

Inheritance

Improving Structure with Inheritance

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Based on Objects First with Java - A Practical Introduction using BlueJ, © David J. Barnes, Michael Kölling



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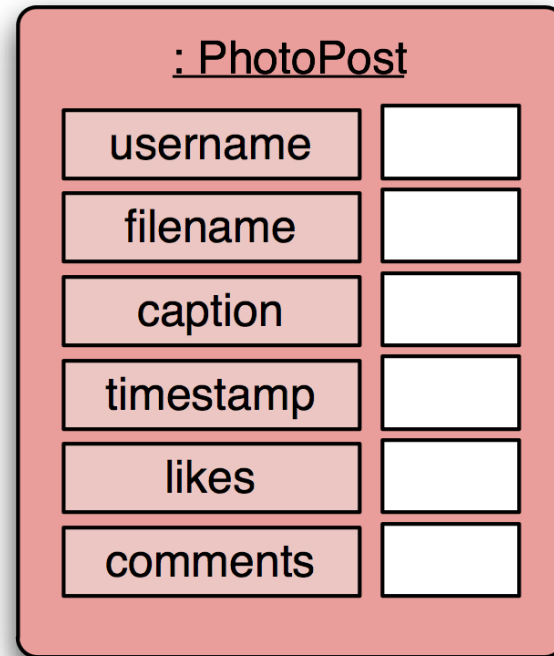
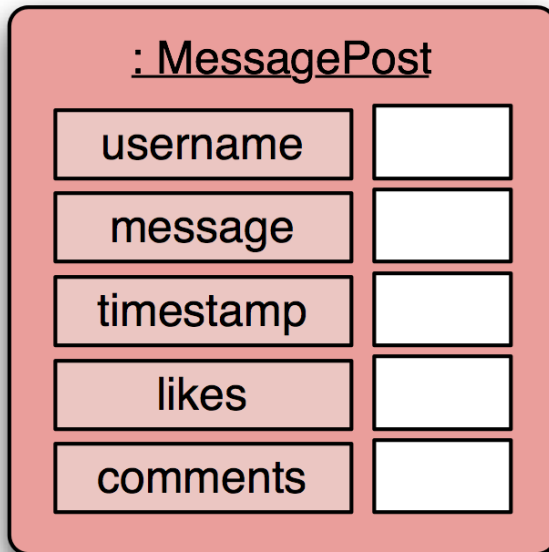
Topic List

- NetworkV1
- Inheritance hierarchies
- Network V2
- Coding inheritance hierarchies
 - Super and subclasses
 - Using constructors in these hierarchies
- Network V3
 - Deeper hierarchies
 - Advantages of using inheritance
- Subtyping and Substitution
- Polymorphic variables / Collections
 - Includes casting, wrapper classes, autoboxing /unboxing

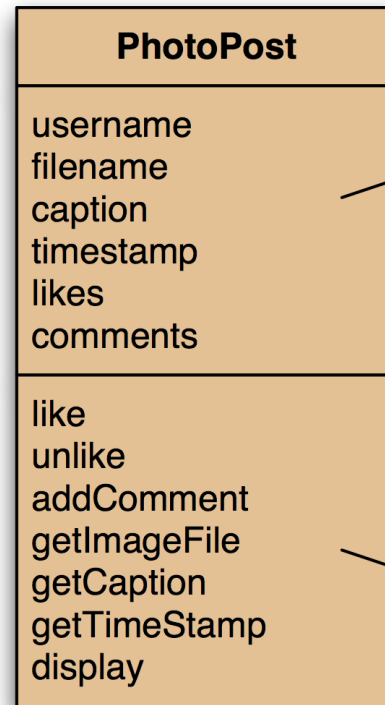
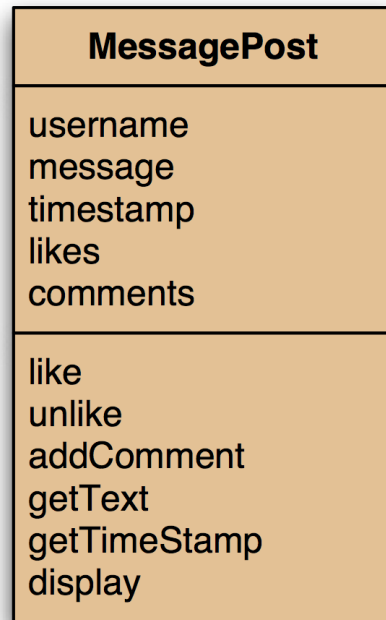
NetworkV1

- A small, prototype social network.
- Supports a news feed with posts.
- Stores *text-based posts* and *photo posts*.
 - MessagePost: multi-line text message.
 - PhotoPost: photo and caption.
- Allows operations on the posts:
 - e.g., search, display and remove.

NetworkV1 - Objects



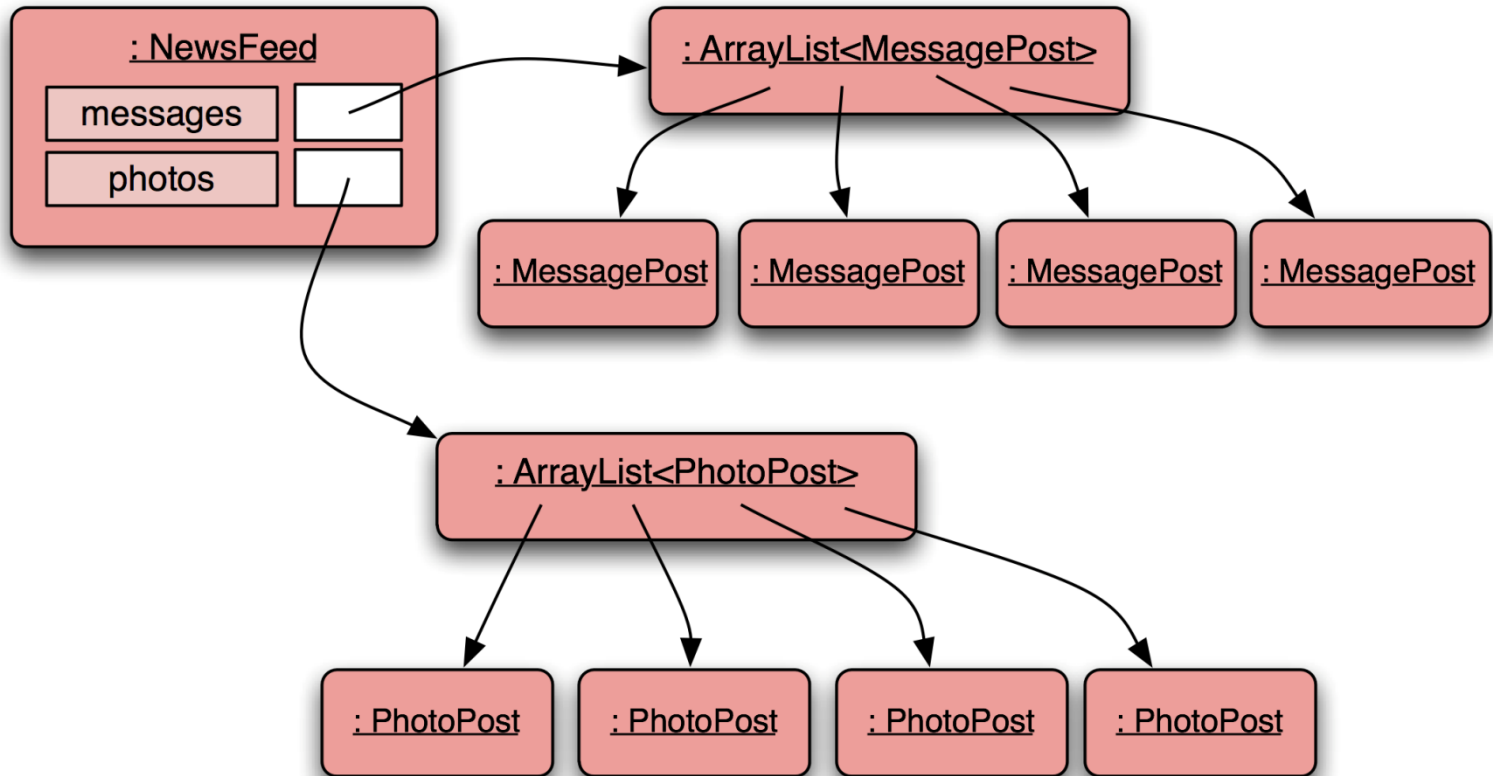
NetworkV1 - Classes



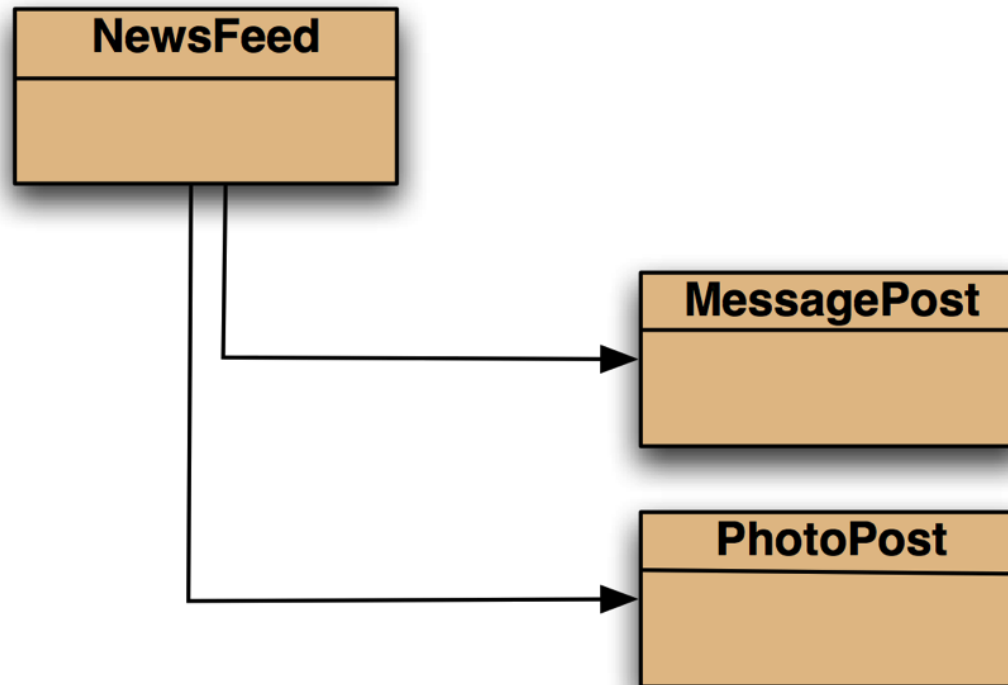
*top half
shows fields*

*bottom half
shows methods*

NetworkV1 - Object model



NetworkV1 - Class diagram



MessagePost source code

*Just an
outline*

```
public class MessagePost
{
    private String username;
    private String message;
    private long timestamp;
    private int likes;
    private ArrayList<String> comments;

    public MessagePost(String author, String text)
    {
        username = author;
        message = text;
        timestamp = System.currentTimeMillis();
        likes = 0;
        comments = new ArrayList<String>();
    }

    public void addComment(String text) ...

    public void like() ...

    public void display() ...

    ...
}
```

PhotoPost source code

*Just an
outline*

```
public class PhotoPost
{
    private String username;
    private String filename;
    private String caption;
    private long timestamp;
    private int likes;
    private ArrayList<String> comments;

    public PhotoPost(String author, String filename,
                     String caption)
    {
        username = author;
        this.filename = filename;
        this.caption = caption;
        timestamp = System.currentTimeMillis();
        likes = 0;
        comments = new ArrayList<String>();
    }

    public void addComment(String text) ...
    public void like() ...
    public void display() ...
    ...
}
```

NewsFeed source code

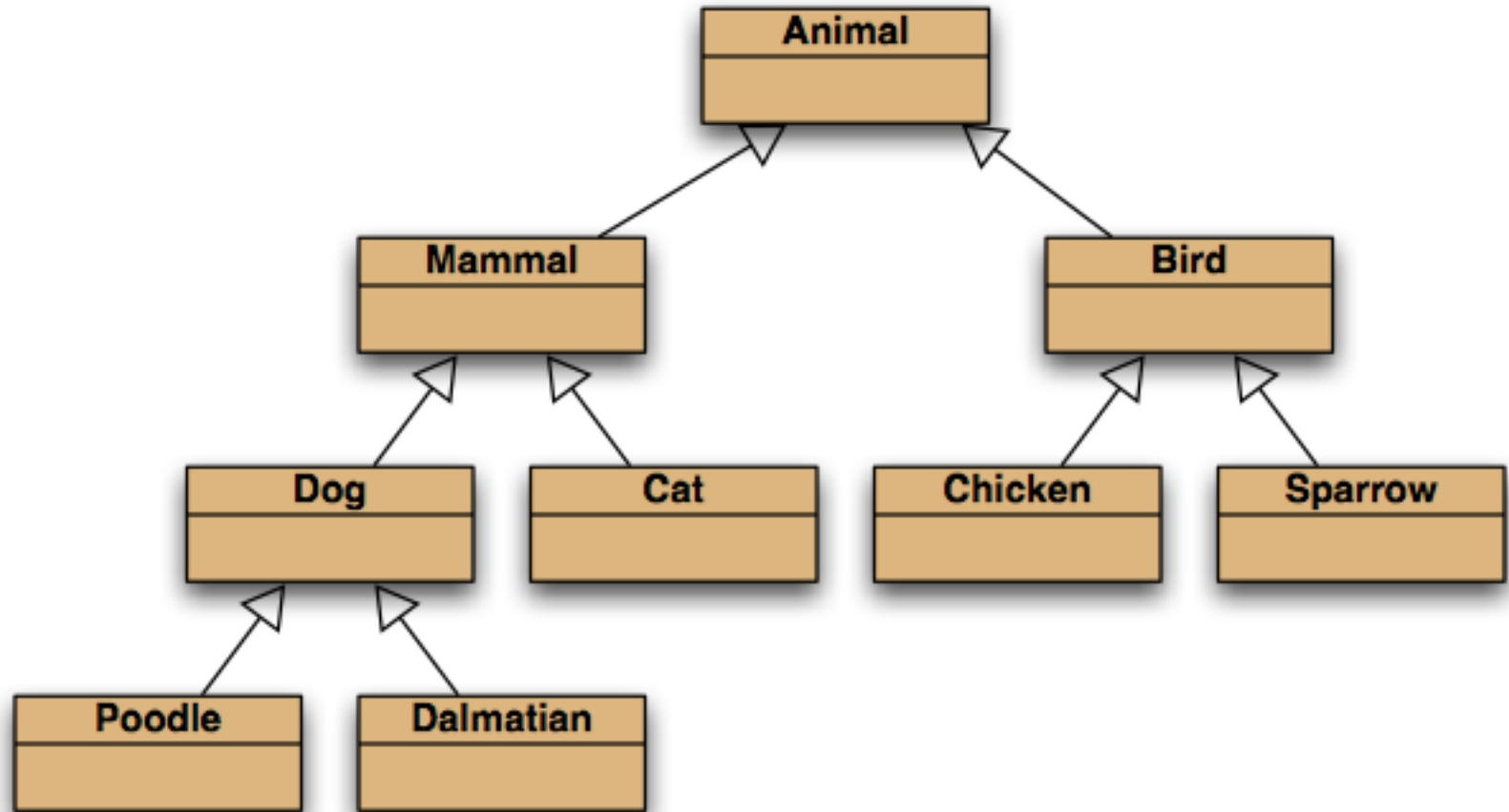
```
public class NewsFeed
{
    private ArrayList<MessagePost> messages;
    private ArrayList<PhotoPost> photos;
    ...
    public void show()
    {
        for(MessagePost message : messages) {
            message.display();
            System.out.println(); // empty line between posts
        }

        for(PhotoPost photo : photos) {
            photo.display();
            System.out.println(); // empty line between posts
        }
    }
}
```

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Inheritance hierarchies



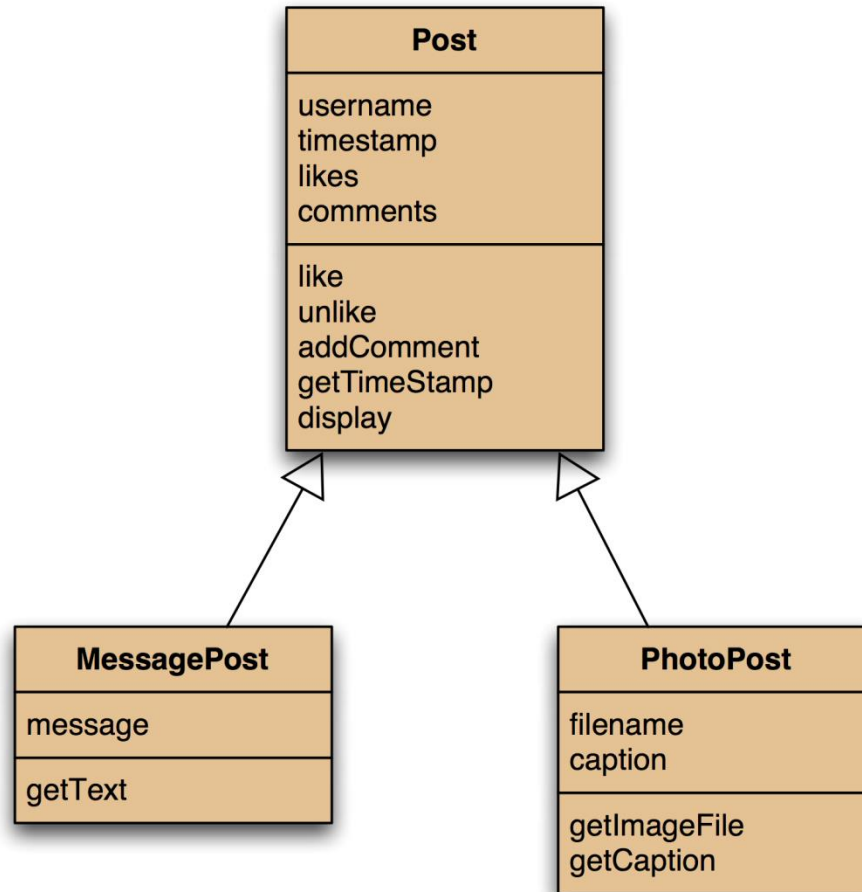
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Critique of NetworkV1

- Code duplication:
 - MessagePost and PhotoPost classes very similar (large parts are identical)
 - makes maintenance difficult/more work
 - introduces danger of bugs through incorrect maintenance
- Code duplication in NewsFeed class as well.

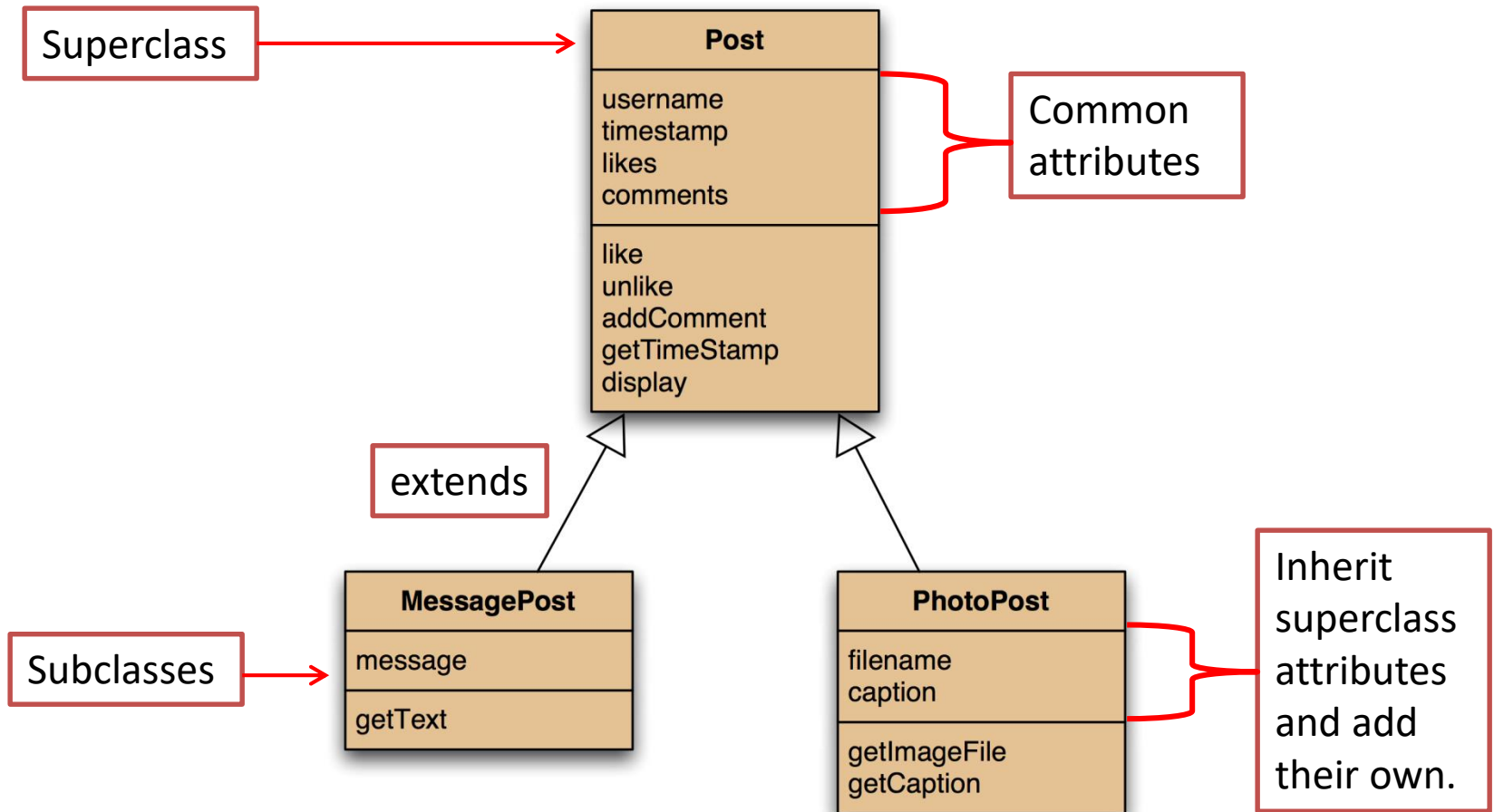
NetworkV2 - Using inheritance



NetworkV2 - Using inheritance

- define one **superclass** : **Post**
- define **subclasses** for **MessagePost** and **PhotoPost**
- the superclass defines common attributes (via fields)
- the subclasses **inherit** the superclass attributes
- the subclasses add other attributes

NetworkV2 - Using inheritance



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Inheritance in Java

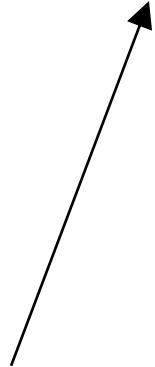
```
public class Post
{
    ...
}
```

no change here

change here

```
public class PhotoPost extends Post
{
    ...
}
```

```
public class MessagePost extends Post
{
    ...
}
```



Superclass

```
public class Post
{
    private String username;
    private long timestamp;
    private int likes;
    private ArrayList<String> comments;

    // constructor and methods omitted.
}
```

Subclasses

```
public class MessagePost extends Post
{
    private String message;

    // constructor and methods omitted.
}
```

```
public class PhotoPost extends Post
{
    private String filename;
    private String caption;

    // constructor and methods omitted.
}
```

Inheritance and constructors

```
public class Post
{
    private String username;
    private long timestamp;
    private int likes;
    private ArrayList<String> comments;

    /**
     * Initialise the fields of the post.
     */
    public Post(String author)
    {
        username = author;
        timestamp = System.currentTimeMillis();
        likes = 0;
        comments = new ArrayList<String>();
    }

    // methods omitted
}
```

Inheritance and constructors

```
public class MessagePost extends Post
{
    private String message;

    /**
     * Constructor for objects of class MessagePost
     */
    public MessagePost (String author, String text)
    {
        super(author);
        message = text;
    }

    // methods omitted
}
```

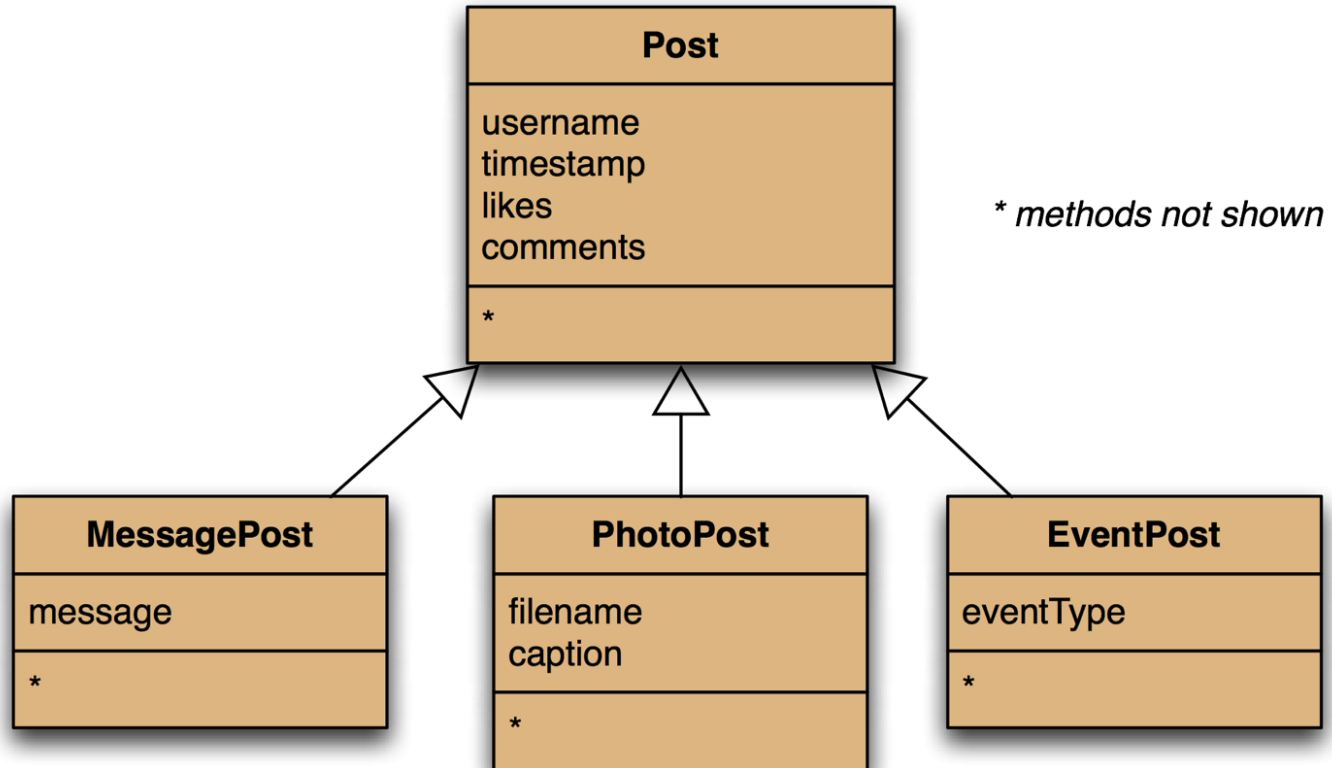
Superclass constructor call

- Subclass constructors must always contain a 'super' call.
- If none is written, the compiler inserts one (without parameters)
 - works only, if the superclass has a constructor without parameters
- Must be the first statement in the subclass constructor.

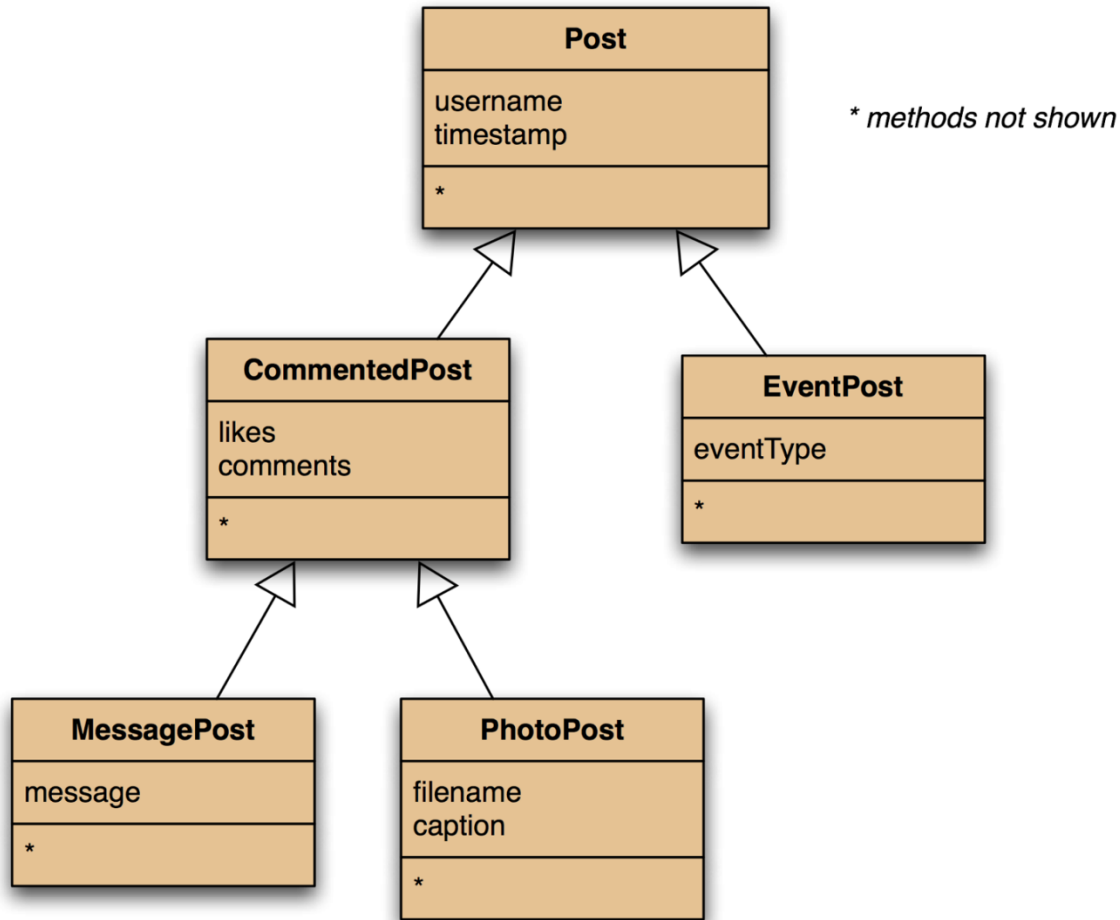
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NetworkV3 - Adding more item types



NetworkV3 - Deeper hierarchies



Advantages of inheritance

Inheritance (so far) helps with:

- Avoiding code duplication
- Code reuse
- Easier maintenance
- Extensibility

```
public class NewsFeed
{
    private ArrayList<Post> posts;

    /**
     * Construct an empty news feed.
     */
    public NewsFeed()
    {
        posts = new ArrayList<Post>();
    }

    /**
     * Add a post to the news feed.
     */
    public void addPost(Post post)
    {
        posts.add(post);
    }
    ...
}
```

Revised
NewsFeed
source code

*Avoids code
duplication in
the client
class!*

New NewsFeed source code

```
/**
 * Show the news feed. Currently: print the
 * news feed details to the terminal.
 */

public void show()
{
    for(Post post : posts) {
        post.display();
        System.out.println(); // Empty line ...
    }
}
```

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Subtyping

First, we had:

```
public void addMessagePost (
    MessagePost message)
public void addPhotoPost (
    PhotoPost photo)
```

Now, we have:

```
public void addPost(Post post)
```

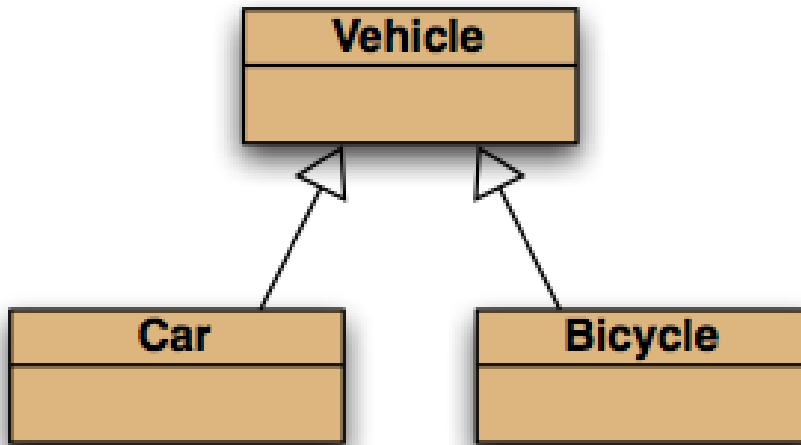
We call this method with:

```
PhotoPost myPhoto = new PhotoPost(...);
feed.addPost(myPhoto);
```


Subclasses and subtyping

- Classes define types.
- Subclasses define *subtypes*.
- **Substitution**: objects of subclasses can be used where objects of supertypes are required.

Subtyping and assignment



*subclass objects
may be assigned
to superclass
variables*

```
Vehicle v1 = new Vehicle();  
Vehicle v2 = new Car();  
Vehicle v3 = new Bicycle();
```

Subtyping and parameter passing

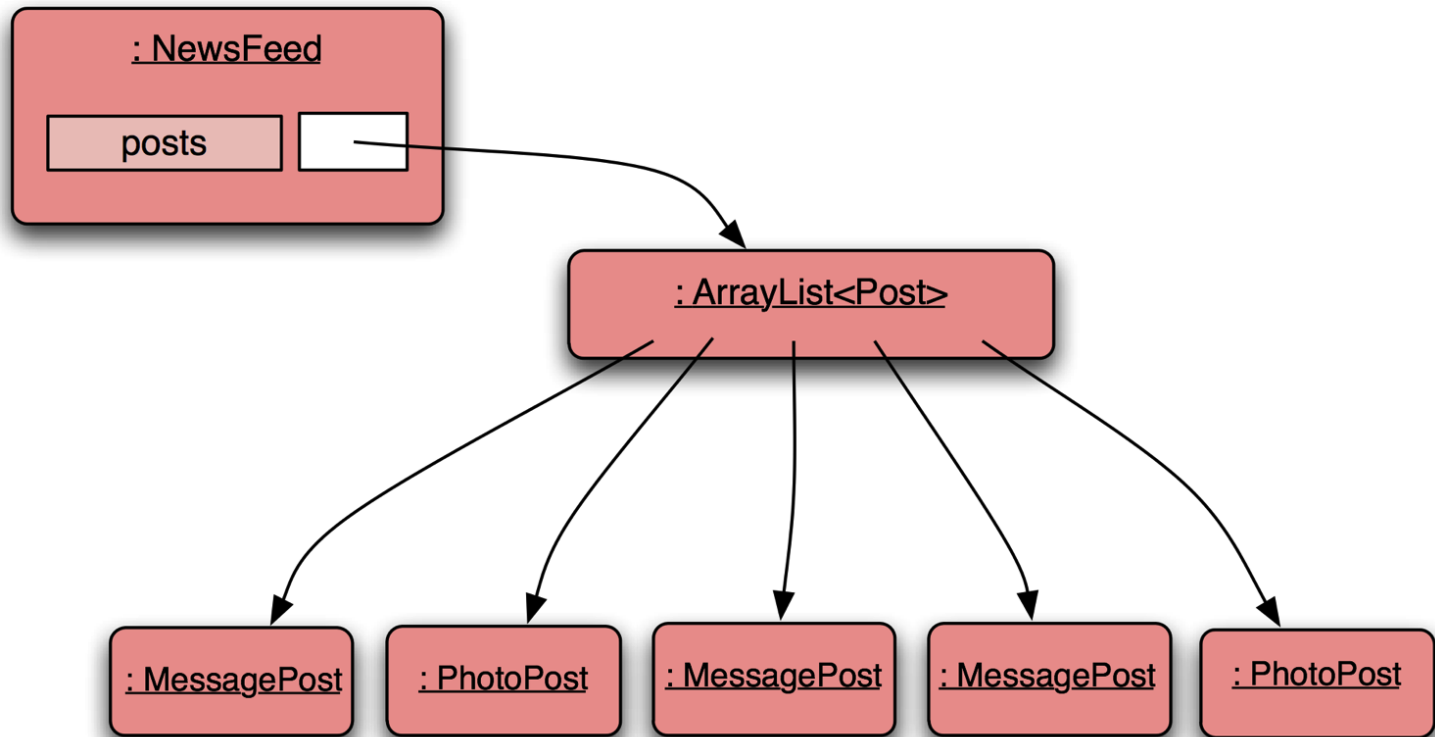
```
public class NewsFeed
{
    public void addPost(Post post)
    {
        ...
    }
}
```

```
PhotoPost photo = new PhotoPost(...);
MessagePost message = new MessagePost(...);

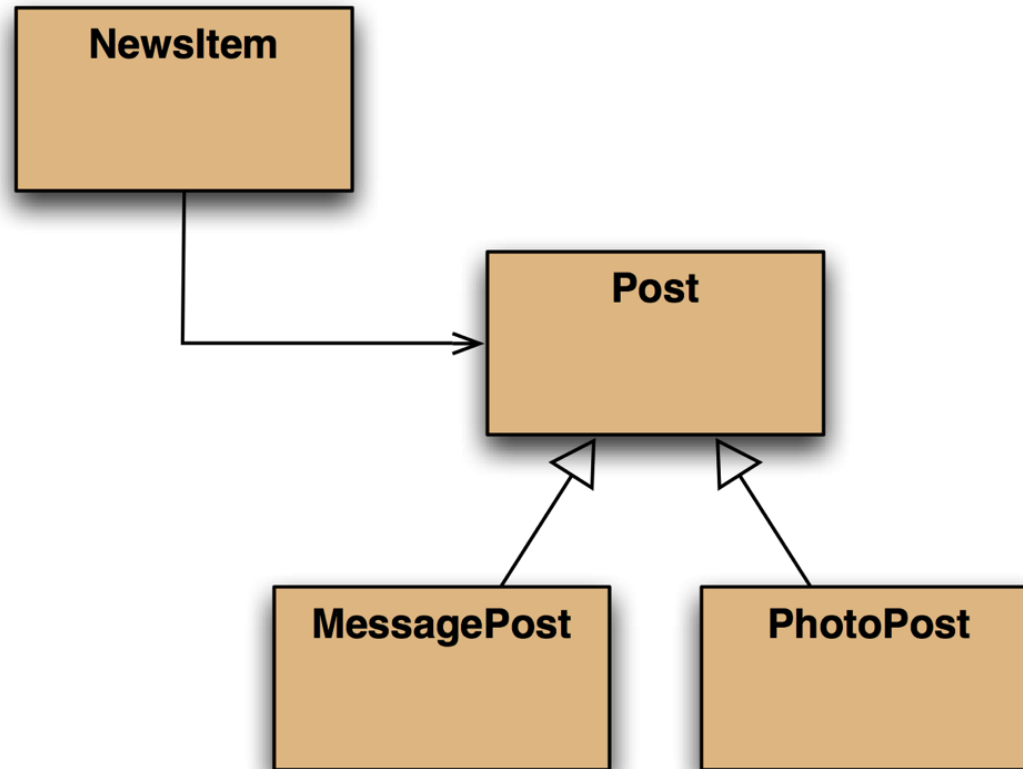
feed.addPost(photo);
feed.addPost(message);
```

*subclass objects
may be used as
actual parameters
for the superclass*

Object diagram



Class diagram



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Polymorphic variables

- Object variables in Java are **polymorphic** (they can hold objects of more than one type.)
- They can hold objects of the declared type, or of subtypes of the declared type.

Casting

- We can assign subtype to supertype ...
- ... but we cannot assign supertype to subtype!

```
Vehicle v;  
Car c = new Car();  
v = c; // correct  
c = v; // compile-time error!
```

- Casting fixes this:

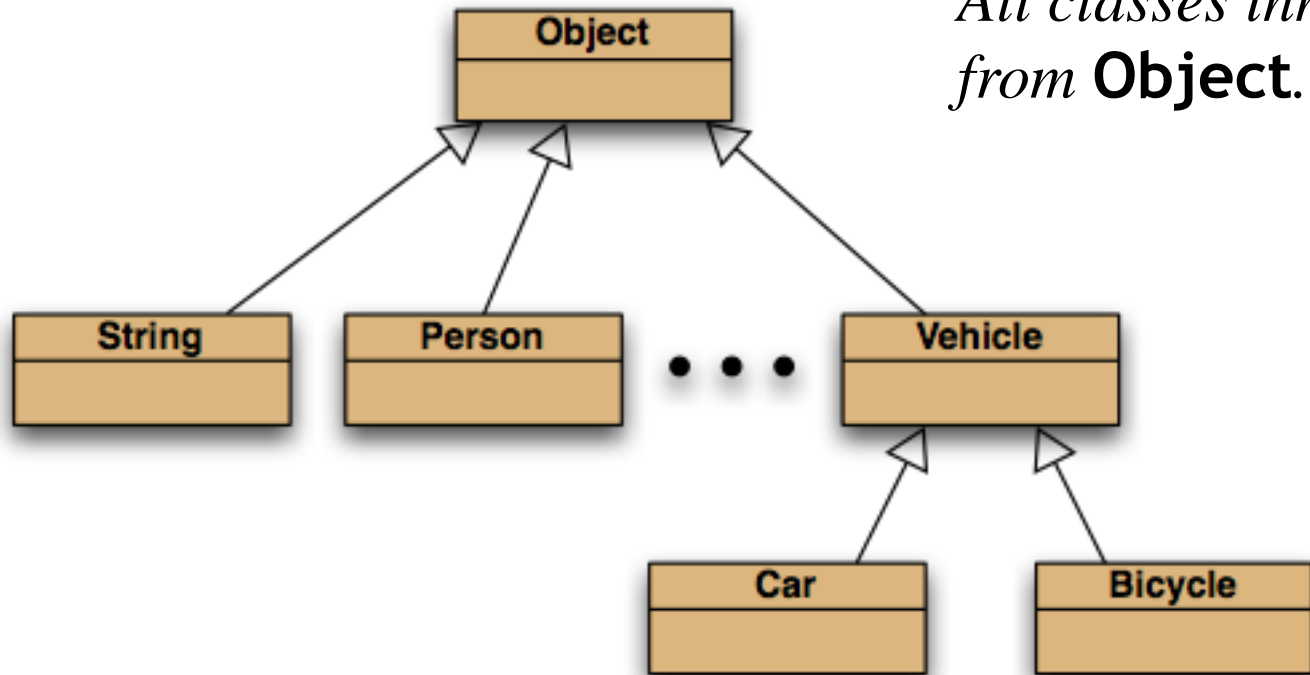
```
c = (Car) v;
```

(only ok if the vehicle really is a Car!)

Casting

- An object type in parentheses.
- Used to overcome 'type loss'.
- The object is not changed in any way.
- A runtime check is made to ensure the object really is of that type:
 - **ClassCastException** if it isn't!
- Use it sparingly.

The Object class



*All classes inherit from **Object**.*

Polymorphic collections

- All collections are polymorphic.
- The elements could simply be of type **Object**.

```
public void add(Object element)
```

```
public Object get(int index)
```

- Usually avoided by using a type parameter with the collection.

Polymorphic collections

- A type parameter limits the degree of polymorphism: **ArrayList<Post>**
- Collection methods are then typed.
- Without a type parameter, **ArrayList<Object>** is implied.
- Likely to get an “*unchecked or unsafe operations*” warning.
- More likely to have to use casts.

Collections and primitive types

- Potentially, all objects can be entered into collections ...
 - ... because collections can accept elements of type **Object** ...
 - ... and all classes are subtypes of **Object**.
- Great! But what about *the primitive types*: **int**, **boolean**, etc.?

Wrapper classes

- Primitive types are not objects types. Primitive-type values must be wrapped in objects to be stored in a collection!
- Wrapper classes exist for all primitive types:

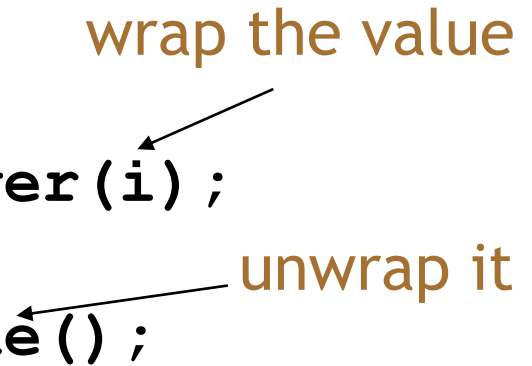
<i>simple type</i>	<i>wrapper class</i>
int	Integer
float	Float
char	Character
...	...

Wrapper classes

```
int i = 18;  
Integer iwrap = new Integer(i);  
...  
int value = iwrap.intValue();
```

wrap the value

unwrap it



In practice, *autoboxing* and *unboxing* mean we don't often have to do this explicitly

Autoboxing and unboxing

```
private ArrayList<Integer> markList;  
...  
public void storeMark(int mark)  
{  
    markList.add(mark);  
}
```

autoboxing

```
int firstMark = markList.get(0);
```

unboxing

Review

- Inheritance allows the definition of classes as extensions of other classes.
- Inheritance
 - avoids code duplication
 - allows code reuse
 - simplifies the code
 - simplifies maintenance and extending
- Variables can hold subtype objects.
- Subtypes can be used wherever supertype objects are expected (substitution).

**Any
Questions?**





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