# **Exceptional Control Flow: Signals and Nonlocal Jumps**

**Computer Systems** 

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#### ECF Exists at All Levels of a System

- Exceptions
  - Hardware and operating system kernel software
- Process Context Switch
  - Hardware timer and kernel software
- Signals
  - Kernel software and application software
- Nonlocal jumps
  - Application code

**Previous Lecture** 

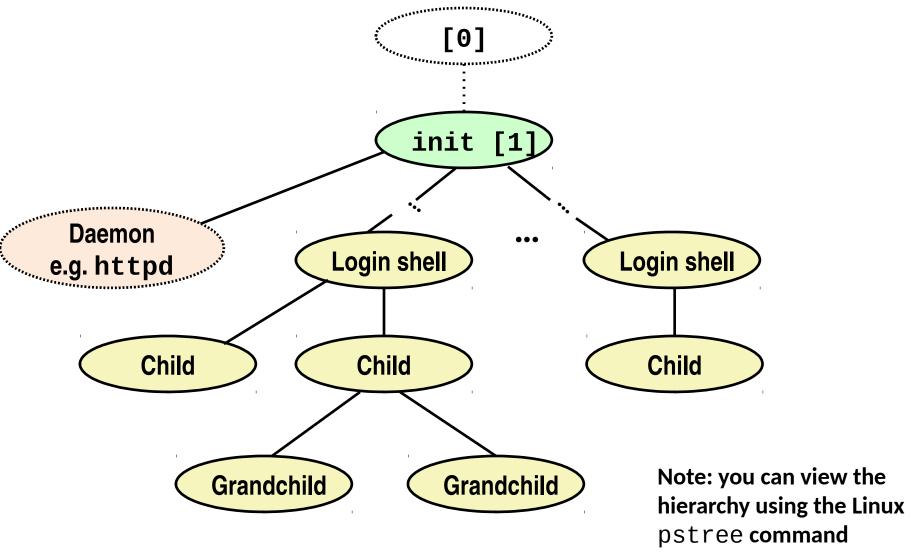
**This Lecture** 

**Textbook** 

# **Today**

- Shells
- Signals
- Nonlocal jumps

#### **Linux Process Hierarchy**



#### **Shell Programs**

- A shell is an application program that runs programs on behalf of the user.
  - Sh Original Unix shell (Stephen Bourne, AT&T Bell Labs, 1977)
  - csh/tcsh BSD Unix C shell
  - **bash** "Bourne-Again" Shell (default Linux shell)

```
int main()
{
    char cmdline[MAXLINE]; /* command line */

    while (1) {
        /* read */
        printf("> ");
        Fgets(cmdline, MAXLINE, stdin);
        if (feof(stdin))
            exit(0);

        /* evaluate */
        eval(cmdline);
    }
}
```

Execution is a sequence of read/evaluate steps

#### Simple Shell eval Function

```
void eval(char *cmdline)
  char *argv[MAXARGS]; /* Argument list execve() */
  char buf[MAXLINE]; /* Holds modified command line */
          /* Should the job run in bg or fg? */
  int ba:
  pid t pid; /* Process id */
  strcpy(buf, cmdline);
  bg = parseline(buf, argv);
  if (argv[0] == NULL)
    return; /* Ignore empty lines */
  if (!builtin command(argv)) {
    if ((pid = Fork()) == 0) { /* Child runs user job */
       if (execve(argv[0], argv, environ) < 0) {</pre>
          printf("%s: Command not found.\n", arqv[0]);
         exit(0);
     }
    /* Parent waits for foreground job to terminate */
   if (!bg) {
       int status:
       if (waitpid(pid, &status, 0) < 0)
          unix error("waitfg: waitpid error");
    else
       printf("%d %s", pid, cmdline);
  }
  return;
```

#### **Problem with Simple Shell Example**

- Our example shell correctly waits for and reaps foreground jobs
- But what about background jobs?
  - Will become zombies when they terminate
  - Will never be reaped because shell (typically) will not terminate
  - Will create a memory leak that could run the kernel out of memory

#### **ECF** to the Rescue!

- Solution: Exceptional control flow
  - The kernel will interrupt regular processing to alert us when a background process completes
  - In Unix, the alert mechanism is called a signal

# **Today**

- Shells
- Signals
- Nonlocal jumps

# Signals

- A signal is a small message that notifies a process that an event of some type has occurred in the system
  - Akin to exceptions and interrupts
  - Sent from the kernel (sometimes at the request of another process) to a process
  - Signal type is identified by small integer ID's (1-30)
  - Only information in a signal is its ID and the fact that it arrived

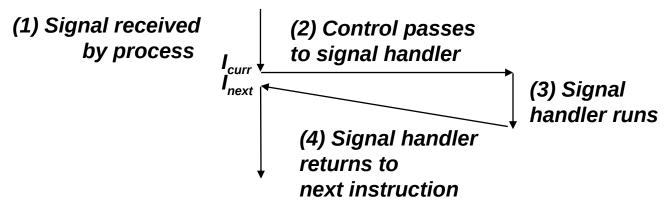
| ID | Name    | Default Action | Corresponding Event                      |
|----|---------|----------------|--|
| 2  | SIGINT  | Terminate      | User typed ctrl-c                        |
| 9  | SIGKILL | Terminate      | Kill program (cannot override or ignore) |
| 11 | SIGSEGV | Terminate      | Segmentation violation                   |
| 14 | SIGALRM | Terminate      | Timer signal                             |
| 17 | SIGCHLD | Ignore         | Child stopped or terminated              |

### Signal Concepts: Sending a Signal

- Kernel sends (delivers) a signal to a destination process by updating some state in the context of the destination process
- Kernel sends a signal for one of the following reasons:
  - Kernel has detected a system event such as divide-by-zero (SIGFPE) or the termination of a child process (SIGCHLD)
  - Another process has invoked the kill system call to explicitly request the kernel to send a signal to the destination process

### Signal Concepts: Receiving a Signal

- A destination process receives a signal when it is forced by the kernel to react in some way to the delivery of the signal
- Some possible ways to react:
  - Ignore the signal (do nothing)
  - Terminate the process (with optional core dump)
  - Catch the signal by executing a user-level function called signal handler
    - Akin to a hardware exception handler being called in response to an asynchronous interrupt:



# Signal Concepts: Pending and Blocked Signals

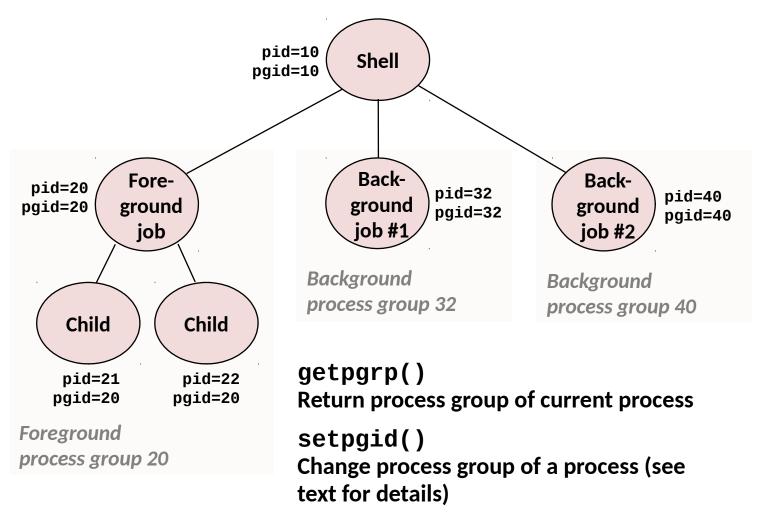
- A signal is pending if sent but not yet received
  - There can be at most one pending signal of any particular type
  - Important: Signals are not queued
    - If a process has a pending signal of type k, then subsequent signals of type k that are sent to that process are discarded
- A process can **block** the receipt of certain signals
  - Blocked signals can be delivered, but will not be received until the signal is unblocked
- A pending signal is received at most once

# Signal Concepts: Pending/Blocked Bits

- Kernel maintains pending and blocked bit vectors in the context of each process
  - **pending**: represents the set of pending signals
    - Kernel sets bit k in **pending** when a signal of type k is delivered
    - Kernel clears bit k in **pending** when a signal of type k is received
  - blocked: represents the set of blocked signals
    - Can be set and cleared by using the sigprocmask function
    - Also referred to as the signal mask.

#### **Sending Signals: Process Groups**

Every process belongs to exactly one process group



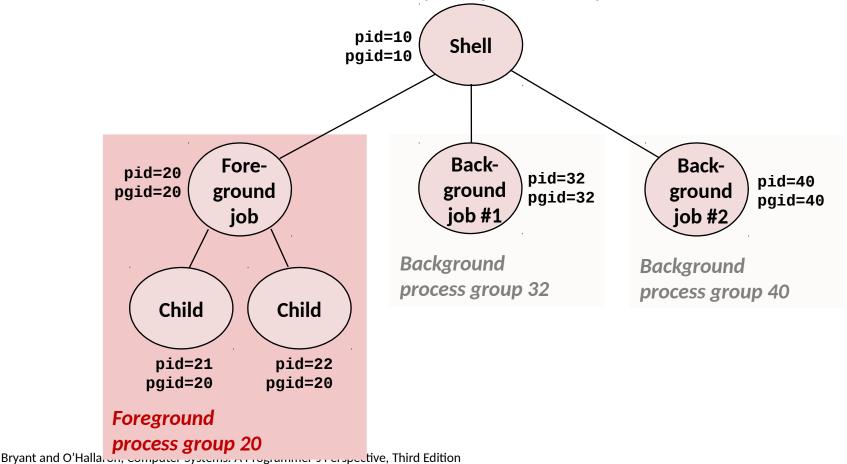
# Sending Signals with /bin/kill Program

- /bin/kill program sends arbitrary signal to a process or process group
- Examples
  - bin/kill -9 24818 Send SIGKILL to process 24818
  - /bin/kill -9 -24817 Send SIGKILL to every process in process group 24817

```
linux> ./forks 16
Child1: pid=24818 pgrp=24817
Child2: pid=24819 pgrp=24817
linux> ps
  PID TTY
                   TIME CMD
24788 pts/2
               00:00:00 tcsh
               00:00:02 forks
24818 pts/2
24819 pts/2
               00:00:02 forks
24820 pts/2
               00:00:00 ps
linux> /bin/kill -9 -24817
linux> ps
  PID TTY
                   TIME CMD
               00:00:00 tcsh
24788 pts/2
24823 pts/2
               00:00:00 ps
linux>
```

### Sending Signals from the Keyboard

- Typing ctrl-c (ctrl-z) causes the kernel to send a SIGINT (SIGTSTP) to every job in the foreground process group.
  - SIGINT default action is to terminate each process
  - SIGTSTP default action is to stop (suspend) each process



#### Example of ctrl-c and ctrl-z

```
bluefish> ./forks 17
Child: pid=28108 pgrp=28107
Parent: pid=28107 pgrp=28107
<types ctrl-z>
Suspended
bluefish> ps w
 PID TTY
             STAT
                    TIME COMMAND
27699 pts/8 Ss
                    0:00 -tcsh
28107 pts/8 T
                    0:01 ./forks 17
28108 pts/8
                    0:01 ./forks 17
28109 pts/8
             R+
                    0:00 ps w
bluefish> fg
./forks 17
<types ctrl-c>
bluefish> ps w
             STAT
 PID TTY
                    TIME COMMAND
27699 pts/8 Ss
                    0:00 -tcsh
28110 pts/8
                    0:00 ps w
              R+
```

#### STAT (process state) Legend:

#### First letter:

S: sleeping
T: stopped

R: running

#### **Second letter:**

s: session leader

+: foreground proc group

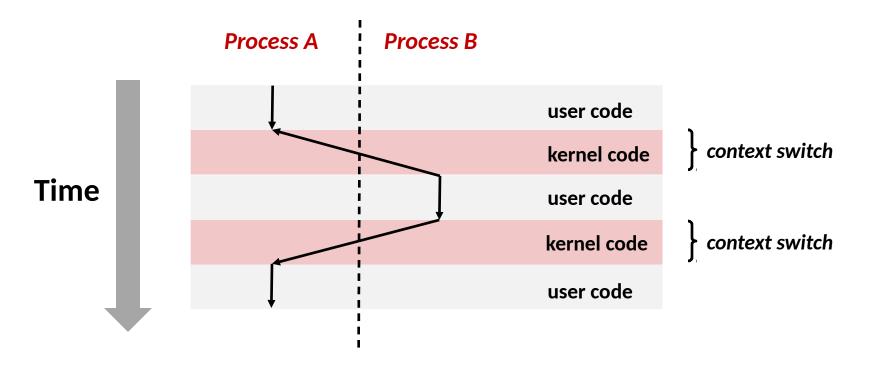
See "man ps" for more details

#### Sending Signals with kill Function

```
void fork12()
  pid t pid[N];
  int i;
  int child status;
  for (i = 0; i < N; i++)
    if ((pid[i] = fork()) == 0) {
       /* Child: Infinite Loop */
       while(1)
     }
  for (i = 0; i < N; i++) {
     printf("Killing process %d\n", pid[i]);
     kill(pid[i], SIGINT);
  }
  for (i = 0; i < N; i++) {
     pid t wpid = wait(&child status);
     if (WIFEXITED(child status))
       printf("Child %d terminated with exit status %d\n",
            wpid, WEXITSTATUS(child status));
     else
       printf("Child %d terminated abnormally\n", wpid);
                                                                            forks.c
```

#### **Receiving Signals**

Suppose kernel is returning from an exception handler and is ready to pass control to process p



#### **Receiving Signals**

- Suppose kernel is returning from an exception handler and is ready to pass control to process p
- Kernel computes pnb = pending & ~blocked
  - The set of pending nonblocked signals for process p
- If (pnb == 0)
  - Pass control to next instruction in the logical flow for p
- Else
  - Choose least nonzero bit k in pnb and force process p to receive signal k
  - The receipt of the signal triggers some *action* by *p*
  - Repeat for all nonzero k in pnb
  - Pass control to next instruction in logical flow for p

#### **Default Actions**

- Each signal type has a predefined default action, which is one of:
  - The process terminates
  - The process stops until restarted by a SIGCONT signal
  - The process ignores the signal

#### **Installing Signal Handlers**

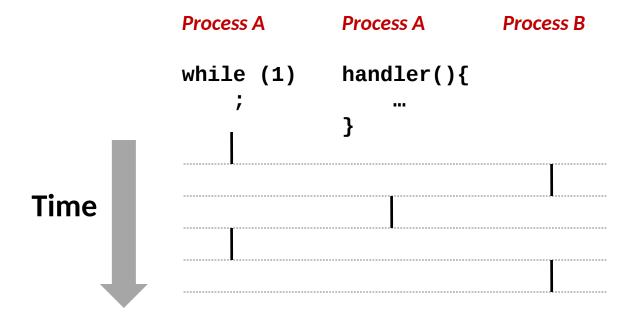
- The signal function modifies the default action associated with the receipt of signal signum:
  - handler\_t \*signal(int signum, handler\_t \*handler)
- Different values for handler:
  - SIG\_IGN: ignore signals of type signum
  - SIG\_DFL: revert to the default action on receipt of signals of type signum
  - Otherwise, handler is the address of a user-level signal handler
    - Called when process receives signal of type signum
    - Referred to as "installing" the handler
    - Executing handler is called "catching" or "handling" the signal
    - When the handler executes its return statement, control passes back to instruction in the control flow of the process that was interrupted by receipt of the signal

#### **Signal Handling Example**

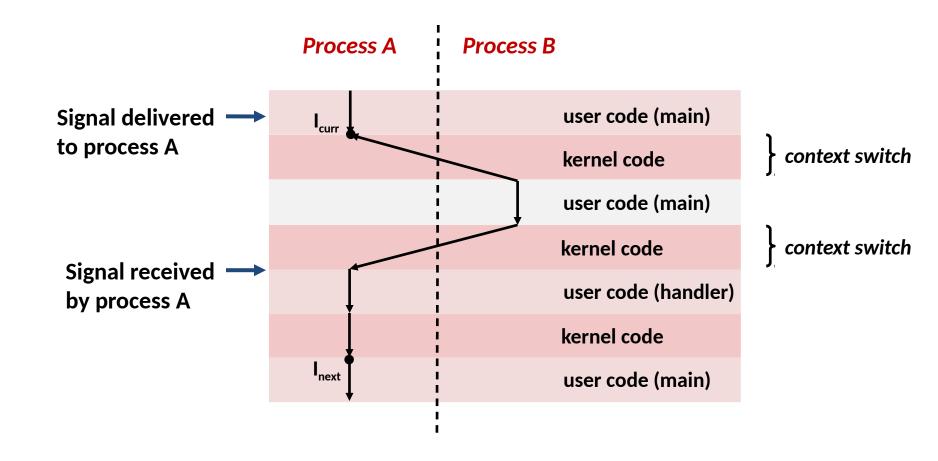
```
void sigint handler(int sig) /* SIGINT handler */
{
  printf("So you think you can stop the bomb with ctrl-c, do you?\n");
  sleep(2);
  printf("Well...");
  fflush(stdout);
  sleep(1);
  printf("OK. :-)\n");
  exit(0);
int main()
{
  /* Install the SIGINT handler */
  if (signal(SIGINT, sigint handler) == SIG ERR)
     unix error("signal error");
  /* Wait for the receipt of a signal */
  pause();
  return 0;
```

#### Signals Handlers as Concurrent Flows

A signal handler is a separate logical flow (not process) that runs concurrently with the main program

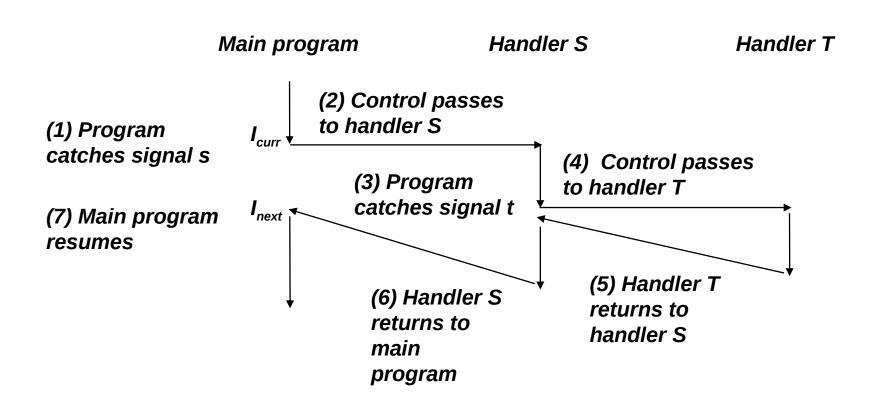


# **Another View of Signal Handlers as Concurrent Flows**



#### **Nested Signal Handlers**

Handlers can be interrupted by other handlers



#### **Blocking and Unblocking Signals**

#### Implicit blocking mechanism

- Kernel blocks any pending signals of type currently being handled.
- E.g., A SIGINT handler can't be interrupted by another SIGINT

#### Explicit blocking and unblocking mechanism

sigprocmask function

#### Supporting functions

- sigemptyset Create empty set
- sigfillset Add every signal number to set
- sigaddset Add signal number to set
- sigdelset Delete signal number from set

### **Temporarily Blocking Signals**

# **Safe Signal Handling**

- Handlers are tricky because they are concurrent with main program and share the same global data structures.
  - Shared data structures can become corrupted.
- We'll explore concurrency issues later in the term.
- For now here are some guidelines to help you avoid trouble.

#### **Guidelines for Writing Safe Handlers**

- G0: Keep your handlers as simple as possible
  - e.g., Set a global flag and return
- G1: Call only async-signal-safe functions in your handlers
  - printf, sprintf, malloc, and exit are not safe!
- G2: Save and restore errno on entry and exit
  - So that other handlers don't overwrite your value of errno
- G3: Protect accesses to shared data structures by temporarily blocking all signals.
  - To prevent possible corruption
- G4: Declare global variables as volatile
  - To prevent compiler from storing them in a register
- G5: Declare global flags as volatile sig\_atomic\_t
  - flag: variable that is only read or written (e.g. flag = 1, not flag++)
  - Flag declared this way does not need to be protected like other globals

#### **Async-Signal-Safety**

- Function is async-signal-safe if either reentrant (e.g., all variables stored on stack frame, CS:APP3e 12.7.2) or non-interruptible by signals.
- Posix guarantees 117 functions to be async-signal-safe
  - Source: "man 7 signal"
  - Popular functions on the list:
    - \_exit, write, wait, waitpid, sleep, kill
  - Popular functions that are not on the list:
    - printf, sprintf, malloc, exit
    - Unfortunate fact: write is the only async-signal-safe output function

#### **Safely Generating Formatted Output**

Use the reentrant SIO (Safe I/O library) from csapp.c in your handlers.

```
ssize_t sio_puts(char s[]) /* Put string */
ssize_t sio_putl(long v) /* Put long */
void sio_error(char s[]) /* Put msg & exit */
```

```
void sigint_handler(int sig) /* Safe SIGINT handler */
{
    Sio_puts("So you think you can stop the bomb with ctrl-c, do
you?\n");
    sleep(2);
    Sio_puts("Well...");
    sleep(1);
    Sio_puts("OK. :-)\n");
    _exit(0);
}
```

#### int ccount = 0;void child handler(int sig) { int olderrno = errno; pid t pid; if ((pid = wait(NULL)) < 0)Sio error("wait error"); ccount--; Sio puts("Handler reaped child "); Sio putl((long)pid); Sio puts(" \n"); sleep(1); errno = olderrno; void fork14() { pid t pid[N]; int i: ccount = N;Signal(SIGCHLD, child handler); for (i = 0; i < N; i++) { if ((pid[i] = Fork()) == 0) { Sleep(1); exit(0); /\* Child exits \*/ while (ccount > 0) /\* Parent spins \*/

### **Correct Signal Handling**

- Pending signals are not queued
  - For each signal type, one bit indicates whether or not signal is pending...
  - ...thus at most one pending signal of any particular type.
- You can't use signals to count events, such as children terminating.

whaleshark> ./forks 14
Handler reaped child 23240

Handler reaped child 23241

forks.c

#### **Correct Signal Handling**

- Must wait for all terminated child processes
  - Put wait in a loop to reap all terminated children

```
void child_handler2(int sig)
  int olderrno = errno;
  pid t pid;
  while ((pid = wait(NULL)) > 0) {
    ccount--;
    Sio puts("Handler reaped child ");
    Sio putl((long)pid);
    Sio puts("\n");
  if (errno != ECHILD)
    Sio error("wait error");
                                       whaleshark> ./forks 15
  errno = olderrno;
                                       Handler reaped child 23246
                                       Handler reaped child 23247
                                       Handler reaped child 23248
                                       Handler reaped child 23249
                                       Handler reaped child 23250
                                       whaleshark>
```

#### **Portable Signal Handling**

- Ugh! Different versions of Unix can have different signal handling semantics
  - Some older systems restore action to default after catching signal
  - Some interrupted system calls can return with errno == EINTR
  - Some systems don't block signals of the type being handled
- Solution: sigaction

```
handler_t *Signal(int signum, handler_t *handler)
{
    struct sigaction action, old_action;

    action.sa_handler = handler;
    sigemptyset(&action.sa_mask); /* Block sigs of type being handled */
    action.sa_flags = SA_RESTART; /* Restart syscalls if possible */

    if (sigaction(signum, &action, &old_action) < 0)
        unix_error("Signal error");
    return (old_action.sa_handler);
}

    csapp.c</pre>
```

#### Synchronizing Flows to Avoid Races

Simple shell with a subtle synchronization error because it assumes parent runs before child.

```
int main(int argc, char **argv)
  int pid;
  sigset t mask all, prev all;
  Sigfillset(&mask all);
  Signal(SIGCHLD, handler);
  initjobs(); /* Initialize the job list */
  while (1) {
     if ((pid = Fork()) == 0) { /* Child */
       Execve("/bin/date", argv, NULL);
     Sigprocmask(SIG BLOCK, &mask all, &prev all); /* Parent */
     addjob(pid); /* Add the child to the job list */
     Sigprocmask(SIG SETMASK, &prev all, NULL);
  exit(0);
                                                            procmask1
```

## **Synchronizing Flows to Avoid Races**

SIGCHLD handler for a simple shell

```
void handler(int sig)
  int olderrno = errno:
  sigset_t mask_all, prev_all;
  pid t pid;
  Sigfillset(&mask all);
  while ((pid = waitpid(-1, NULL, 0)) > 0) { /* Reap child */
     Sigprocmask(SIG_BLOCK, &mask_all, &prev_all);
     deletejob(pid); /* Delete the child from the job list */
     Sigprocmask(SIG SETMASK, &prev all, NULL);
  if (errno != ECHILD)
     Sio error("waitpid error");
  errno = olderrno;
```

#### **Corrected Shell Program without Race**

```
int main(int argc, char **argv)
  int pid;
  sigset t mask all, mask one, prev one;
  Sigfillset(&mask all);
  Sigemptyset(&mask one);
  Sigaddset(&mask one, SIGCHLD);
  Signal(SIGCHLD, handler);
  initjobs(); /* Initialize the job list */
  while (1) {
    Sigprocmask(SIG BLOCK, &mask one, &prev one); /* Block SIGCHLD */
     if ((pid = Fork()) == 0) { /* Child process */
       Sigprocmask(SIG_SETMASK, &prev_one, NULL); /* Unblock SIGCHLD */
       Execve("/bin/date", argv, NULL);
    Sigprocmask(SIG BLOCK, &mask all, NULL); /* Parent process */
    addjob(pid); /* Add the child to the job list */
     Sigprocmask(SIG SETMASK, &prev one, NULL); /* Unblock SIGCHLD */
  exit(0);
```

## **Explicitly Waiting for Signals**

Handlers for program explicitly waiting for SIGCHLD to arrive.

```
volatile sig_atomic_t pid;

void sigchld_handler(int s)
{
   int olderrno = errno;
   pid = Waitpid(-1, NULL, 0); /* Main is waiting for nonzero pid */
   errno = olderrno;
}

void sigint_handler(int s)
{
}

waitforsignal.c
```

## **Explicitly Waiting for Signals**

```
Similar to a shell waiting
int main(int argc, char **argv) {
                                                   for a foreground job to
  sigset t mask, prev;
                                                   terminate.
  Signal(SIGCHLD, sigchld_handler);
  Signal(SIGINT, sigint handler);
  Sigemptyset(&mask);
  Sigaddset(&mask, SIGCHLD);
  while (1) {
    Sigprocmask(SIG BLOCK, &mask, &prev); /* Block SIGCHLD */
    if (Fork() == 0) /* Child */
       exit(0);
    /* Parent */
    pid = 0;
    Sigprocmask(SIG SETMASK, &prev, NULL); /* Unblock SIGCHLD */
    /* Wait for SIGCHLD to be received (wasteful!) */
    while (!pid)
    /* Do some work after receiving SIGCHLD */
     printf(".");
  exit(0);
                                                           waitforsignal.c
```

## **Explicitly Waiting for Signals**

- Program is correct, but very wasteful
- Other options:

```
while (!pid) /* Race! */
   pause();
```

```
while (!pid) /* Too slow! */
sleep(1);
```

Solution: sigsuspend

## Waiting for Signals with sigsuspend

- int sigsuspend(const sigset\_t \*mask)
- **Equivalent to atomic (uninterruptable) version of:**

```
sigprocmask(SIG_BLOCK, &mask, &prev);
pause();
sigprocmask(SIG_SETMASK, &prev, NULL);
```

## Waiting for Signals with sigsuspend

```
int main(int argc, char **argv) {
    sigset_t mask, prev;
    Signal(SIGCHLD, sigchld_handler);
    Signal(SIGINT, sigint_handler);
    Sigemptyset(&mask);
    Sigaddset(&mask, SIGCHLD);
    while (1) {
        Sigprocmask(SIG_BLOCK, &mask, &prev); /* Block SIGCHLD */
        if (Fork() == 0) /* Child */
            exit(0);
       /* Wait for SIGCHLD to be received */
        pid = 0;
        while (!pid)
            Sigsuspend(&prev);
       /* Optionally unblock SIGCHLD */
        Sigprocmask(SIG_SETMASK, &prev, NULL);
    /* Do some work after receiving SIGCHLD */
        printf(".");
    exit(0);
```

## **Today**

- Shells
- Signals
- Nonlocal jumps
  - Consult your textbook. (Much less important than the rest.)

## **Summary**

- Signals provide process-level exception handling
  - Can generate from user programs
  - Can define effect by declaring signal handler
  - Be very careful when writing signal handlers
- Nonlocal jumps provide exceptional control flow within process
  - Within constraints of stack discipline

#### **Additional slides**

## Nonlocal Jumps: setjmp/longjmp

- Powerful (but dangerous) user-level mechanism for transferring control to an arbitrary location
  - Controlled to way to break the procedure call / return discipline
  - Useful for error recovery and signal handling
- int setjmp(jmp\_buf j)
  - Must be called before longjmp
  - Identifies a return site for a subsequent longjmp
  - Called once, returns one or more times
- Implementation:
  - Remember where you are by storing the current register context, stack pointer, and PC value in jmp\_buf
  - Return 0

## setjmp/longjmp (cont)

- void longjmp(jmp\_buf j, int i)
  - Meaning:
    - return from the setjmp remembered by jump buffer j again ...
    - ... this time returning i instead of 0
  - Called after setjmp
  - Called once, but never returns

#### longjmp Implementation:

- Restore register context (stack pointer, base pointer, PC value) from jump buffer j
- Set %eax (the return value) to i
- Jump to the location indicated by the PC stored in jump buf j

# setjmp/longjmp Example

Goal: return directly to original caller from a deeplynested function

```
/* Deeply nested function foo */
void foo(void)
{
   if (error1)
      longjmp(buf, 1);
   bar();
}

void bar(void)
{
   if (error2)
      longjmp(buf, 2);
}
```

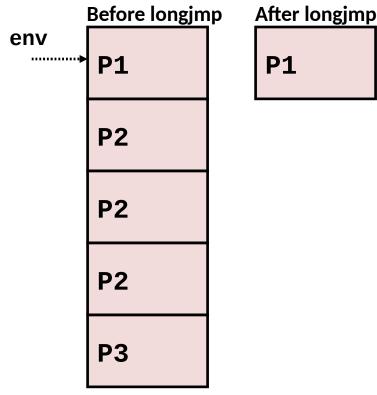
```
jmp_buf buf;
                                     setjmp/longjmp
int error1 = 0:
                                      Example (cont)
int error2 = 1;
void foo(void), bar(void);
int main()
{
  switch(setjmp(buf)) {
  case 0:
    foo();
    break:
  case 1:
    printf("Detected an error1 condition in foo\n");
    break:
  case 2:
    printf("Detected an error2 condition in foo\n");
    break:
  default:
    printf("Unknown error condition in foo\n");
  exit(0);
```

## **Limitations of Nonlocal Jumps**

#### Works within stack discipline

 Can only long jump to environment of function that has been called but not yet completed

```
jmp_buf env;
P1()
  if (setjmp(env)) {
    /* Long Jump to here */
  } else {
    P2();
P2()
{ . . . P2(); . . . P3(); }
P3()
  longjmp(env, 1);
```



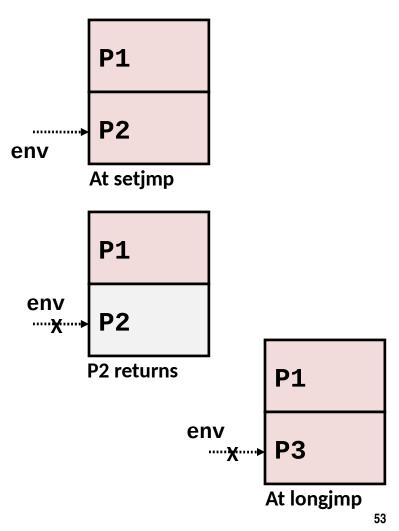
## **Limitations of Long Jumps (cont.)**

Works within stack discipline

Can only long jump to environment of function that has been called but

not yet completed

```
jmp_buf env;
P1()
  P2(); P3();
P2()
   if (setjmp(env)) {
    /* Long Jump to here */
P3()
  longjmp(env, 1);
```



# Putting It All Together: A Program That Restarts Itself When ctrl-c'd

```
#include "csapp.h"
sigjmp_buf buf;
                                       greatwhite> ./restart
void handler(int sig)
                                       starting
{
                                       processing...
  siglongjmp(buf, 1);
                                       processing...
}
                                       processing...
                                       restarting
int main()
                                                                 .Ctrl-c
                                       processing. ...
                                       processing...
  if (!sigsetjmp(buf, 1)) {
                                       restarting
     Signal(SIGINT, handler);
    Sio puts("starting\n");
                                       processing. ____
                                                                 Ctrl-c
                                       processing...
  else
                                       processing...
     Sio puts("restarting\n");
  while(1) {
    Sleep(1);
    Sio puts("processing...\n");
  exit(0); /* Control never reaches here */
                                     restart.c
```