



# Operating Systems

## Thread Libraries & Signal handling

Seyyed Ahmad Javadi

[sajavadi@aut.ac.ir](mailto:sajavadi@aut.ac.ir)

Spring 2023

# Thread Libraries

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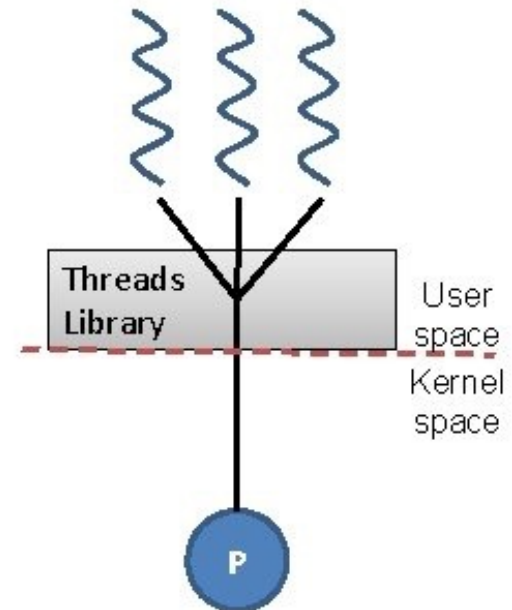
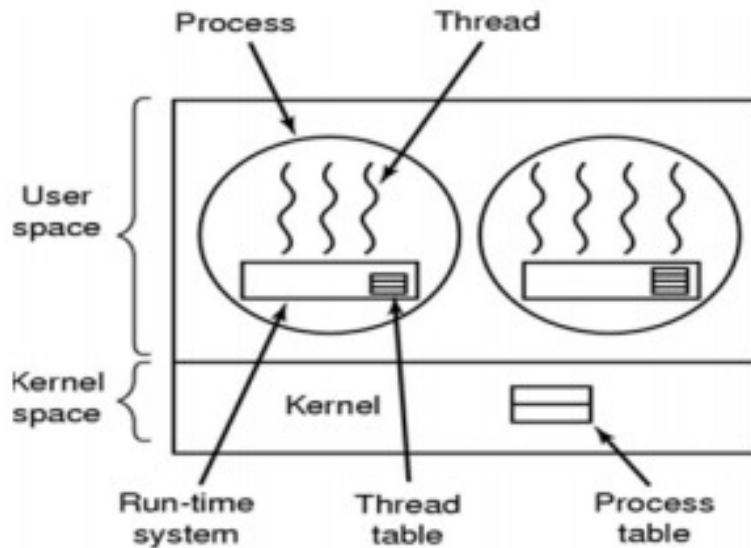
- Thread library provides programmer with API for creating and managing threads.
  - Abstract Programming Interface (API)
- Two primary ways of implementing
  - User-space library
  - Kernel-level library

[https://www.tutorialspoint.com/operating\\_system/os\\_multi\\_threading.htm](https://www.tutorialspoint.com/operating_system/os_multi_threading.htm)



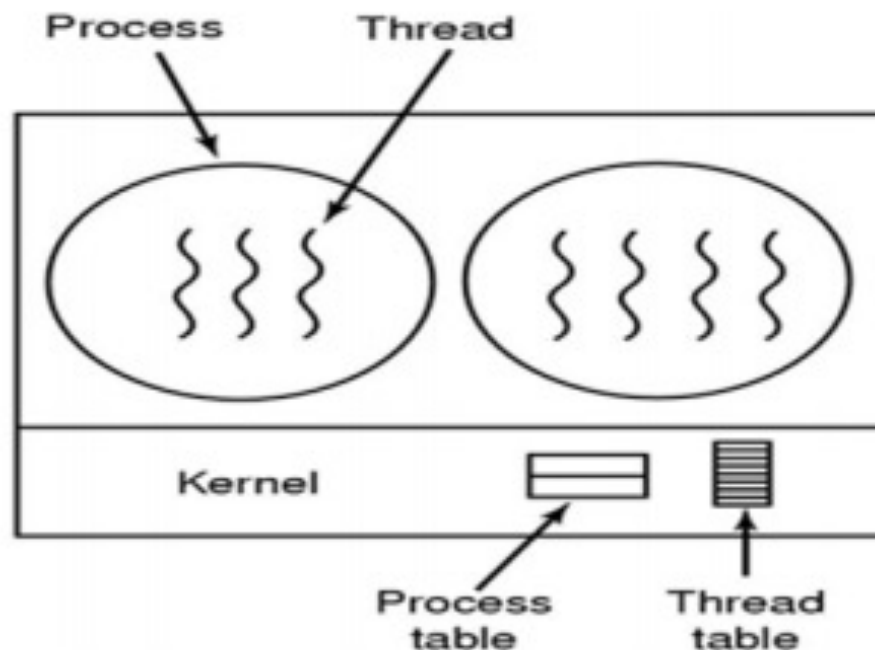
# User-Space Library

- All code and data structures for the library *exist in user space*.
- Invoking a function in the library *results in a local function call* in user space and *not a system call*.



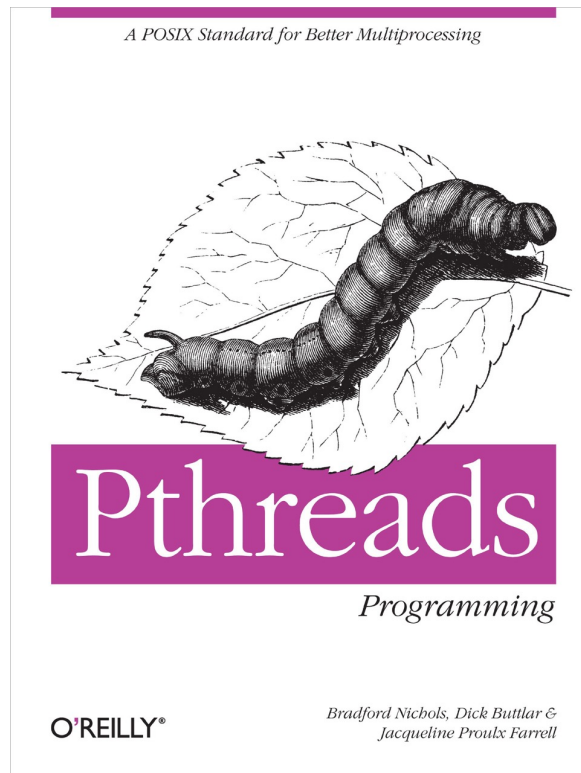
# Kernel-Level Library

- Code and data structures for the library exist in kernel space.
- Invoking a function in the API for the library typically **results in a system call** to the kernel.



# Pthreads

- May be provided either as user-level or kernel-level.
- A POSIX standard API for thread creation and synchronization.



# Pthreads (cont.)

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- ***Specification***, not ***implementation***.
- API specifies behavior of the thread library
  - Implementation is up to development of the library.
- Common in UNIX operating systems
  - Linux & Mac OS X

## Optional reading:

<https://users.cs.cf.ac.uk/Dave.Marshall/C/node30.html>

<https://stackoverflow.com/questions/43219214/where-is-the-value-of-the-current-stack-pointer-register-stored-before-context-s>



# Pthreads Example

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```
#include <pthread.h>
#include <stdio.h>

#include <stdlib.h>

int sum; /* this data is shared by the thread(s) */
void *runner(void *param); /* threads call this function */

int main(int argc, char *argv[])
{
    pthread_t tid; /* the thread identifier */
    pthread_attr_t attr; /* set of thread attributes */

    /* set the default attributes of the thread */
    pthread_attr_init(&attr);
    /* create the thread */
    pthread_create(&tid, &attr, runner, argv[1]);
    /* wait for the thread to exit */
    pthread_join(tid, NULL);

    printf("sum = %d\n", sum);
}
```



# Pthreads Example (Cont.)

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```
/* The thread will execute in this function */  
void *runner(void *param)  
{  
    int i, upper = atoi(param);  
    sum = 0;  
  
    for (i = 1; i <= upper; i++)  
        sum += i;  
  
    pthread_exit(0);  
}
```





# Pthreads Code for Joining 10 Threads

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```
#define NUM_THREADS 10

/* an array of threads to be joined upon */
pthread_t workers[NUM_THREADS];

for (int i = 0; i < NUM_THREADS; i++)
    pthread_join(workers[i], NULL);
```



# Threading Issues

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- Semantics of **fork()** and **exec()** system calls
- Signal handling
  - Synchronous and asynchronous



# Semantics of fork() and exec()

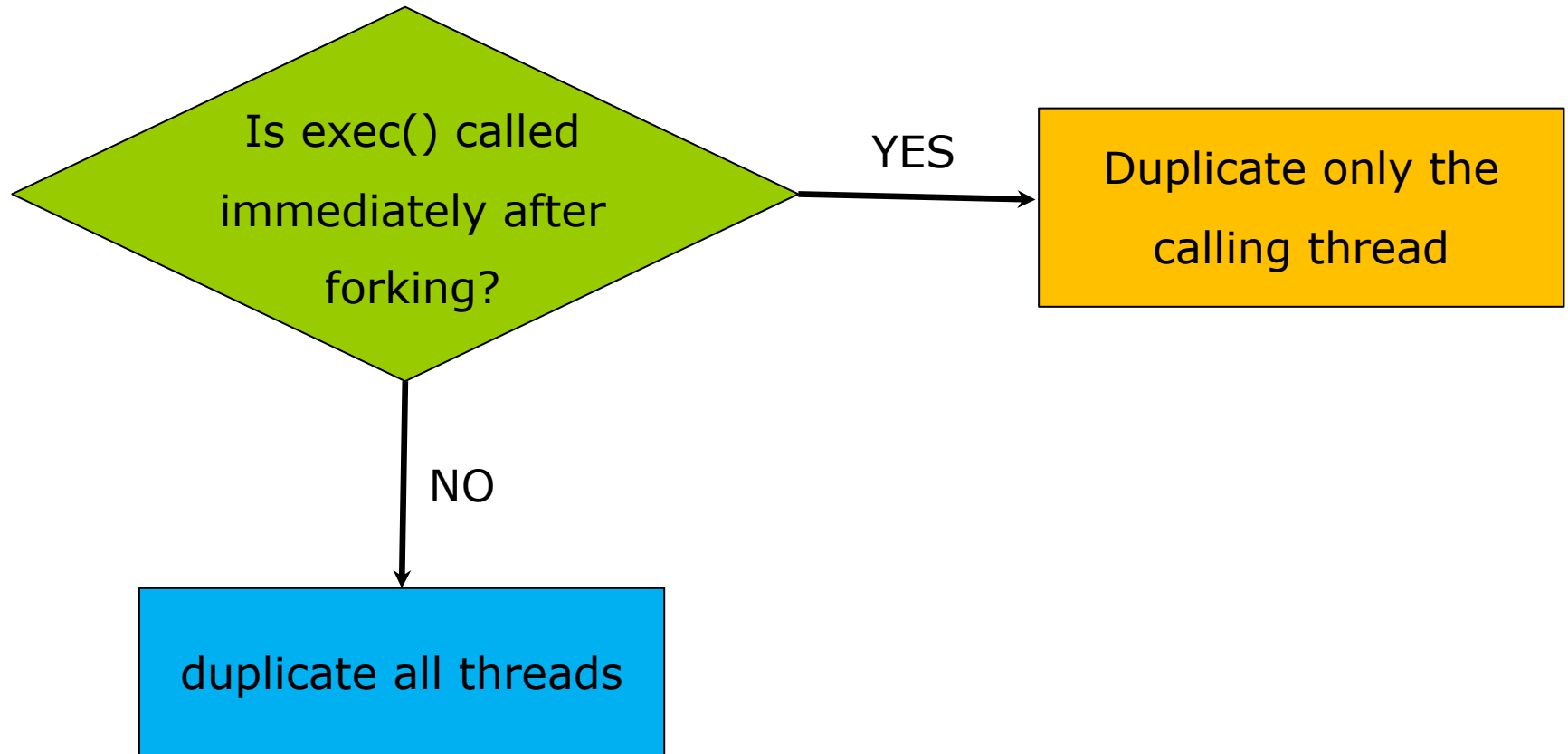
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- Does fork() duplicate only the calling thread or all threads?
  - Some UNIXes have **two versions of fork**
    - ▶ One that duplicates all threads
    - ▶ Another that duplicates only the thread that invoked the fork()
  
- exec() usually works as normal
  - Replace the running process including all threads.



# Which Version of Fork() to use?

Depends on the application.



# Which Version of Fork() to use?

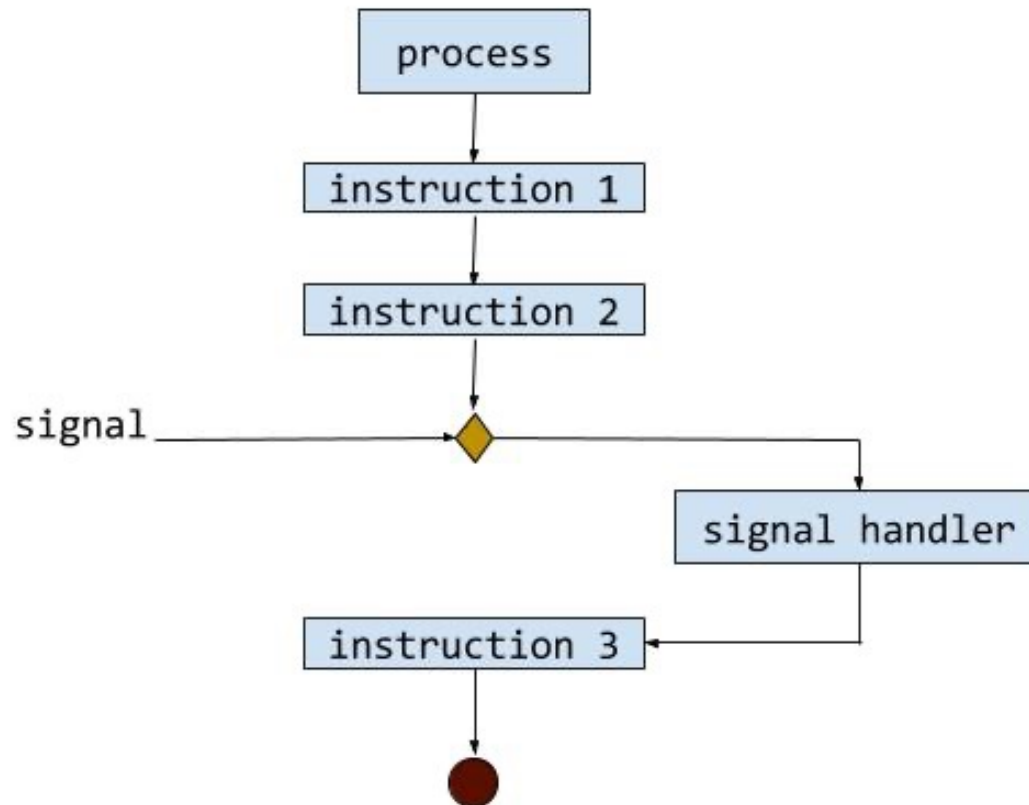
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- **If exec() is called immediately after forking**
  - Duplicating only the calling thread is appropriate.
  - Since the program specified in the parameters to exec() will replace the process.
  
- **If the child process does not call exec() after forking**
  - The **child process should duplicate all threads.**



# Signal Handling

- **Signals** are used in UNIX systems to notify a process that a particular event has occurred.



# Signal Handling

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- A **signal handler** is used to process signals
  1. Signal is generated by particular event
  2. Signal is delivered to a process
  3. Signal is handled by one of two signal handlers:
    1. **default**
    2. **user-defined**



# Two Types of Signals

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- **Synchronous**
- **Asynchronous**





# Synchronous Signals

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- When a signal is generated by an event internal to a running process.
- Example:
  - Illegal memory access
  - Divide by 0
- Synchronous signals are delivered to the same process that performed the operation that caused the signal
  - That is the reason they are considered synchronous



# Asynchronous Signals

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- Signal is ***generated by an event external*** to a running process, that process receives the signal asynchronously.
- Example: terminating a process with specific keystrokes
  - <control><C>
- Typically, an asynchronous signal is sent to another process.



# Signal Handling (Cont.)

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- Every signal has **default-handler** that kernel runs when handling it
  - Some signals are simply ignored
    - ▶ Such as changing the size of a window
  - Others are handled by terminating the program.
    - ▶ Such as an illegal memory access
- **User-defined signal handler** can override default.
- For single-threaded, signal delivered to process.



# Signal Handling (Cont.)

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- Where should a signal be delivered for multi-threaded?
  - Deliver the signal to the thread to which the signal applies
  - Deliver the signal to every thread in the process
  - Deliver the signal to certain threads in the process
  - Assign a specific thread to receive all signals for the process
- Which one should be used?
  - Depends on the type of signal generated.



# Signal Handling (cont.)

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- **Synchronous *signals*** need to be delivered to the thread causing the signal and not to other threads in the process.
- However, the situation **with asynchronous signals is not as clear.**
  - Some asynchronous signals should be sent to all threads
    - ▶ Such as a signal that terminates a process (e.g., <control><C>)



# Signal Handling (cont.)

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- Most multithreaded versions of UNIX allow a thread to specify which signals it will accept and which it will block.
  - Therefore, in some cases, an asynchronous signal may be delivered only to those threads that are not blocking it.
- However, a signal is typically delivered only to the first thread found that is not blocking it.
  - Because signals need to **be handled only once**



# Functions for Delivering Signals

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- The standard UNIX function

`kill(pid_t pid, int signal)`

- Specifies the process to which a particular signal is to be delivered.

- POSIX Pthreads function

`pthread_kill(pthread_t tid, int signal)`

- Allows a signal to be delivered to a specified thread (tid)