Programming Paradigms for Concurrency

Introduction

Based on companion slides for
The Art of Multiprocessor Programming
by Maurice Herlihy & Nir Shavit

Modified by
Thomas Wies
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Moore’s Law

Transistor count still rising

Clock speed flattening sharply
Moore’s Law (in practice)
Nearly Extinct: the Uniprocessor
Endangered:
The Shared Memory Multiprocessor (SMP)
The New Boss: The Multicore Processor (CMP)

All on the same chip

NVidia Tegra 4 with ARM Cortex-A15
Why is Mooly Eden Smiling?
Traditional Scaling Process

Speedup

1.8x

3.6x

7x

User code

Traditional Uniprocessor

Time: Moore’s law
Ideal Scaling Process

Unfortunately, not so simple...
Actual Scaling Process

Parallelization and Synchronization require great care...
Course Overview

• Fundamentals
  – models, algorithms, impossibility

• Real-World programming
  – architectures
  – synchronization primitives
    • spin-locks, monitors, barriers
  – paradigms and techniques
    • shared memory concurrency
    • transactional memories
    • message passing
Languages Used

• Java
  – shared memory concurrency

• Scala
  – software transactional memory
  – message passing (actors)
Administrative Issues

- Office Hours: Tue 3-4pm, or by appointment
- Office: CIWW 407
- Course web site: http://cs.nyu.edu/wies/teaching/ppc-14
- Mailing list: csci_ga_3033_014_sp14@cs.nyu.edu
Grading

• Weekly Assignments: 30%

• Term Project: 30%

• Final Exam: 40%
Sequential Computation

memory

object

thread

object
Concurrent Computation

memory

threads

object

object
Asynchrony

Sudden unpredictable delays
- Cache misses (*short*)
- Page faults (*long*)
- Scheduling quantum used up (*really long*)
Model Summary

- Multiple *threads*
  - Sometimes called *processes*
- Single shared *memory*
- *Objects* live in memory
- Unpredictable asynchronous delays
Road Map

• We are going to focus on principles first, then practice
  – Start with idealized models
  – Look at simplistic problems
  – Emphasize correctness over pragmatism
  – “Correctness may be theoretical, but incorrectness has practical impact”
Toyota Unintended Acceleration Incidents (2009-2010)

- at least one fatal accident
- more than 9 million vehicles recalled
- In a 2013 court case, unprotected critical variables in Toyota’s real-time OS were linked to the incidents
Concurrency Jargon

- **Hardware**
  - Processors

- **Software**
  - Threads, processes

- Sometimes OK to confuse them, sometimes not.
Parallel Primality Testing

• Challenge
  – Print primes from 1 to $10^{10}$

• Given
  – Ten-processor multiprocessor
  – One thread per processor

• Goal
  – Get ten-fold speedup (or close)
Load Balancing

- Split the work evenly
- Each thread tests range of $10^9$
void primePrint {
    int i = ThreadID.get(); // IDs in {0..9}
    for (j = i*10^9+1, j<(i+1)*10^9; j++) {
        if (isPrime(j)) {
            print(j);
        }
    }
}
Issues

• Higher ranges have fewer primes
• Yet larger numbers harder to test
• Thread workloads
  – Uneven
  – Hard to predict
Issues

- Higher ranges have fewer primes
- Yet larger numbers harder to test
- Thread workloads
  - Uneven
  - Hard to predict
- Need *dynamic* load balancing

*rejected*
Shared Counter

each thread takes a number
int counter = new Counter(1);

void primePrint {
    long j = 0;
    while (j < 10^{10}) {
        j = counter.getAndIncrement();
        if (isPrime(j))
            print(j);
    }
}
Procedure for Thread $i$

```java
Counter counter = new Counter(1);

void primePrint {
    long j = 0;
    while (j < 10_10) {
        j = counter.getAndIncrement();
        if (isPrime(j))
            print(j);
    }
}
```

Shared counter object
void primePrint {
    int i = ThreadID.get(); // IDs in {0..9}
    for (; i<10*10; j++) {
        if (isPrime(j))
            print(j);
    }
}

shared counter

local variables

code

cache

cache

cache

shared memory
Procedure for Thread \( i \)

Counter counter = new Counter(1);

void primePrint {  
    long j = 0;
    while (j < \(10^{10}\)) {
        j = counter.getAndIncrement();
        if (isPrime(j))
            print(j);
    }
}
Procedure for Thread $i$

```java
Counter counter = new Counter(1);

void primePrint {
    long j = 0;
    while (j < 10^{10}) {
        j = counter.getAndIncrement();
        if (isPrime(j))
            print(j);
    }
}
```

Increment & return each new value
public class Counter {
    private long value;

    public long getAndIncrement() {
        return value++;
    }
}

Counter Implementation
Counter Implementation

```java
public class Counter {
    private long value;

    public long getAndIncrement() {
        return value++;
    }
}
```

OK for single thread, not for concurrent threads
What It Means

public class Counter {
    private long value;

    public long getAndIncrement() {
        return value++;
    }
}

public class Counter {
    private long value;

    public long getAndIncrement() {
        return value++;
        temp = value;
        value = temp + 1;
        return temp;
    }
}
Not so good...

Value...

1

read
1

write
2

read
2

write
3

write
2

read
1

write
2

time
Is this problem inherent?

If we could only glue reads and writes together...
public class Counter {
    private long value;

    public long getAndIncrement() {
        temp  = value;
        value = temp + 1;
        return temp;
    }
}
public class Counter {
    private long value;

    public long getAndIncrement() {
        temp = value;
        value = temp + 1;
        return temp;
    }
}

Make these steps atomic (indivisible)
Hardware Solution

```java
public class Counter {
    private long value;

    public long getAndIncrement() {
        long temp = value;
        value = temp + 1;
        return temp;
    }
}
```

ReadModifyWrite() instruction
An Aside: Java™

```java
public class Counter {
    private long value;

    public long getAndIncrement() {
        synchronized {
            temp = value;
            value = temp + 1;
        }
        return temp;
    }
}
```
public class Counter {
    private long value;

    public long getAndIncrement() {
        synchronized {
            temp = value;
            value = temp + 1;
        }
        return temp;
    }
}
An Aside: Java™

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public class Counter {
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            long temp = value;
            value = temp + 1;
        }
        return temp;
    }
}
```

Mutual Exclusion
Mutual Exclusion,
or “Alice & Bob share a pond”
Alice has a pet
Bob has a pet
The Problem

The pets don’t get along
Formalizing the Problem

- Two types of formal properties in asynchronous computation:
  - Safety Properties
    - Nothing bad happens ever
  - Liveness Properties
    - Something good happens eventually
Formalizing our Problem

• Mutual Exclusion
  – Both pets never in pond simultaneously
  – This is a safety property

• No Deadlock
  – if only one wants in, it gets in
  – if both want in, one gets in.
  – This is a liveness property
Simple Protocol

• Idea
  – Just look at the pond

• Gotcha
  – Not atomic
  – Trees obscure the view
Interpretation

• Threads can’t “see” what other threads are doing
• Explicit communication required for coordination
Cell Phone Protocol

• Idea
  – Bob calls Alice (or vice-versa)

• Gotcha
  – Bob takes shower
  – Alice recharges battery
  – Bob out shopping for pet food ...
Interpretation

• Message-passing doesn’t work

• Recipient might not be
  – Listening
  – There at all

• Communication must be
  – Persistent (like writing)
  – Not transient (like speaking)
Can Protocol
Bob conveys a bit
Bob conveys a bit
Can Protocol

• Idea
  – Cans on Alice’s windowsill
  – Strings lead to Bob’s house
  – Bob pulls strings, knocks over cans

• Gotcha
  – Cans cannot be reused
  – Bob runs out of cans
Interpretation

• Cannot solve mutual exclusion with interrupts
  – Sender sets fixed bit in receiver’s space
  – Receiver resets bit when ready
  – Requires unbounded number of interrupt bits
Flag Protocol
Alice’s Protocol (sort of)
Bob’s Protocol (sort of)
Alice’s Protocol

• Raise flag
• Wait until Bob’s flag is down
• Unleash pet
• Lower flag when pet returns
Bob’s Protocol

• Raise flag
• Wait until Alice’s flag is down
• Unleash pet
• Lower flag when pet returns
Bob’s Protocol (2\textsuperscript{nd} try)

- Raise flag
- While Alice’s flag is up
  - Lower flag
  - Wait for Alice’s flag to go down
  - Raise flag
- Unleash pet
- Lower flag when pet returns
Bob’s Protocol

- Raise flag
- While Alice’s flag is up
  - Lower flag
  - Wait for Alice’s flag to go down
  - Raise flag
- Unleash pet
- Lower flag when pet returns

Bob defers to Alice
The Flag Principle

• Raise the flag
• Look at other’s flag
• Flag Principle:
  – If each raises and looks, then
  – Last to look must see both flags up
Proof of Mutual Exclusion

• Assume both pets in pond
  – Derive a contradiction
  – By reasoning backwards

• Consider the last time Alice and Bob each looked before letting the pets in

• Without loss of generality assume Alice was the last to look...
Proof

Bob last raised flag
Bob’s last look

Alice last raised her flag
Alice’s last look

time

Alice must have seen Bob’s Flag. A Contradiction
Proof of No Deadlock

• If only one pet wants in, it gets in.
Proof of No Deadlock

• If only one pet wants in, it gets in.
• Deadlock requires both continually trying to get in.
Proof of No Deadlock

• If only one pet wants in, it gets in.
• Deadlock requires both continually trying to get in.
• If Bob sees Alice’s flag, he gives her priority (a gentleman...)

QED
Remarks

• Protocol is *unfair*
  – Bob’s pet might never get in

• Protocol uses *waiting*
  – If Bob is eaten by his pet, Alice’s pet might never get in
Moral of Story

• Mutual Exclusion cannot be solved by
  – transient communication (cell phones)
  – interrupts (cans)

• It can be solved by
  – one-bit shared variables
  – that can be read or written
The Arbiter Problem (an aside)

Pick a point

Pick a point
The Fable Continues

- Alice and Bob fall in love & marry
The Fable Continues

- Alice and Bob fall in love & marry
- Then they fall out of love & divorce
  - She gets the pets
  - He has to feed them
The Fable Continues

• Alice and Bob fall in love & marry
• Then they fall out of love & divorce
  – She gets the pets
  – He has to feed them
• Leading to a new coordination problem: Producer-Consumer
Bob Puts Food in the Pond
Alice releases her pets to Feed
Producer/Consumer

• Alice and Bob can’t meet
  – Each has restraining order on other
  – So he puts food in the pond
  – And later, she releases the pets

• Avoid
  – Releasing pets when there’s no food
  – Putting out food if uneaten food remains
Producer/Consumer

• Need a mechanism so that
  – Bob lets Alice know when food has been put out
  – Alice lets Bob know when to put out more food
Bob puts food in Pond

A

cola

B

85
Bob knocks over Can
Alice Releases Pets
Alice Resets Can when Pets are Fed
Pseudocode

while (true) {
    while (can.isUp()){}
    pet.release();
    pet.recapture();
    can.reset();
}
while (true) {
    while (can.isUp()){};
    pet.release();
    pet.recapture();
    can.reset();
}

Alice’s code

while (true) {
    while (can.isDown()){};
    pond.stockWithFood();
    can.knockOver();
}

Bob’s code
Correctness

• Mutual Exclusion
  – Pets and Bob never together in pond
Correctness

• Mutual Exclusion
  – Pets and Bob never together in pond

• No Starvation
  if Bob always willing to feed, and pets always famished, then pets eat infinitely often.
Correctness

- **Mutual Exclusion**
  - Pets and Bob never together in pond

- **No Starvation**
  - if Bob always willing to feed, and pets always famished, then pets eat infinitely often.

- **Producer/Consumer**
  - The pets never enter pond unless there is food, and Bob never provides food if there is unconsumed food.
Could Also Solve Using Flags
Waiting

• Both solutions use waiting
  – while (mumble) {} 

• In some cases waiting is problematic
  – If one participant is delayed
  – So is everyone else
  – But delays are common & unpredictable
The Fable drags on ...

- Bob and Alice still have issues
The Fable drags on ...

- Bob and Alice still have issues
- So they need to communicate
The Fable drags on ...

• Bob and Alice still have issues
• So they need to communicate
• They agree to use billboards ...
Billboards are Large

Letter Tiles
From Scrabble™ box
Write One Letter at a Time ...
To post a message

W A S H T H E C A R

whew
Let’s send another message
Readers/Writers

- Devise a protocol so that
  - Writer writes one letter at a time
  - Reader reads one letter at a time
  - Reader sees “snapshot”
    - Old message or new message
    - No mixed messages
Readers/Writers (continued)

• Easy with mutual exclusion

• But mutual exclusion requires waiting
  – One waits for the other
  – Everyone executes sequentially

• Remarkably
  – We can solve R/W without mutual exclusion
Esoteric?

• Java container `size()` method
• Single shared counter?
  – incremented with each `add()` and
  – decremented with each `remove()`
• Threads wait to exclusively access counter
Readers/Writers Solution

- Each thread \( i \) has \( \text{size}[i] \) counter
  - only it increments or decrements.
- To get object’s size, a thread reads a “snapshot” of all counters
- This eliminates the bottleneck
Why do we care?

- We want as much of the code as possible to execute concurrently (in parallel)
- A larger sequential part implies reduced performance
- Amdahl’s law: this relation is not linear...
Amdahl’s Law

\[
\text{Speedup} = \frac{1}{\frac{1}{n\text{-thread execution time}}} - \frac{1}{\text{1-thread execution time}}
\]
Amdahl’s Law

\[
\text{Speedup} = \frac{1}{1 - \frac{p}{n} + \frac{p}{n}}
\]
Amdahl’s Law

Speedup = \frac{1}{1 - p + \frac{p}{n}}

Parallel fraction
Amdahl’s Law

\[
\text{Speedup} = \frac{1}{1 - p + \frac{p}{n}}
\]

Sequential fraction

Parallel fraction
Amdahl’s Law

\[
\text{Speedup} = \frac{1}{1 - p + \frac{p}{n}}
\]

Sequential fraction

Parallel fraction

Number of threads
Amdahl’s Law (in practice)
Example

- Ten processors
- 60% concurrent, 40% sequential
- How close to 10-fold speedup?
Example

• Ten processors
• 60% concurrent, 40% sequential
• How close to 10-fold speedup?

\[
\text{Speedup} = 2.17 = \frac{1}{1 - 0.6 + \frac{0.6}{10}}
\]
Example

- Ten processors
- 80% concurrent, 20% sequential
- How close to 10-fold speedup?
Example

- Ten processors
- 80% concurrent, 20% sequential
- How close to 10-fold speedup?

\[
\text{Speedup} = 3.57 = \frac{1}{1 - 0.8 + \frac{0.8}{10}}
\]
Example

- Ten processors
- 90% concurrent, 10% sequential
- How close to 10-fold speedup?
Example

- Ten processors
- 90% concurrent, 10% sequential
- How close to 10-fold speedup?

\[
\text{Speedup} = 5.26 = \frac{1}{1 - 0.9 + \frac{0.9}{10}}
\]
Example

• Ten processors
• 99% concurrent, 01% sequential
• How close to 10-fold speedup?
Example

- Ten processors
- 99% concurrent, 01% sequential
- How close to 10-fold speedup?

\[
\text{Speedup} = \frac{1}{1 - 0.99 + \frac{0.99}{10}} = 9.17
\]
Back to Real-World Multicore Scaling

Speedup

1.8x  2x  2.9x

User code

Multicore

Not reducing sequential % of code
Shared Data Structures

Coarse Grained

25% Shared

75% Unshared

Fine Grained

25% Shared

75% Unshared
Shared Data Structures

Why only 2.9 speedup

Coarse Grained

Honk! Honk! Honk!

Fine Grained

25% Shared

75% Unshared

25% Shared

75% Unshared
Shared Data Structures

Why fine-grained parallelism matters

Coarse Grained

- 25% Shared
- 75% Unshared

Fine Grained

- 25% Shared
- 75% Unshared
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