# CSE 332 Winter 2024
# Lecture 23: Race Conditions, Deadlock

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# Race Condition

- Occurs when the computation result depends on scheduling (how threads are interleaved)
  - We, as programmers can’t influence scheduling of threads
  - We need to write programs that work independent of scheduling
- Data Race:
  - When there is the potential for two threads to be writing a variable in parallel
  - When there is the potential for one thread to be reading a variable while another writes to it
- Bad Interleaving:
  - A race condition other than a data race
  - Usually it looks like exposing a “bad” intermediate state

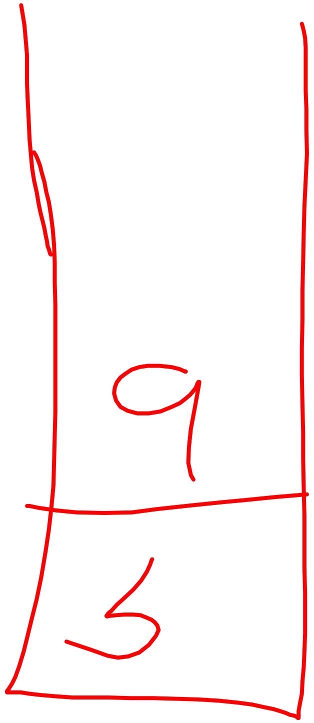
# Example: Shared Stack (no problems so far)

```
class Stack {
    private E[] array = (E[])new Object[SIZE];
    private int index = -1;
    synchronized boolean isEmpty() {
        return index==-1;
    }
    synchronized void push(E val) {
        array[++index] = val;
    }
    synchronized E pop() {
        if(isEmpty())
            throw new StackEmptyException();
        return array[index--];
} }
```

Critical sections of this code?

# Race Condition, but no Data Race

```
class Stack {
        private E[] array = (E[])new Object[SIZE];
        private int index = -1;
        synchronized boolean isEmpty() { … }
        synchronized void push(E val) { … }
        synchronized E pop() { … }
        E peek(){
                E ans = pop();
                push(ans);
                return ans;
        }
}
```

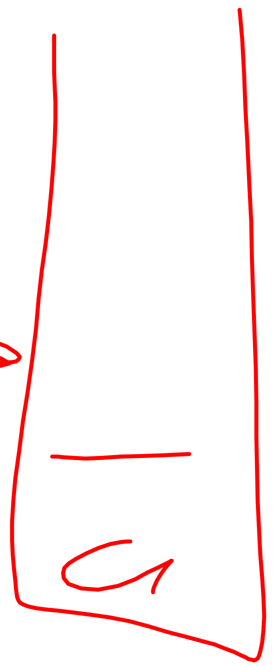



Critical sections of this code?

Mut Ex.

# Race Condition, including a Data Race

```
class Stack {
        private E[] array = (E[])new Object[SIZE];
        private int index = -1;
        synchronized boolean isEmpty() { … }
        synchronized void push(E val) { … }
        synchronized E pop() { … }
        E peek(){
                System.out.println(index);
                E ans = pop();
                push(ans);
                return ans;
        }
}
```



# Peek and isEmpty

Not4 OR

**Expected Behavior:**
Thread 2 should not see an empty stack if there is a push but no pop.

Thread 1:

```
peek();
```

Thread 2:

```
push(x);
boolean b = isEmpty();
```

| | |
|---|---|
| E ans = pop();<br><br>push(ans);<br>return ans; | push(x);<br><br>boolean b = isEmpty(); |

# Peek and Push

**Expected Behavior:**
Thread 2 items from a stack are popped in LIFO order

Thread 1:

```
peek();
```

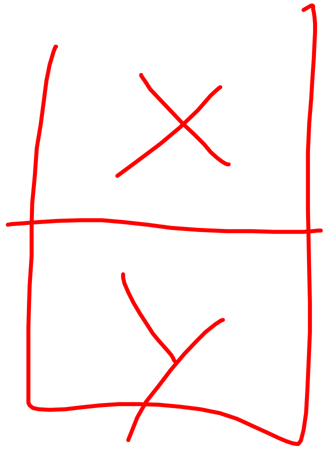
Thread 2:

```
push(x);
push(y);
System.out.println(pop());
System.out.println(pop());
```

| | |
|---|---|
| E ans = pop();<br>push(ans);<br>return ans; | push(x);<br>push(y);<br>System.out.println(pop());<br>System.out.println(pop()); |

# Peek and Pop

**Expected Behavior:**
Thread 2 items from a stack are popped in LIFO order




Thread 1:

```
peek();
```

Thread 2:

```
push(x);
push(y);
System.out.println(pop());
System.out.println(pop());
```

| | |
|---|---|
| | push(x); |
| E ans = pop(); | |
| | push(y); |
| push(ans); | |
| return ans; | |
| | System.out.println(pop()); |
| | System.out.println(pop()); |

# How to fix this?

Make a bigger critical section

```
class Stack {
        private E[] array = (E[])new Object[SIZE];
        private int index = -1;
        synchronized boolean isEmpty() { … }
        synchronized void push(E val) { … }
        synchronized E pop() { … }
Syn     E peek(){
                E ans = pop();
                push(ans);
                return ans;
        }
}
```

# How to fix this?

Make a bigger critical section

```
class Stack {
	private E[] array = (E[])new Object[SIZE];
	private int index = -1;
	synchronized boolean isEmpty() { … }
	synchronized void push(E val) { … }
	synchronized E pop() { … }
	synchronized E peek(){
		E ans = pop();
		push(ans);
		return ans;
	}
}
```

# Did this fix it?

No! Now it has a data race!

```
class Stack {
        private E[] array = (E[])new Object[SIZE];
        private int index = -1;
        synchronized boolean isEmpty() { … }
        synchronized void push(E val) { … }
        synchronized E pop() { … }
        E peek(){
                return array[index];
        }
}
```

Read

T1: peek

T2: push

# Parallel Code Conventional Wisdom

# Memory Categories

All memory must fit one of three categories:

1. Thread Local: Each thread has its own copy
2. Shared and Immutable: There is just one copy, but nothing will ever write to it
3. Shared and Mutable: There is just one copy, it may change
   - Requires Synchronization!

# Thread Local Memory #1

- Whenever possible, avoid sharing resources
- Dodges all race conditions, since no other threads can touch it!
  - No synchronization necessary! (Remember Ahmdal's law)
- Use whenever threads do not need to communicate using the resource
  - E.g., each thread should have its on Random object
- In most cases, most objects should be in this category

# Immutable Objects

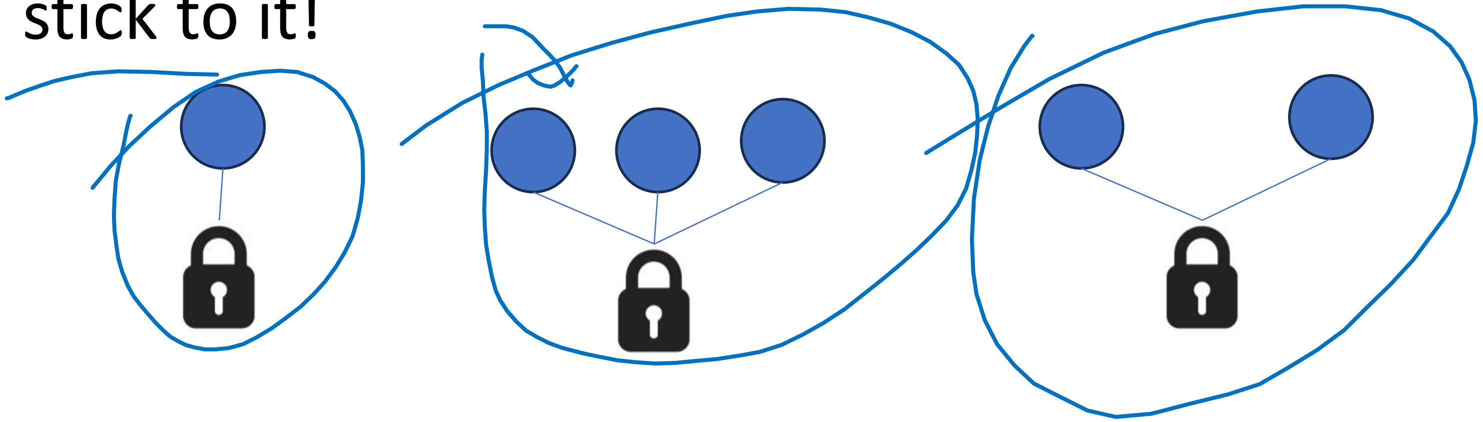
- Whenever possible, avoid changing objects
  - Make new objects instead
- Parallel reads are not data races
  - If an object is never written to, no synchronization necessary!
- Many programmers over-use mutation, minimize it

# Shared and Mutable Objects

- For everything else, use locks
- Avoid all data races
  - Every read and write should be projected with a lock, even if it "seems safe"
  - Almost every Java/C program with a data race is wrong
- Even without data races, it still may be incorrect
  - Watch for bad interleavings as well!

# Consistent Locking

- For each location needing synchronization, have a lock that is always held when reading or writing the location
- The same lock can (and often should) “guard” multiple fields/objects
  - Clearly document what each lock guards!
  - In Java, the lock should usually be the object itself (i.e. “this”)
- Have a mapping between memory locations and lock objects and stick to it!



# Lock Granularity

- Coarse Grained: Fewer locks guarding more things each
  - One lock for an entire data structure
  - One lock shared by multiple objects (e.g. one lock for all bank accounts)
- Fine Grained: More locks guarding fewer things each
  - One lock per data structure location (e.g. array index)
  - One lock per object or per field in one object (e.g. one lock for each account)
- Note: there’s really a continuum between them…

# Example: Separate Chaining Hashtable

- Coarse-grained: One lock for the entire hashtable
- Fine-grained: One lock for each bucket
- Which supports more parallelism in insert and find?
- Which makes rehashing easier?
- What happens if you want to have a size field?

# Tradeoffs

- Coarse-Grained Locking:
  - Simpler to implement and avoid race conditions
  - Faster/easier to implement operations that access multiple locations (because all guarded by the same lock)
  - Much easier for operations that modify data-structure shape
- Fine-Grained Locking:
  - More simultaneous access (performance when coarse grained would lead to unnecessary blocking)
  - Can make multi-location operations more difficult: say, rotations in an AVL tree
- Guideline:
  - Start with coarse-grained, make finer only as necessary to improve performance

# Similar But Separate Issue: Critical Section Granularity

- Coarse-grained
  - For every method that needs a lock, put the entire method body in a lock
- Fine-grained
  - Keep the lock only for the sections of code where it's necessary
- Guideline:
  - Try to structure code so that expensive operations (like I/O) can be done outside of your critical section
  - E.g., if you're trying to print all the values in a tree, maybe copy items into an array inside your critical section, then print the array's contents outside.

# Atomicity

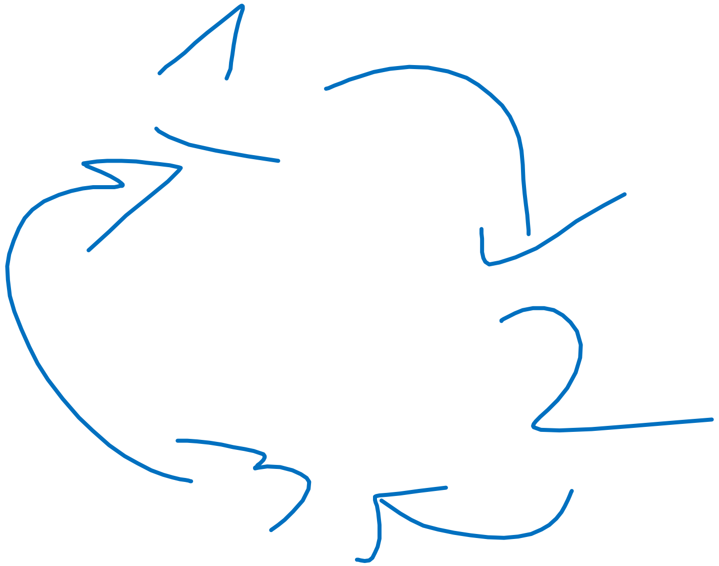
- Atomic: indivisible
- Atomic operation: one that should be thought of as a single step
- Some sequences of operations should behave as if they are one unit
  - Between two operations you may need to avoid exposing an intermediate state
  - Usually ADT operations should be atomic
    - You don't want another thread trying to do an insert while another thread is rotating the AVL tree
- Think first in terms of what operations need to be atomic
  - Design critical sections and locking granularity based on these decisions

# Use Pre-Tested Code

- Whenever possible, use built-in libraries!
- Other people have already invested tons of effort into making things both efficient and correct, use their work when you can!
  - Especially true for concurrent data structures
  - Use thread-safe data structures when available
    - E.g. Java as ConcurrentHashMap

# Deadlock

- Occurs when two or more threads are mutually blocking each other
- T1 is blocked by T2, which is blocked by T3, …, Tn is blocked by T1
  - A cycle of blocking



# Bank Account

```
class BankAccount {
        …
        synchronized void withdraw(int amt) {…}
        synchronized void deposit(int amt) {…}
        synchronized void transferTo(int amt, BankAccount a) {
                this.withdraw(amt);
                a.deposit(amt);
        }
}
```

# The Deadlock

**Expected Behavior:**
Thread 2 items from a stack are popped in LIFO order

Thread 1:

x.transferTo(1,y);

Thread 2:

y.transferTo(1,x);

| Thread 1 | Thread 2 |
| --- | --- |
| **acquire lock for account x** b/c transferTo is synchronized<br>**acquire lock for account y** b/c deposit is synchronized<br>**release lock for account y** after depost<br>**release lock for account x** at end of transferTo | **acquire lock for account y** b/c transferTo is synchronized<br>**acquire lock for account x** b/c deposit is synchronized<br>**release lock for account x** after deposit<br>**release lock for account y** at end of transferTo |

# The Deadlock

**Expected Behavior:**
Thread 2 items from a stack are popped in LIFO order

Thread 1:

x.transferTo(1,y);

Thread 2:

y.transferTo(1,x);

| | |
|---|---|
| **acquire lock for account x** b/c transferTo is synchronized<br><br>**acquire lock for account y** b/c deposit is synchronized<br><br>**release lock for account y** after depost<br><br>**release lock for account x** at end of transferTo | **acquire lock for account y** b/c transferTo is synchronized<br><br>**acquire lock for account x** b/c deposit is synchronized<br><br>**release lock for account x** after deposit<br><br>**release lock for account y** at end of transferTo |

# Resolving Deadlocks

- Deadlocks occur when there are multiple locks necessary to complete a task and different threads may obtain them in a different order
- Option 1:
  - Have a coarser lock granularity
  - E.g. one lock for ALL bank accounts
- Option 2:
  - Have a finer critical section so that only one lock is needed at a time
  - E.g. instead of a synchronized transferTo, have the withdraw and deposit steps locked separately
- Option 3:
  - Force the threads to always acquire the locks in the same order
  - E.g. make transferTo acquire both locks before doing either the withdraw or deposit, make sure both threads agree on the order to aquire

# Option 1: Coarser Locking

```
static final Object BANK = new Object();
class BankAccount {
        ...
        synchronized void withdraw(int amt) {...}
        synchronized void deposit(int amt) {...}
        void transferTo(int amt, BankAccount a) {
                synchronized(BANK){
                        this.withdraw(amt);
                        a.deposit(amt);
                }
        }
}
```

# Option 2: Finer Critical Section

```
class BankAccount {
        …
        synchronized void withdraw(int amt) {…}
        synchronized void deposit(int amt) {…}
        void transferTo(int amt, BankAccount a) {
                synchronized(this){
                        this.withdraw(amt);
                }
                synchronized(a){
                        a.deposit(amt);
                }
        }
}
```

# Option 3: First Get All Locks In A Fixed Order

```
class BankAccount {
        …
        synchronized void withdraw(int amt) {…}
        synchronized void deposit(int amt) {…}
        void transferTo(int amt, BankAccount a) {
                if (this.acctNum < a.acctNum){
                        synchronized(this){
                                synchronized(a){
                                        this.withdraw(amt);
                                        a.deposit(amt);
                } } }
                else {
                        synchronized(a){
                                synchronized(this){
                                        this.withdraw(amt);
                                        a.deposit(amt);
                } } }
        }
}
```