

Practice: Small Systems

Part 2, Chapter 3

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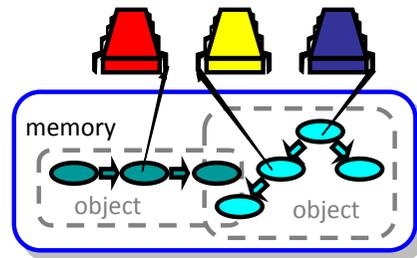
Overview

- Introduction
- Spin Locks
 - Test-and-Set & Test-and-Test-and-Set
 - Backoff lock
 - Queue locks
- Concurrent Linked List
 - Fine-grained synchronization
 - Optimistic synchronization
 - Lazy synchronization
 - Lock-free synchronization
- Hashing
 - Fine-grained locking
 - Recursive split ordering

3/2

Concurrent Computation

- We started with...
- Multiple **threads**
 - Sometimes called **processes**
- Single shared **memory**
- Objects live in memory
- Unpredictable asynchronous delays



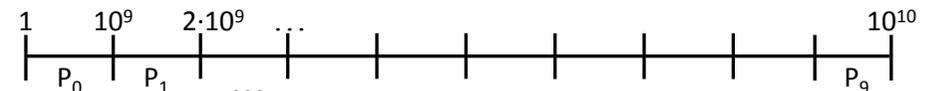
- In the previous chapters, we focused on fault-tolerance
 - We discussed theoretical results
 - We discussed practical solutions with a focus on efficiency
- In this chapter, we focus on **efficient concurrent computation!**
 - Focus on asynchrony and not on explicit failures

3/3

Example: Parallel Primality Testing

- Challenge
 - Print all primes from 1 to 10^{10}
- Given
 - Ten-core multiprocessor
 - One thread per processor
- Goal
 - Get ten-fold speedup (or close)
- Naïve Approach
 - Split the work evenly
 - Each thread tests range of 10^9

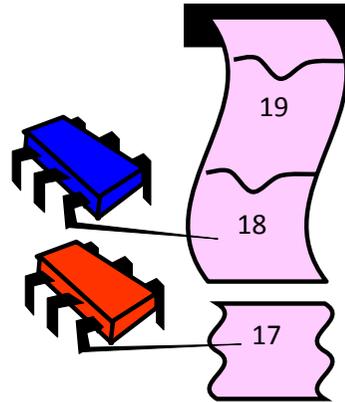
Problems with this approach?



3/4

Issues

- Higher ranges have fewer primes
- Yet larger numbers are harder to test
- Thread workloads
 - Uneven
 - Hard to predict
- Need **dynamic** load balancing
- Better approach
 - Shared counter!
 - Each thread takes a number



3/5

Procedure Executed at each Thread

```

Counter counter = new Counter(1);

void primePrint() {
    long j = 0;
    while(j < 1010) {
        j = counter.getAndIncrement();
        if(isPrime(j))
            print(j);
    }
}
    
```

Shared counter object

Increment counter & test if return value is prime

3/6

Counter Implementation

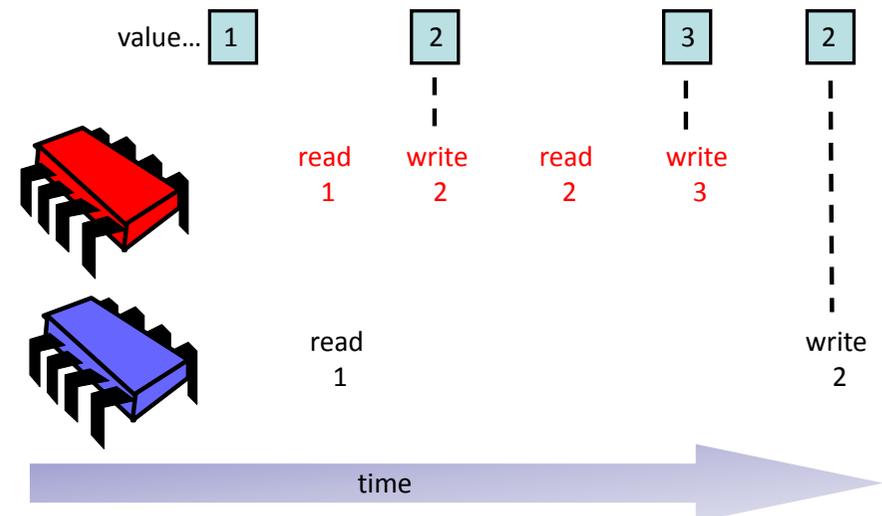
```

public class Counter {
    private long value;

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

What's the problem with this implementation?

Problem



3/7

3/8

Counter Implementation

```
public class Counter {
    private long value;

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

These steps must be atomic!

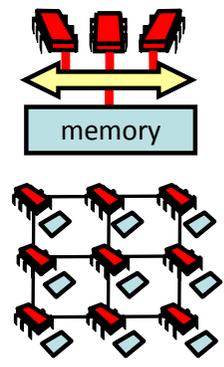
Recall: We can use **Read-Modify-Write (RMW)** instructions!

We have to guarantee **mutual exclusion**

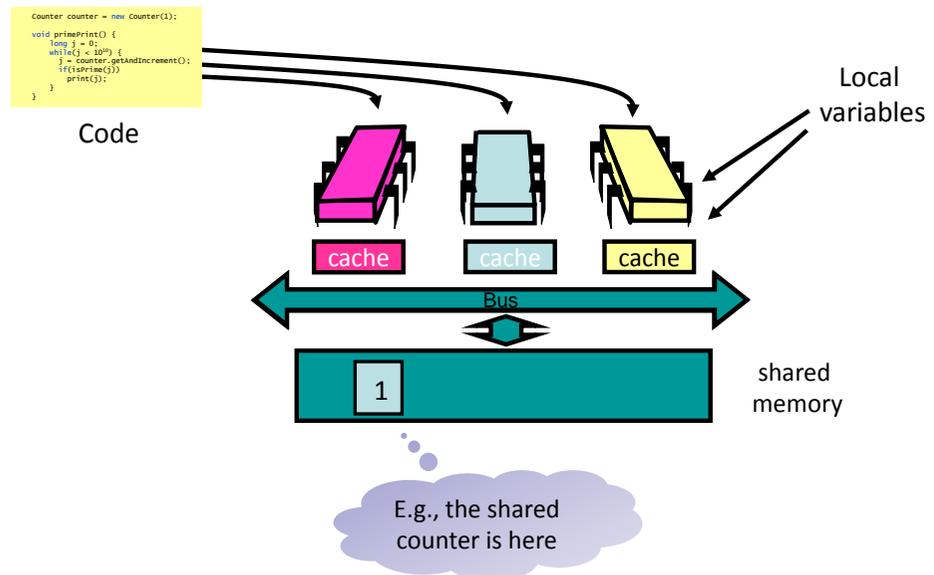
Model

- The model in this part is slightly more complicated
 - However, we still focus on principles
- What remains the same?
 - Multiple instruction multiple data (MIMD) architecture
 - Each thread/process has its own code and local variables
 - There is a shared memory that all threads can access
- What is new?
 - Typically, communication runs over a shared bus (alternatively, there may be several channels)
 - Communication contention
 - Communication latency
 - Each thread has a local cache

I.e., multiprocessors



Model: Where Things Reside



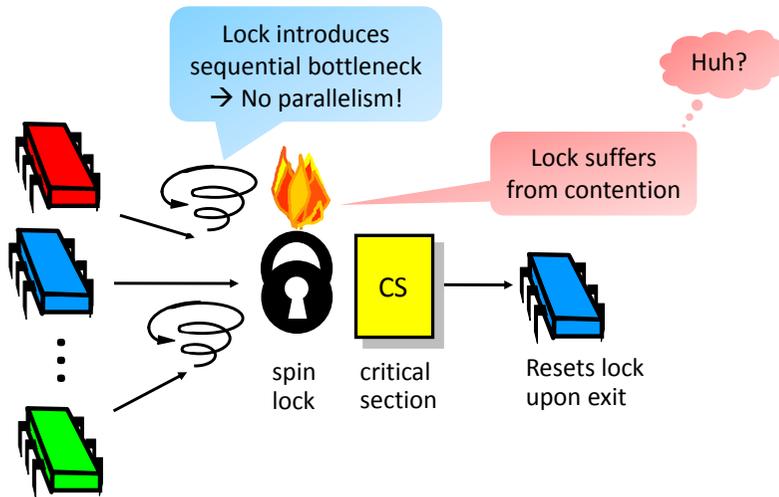
Revisiting Mutual Exclusion

- We need mutual exclusion for our counter
 - We are now going to study mutual exclusion from a different angle
 - Focus on performance, not just correctness and progress
 - We will begin to understand how performance depends on our software properly utilizing the multiprocessor machine's hardware, and get to know a collection of locking algorithms!
-
- What should you do if you can't get a lock?
 - Keep trying
 - "spin" or "busy-wait"
 - Good if delays are short
 - Give up the processor
 - Good if delays are long
 - Always good on uniprocessor

Our focus



Basic Spin-Lock



3/13

Reminder: Test&Set

- Boolean value
- Test-and-set (TAS)
 - Swap **true** with current value
 - Return value tells if prior value was **true** or **false**
- Can reset just by writing **false**
- Also known as “getAndSet”

3/14

Reminder: Test&Set

```
public class AtomicBoolean {  
    private boolean value; // java.util.concurrent.atomic  
  
    public synchronized boolean getAndSet() {  
        boolean prior = this.value;  
        this.value = true;  
        return prior;  
    }  
}
```

// Get current value and set value to true

3/15

Test&Set Locks

- Locking
 - Lock is **free**: value is false
 - Lock is **taken**: value is true
- Acquire lock by calling TAS
 - If result is false, you **win**
 - If result is true, you **lose**
- Release lock by writing false



3/16

Test&Set Lock

```
public class TASLock implements Lock {
    AtomicBoolean state = new AtomicBoolean(false);

    public void lock() {
        while (state.getAndSet(true)) {}
    }

    public void unlock() {
        state.set(false);
    }
}
```

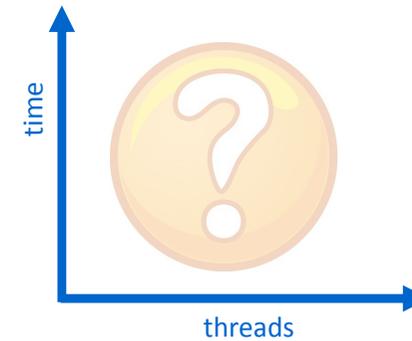
Lock state is AtomicBoolean

Keep trying until lock acquired

Release lock by resetting state to false

Performance

- Experiment
 - n threads
 - Increment shared counter 1 million times
- How long should it take?
- How long does it take?



3/17

3/18

Test&Test&Set Locks

- How can we improve TAS?
- A crazy idea: Test before you test and set!
- Lurking stage
 - Wait until lock “looks” free
 - Spin while read returns true (i.e., the lock is taken)
- Pouncing state
 - As soon as lock “looks” available
 - Read returns false (i.e., the lock is free)
 - Call TAS to acquire the lock
 - If TAS loses, go back to lurking

Test&Test&Set Lock

```
public class TTASLock implements Lock {
    AtomicBoolean state = new AtomicBoolean(false);

    public void lock() {
        while (true) {
            while (state.get()) {}
            if (!state.getAndSet(true))
                return;
        }
    }

    public void unlock() {
        state.set(false);
    }
}
```

Wait until lock looks free

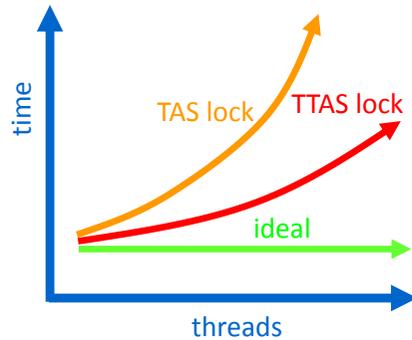
Then try to acquire it

3/19

3/20

Performance

- Both TAS and TTAS do the same thing (in our old model)
- So, we would expect basically the same results

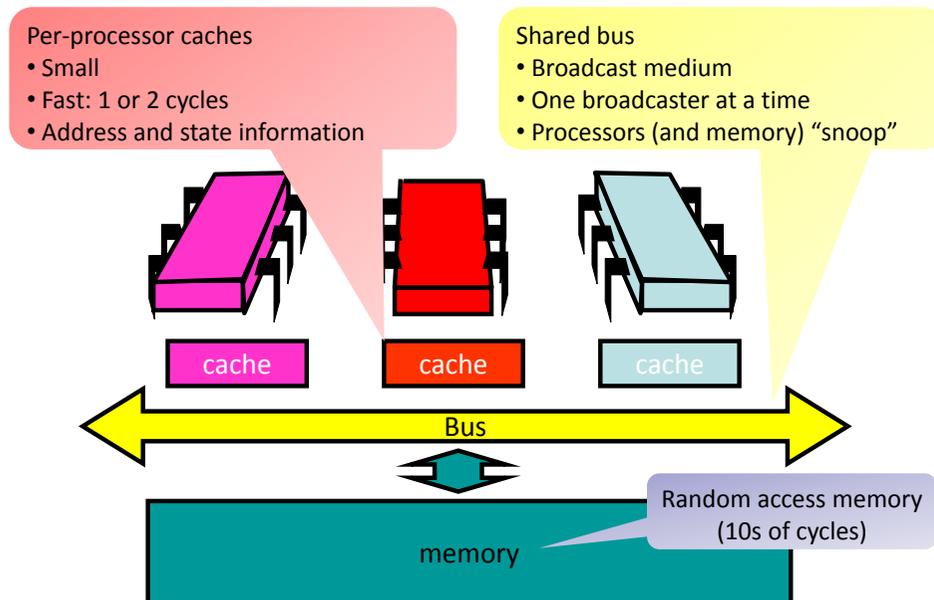


- Why is TTAS so much better than TAS? Why are both far from ideal?

3/21

3/22

Bus-Based Architectures



3/23

Opinion

- TAS & TTAS locks
 - are provably the same (in our old model)
 - except they aren't (in field tests)
- Obviously, it must have something to do with the model...
- Let's take a closer look at our new model and try to find a reasonable explanation!

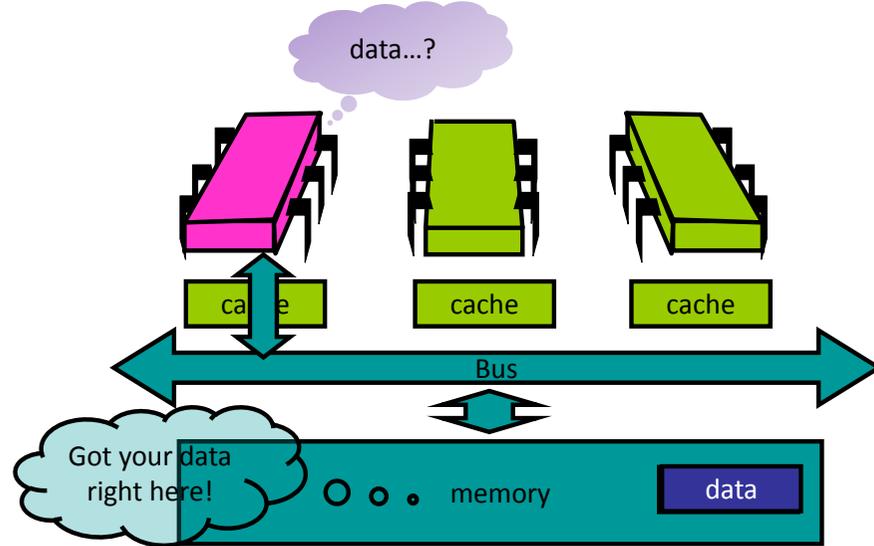
Jargon Watch

- Load request
 - When a thread wants to access data, it issues a load request
- Cache hit
 - The thread found the data in its own cache
- Cache miss
 - The data is not found in the cache
 - The thread has to get the data from memory

3/24

Load Request

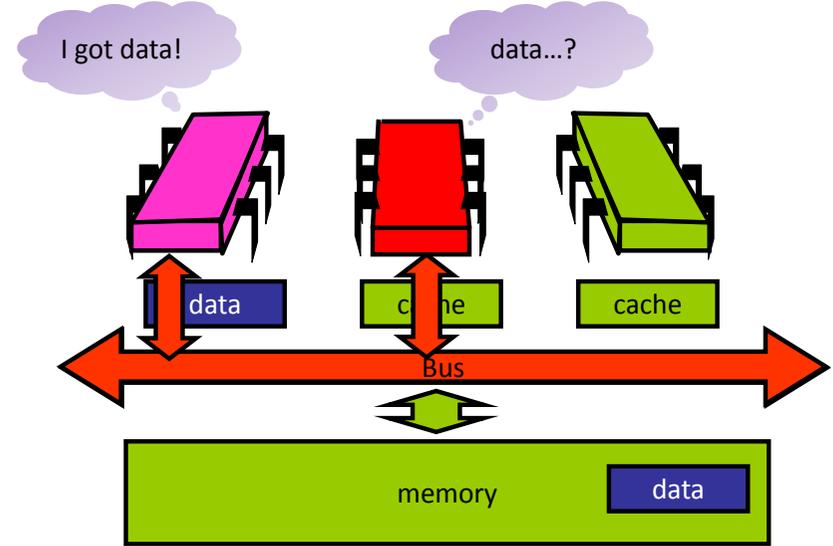
- Thread issues load request and memory responds



3/25

Another Load Request

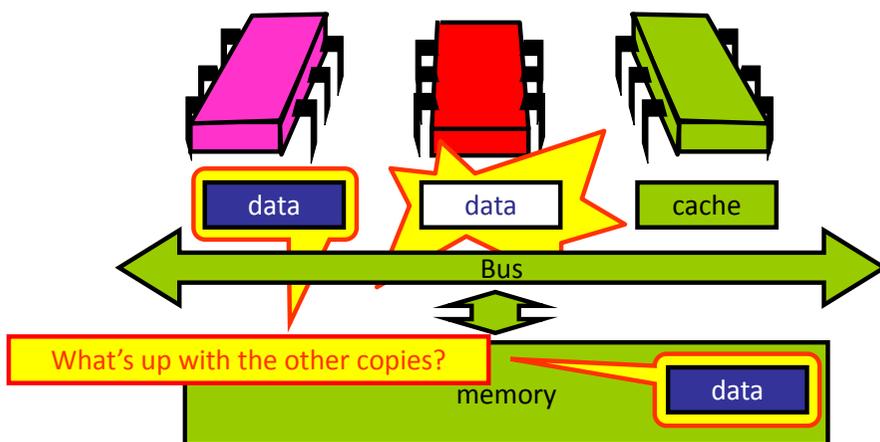
- Another thread wants to access the same data. Get a copy from the cache!



3/26

Modify Cached Data

- Both threads now have the data in their cache
- What happens if the red thread now **modifies** the data...?



3/27

Cache Coherence

- We have lots of copies of data
 - Original copy in memory
 - Cached copies at processors
- Some processor modifies its own copy
 - What do we do with the others?
 - How to avoid confusion?

3/28

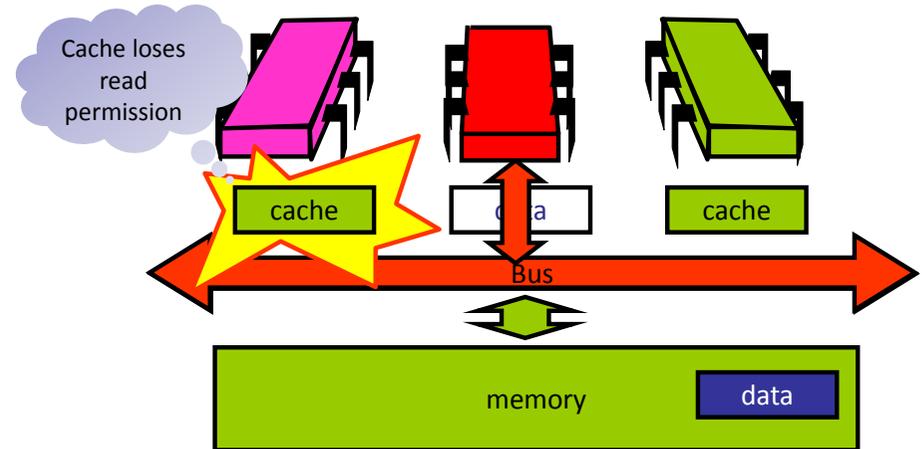
Write-Back Caches

- Accumulate changes in cache
- Write back when needed
 - Need the cache for something else
 - Another processor wants it
- On first modification
 - Invalidate other entries
 - Requires non-trivial protocol ...
- Cache entry has three states:
 - Invalid: contains raw bits
 - Valid: I can read but I can't write
 - Dirty: Data has been modified
 - Intercept other load requests
 - Write back to memory before reusing cache

3/29

Invalidate

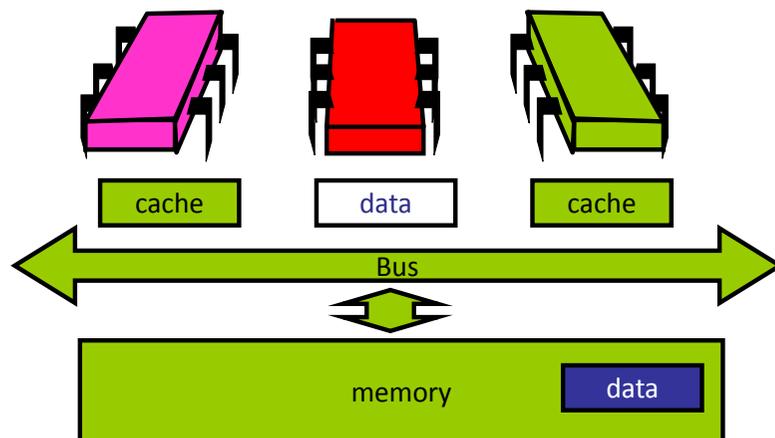
- Let's rewind back to the moment when the red processor updates its cached data
- It broadcasts an **invalidation** message → Other processor invalidates its cache!



3/30

Invalidate

- Memory provides data only if not present in any cache, so there is no need to change it now (this is an expensive operation!)
- Reading is not a problem → The threads get the data from the red process



3/31

Mutual Exclusion

- What do we want to optimize?
 1. Minimize the bus bandwidth that the spinning threads use
 2. Minimize the lock acquire/release latency
 3. Minimize the latency to acquire the lock if the lock is idle

3/32

TAS vs. TTAS

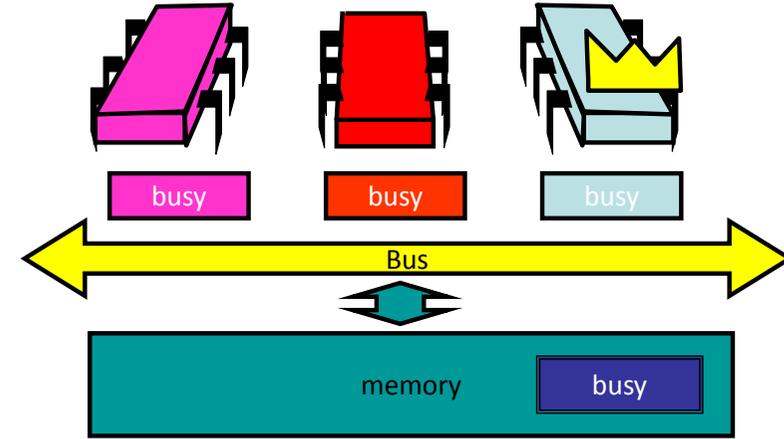
- TAS invalidates cache lines
- Spinners
 - Always go to bus
- Thread wants to release lock
 - delayed behind spinners!!!
- TTAS waits until lock “looks” free
 - Spin on local cache
 - No bus use while lock busy
- Problem: when lock is released
 - Invalidation storm ...

This is why TAS performs so poorly...

Huh?

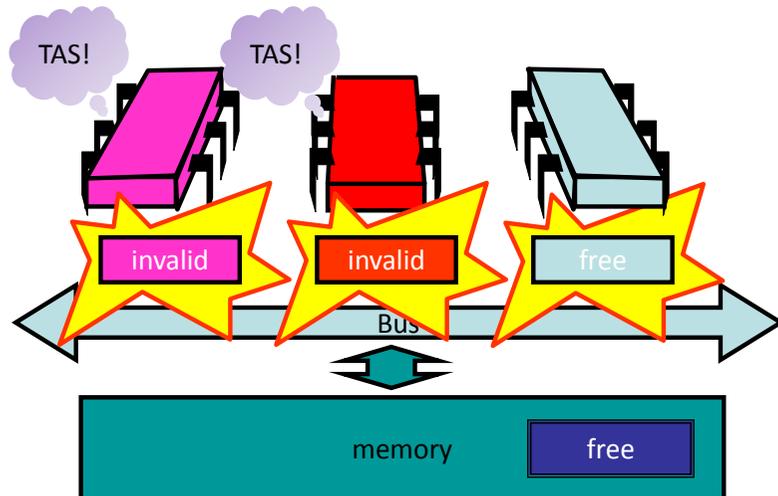
Local Spinning while Lock is Busy

- While the lock is held, all contenders spin in their caches, rereading cached data without causing any bus traffic



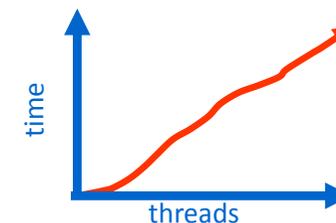
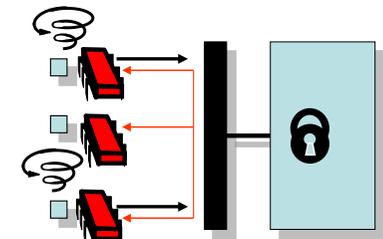
On Release

- The lock is released. All spinners take a cache miss and call Test&Set!



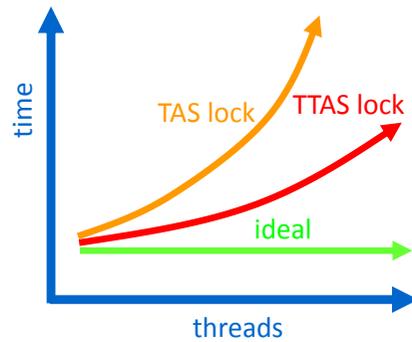
Time to Quiescence

- Every process experiences a cache miss
 - All state.get() satisfied sequentially
- Every process does TAS
 - Caches of other processes are invalidated
- Eventual quiescence (“silence”) after acquiring the lock
- The time to quiescence increases **linearly** with the number of processors for a bus architecture!



Mystery Explained

- Now we understand why the TTAS lock performs much better than the TAS lock, but still much worse than an ideal lock!

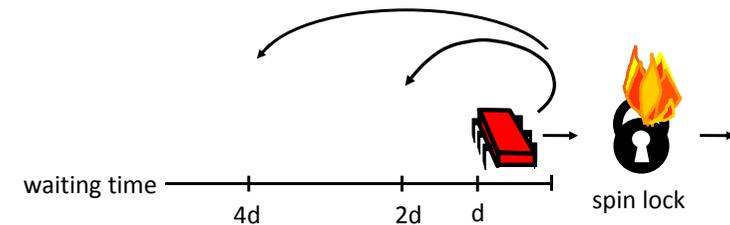


- How can we do better?

Introduce Delay

- If the lock looks free, but I fail to get it, there must be lots of contention
- It's better to back off than to collide again!

- Example: Exponential Backoff
- Each subsequent failure doubles expected waiting time



3/37

3/38

Exponential Backoff Lock

```

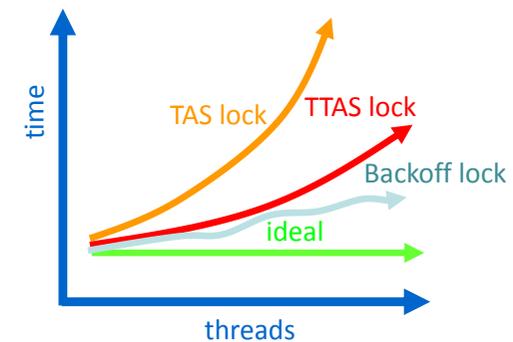
public class Backoff implements Lock {
    AtomicBoolean state = new AtomicBoolean(false);

    public void lock() {
        int delay = MIN_DELAY; // Fix minimum delay
        while (true) {
            while(state.get()) {}
            if (!lock.getAndSet())
                return;
            sleep(random() % delay); // Back off for random duration
            if (delay < MAX_DELAY) // Double maximum delay until an upper bound is reached
                delay = 2 * delay;
        }
    }

    // unlock() remains the same
}
    
```

Backoff Lock: Performance

- The backoff lock outperforms the TTAS lock!
- But it is still not ideal...



3/39

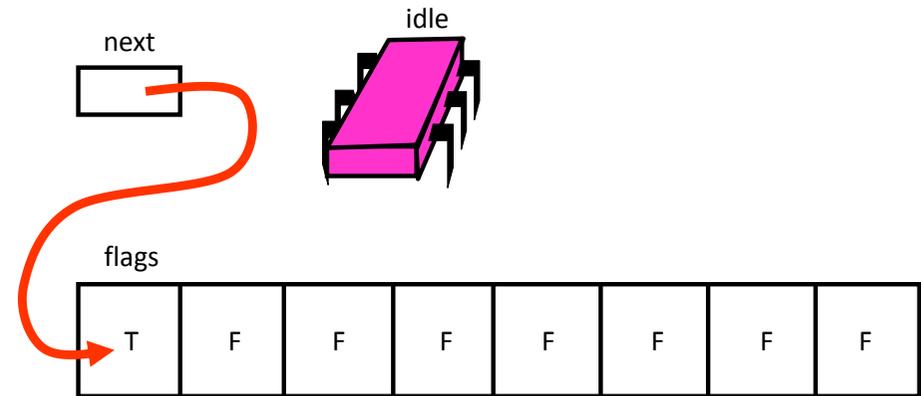
3/40

Backoff Lock: Evaluation

- Good
 - Easy to implement
 - Beats TTAS lock
- Bad
 - Must choose parameters carefully
 - Not portable across platforms
- How can we do better?
- Avoid useless invalidations
 - By keeping a queue of threads
- Each thread
 - Notifies next in line
 - Without bothering the others

ALock: Initially

- The Anderson queue lock (ALock) is an array-based queue lock
- Threads share an atomic tail field (called next)

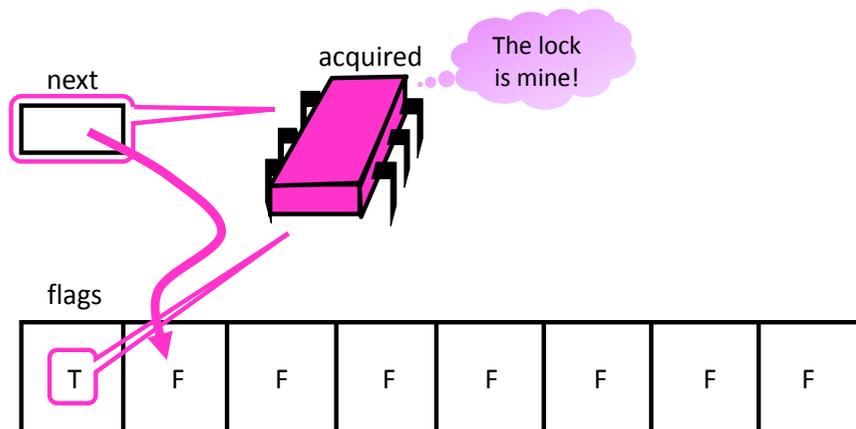


3/41

3/42

ALock: Acquiring the Lock

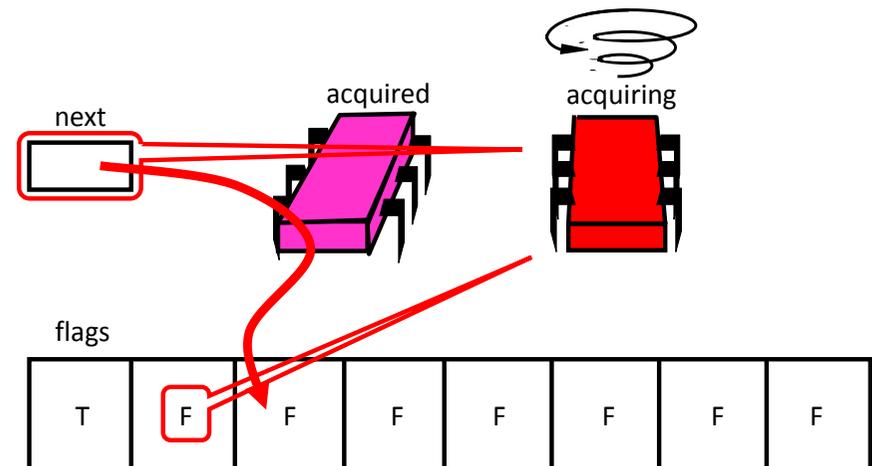
- To acquire the lock, each thread atomically increments the tail field
- If the flag is true, the lock is acquired
- Otherwise, spin until the flag is true



3/43

ALock: Contention

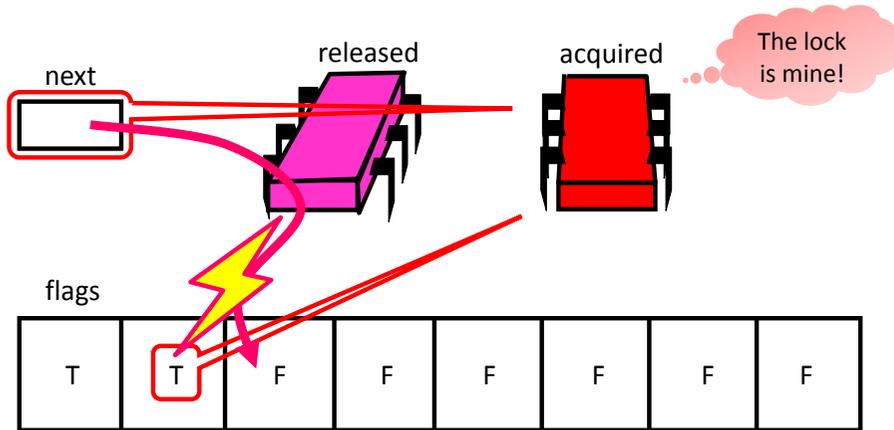
- If another thread wants to acquire the lock, it applies get&increment
- The thread spins because the flag is false



3/44

ALock: Releasing the Lock

- The first thread releases the lock by setting the next slot to true
- The second thread notices the change and gets the lock



3/45

ALock

```

public class Alock implements Lock {
    boolean[] flags = {true, false, ..., false};
    AtomicInteger next = new AtomicInteger(0);
    ThreadLocal<Integer> mySlot;

    public void lock() {
        mySlot = next.getAndIncrement();
        while (!flags[mySlot % n]) {}
        flags[mySlot % n] = false;
    }

    public void unlock() {
        flags[(mySlot+1) % n] = true;
    }
}

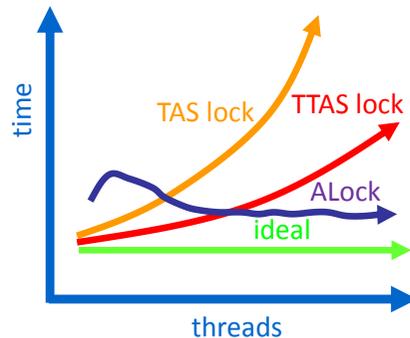
```

Annotations: One flag per thread, Thread-local variable, Take the next slot, Tell next thread to go.

3/46

ALock: Performance

- Shorter handover than backoff
- Curve is practically flat
- Scalable performance
- FIFO fairness



3/47

ALock: Evaluation

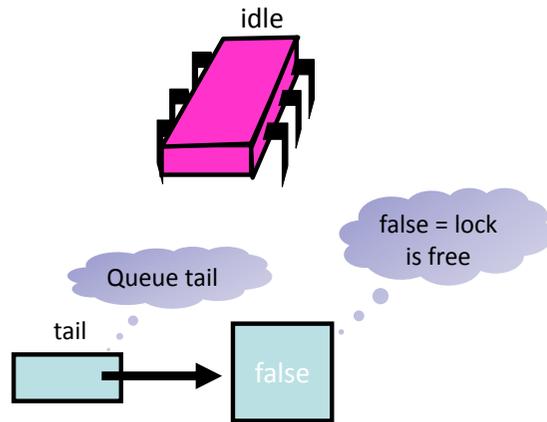
- Good
 - First truly scalable lock
 - Simple, easy to implement
- Bad
 - One bit per thread
 - Unknown number of threads?

How can we deal with this?

3/48

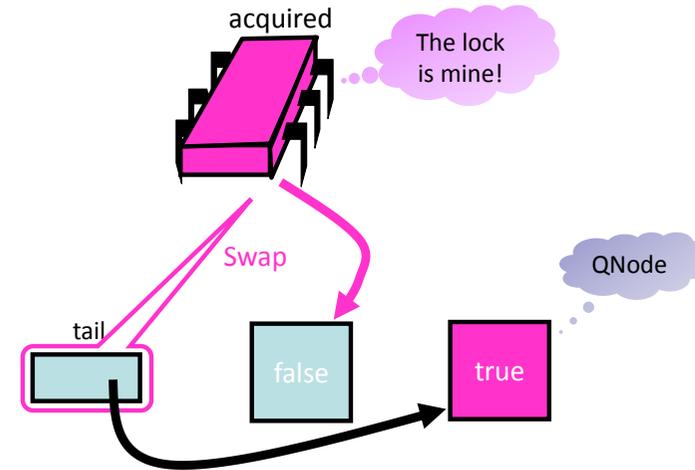
CLH Lock

- The CLH lock uses a linked list instead of an array!
- Each thread's status is recorded in a QNode object with a Boolean locked field: if the field is true, the thread has acquired the lock or is waiting for it



CLH Lock: Acquiring the Lock

- The thread sets the locked field of its QNode to true
- The thread applies swap to the tail → Its own node is now the tail and it acquires a reference to the predecessor's QNode

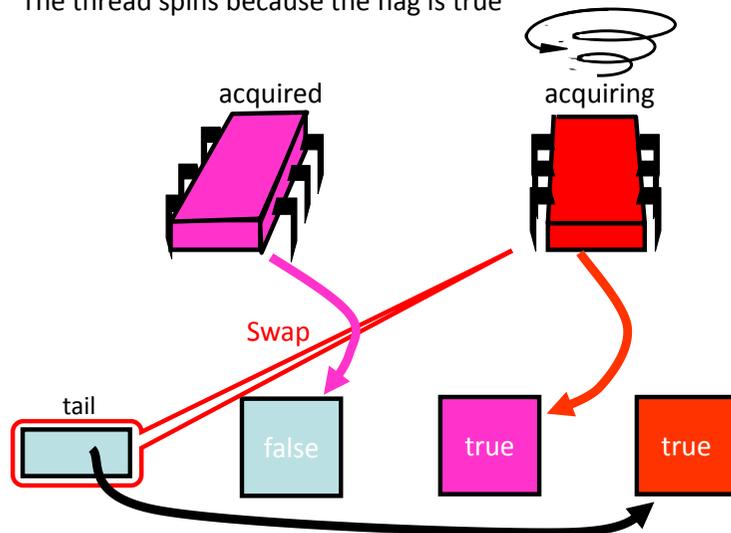


3/49

3/50

CLH Lock: Contention

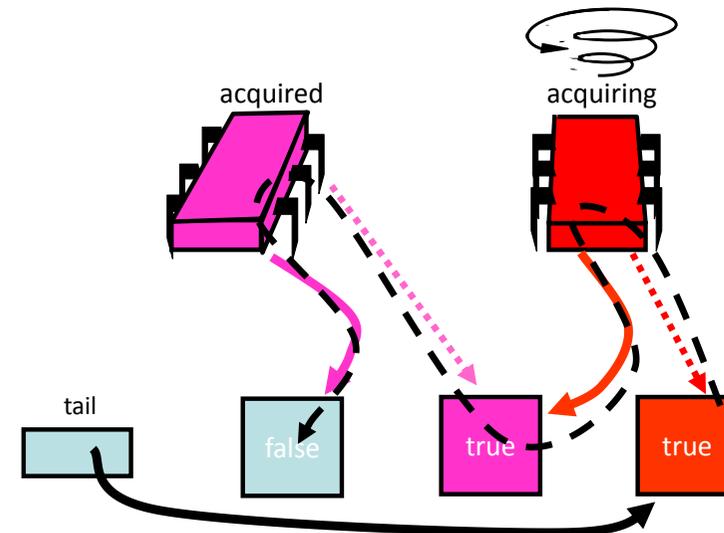
- If another thread wants to acquire the lock, it applies swap
- The thread spins because the flag is true



3/51

CLH Lock: Implicit Linked List

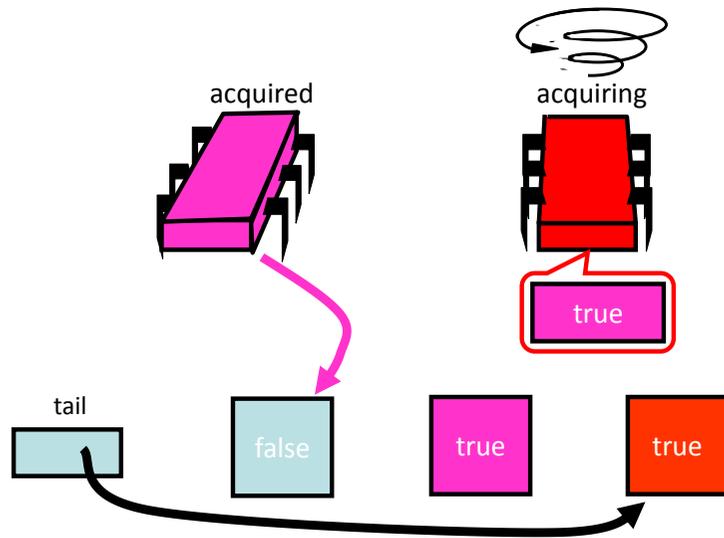
- Note that the list is ordered implicitly!



3/52

CLH Lock: Spinning on Cache

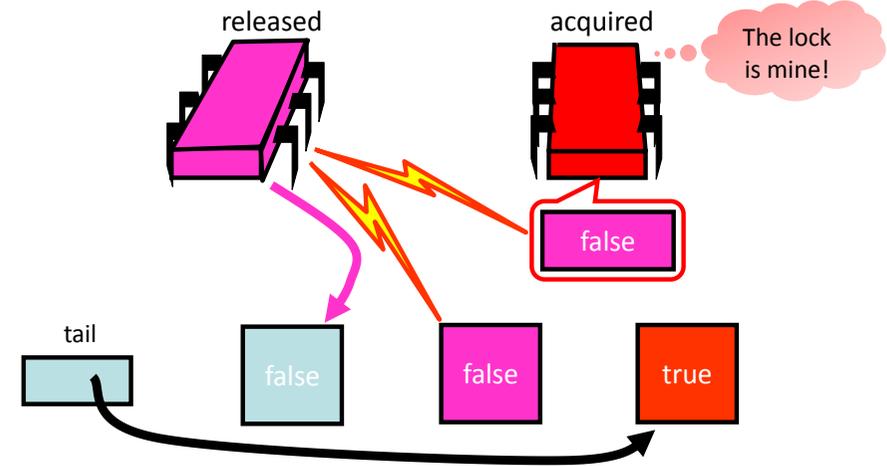
- Note that the red thread actually spins on a cached copy



3/53

CLH Lock: Release Lock

- The first thread releases the lock by setting its QNode to false
- The second thread notices the change and gets the lock



3/54

CLH Queue Lock

```
public class QNode {
    AtomicBoolean locked = new Atomic Boolean(true);
}
```

3/55

CLH Queue Lock

```
public class CLHLock implements Lock {
    AtomicReference<QNode> tail; // Tail of the queue
    ThreadLocal<QNode> myNode = new ThreadLocal<QNode>(); // Thread-local QNode

    public void lock() {
        QNode pred = tail.getAndSet(myNode); // Swap in my node
        while(pred.locked) {}
    }

    public void unlock() {
        myNode.locked.set(false);
        myNode = pred; // Recycle predecessor's node
    }
}
```

3/56

CLH Lock: Evaluation

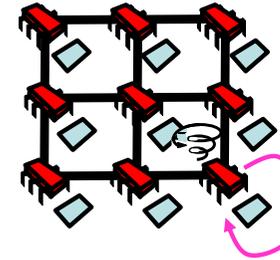
- Space usage
 - L = number of locks
 - N = number of threads
- ALock
 - $O(LN)$
- CLH lock
 - $O(L+N)$
- Good
 - Lock release affects predecessor only
 - Small, constant-sized space
- Bad
 - Doesn't work for uncached NUMA architectures

???

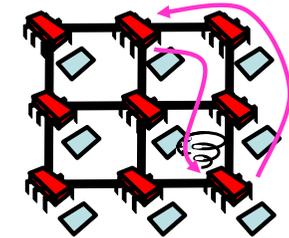
NUMA Architectures

- **Non-Uniform Memory Architecture**
- Illusion
 - Flat shared memory
- Truth
 - No caches (sometimes)
 - Some memory regions faster than others

Spinning on local memory is fast:



Spinning on remote memory is slow:



3/57

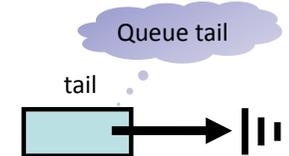
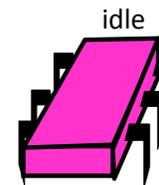
3/58

CLH Lock: Problem

- Each thread spins on predecessor's memory
- The predecessor could be far away ...
- What we want is that
 - each thread spins on local memory only
 - and the overhead is still small (constant size)
- Idea: Spin on own flag, just like the Anderson queue lock!

MCS Lock

- The lock is again represented as a linked list of QNodes, one per thread
- The tail of the queue is shared among all threads

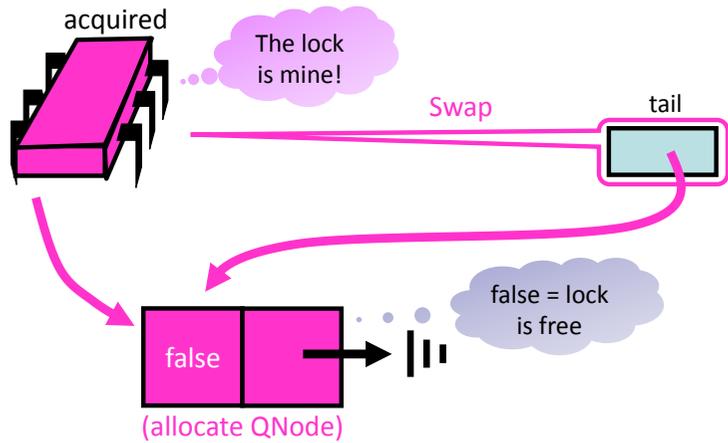


3/59

3/60

MCS Lock: Acquiring the Lock

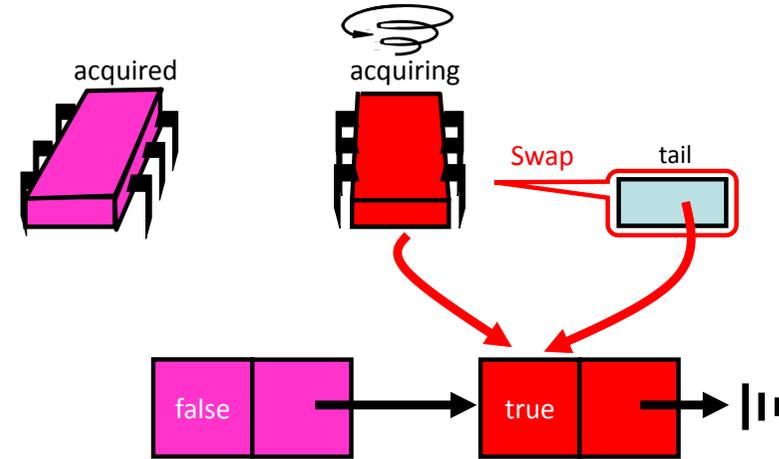
- To acquire the lock, the thread places its QNode at the tail of the list by swapping the tail to its QNode
- If there is no predecessor, the thread acquires the lock



3/61

MCS Lock: Contention

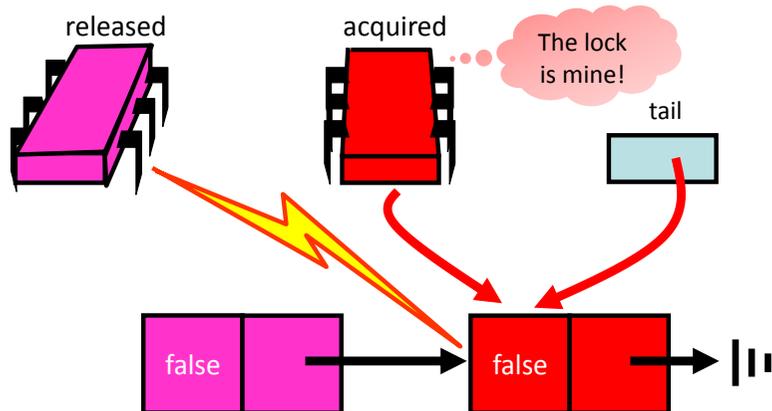
- If another thread wants to acquire the lock, it again applies swap
- The thread spins on its own QNode because there is a predecessor



3/62

MCS Lock: Releasing the Lock

- The first thread releases the lock by setting its successor's QNode to false



3/63

MCS Queue Lock

```
public class QNode {
    boolean locked = false;
    QNode next = null;
}
```

3/64

MCS Queue Lock

```

public class MCSLock implements Lock {
    AtomicReference<QNode> tail;

    public void lock() {
        QNode qnode = new QNode();
        QNode pred = tail.getAndSet(qnode);
        if (pred != null) {
            qnode.locked = true;
            pred.next = qnode;
            while (qnode.locked) {}
        }
    }
    ...
}

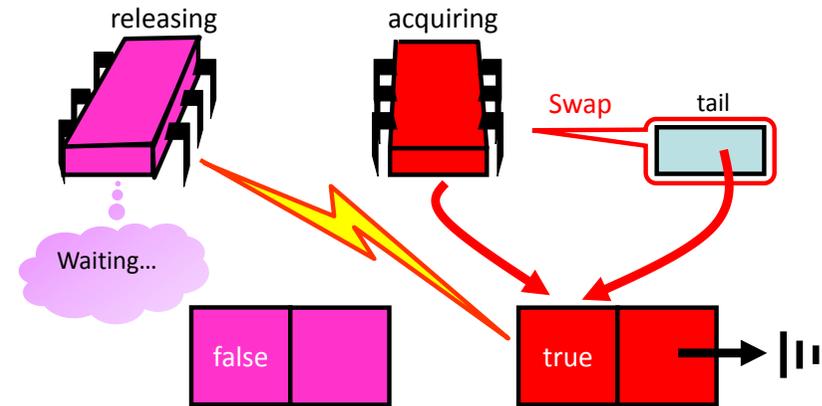
```

Add my node to the tail

Fix if queue was non-empty

MCS Lock: Unlocking

- If there is a successor, unlock it. But, be cautious!
- Even though a QNode does not have a successor, the purple thread knows that another thread is active because tail does not point to its QNode!

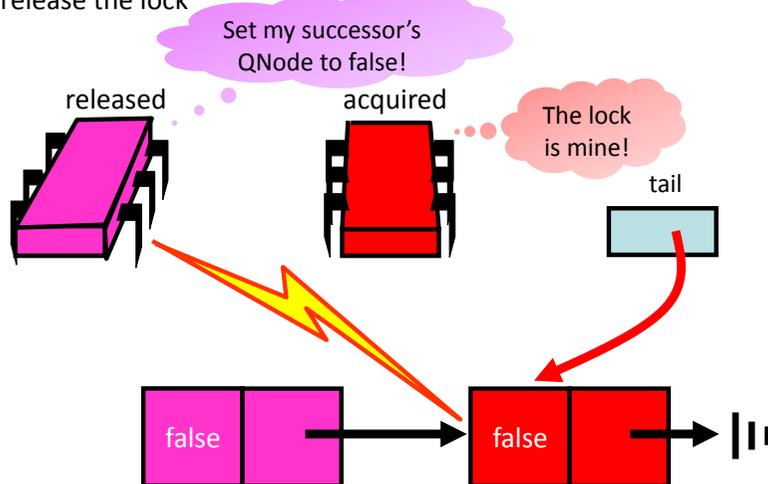


3/65

3/66

MCS Lock: Unlocking Explained

- As soon as the pointer to the successor is set, the purple thread can release the lock



MCS Queue Lock

```

...
public void unlock() {
    if (qnode.next == null) {
        if (tail.CAS(qnode, null))
            return;
        while (qnode.next == null) {}
    }
    qnode.next.locked = false;
}
}

```

Missing successor?

If really no successor, return

Otherwise, wait for successor to catch up

Pass lock to successor

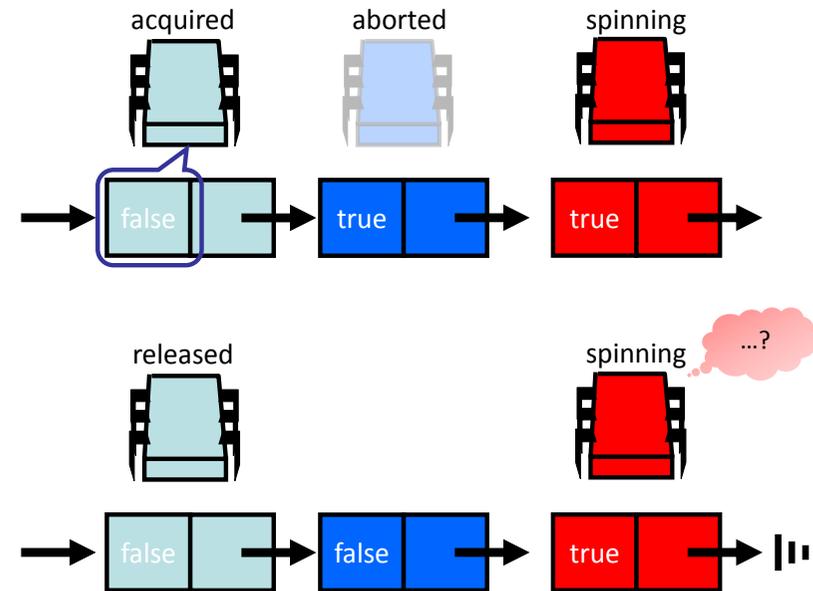
3/67

3/68

Abortable Locks

- What if you want to give up waiting for a lock?
 - For example
 - Time-out
 - Database transaction aborted by user
- Back-off Lock
 - Aborting is trivial: Just return from lock() call!
 - Extra benefit: No cleaning up, wait-free, immediate return
- Queue Locks
 - Can't just quit: Thread in line behind will starve
 - Need a graceful way out...

Problem with Queue Locks

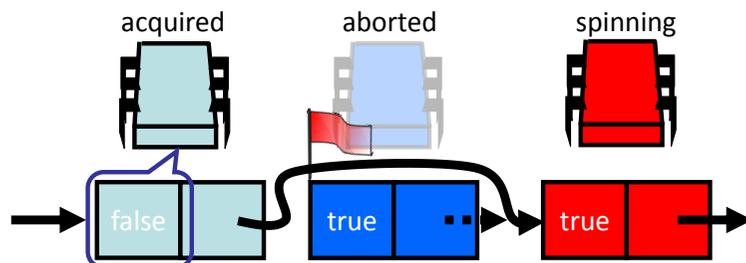


3/69

3/70

Abortable MCS Lock

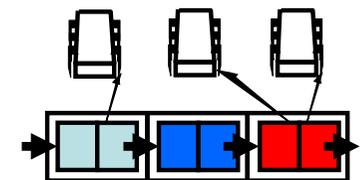
- A mechanism is required to recognize and remove aborted threads
 - A thread can set a flag indicating that it aborted
 - The predecessor can test if the flag is set • • • Spinning on remote object...?!
 - If the flag is set, its new successor is the successor's successor
 - How can we handle concurrent aborts? This is not discussed in this lecture



3/71

Composite Locks

- Queue locks have many advantages
 - FIFO fairness, fast lock release, low contention
- Backoff locks support trivial time-out protocols but are not scalable and may have slow lock release times
- A **composite lock** combines the best of both approaches!
- Short fixed-sized array of lock nodes
- Threads randomly pick a node and try to acquire it
- Use backoff mechanism to acquire a node
- Nodes build a queue
- Use a queue lock mechanism to acquire the lock



3/72

One Lock To Rule Them All?

- TTAS+Backoff, MCS, Abortable MCS...
- Each better than others in some way
- There is not a single best solution
- Lock we pick really depends on
 - the application
 - the hardware
 - which properties are important

Handling Multiple Threads

- Adding threads should not **lower** the throughput
 - Contention effects can mostly be fixed by Queue locks
- Adding threads should **increase** throughput
 - Not possible if the code is inherently sequential
 - Surprising things are parallelizable!
- How can we guarantee **consistency** if there are many threads?

3/73

3/74

Coarse-Grained Synchronization

- Each method locks the object
 - Avoid contention using queue locks
 - Mostly easy to reason about
 - This is the standard Java model (**synchronized** blocks and methods)
- Problem: Sequential bottleneck
 - Threads “stand in line”
 - Adding more threads does not improve throughput
 - We even struggle to keep it from getting worse...
- So why do we even use a multiprocessor?
 - Well, some applications are inherently parallel...
 - We focus on exploiting non-trivial parallelism

Exploiting Parallelism

- We will now talk about four “patterns”
 - Bag of tricks ...
 - Methods that work more than once ...
- The goal of these patterns are
 - Allow concurrent access
 - If there are more threads, the throughput increases!

3/75

3/76

Pattern #1: Fine-Grained Synchronization

- Instead of using a single lock split the concurrent object into **independently-synchronized** components
- Methods conflict when they access
 - The same component
 - At the same time

Pattern #2: Optimistic Synchronization

- Assume that nobody else wants to access your part of the concurrent object
- Search for the specific part that you want to lock without locking any other part on the way
- If you find it, try to lock it and perform your operations
 - If you don't get the lock, start over!
- Advantage
 - Usually cheaper than always assuming that there may be a conflict due to a concurrent access

3/77

3/78

Pattern #3: Lazy Synchronization

- Postpone hard work!
- Removing components is tricky
 - Either remove the object physically
 - Or logically: Only mark component to be deleted

Pattern #4: Lock-Free Synchronization

- Don't use locks at all!
 - Use compareAndSet() & other RMW operations!
- Advantages
 - No scheduler assumptions/support
- Disadvantages
 - Complex
 - Sometimes high overhead

3/79

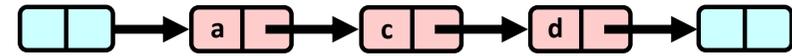
3/80

Illustration of Patterns

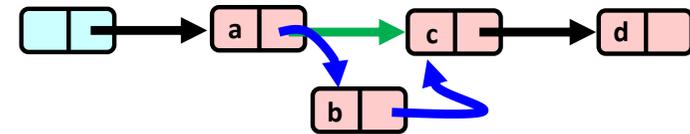
- In the following, we will illustrate these patterns using a **list-based set**
 - Common application
 - Building block for other apps
- A set is a collection of items
 - No duplicates
- The operations that we want to allow on the set are
 - **add(x)** puts **x** into the set
 - **remove(x)** takes **x** out of the set
 - **contains(x)** tests if **x** is in the set

The List-Based Set

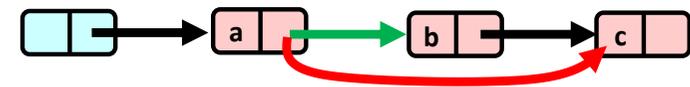
- We assume that there are sentinel nodes at the beginning and end of the linked list



- Add node b:



- Remove node b:

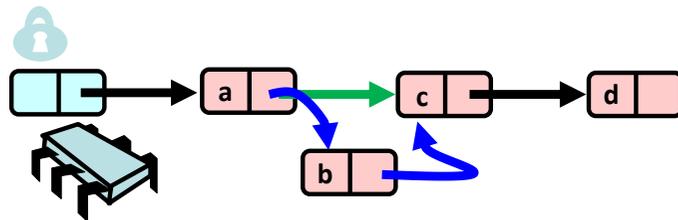


3/81

3/82

Coarse-Grained Locking

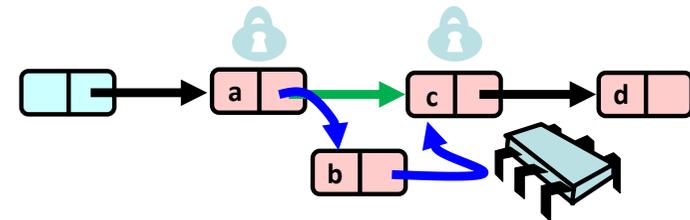
- A simple solution is to lock the entire list for each operation
 - E.g., by locking the first sentinel



- Simple and clearly correct!
- Works poorly with contention...

Fine-Grained Locking

- Split object (list) into pieces (nodes)
 - Each piece (each node in the list) has its own lock
 - Methods that work on disjoint pieces need not exclude each other



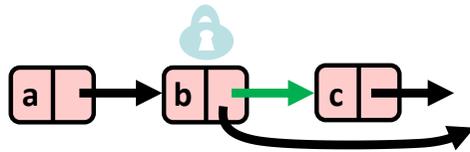
- Hand-over-hand locking: Use two locks when traversing the list
 - Why two locks?

3/83

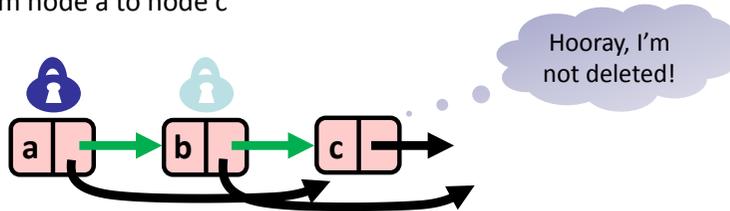
3/84

Problem with One Lock

- Assume that we want to delete node c
- We lock node b and set its next pointer to the node after c



- Another thread may concurrently delete node b by setting the next pointer from node a to node c



3/85

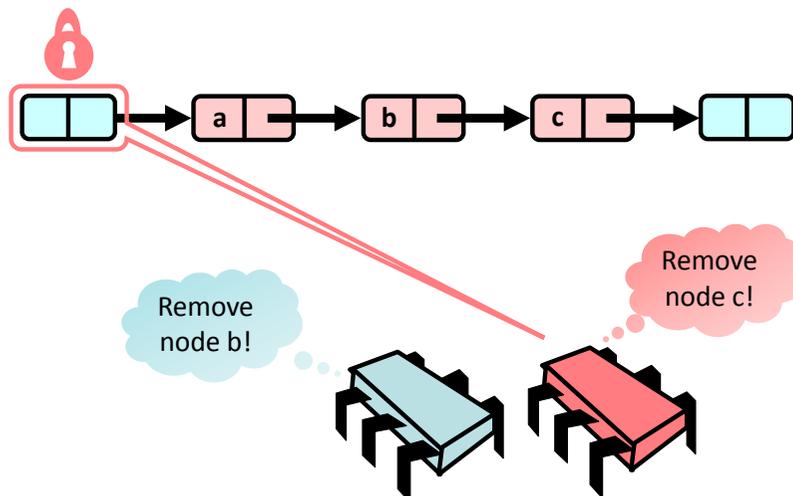
Insight

- If a node is locked, no one can delete the node's *successor*
- If a thread locks
 - the node to be deleted
 - and also its predecessor
- then it works!
- That's why we (have to) use two locks!

3/86

Hand-Over-Hand Locking: Removing Nodes

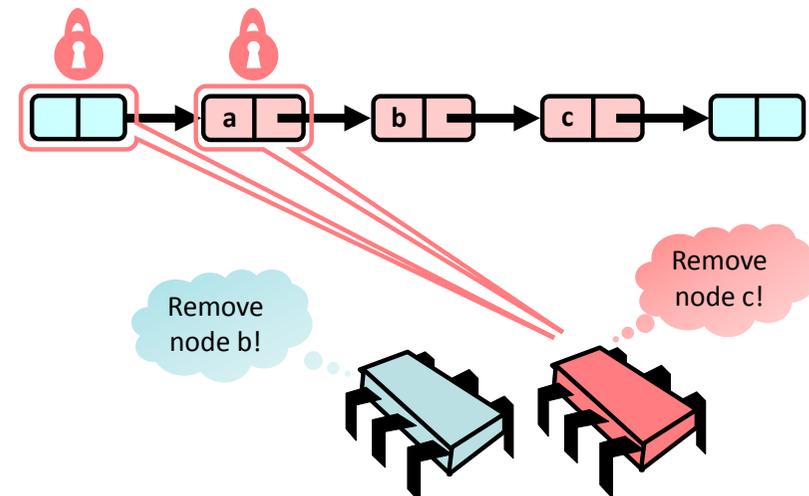
- Assume that two threads want to remove the nodes b and c
- One thread acquires the lock to the sentinel, the other has to wait



3/87

Hand-Over-Hand Locking: Removing Nodes

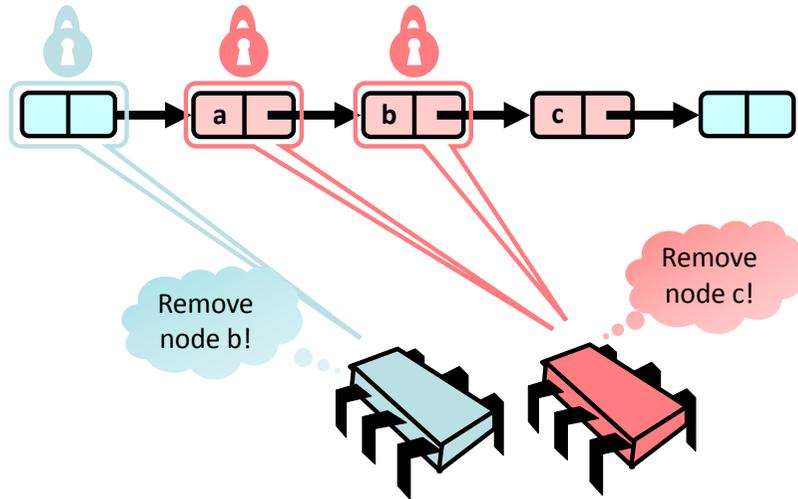
- The same thread that acquired the sentinel lock can then lock the next node



3/88

Hand-Over-Hand Locking: Removing Nodes

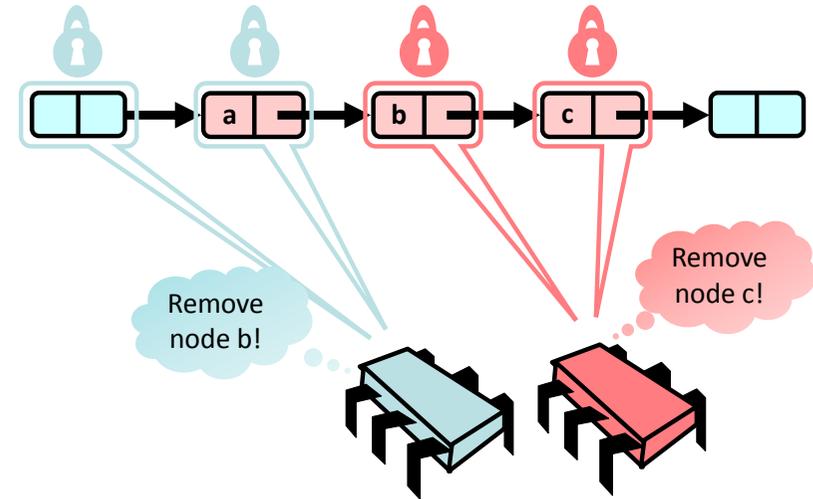
- Before locking node b, the sentinel lock is released
- The other thread can now acquire the sentinel lock



3/89

Hand-Over-Hand Locking: Removing Nodes

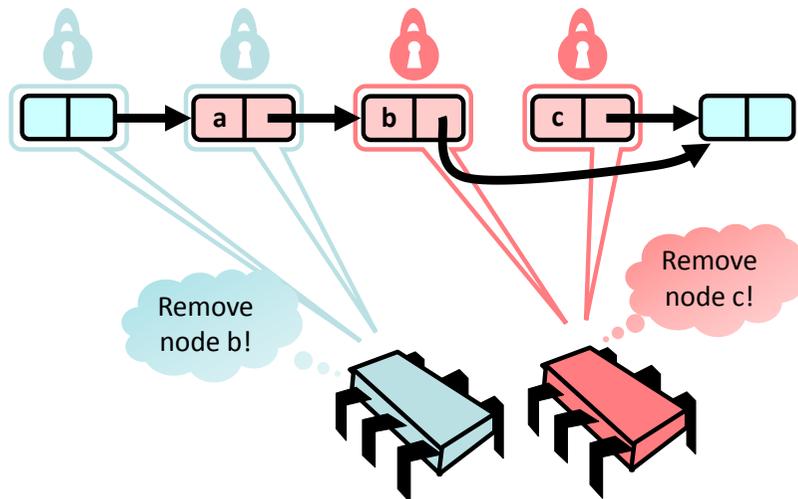
- Before locking node c, the lock of node a is released
- The other thread can now lock node a



3/90

Hand-Over-Hand Locking: Removing Nodes

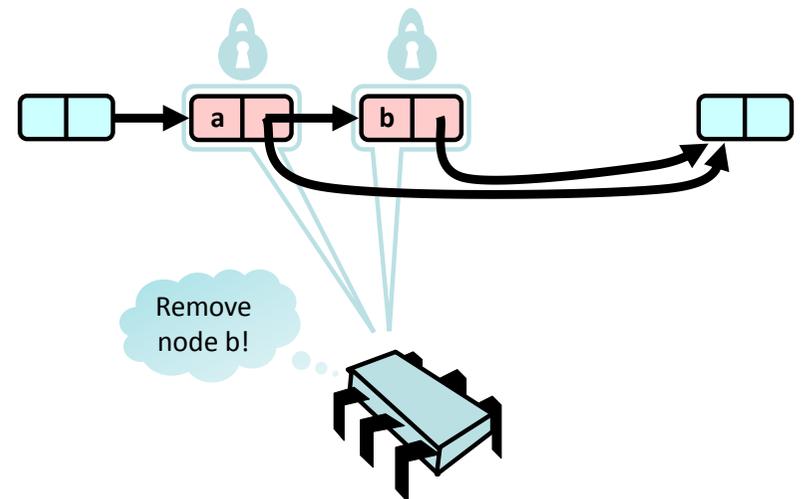
- Node c can now be removed
- Afterwards, the two locks are released



3/91

Hand-Over-Hand Locking: Removing Nodes

- The other thread can now lock node b and remove it



3/92

List Node

```
public class Node {  
    public T item;  
    public int key;  
    public Node next;  
}
```

Item of interest

Usually a hash code

Reference to next node

Remove Method

```
public boolean remove(Item item) {  
    int key = item.hashCode();  
    Node pred, curr;  
    try {  
        pred = this.head;  
        pred.lock();  
        curr = pred.next;  
        curr.lock();  
        ...  
    } finally {  
        curr.unlock();  
        pred.unlock();  
    }  
}
```

Start at the head and lock it

Lock the current node

Traverse the list and remove the item

Make sure that the locks are released

On the next slide!

3/93

3/94

Remove Method

```
while (curr.key <= key) {  
    if (item == curr.item) {  
        pred.next = curr.next;  
        return true;  
    }  
    pred.unlock();  
    pred = curr;  
    curr = curr.next;  
    curr.lock();  
}  
return false;
```

Search key range

If item found, remove the node

Unlock pred and lock the next node

Return false if the element is not present

Why does this work?

- To remove node e
 - Node e must be locked
 - Node e's predecessor must be locked
- Therefore, if you lock a node
 - It can't be removed
 - And neither can its successor
- To add node e
 - Must lock predecessor
 - Must lock successor
- Neither can be deleted
 - Is the successor lock actually required?

3/95

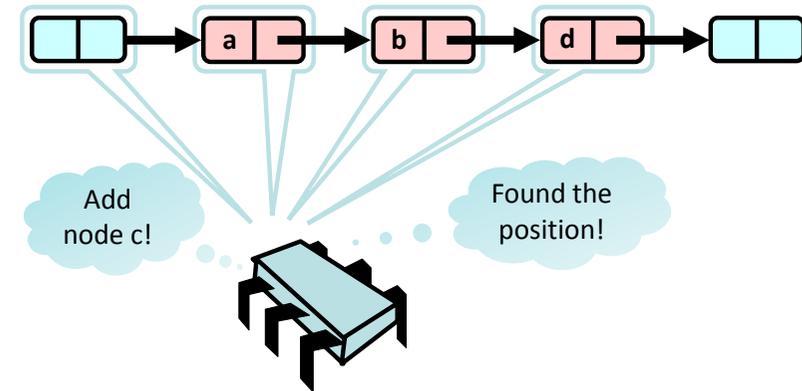
3/96

Drawbacks

- Hand-over-hand locking is sometimes better than coarse-grained lock
 - Threads can traverse in parallel
 - Sometimes, it's worse!
- However, it's certainly not ideal
 - Inefficient because many locks must be acquired and released
- How can we do better?

Optimistic Synchronization

- Traverse the list without locking!



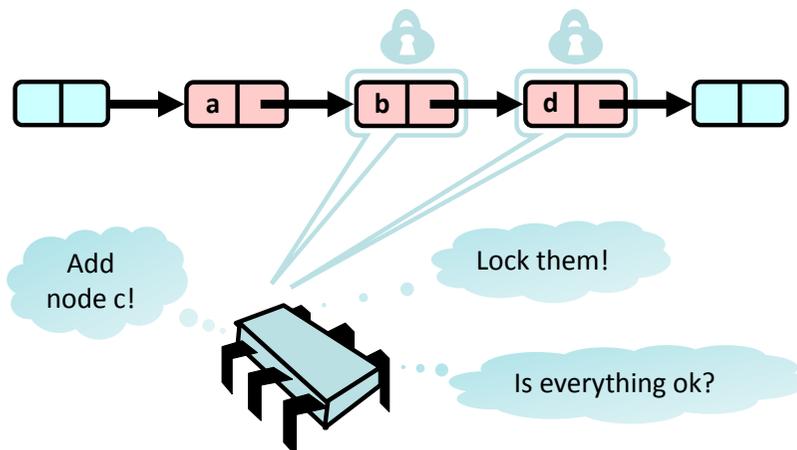
3/97

3/98

Optimistic Synchronization: Traverse without Locking

- Once the nodes are found, try to lock them
- Check that everything is ok

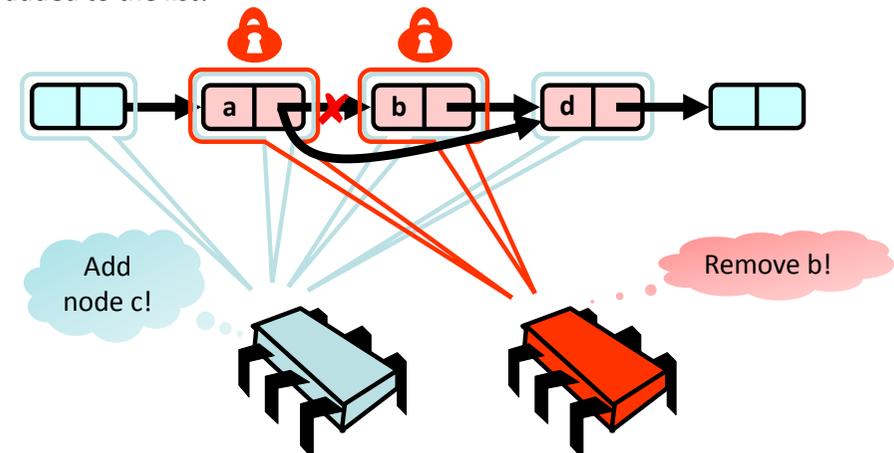
What could go wrong...?



3/99

Optimistic Synchronization: What Could Go Wrong?

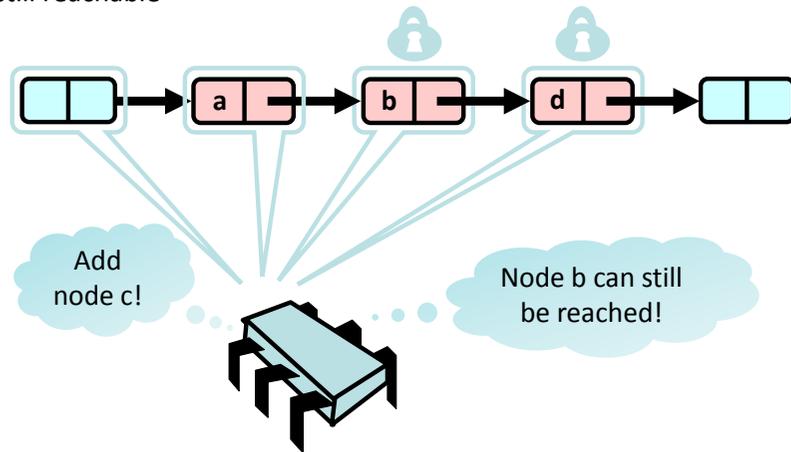
- Another thread may lock nodes a and b and remove b before node c is added → If the pointer from node b is set to node c, then node c is not added to the list!



3/100

Optimistic Synchronization: Validation #1

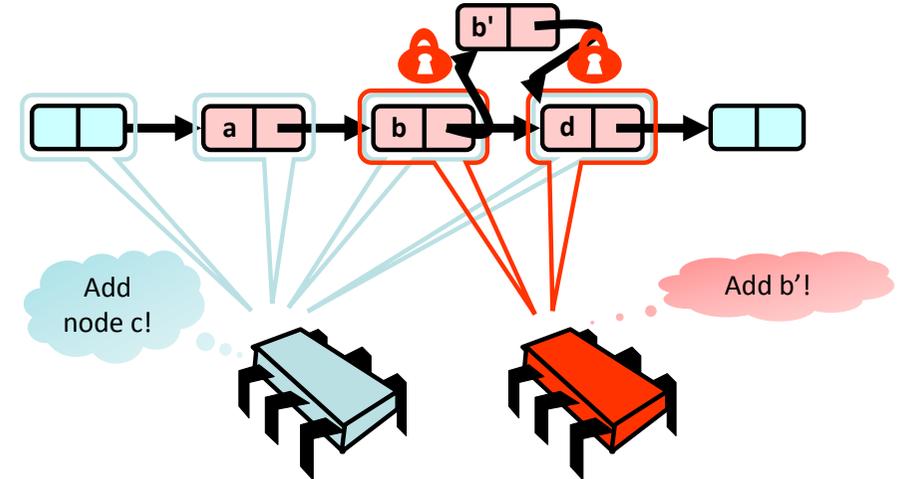
- How can this be fixed?
- After locking node b and node d, traverse the list again to verify that b is still reachable



3/101

Optimistic Synchronization: What Else Could Go Wrong?

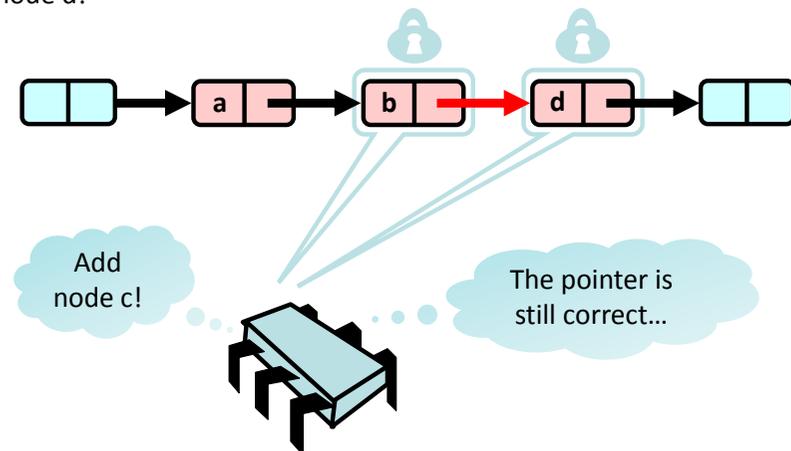
- Another thread may lock nodes b and d and add a node b' before node c is added → By adding node c, the addition of node b' is undone!



3/102

Optimistic Synchronization: Validation #2

- How can this be fixed?
- After locking node b and node d, also check that node b still points to node d!



3/103

Optimistic Synchronization: Validation

```
private boolean validate(Node pred, Node curr) {
    Node node = head;
    while (node.key <= pred.key) {
        if (node == pred)
            return pred.next == curr;
        node = node.next;
    }
    return false;
}
```

If pred is reached, test if the successor is curr

Predecessor not reachable

3/104

Optimistic Synchronization: Remove

```
private boolean remove(Item item) {
    int key = item.hashCode();
    while (true) {
        Node pred = this.head;
        Node curr = pred.next;
        while (curr.key <= key) {
            if (item == curr.item)
                break;
            pred = curr;
            curr = curr.next;
        }
        ...
    }
}
```

Retry on synchronization conflict

Stop if we find the item

Optimistic Synchronization: Remove

```
...
try {
    pred.lock(); curr.lock();
    if (validate(pred, curr)) {
        if (curr.item == item) {
            pred.next = curr.next;
            return true;
        } else {
            return false;
        }
    }
} finally {
    pred.unlock();
    curr.unlock();
}
}
```

Lock both nodes

Check for synchronization conflicts

Remove node if target found

Always unlock the nodes

3/105

3/106

Optimistic Synchronization

- Why is this correct?
 - If nodes b and c are both locked, node b still accessible, and node c still the successor of node b, then neither b nor c will be deleted by another thread
 - This means that it's ok to delete node c!
- Why is it good to use optimistic synchronization?
 - Limited hot-spots: no contention on traversals
 - Less lock acquisitions and releases
- When is it good to use optimistic synchronization?
 - When the cost of scanning twice without locks is less than the cost of scanning once with locks
- Can we do better?
 - It would be better to traverse the list only once...

Lazy Synchronization

- Key insight
 - Removing nodes causes trouble
 - Do it "lazily"
- How can we remove nodes "lazily"?
 - First perform a logical delete: Mark current node as removed (new!)



- Then perform a physical delete: Redirect predecessor's next (as before)

3/107

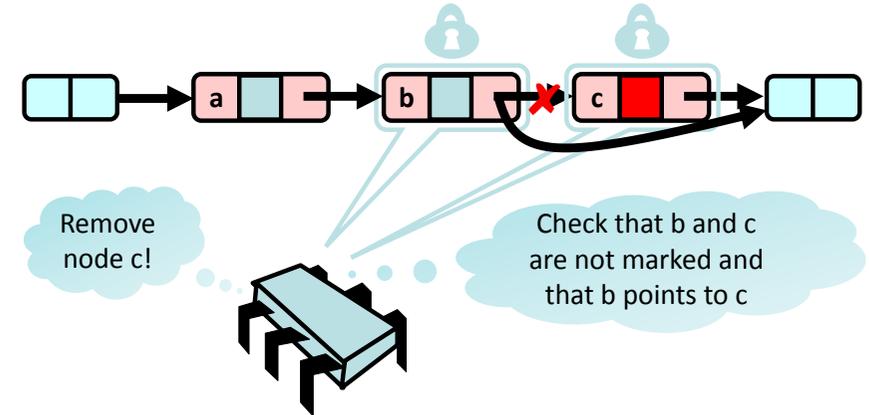
3/108

Lazy Synchronization

- All Methods
 - Scan through locked and marked nodes
 - Removing a node doesn't slow down other method calls...
- Note that we must still lock pred and curr nodes!
- How does validation work?
 - Check that neither pred nor curr are marked
 - Check that pred points to curr

Lazy Synchronization

- Traverse the list and then try to lock the two nodes
- Validate!
- Then, mark node c and change the predecessor's next pointer



3/109

3/110

Lazy Synchronization: Validation

```
private boolean validate(Node pred, Node curr) {  
    return !pred.marked && !curr.marked &&  
           pred.next == curr;  
}
```

Nodes are not logically removed

Predecessor still points to current

Lazy Synchronization: Remove

```
public boolean remove(Item item) {  
    int key = item.hashCode();  
    while (true) {  
        Node pred = this.head;  
        Node curr = pred.next;  
        while (curr.key <= key) {  
            if (item == curr.item)  
                break;  
            pred = curr;  
            curr = curr.next;  
        }  
        ...  
    }  
}
```

This is the same as before!

3/111

3/112

Lazy Synchronization: Remove

```
...
try {
    pred.lock(); curr.lock();
    if (validate(pred,curr)) {
        if (curr.item == item) {
            curr.marked = true;
            pred.next = curr.next;
            return true;
        } else {
            return false;
        }
    }
} finally {
    pred.unlock();
    curr.unlock();
}
}
```

Check for synchronization conflicts

If the target is found, mark the node and remove it

3/113

Lazy Synchronization: Contains

```
public boolean contains(Item item) {
    int key = item.hashCode();
    Node curr = this.head;
    while (curr.key < key) {
        curr = curr.next;
    }
    return curr.key == key && !curr.marked;
}
```

Traverse without locking (nodes may have been removed)

Is the element present and not marked?

3/114

Evaluation

- Good
 - The list is traversed only once without locking
 - Note that contains() doesn't lock at all!
 - This is nice because typically contains() is called much more often than add() or remove()
 - Uncontended calls don't re-traverse
- Bad
 - Contended add() and remove() calls do re-traverse
 - Traffic jam if one thread delays
- Traffic jam?
 - If one thread gets the lock and experiences a cache miss/page fault, every other thread that needs the lock is stuck!
 - We need to trust the scheduler....

3/115

Reminder: Lock-Free Data Structures

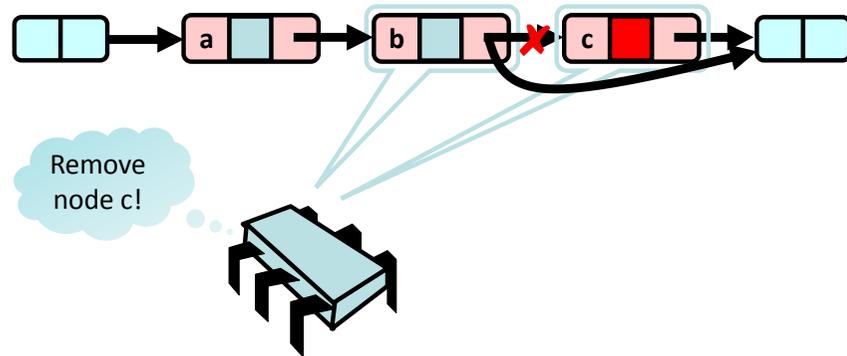
- If we want to guarantee that some thread will eventually complete a method call, even if other threads may halt at malicious times, then the implementation cannot use locks!
- Next logical step: Eliminate locking entirely!
- Obviously, we must use some sort of RMW method
- Let's use compareAndSet() (CAS)!



3/116

Remove Using CAS

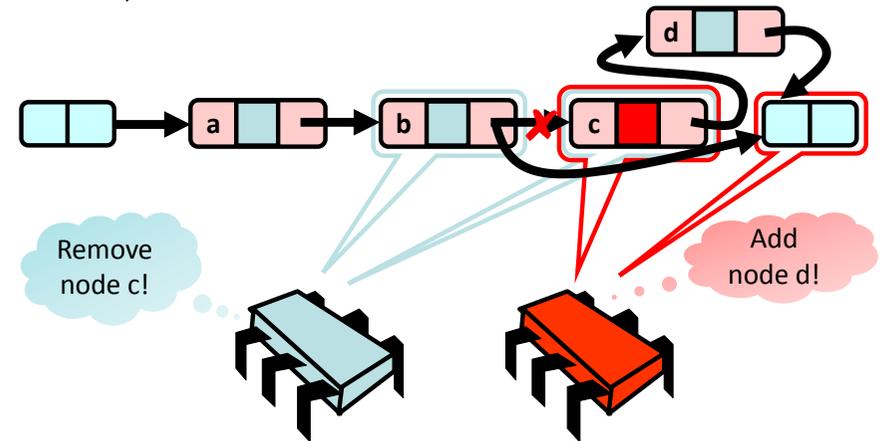
- First, remove the node logically (i.e., mark it)
- Then, use CAS to change the next pointer
- Does this work...?



3/117

Remove Using CAS: Problem

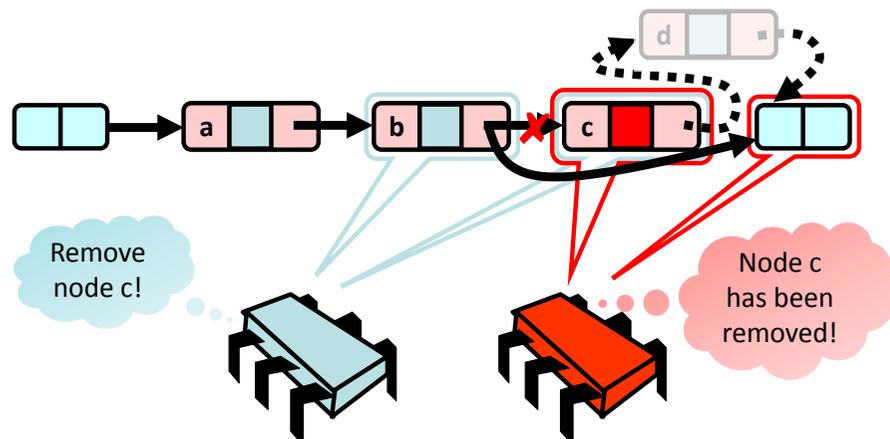
- Unfortunately, this doesn't work!
- Another node d may be added before node c is physically removed
- As a result, node d is not added to the list...



3/118

Solution

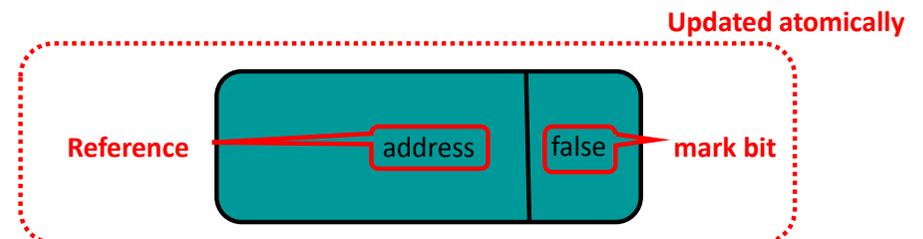
- Mark bit and next pointer are "CASed together"
- This atomic operation ensures that no node can cause a conflict by adding (or removing) a node at the same position in the list



3/119

Solution

- Such an operation is called an [atomic markable reference](#)
 - Atomically update the mark bit and redirect the predecessor's next pointer
- In Java, there's an AtomicMarkableReference class
 - In the package `Java.util.concurrent.atomic` package



3/120

Changing State

```
private Object ref;  
private boolean mark;
```

The reference to the next
Object and the mark bit

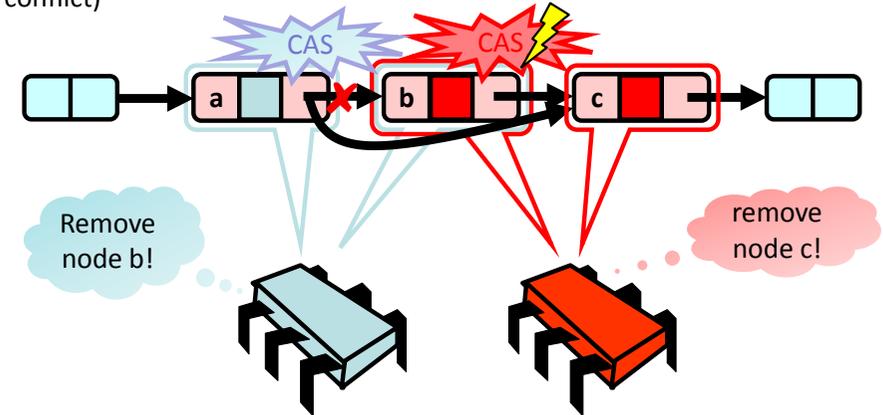
```
public synchronized boolean compareAndSet(  
Object expectedRef, Object updateRef,  
boolean expectedMark, boolean updateMark) {
```

```
    if (ref == expectedRef && mark == expectedMark) {  
        ref = updateRef;  
        mark = updateMark;  
    }  
}
```

If the reference and the mark are as
expected, update them atomically

Removing a Node

- If two threads want to delete the nodes b and c, both b and c are marked
- The CAS of the red thread fails because node b is marked!
- (If node b is yet not marked, then b is removed first and there is no conflict)



3/121

3/122

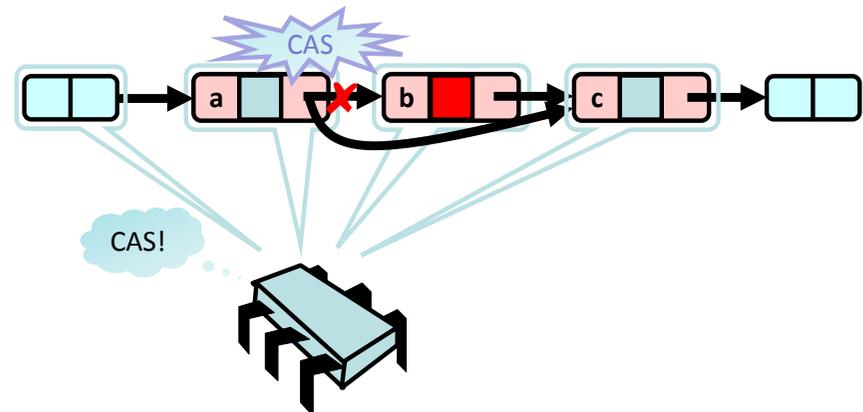
Traversing the List

- Question: What do you do when you find a “logically” deleted node in your path when you’re traversing the list?



Lock-Free Traversal

- If a logically deleted node is encountered, CAS the predecessor’s next field and proceed (repeat as needed)

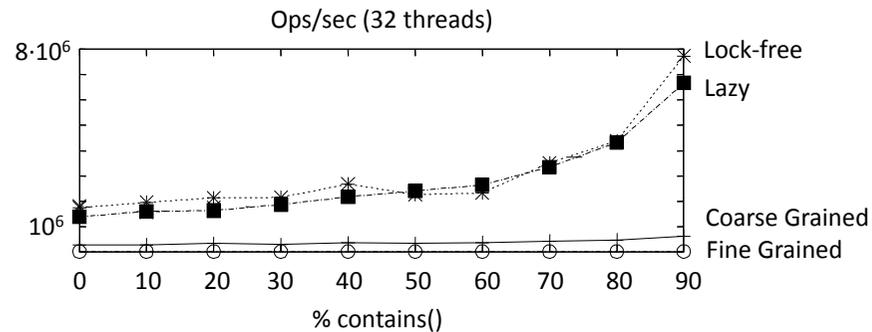


3/123

3/124

Performance

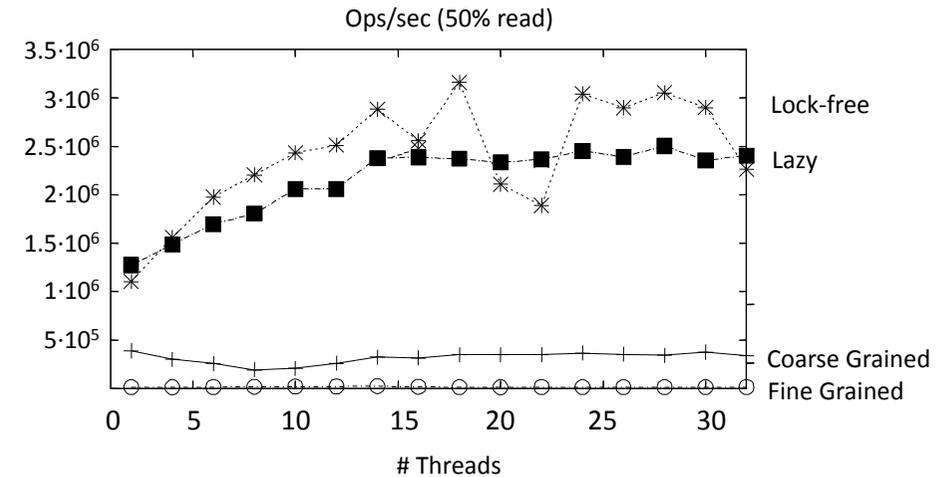
- The throughput of the presented techniques has been measured for a varying percentage of contains() method calls
 - Using a benchmark on a 16 node shared memory machine



3/125

Low Ratio of contains()

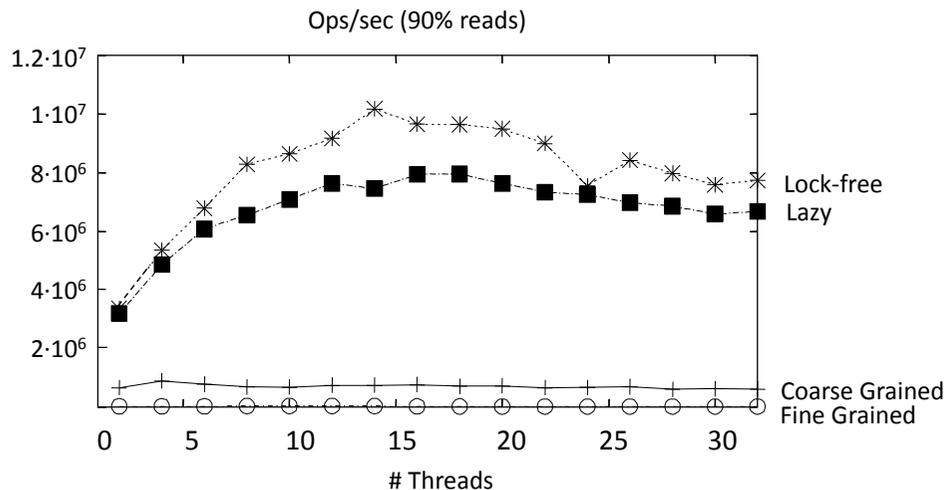
- If the ratio of contains() is low, the lock-free linked list and the linked list with lazy synchronization perform well even if there are many threads



3/126

High Ratio of contains()

- If the ratio of contains() is high, again both the lock-free linked list and the linked list with lazy synchronization perform well even if there are many threads



3/127

“To Lock or Not to Lock”

- Locking vs. non-blocking: Extremist views on both sides
- It is nobler to compromise by combining locking and non-blocking techniques
 - Example: Linked list with lazy synchronization combines blocking add() and remove() and a non-blocking contains()
 - Blocking/non-blocking is a property of a method

3/128

Linear-Time Set Methods

- We looked at a number of ways to make highly-concurrent list-based sets
 - Fine-grained locks
 - Optimistic synchronization
 - Lazy synchronization
 - Lock-free synchronization
- What's not so great?
 - `add()`, `remove()`, `contains()` take time **linear in the set size**
- We want constant-time methods! ... How...?
 - At least on average...

3/129

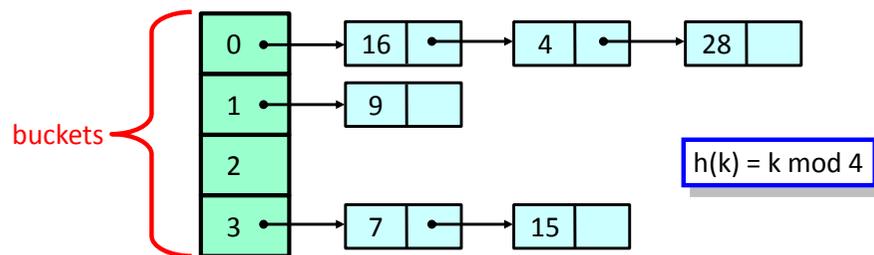
Hashing

- A hash function maps the items to integers
 - $h: \text{items} \rightarrow \text{integers}$
- Uniformly distributed
 - Different items “most likely” have different hash values
- In Java there is a `hashCode()` method

3/130

Sequential Hash Map

- The hash table is implemented as an array of buckets, each pointing to a list of items

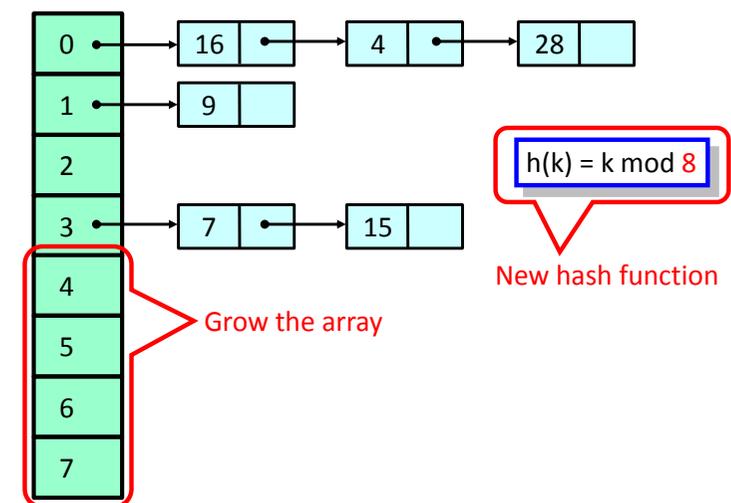


- Problem: If many items are added, the lists get long \rightarrow Inefficient lookups!
- Solution: Resize!

3/131

Resizing

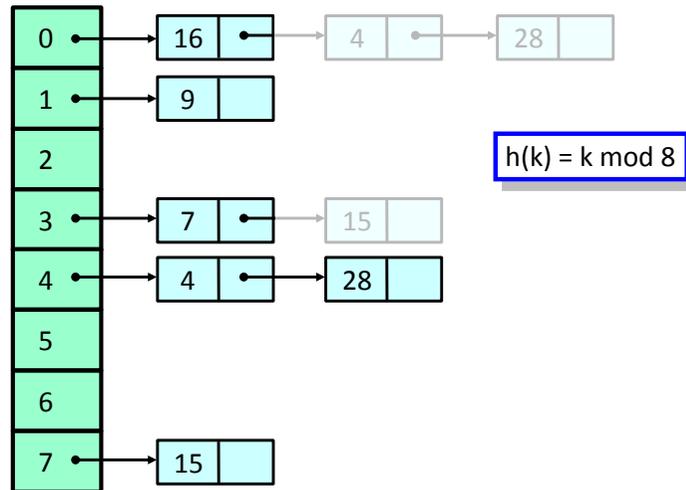
- The array size is doubled and the hash function adjusted



3/132

Resizing

- Some items have to be moved to different buckets!



3/133

Hash Sets

- A hash set implements a set object
 - Collection of items, no duplicates
 - add(), remove(), contains() methods

- More coding ahead!



3/134

Simple Hash Set

```
public class SimpleHashSet {  
    protected LockFreeList[] table; // Array of lock-free lists  
  
    public SimpleHashSet(int capacity) { // Initial size  
        table = new LockFreeList[capacity];  
        for (int i = 0; i < capacity; i++) // Initialization  
            table[i] = new LockFreeList();  
    }  
  
    public boolean add(Object key) {  
        int hash = key.hashCode() % table.length;  
        return table[hash].add(key);  
    }  
}
```

Use hash of object to pick a bucket
and call bucket's add() method

3/135

Simple Hash Set: Evaluation

- We just saw a
 - Simple
 - Lock-free
 - Concurrenthash-based set implementation
- But we don't know how to resize...
- Is Resizing really necessary?
 - Yes, since constant-time method calls require constant-length buckets and a table size proportional to the set size
 - As the set grows, we must be able to resize

3/136

Set Method Mix

- Typical load
 - 90% contains()
 - 9% add ()
 - 1% remove()
- Growing is important, shrinking not so much
- When do we resize?
- There are many reasonable policies, e.g., pick a threshold on the number of items in a bucket
- Global threshold
 - When, e.g., $\geq \frac{1}{4}$ buckets exceed this value
- Bucket threshold
 - When any bucket exceeds this value

Coarse-Grained Locking

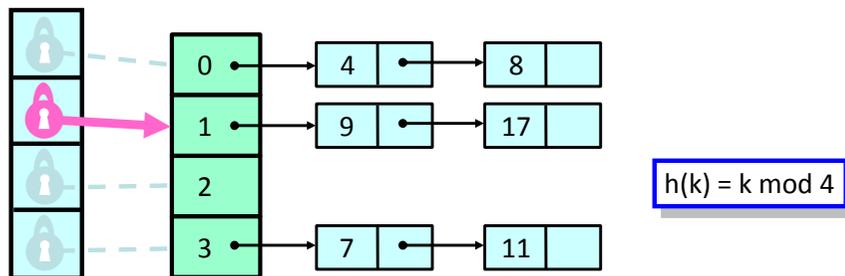
- If there are concurrent accesses, how can we **safely** resize the array?
- As with the linked list, a straightforward solution is to use coarse-grained locking: lock the entire array!
- This is very simple and correct
- However, we again get a sequential bottleneck...
- How about fine-grained locking?

3/137

3/138

Fine-Grained Locking

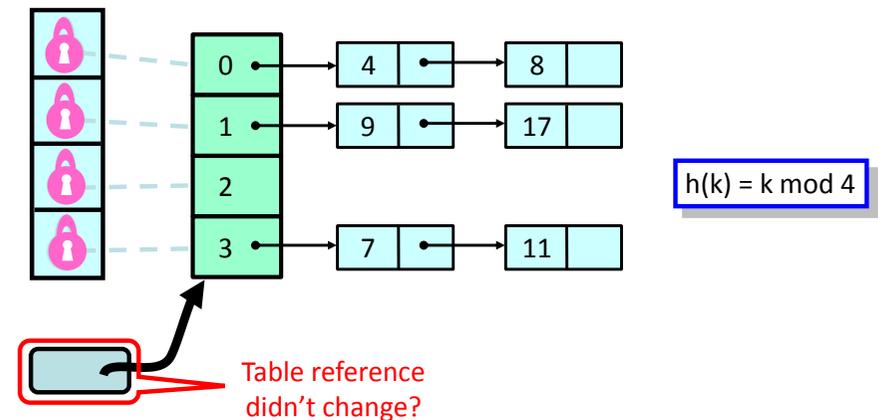
- Each lock is associated with one bucket



- After acquiring the lock of the list, insert the item in the list!

Fine-Grained Locking: Resizing

- Acquire all locks in ascending order and make sure that the table reference didn't change between resize decision and lock acquisition!

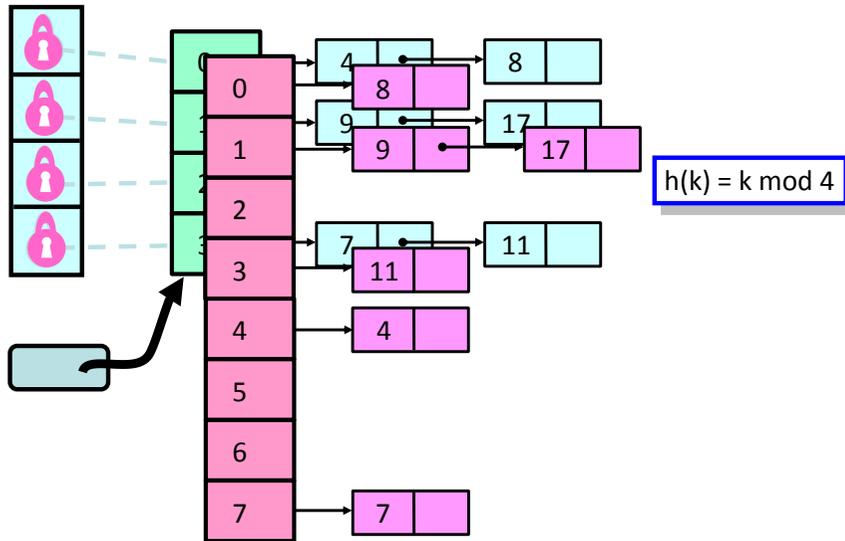


3/139

3/140

Fine-Grained Locking: Resizing

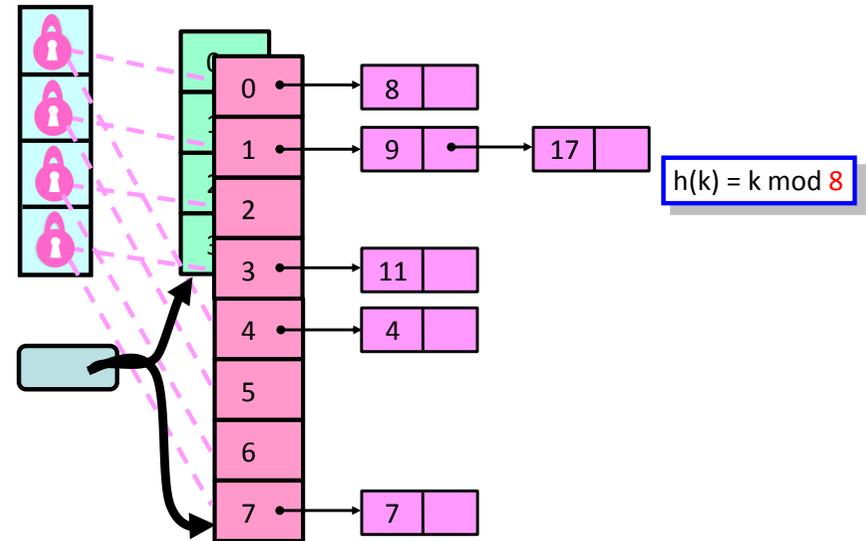
- Allocate a new table and copy all elements



3/141

Fine-Grained Locking: Resizing

- Stripe the locks: Each lock is now associated with two buckets
- Update the hash function and the table reference



3/142

Observations

- We grow the table, but we don't increase the number of locks
 - Resizing the lock array is tricky ...
- We use sequential lists (coarse-grained locking)
 - No lock-free list
 - If we're locking anyway, why pay?

Fine-Grained Hash Set

```
public class FGHashSet {
    protected RangeLock[] lock;
    protected List[] table;

    public FGHashSet(int capacity) {
        table = new List[capacity];
        lock = new RangeLock[capacity];
        for (int i = 0; i < capacity; i++)
            lock[i] = new RangeLock();
            table[i] = new LinkedList();
        }
    }
}
```

Array of locks

Array of buckets

Initially the same number of locks and buckets

3/143

3/144

Fine-Grained Hash Set: Add Method

```
public boolean add(Object key) {  
    int keyHash = key.hashCode() % lock.length;  
    synchronized(lock[keyHash]) {  
        int tableHash = key.hashCode() % table.length;  
        return table[tableHash].add(key);  
    }  
}
```

Acquire the right lock

Call the add() method of the right bucket

3/145

Fine-Grained Hash Set: Resize Method

```
public void resize(int depth, List[] oldTable) {  
    synchronized(lock[depth]) {  
        if (oldTable == this.table) {  
            int next = depth + 1;  
            if (next < lock.length)  
                resize(next, oldTable);  
            else  
                sequentialResize();  
        }  
    }  
}
```

Resize() calls resize(0, this.table)

Acquire the next lock and check that no one else has resized

Recursively acquire the next lock

Once the locks are acquired, do the work

3/146

Fine-Grained Locks: Evaluation

- We can resize the table, but not the locks
- It is debatable whether method calls are constant-time in presence of contention ...
- Insight: The contains() method does not modify any fields
 - Why should concurrent contains() calls conflict?

Read/Write Locks

```
public interface ReadWriteLock {  
    Lock readLock();  
    Lock writeLock();  
}
```

Return the associated read lock

Return the associated write lock

3/147

3/148

Lock Safety Properties

- No thread may acquire the write lock
 - while any thread holds the write lock
 - or the read lock
- No thread may acquire the read lock
 - while any thread holds the write lock
- Concurrent read locks OK

- This satisfies the following safety properties
 - If readers > 0 then writer == false
 - If writer = true then readers == 0

3/149

Read/Write Lock: Liveness

- How do we guarantee liveness?
 - If there are lots of readers, the writers may be locked out!
- Solution: FIFO Read/Write lock
 - As soon as a writer requests a lock, no more readers are accepted
 - Current readers “drain” from lock and the writers acquire it eventually

3/150

Optimistic Synchronization

- What if the contains() method scans without locking...?
- If it finds the key
 - It is ok to return true!
 - Actually requires a proof...
- What if it doesn't find the key?
 - It may be a victim of resizing...
 - Get a **read lock** and try again!
 - This makes sense if is expected (?) that the key is there and resizes are rare...

We won't discuss this in this lecture

Stop The World Resizing

- The resizing we have seen up till now stops all concurrent operations
- Can we design a resize operation that will be incremental?
- We need to avoid locking the table...

- We want a **lock-free table** with **incremental resizing!**

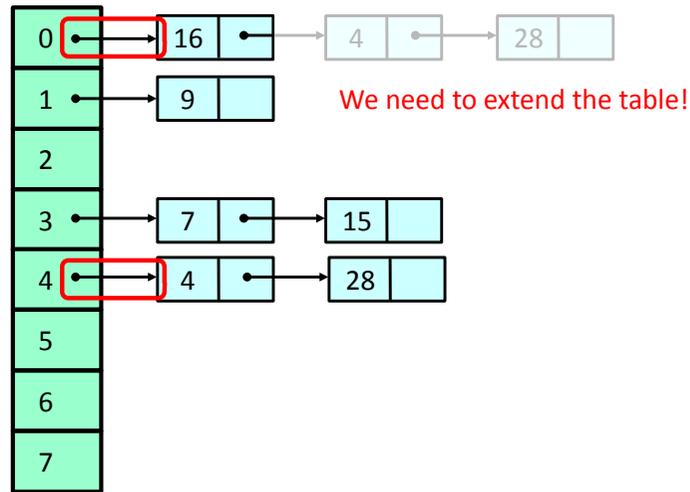
How...?

3/151

3/152

Lock-Free Resizing Problem

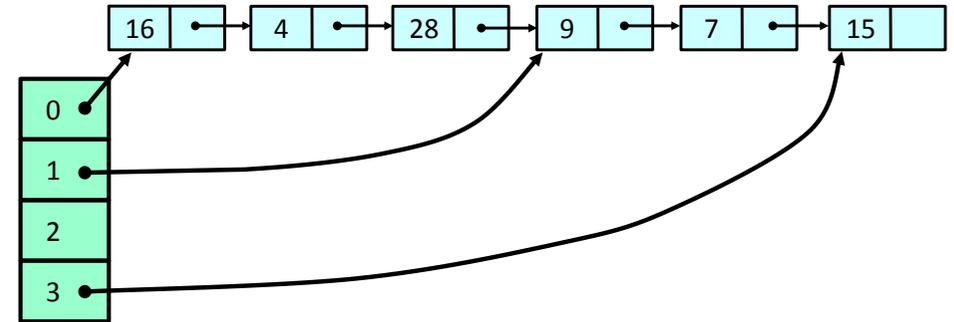
- In order to remove and then add even a single item, "single location CAS" is not enough...



3/153

Idea: Don't Move the Items

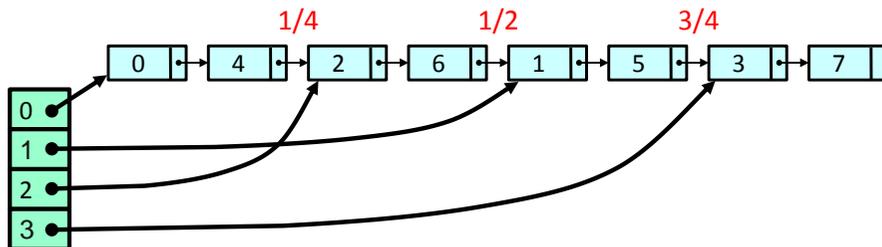
- Move the buckets instead of the items!
- Keep all items in a single lock-free list
- Buckets become "shortcut pointers" into the list



3/154

Recursive Split Ordering

- Example: The items 0 to 7 need to be hashed into the table
- Recursively split the list the buckets in half:



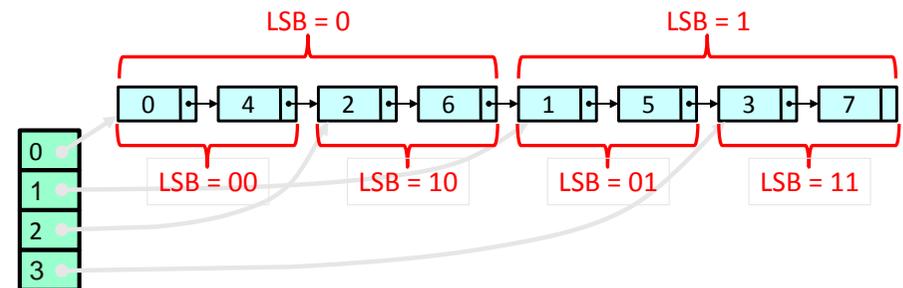
- The list entries are sorted in an order that allows recursive splitting



3/155

Recursive Split Ordering

- Note that the least significant bit (LSB) is 0 in the first half and 1 in the other half! The second LSB determines the next pointers etc.



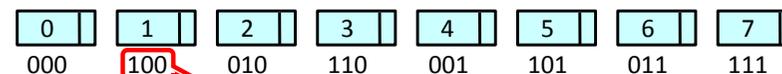
3/156

Split-Order

- If the table size is 2^i :
 - Bucket b contains keys $k = b \bmod 2^i$
 - The bucket index consists of the key's i least significant bits
- When the table splits:
 - Some keys stay ($b = k \bmod 2^{i+1}$)
 - Some keys move ($b+2^i = k \bmod 2^{i+1}$)
- If a key moves is determined by the $(i+1)^{\text{st}}$ bit
 - counting backwards

A Bit of Magic

- We need to map the real keys to the split-order
- Look at the binary representation of the keys and the indices
- The real keys:



- Split-order: Real key 1 is at index 4!



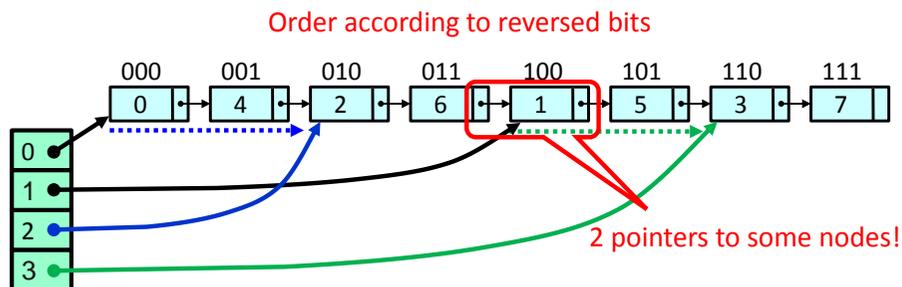
- Just reverse the order of the key bits!

3/157

3/158

Split Ordered Hashing

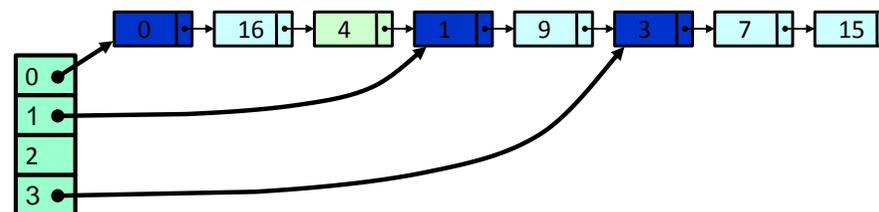
- After a resize, the new pointers are found by searching for the right index



- A problem remains: How can we remove a node by means of a CAS if two sources point to it?

Sentinel Nodes

- Solution: Use a [sentinel node](#) for each bucket



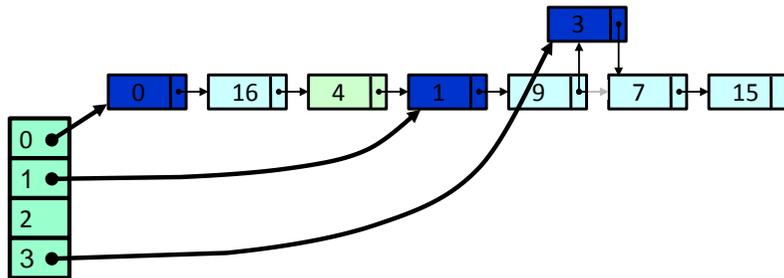
- We want a sentinel key for i ordered
 - before all keys that hash to bucket i
 - after all keys that hash to bucket $(i-1)$

3/159

3/160

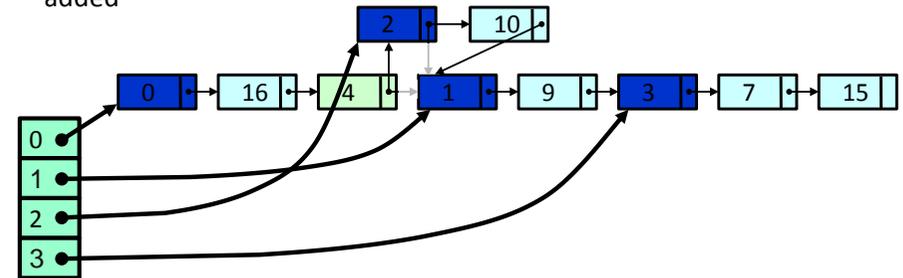
Initialization of Buckets

- We can now split a bucket in a lock-free manner using two CAS() calls
- Example: We need to initialize bucket 3 to split bucket 1!



Adding Nodes

- Example: Node 10 is added
- First, bucket 2 (= 10 mod 4) must be initialized, then the new node is added

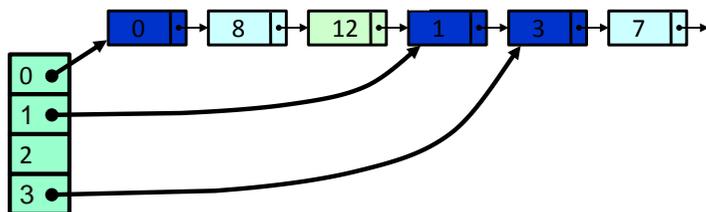


3/161

3/162

Recursive Initialization

- It is possible that buckets must be initialized recursively
- Example: When node 7 is added, bucket 3 (= 7 mod 4) is initialized and then bucket 1 (= 3 mod 2) is also initialized



n = number of nodes

- Note that $\approx \log n$ empty buckets may be initialized if one node is added, but the expected depth is **constant!**

Lock-Free List

```
private int makeRegularKey(int key) {
    return reverse(key | 0x80000000);
}

private int makeSentinelKey(int key) {
    return reverse(key);
}
```

Set high-order bit to 1 and reverse

Simply reverse (high-order bit is 0)

3/163

3/164

Split-Ordered Set

```
public class SSet{
    protected LockFreeList[] table;
    protected AtomicInteger tableSize;
    protected AtomicInteger setSize;

    public SSet(int capacity) {
        table = new LockFreeList[capacity];
        table[0] = new LockFreeList();
        tableSize = new AtomicInteger(2);
        setSize = new AtomicInteger(0);
    }
}
```

This is the lock-free list (slides 108-116) with minor modifications

Track how much of table is used and the set size so we know when to resize

Initially use 1 bucket and the size is zero

Split-Ordered Set: Add

```
public boolean add(Object object) {
    int hash = object.hashCode();
    int bucket = hash % tableSize.get();
    int key = makeRegularKey(hash);
    LockFreeList list = getBucketList(bucket);
    if (!list.add(object, key))
        return false;
    resizeCheck();
    return true;
}
```

Pick a bucket

Non-sentinel split-ordered key

Get pointer to bucket's sentinel, initializing if necessary

Try to add with reversed key

Resize if necessary

3/165

3/166

Recall: Resizing & Initializing Buckets

- Resizing
 - Divide the set size by the total number of buckets
 - If the quotient exceeds a threshold, double the tableSize field up to a fixed limit
- Initializing Buckets
 - Buckets are originally null
 - If you encounter a null bucket, initialize it
 - Go to bucket's parent (earlier nearby bucket) and recursively initialize if necessary
 - Constant expected work!

Split-Ordered Set: Initialize Bucket

```
public void initializeBucket(int bucket) {
    int parent = getParent(bucket);
    if (table[parent] == null)
        initializeBucket(parent);
    int key = makeSentinelKey(bucket);
    LockFreeList list = new LockFreeList(table[parent], key);
}
```

Find parent, recursively initialize if needed

Prepare key for new sentinel

Insert sentinel if not present and return reference to rest of list

3/167

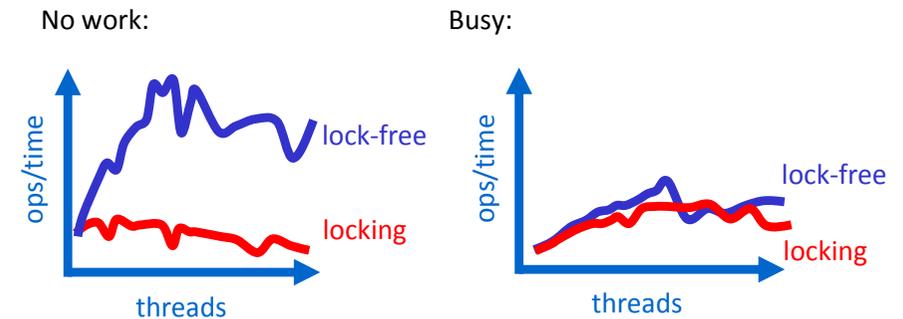
3/168

Correctness

- Split-ordered set is a correct, linearizable, concurrent set implementation
- Constant-time operations!
 - It takes no more than $O(1)$ items between two dummy nodes on average
 - Lazy initialization causes at most $O(1)$ expected recursion depth in `initializeBucket()`

Empirical Evaluation

- Evaluation has been performed on a 30-processor Sun Enterprise 3000
- Lock-Free vs. fine-grained (Lea) optimistic locking
- In a non-multiprogrammed environment
- 10^6 operations: 88% `contains()`, 10% `add()`, 2% `remove()`

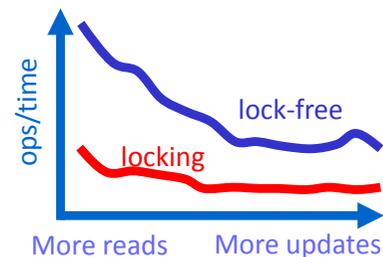
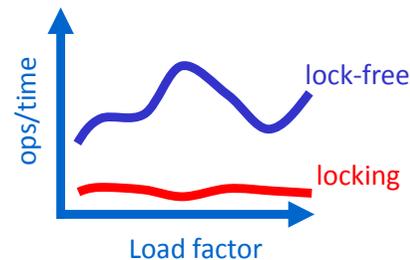


3/169

3/170

Empirical Evaluation

- Expected bucket length
 - The load factor is the capacity of the individual buckets
- Varying The Mix
 - Increasing the number of updates



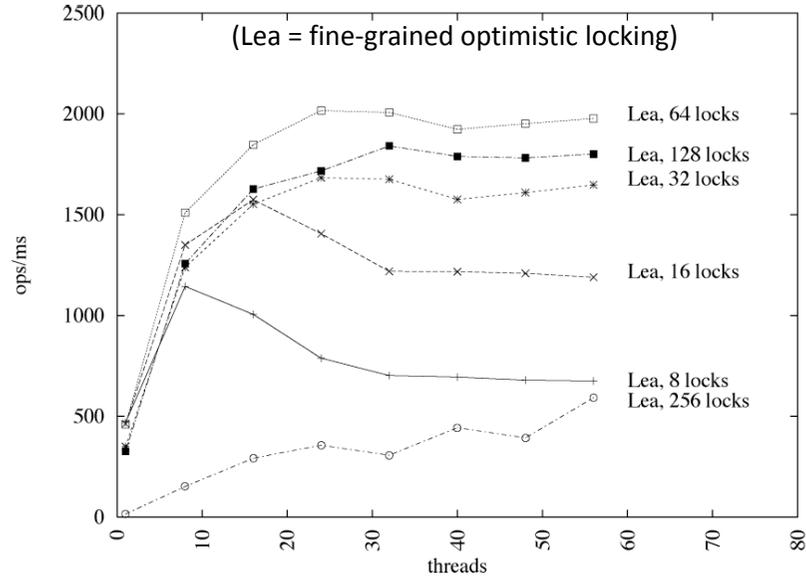
Additional Performance

- Additionally, the following parameters have been analyzed:
 - The effects of the choice of locking granularity
 - The effects of the bucket size

3/171

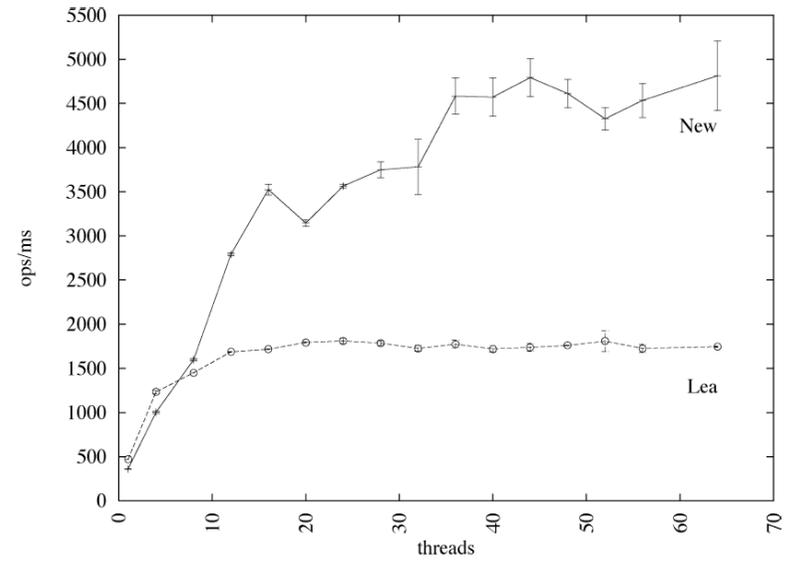
3/172

Number of Fine-Grain Locks



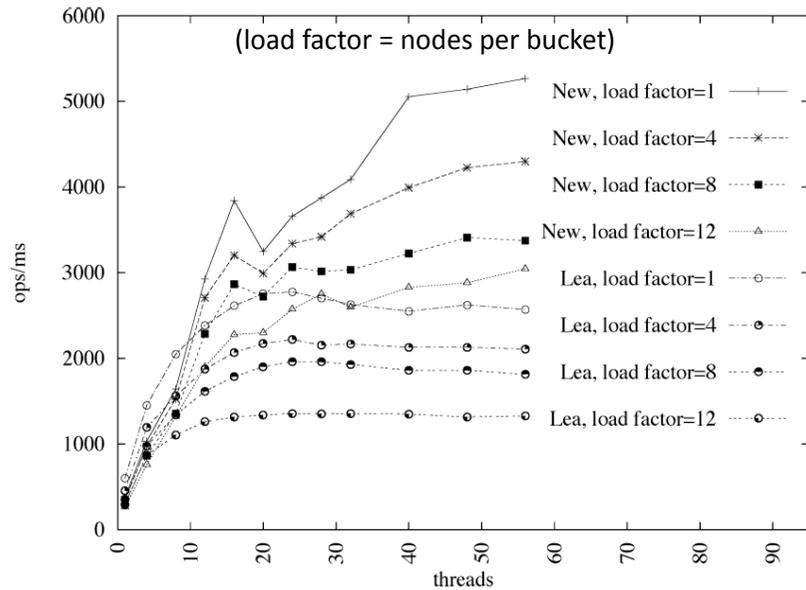
3/173

Lock-free vs. Locks



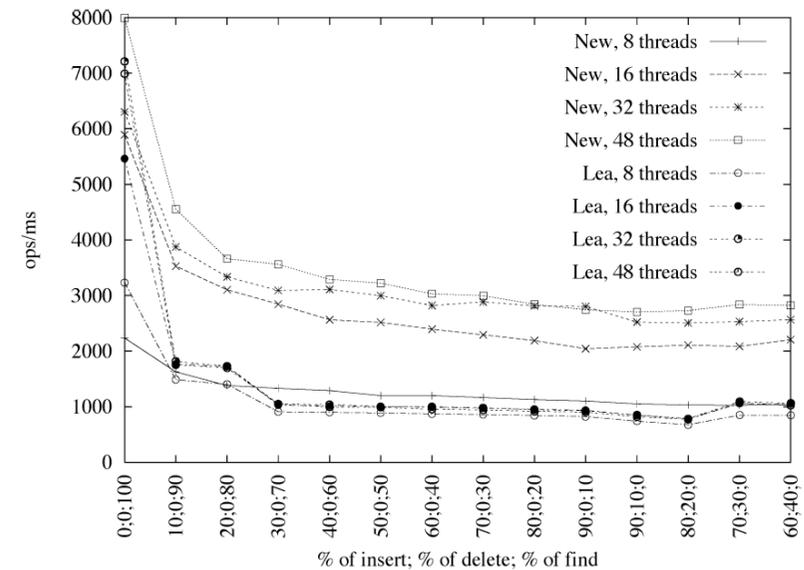
3/174

Hash Table Load Factor



3/175

Varying Operations



3/176

Conclusion

- Concurrent resizing is tricky
- Lock-based
 - Fine-grained
 - Read/write locks
 - Optimistic
- Lock-free
 - Builds on lock-free list

Summary

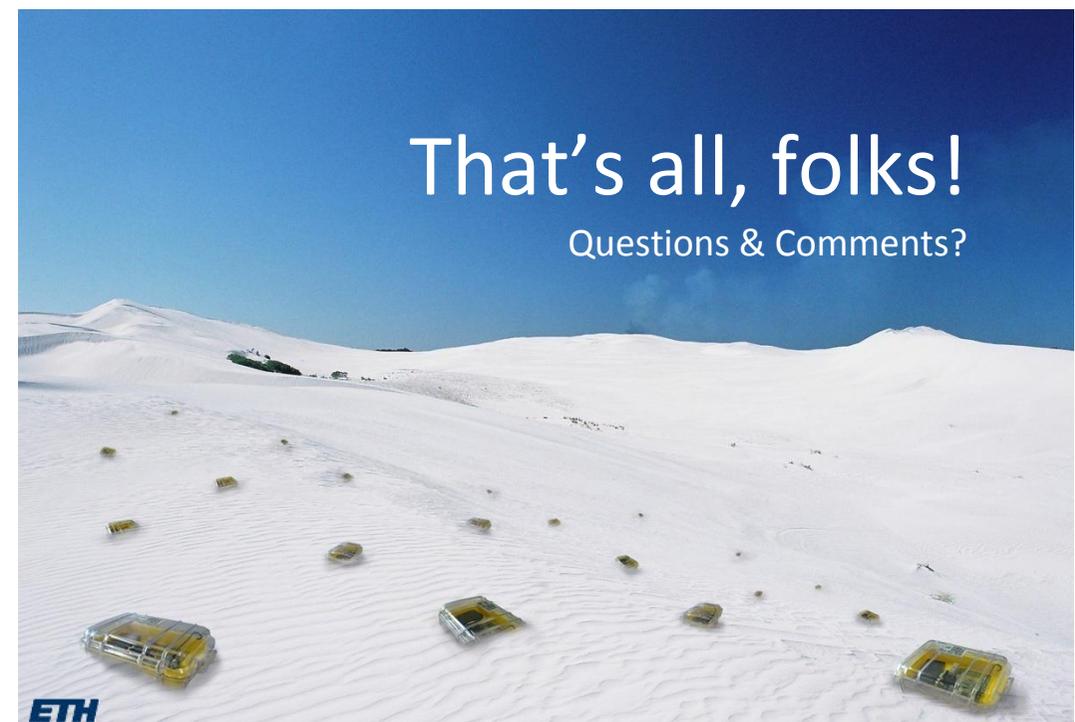
- We talked about several locking mechanisms
- In particular we have seen
 - TAS & TTAS
 - Alock & backoff lock
 - MCS lock & abortable MCS lock
- We also talked about techniques to deal with concurrency in linked lists
 - Hand-over-hand locking
 - Optimistic synchronization
 - Lazy synchronization
 - Lock-free synchronization
- Finally, we talked about hashing
 - Fine-grained locking
 - Recursive split ordering

3/177

3/178

Credits

- The TTAS lock is due to Kruskal, Rudolph, and Snir, 1988.
- Tom Anderson invented the ALock, 1990.
- The MCS lock is due to Mellor-Crummey and Scott, 1991.
- The first lock-free list algorithms are credited to John Valois, 1995.
- The lock-free list algorithm discussed in this lecture is a variation of algorithms proposed by Harris, 2001, and Michael, 2002.
- The lock-free hash set based on split-ordering is by Shalev and Shavit, 2006.



3/179

3/180