NOT mainly made by Andrew… I edited them for spacing and overall readability, but they were made by LLMs*

MACSYSADMIN CONFERENCE • GÖTEBORG, SWEDEN

# Methodology & Generative Model Disclosure

Transparency in technical research: Defining the boundary between computational synthesis engines and human authorship.

PHASE 1 • PREPARATION & CONTEXT

# Conversational Synthesis Engines in Research

### Transcript Analysis

Structured raw session notes using Gemini, Claude, and Siri AI stateful workspaces.

### Term Precision

Replaced marketing terms with exact CS terms like *Transformer Models* & *Generative Neural Networks*.

### System Querying

Quick hardware lookup and reference verification via Siri AI assistant.

PHASE 2 • AUTHORSHIP BOUNDARIES

# What Models Were NOT Allowed To Do

### Zero Opinions

Core thesis and IT governance principles are 100% human-authored.

### No Auto-Scripting

Speaker narrative and presentation flow generated without generative scripts.

### Manual Audit

Every cited statistic and claim cross-verified against primary sources.

SESSION TRANSPARENCY DISCLOSURE

# Model Usage Report Card

Audited Tools: Gemini, Claude & Siri AI

| Workflow Tasks | Execution Engine | Status / Boundary |
|---|---|---|
| Core Thesis & Governance Strategy | Human Intelligence & Domain Experience | 100% HUMAN |
| Literature & Transcript Synthesis | Context-Bound Workspace (Gemini / Claude) | MODEL ASSISTED |
| Quick Reference & System Querying | Siri (Apple Foundation Models) | MODEL ASSISTED |
| Terminology Refinement (CS vs AI) | Probabilistic Text Models (Gemini) | MODEL ASSISTED |
| Slide Authorship & Speaker Delivery | Human Presenter | 100% HUMAN |

Summary Statement: Conversational engines served as research accelerants and formatting tools — never as surrogates for domain expertise or narrative judgment.

META DISCLOSURE • PRESENTATION ARTIFACTS

# Slide Generation Attribution

</>

## HTML/CSS Generation

The underlying layout and Keynote Gradient styling for the audit slides, and some images, were generated by Gemini.

## Multi-Model Inputs

Incorporated research workflow contributions from Claude and Siri AI (Apple Foundation Models).

## Authorial Distinction

The core thesis, IT governance philosophy, and live speech remain 100% human-authored.

# *Outtakes & unused slides…*

*Other quotes planned but not used…*

*“Quis custodiet ipsos custodes?”*

**– Juvenal, “Satires”**
**(Satire VI, lines 347–348)**

*“Who watches the watchmen”*

**– Alan Moore, “Watchmen”**

*“…Just hold on loosely*

*But don't let go*

*If you cling too tightly*

*You're gonna lose control…”*

**– “Hold On Loosely,” 38 Special**

*“…We don't need no education*

*We don't need no thought control…”*

**– “Another Brick In The Wall, Pt. 2,” Pink Floyd**

“**McCoy**: *…There are certain absolutes, Mister Spock, and one of them is the right of humanoids to a free and unchained environment, the right to have conditions which permit growth.*

**Spock**: *Another is their right to choose a system which seems to work for them…”*

***– Star Trek (The Original Series) “The Apple" (Season 2, Episode 5)***

“…For the listener, who listens in the snow,

And, nothing himself, beholds

Nothing that is not there and the nothing that is…”

**– Wallace Stevens, “The Snow Man,”**

*“…It goes down the same as the thousand before*

*No one's getting smarter*

*No one's learning the score*

*Your never-ending spree of death and violence and hate*

*Is gonna tie your own rope, tie your own rope, tie your own…”*

**– “Come Out and Play,” The Offspring**

*“…He’s the hairy-handed gent who ran amok in Kent*

*Lately, he's been overheard in Mayfair*

*You better stay away from him*

*He'll rip your lungs out, Jim*

*Huh, I'd like to meet his tailor*

*Ah-hoo, werewolves of London…”*

**– “Werewolves of London,” Warren Zevon**

*“…And now you do what they told ya*

*(Now you're under control)*

*And now you do what they told ya*

*(Now you're under control)*

*And now you do what they told ya*

*(Now you're under control)…”*

**– “Killing In The Name,” Rage Against The Machine**

*“… Blue canary in the outlet by the light switch*

*Who watches over you*

*Make a little birdhouse in your soul…”*

**– “Birdhouse In Your Soul,” They Might Be Giants**

*“…You can't control an independent heart*

*(Can't hold what you can't keep)…*

*…If you wanna keep something precious*

*You gotta lock it up and throw away the key…”*

**– “If You Love Somebody Set Them Free,” Sting**

*“…And it's the damage that we do*
*we never know*

*it's the words that we don't say that*
*scare me so…”*

**– “Accidents will Happen,” Elvis Costello & The Attractions**

*“…Ahhh*
*(I've been there, I know the way)*
*Can't get there from here*
*(I've been there, I know the way)*
*Can't get there from here…”*

**– “Can’t Get There From Here” R.E.M.**

*“… Each has his own ticket in his hand*
*And as the evening descends*
*I sit thinking 'bout Everyman…”*

**– “Everyman” Jackson Browne**

*TANSTAAFL**

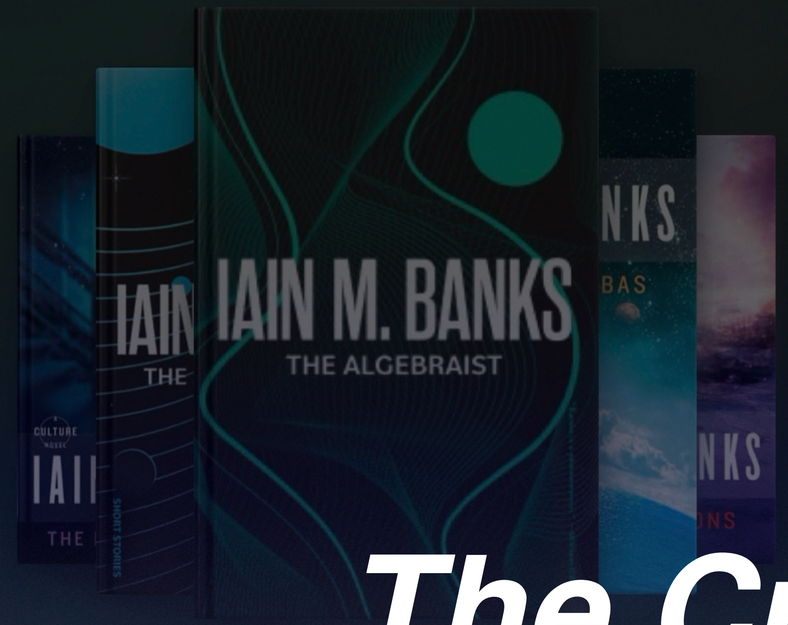
** "…There ain't no such thing as a free lunch…"*

**– Manuel "Mannie" O'Kelly-Davis,**
**"The Moon is a Harsh Mistress," Robert A. Heinlein**

*These were ideas that never got fully integrated…*


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System Collapse
Murderbot novels
by Martha Wells
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Audiobooks
BOOK 1
All Systems Red
Finished
BOOK 2
Artificial Condition
Finished
BOOK 3
Rogue Protocol
Finished


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Control Resonant
games
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Culture

Iain M. Banks >

Series · 8 Books · Sci-Fi & Fantasy

Continue Reading
The State of the Art

# ***The Culture*** novels,
# By Iain M. Banks

Books Audiobooks

The Algebraist
Iain M. Banks
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$9.99

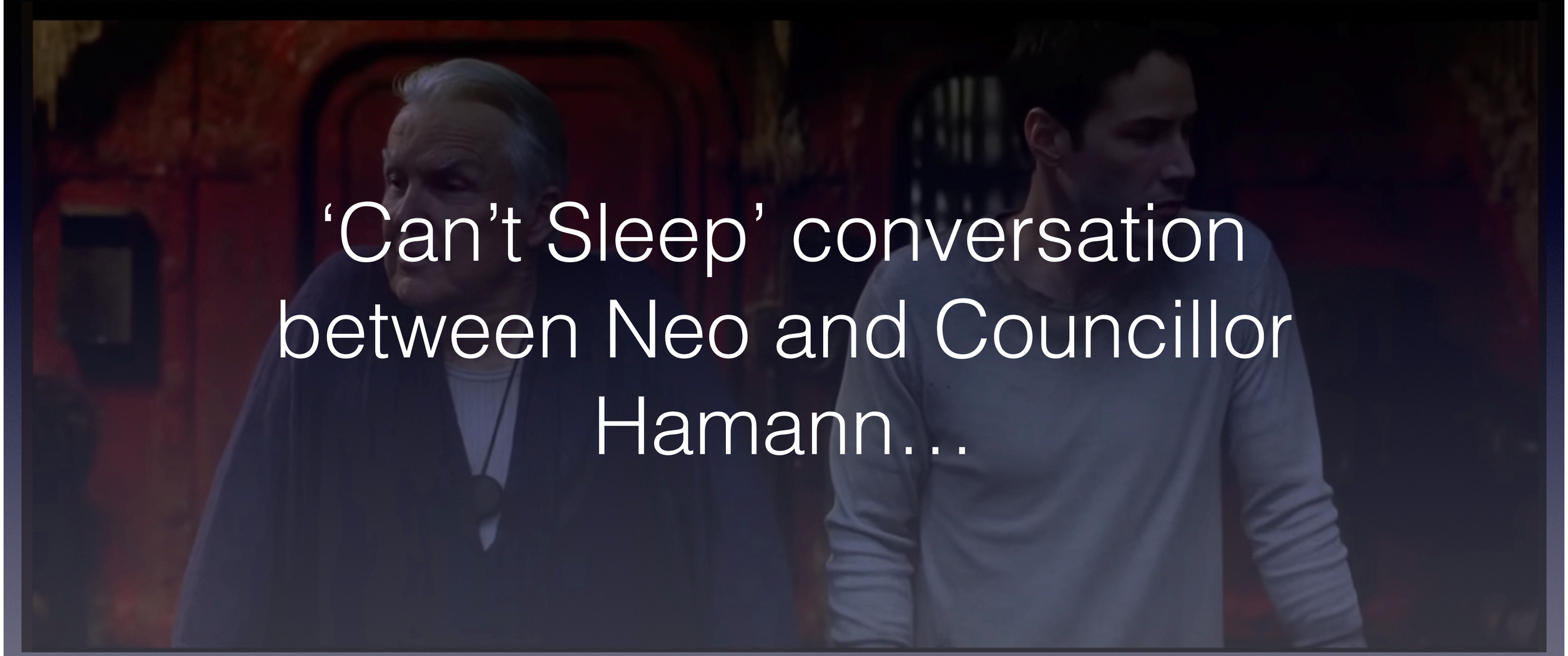
The State of the Art
Iain M. Banks
21%

Consider Phlebas
Iain M. Banks
4%

# The Cypher System TTRPG

*Then, some threads that were included but not developed…*

***More LotRs*** - The One Ring, Ringwraiths, Aragorn, etc…



# ‘Can’t Sleep’ conversation between Neo and Councillor Hamann…

*And finally… slides that were removed — because of repetition, because of time, pacing, etc…*

We may fear a ***lack*** of Control

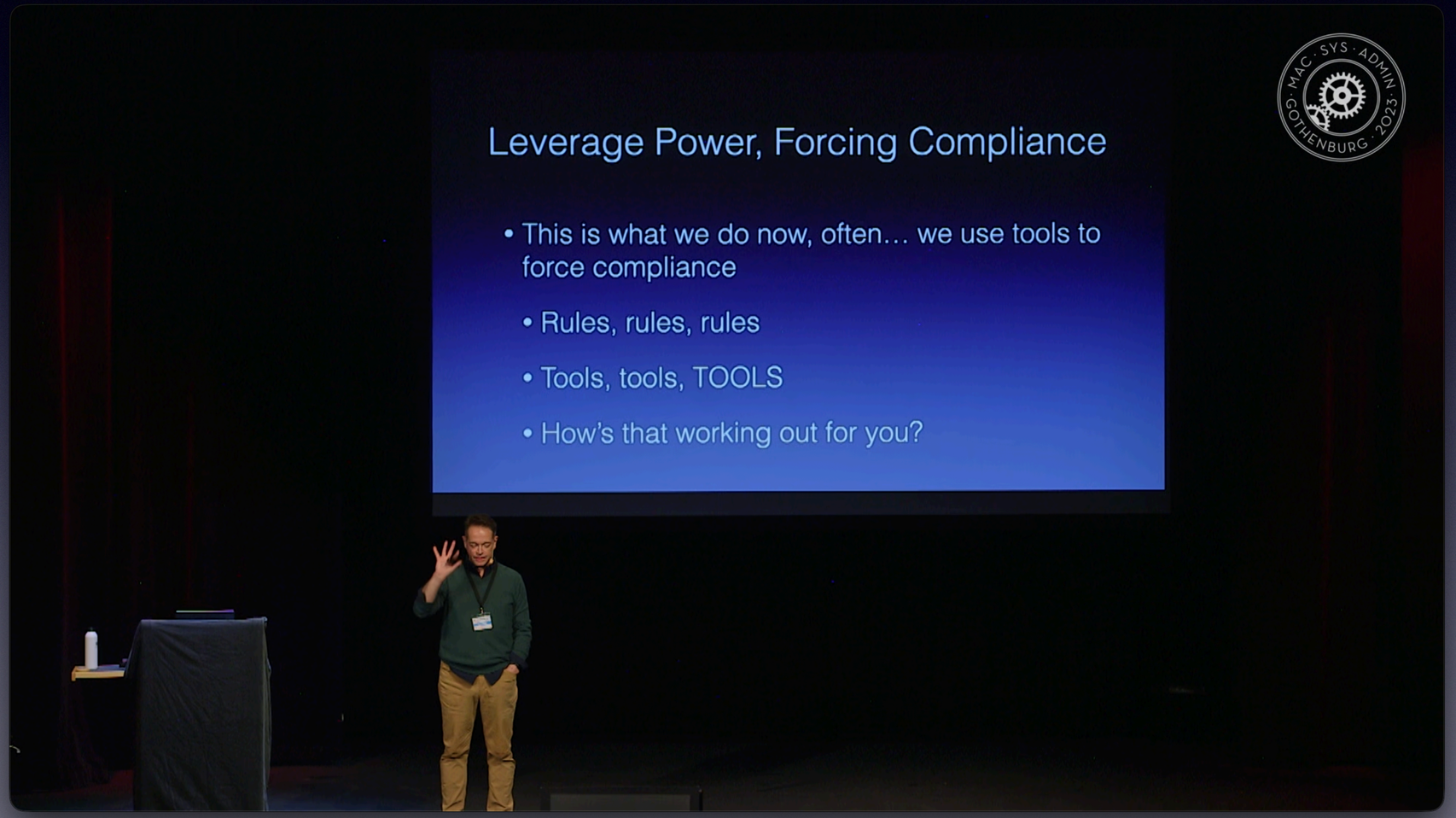
# Fear leads to suffering…

*"Fear is the path to the dark side. Fear leads to anger. Anger leads to hate. Hate leads to suffering."*

**– Yoda, "Star Wars: Episode I – The Phantom Menace"**

# We’ve been here before, btw…

# MSA 2023 - compliance & cooperation



# To successfully deal with user's Fears…

# To get compliance…

# We need to be Leaders

# So what now…

# We have conflicting directions

# We want secure endpoints!

# We want user agency & productivity

# It’s a Paradox

*“…Don’t it always seem to go*

*That you don't know what you got 'til it's gone*

*They paved paradise and put up a parking lot…”*

**– “Big Yellow Taxi,” Counting Crows**
**(after Joni Mitchell)**

“We want controls in ***place***”

“We want our endpoints ***safe***”

“We want the users of those devices ***productive***”

“It would be super nice if we had some cooperation”

“***How*** do we do all this?”

“***How***” is a valid question,
But…

“*How*” is a ***methodology*** question

# Method follows ***purpose***

# Purpose comes from ***why***

***Why*** may not be a focus if we jump straight to ***How***

How do we get to know our **purpose**?

Before we get to the
***implementation*** of the Control…

We should be sure of the ‘***Why***’ of the Control

We can end up feeling like we are ***fighting*** those we serve

And they feel we are ***blocking*** them from being productive

Push-back comes from
***misunderstanding*** purpose

They don’t understand it

***technically,***

*So easier just to say:*

*"**Do this / Don't do that**"*

They resist, find ***workarounds***

…and we're ***back*** to another set of controls being applied

# Rise…Repeat…

# Documentation

# Do we love documentation?

YES

# Do we hate (making) it?

# Also Yes!

# It’s (almost) never enough

# And (almost) never up-to-date

Documentation may not be on-point, may be out-of-date…

So, we end up making new ad-hoc policies…

# Or we may just guesstimate

# *It's A Thing:*

Really locked-down infrastructures are out there

# It’s A Thing:

A ton of work but ***doable***

*That's just the job, right?*

But is it ***sustainable***?

Is there a ***better*** way?

*“…Don’t go back to Rockville*

*Don't go back to Rockville*

*Don't go back to Rockville*

*And waste another year…”*

**– “Don’t Go Back To Rockville,” R.E.M.**

# That’s just the job, right?

*“…I’ve got to break free*

*I want to break free, yeah*

*I want, I want, I want, I want to break free…”*

**– “I Want To Break Free,” Queen**

# I get it…

# Addressing root cause sucks

# That’s exhausting!

# *End of Outtakes & Unused material*