



CSCI-GA.3033-012

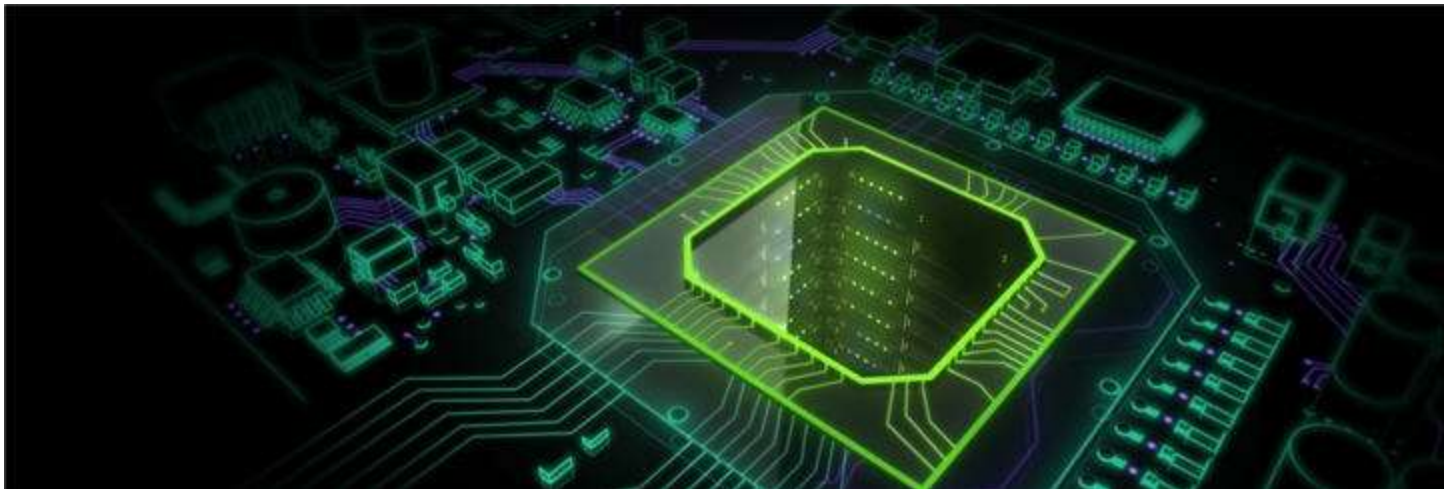
Graphics Processing Units (GPUs): Architecture and Programming

Lecture 7: GPU Performance

Mohamed Zahran (aka Z)

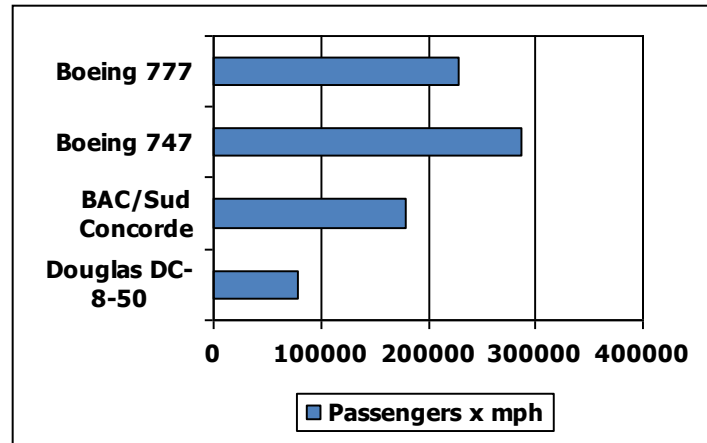
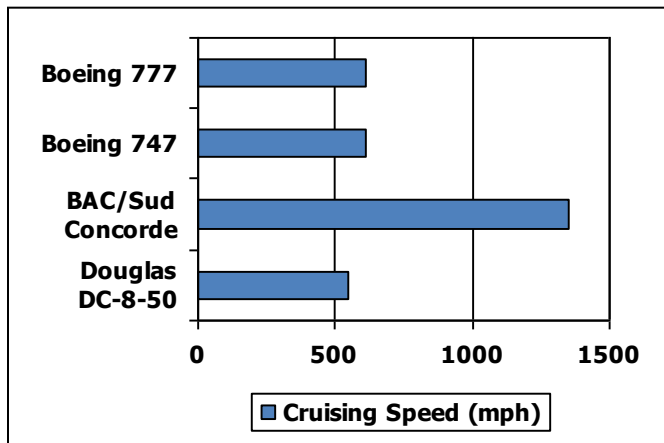
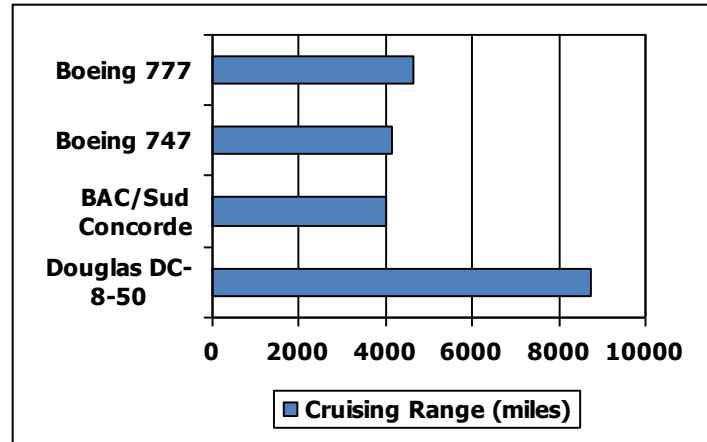
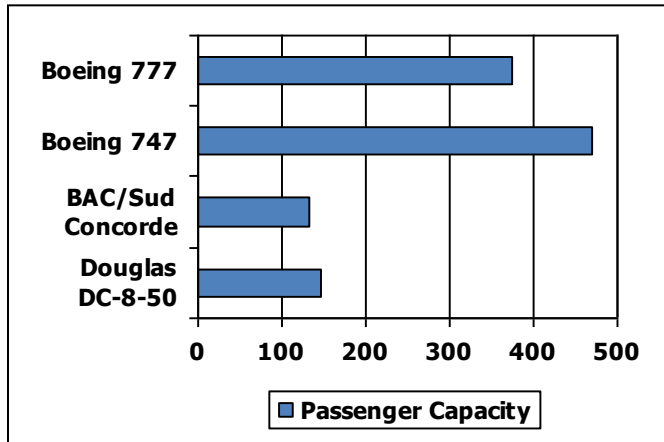
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Defining Performance

- Which airplane has the best performance?



How to Measure GPU Performance?

- FLOPS
- How about performance per watt?
- How about GPU-CPU communication?

Performance Considerations

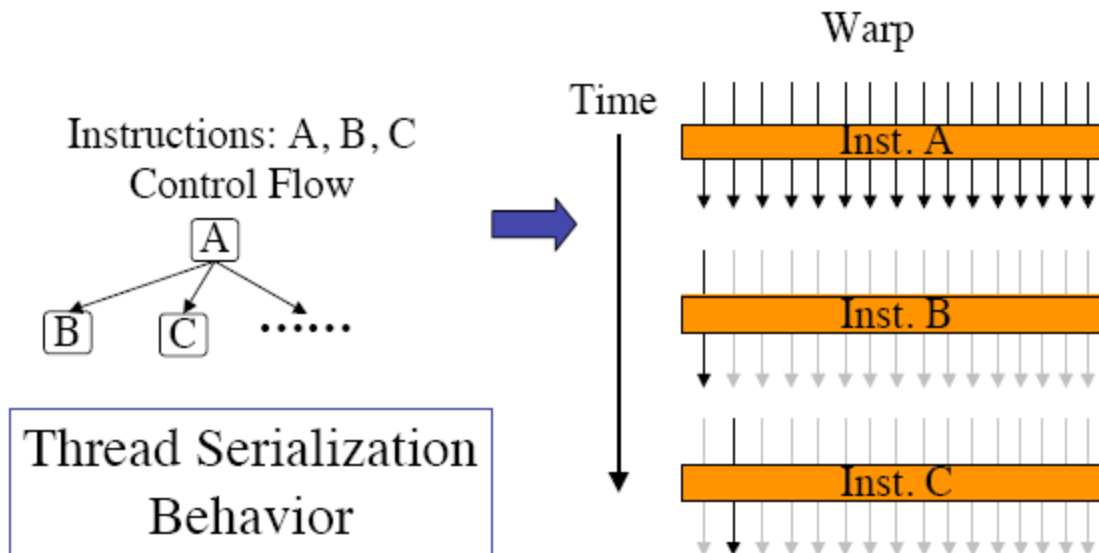
- There are many **hardware constraints**.
- Depending on the application, different constraints may dominate.
- We can improve performance of an application by **trading one resource usage for another**.

Performance Issue: Thread Diversion

- Due to hardware considerations, blocks are partitioned into warps.
- Warp = group of threads based on their thread indices
- Hardware executes an instruction for all threads in the same warp before moving to the next instruction
 - To amortize the cost of fetching and processing an instruction over a large number of threads

Performance Issue: Thread Diversion

- Works well when all threads in a warp follow the same control-flow
- Performance loss due to thread diversion

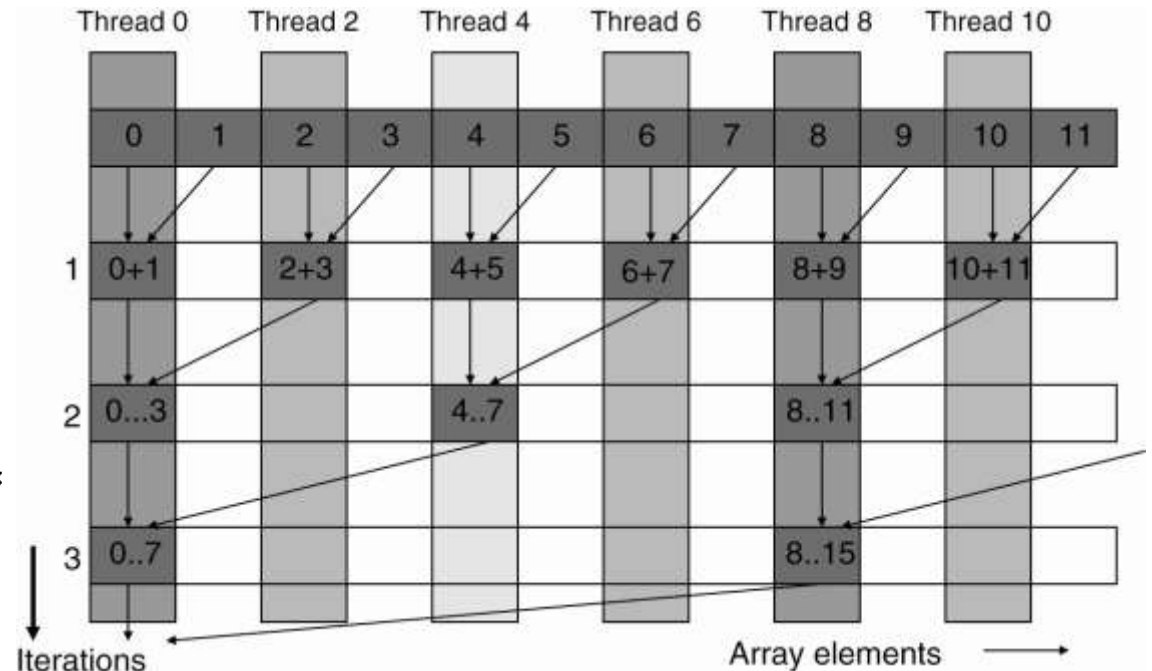


Performance Issue: Thread Diversion

```

1. __shared__ float partialSum[]
2. unsigned int t = threadIdx.x;
3. for (unsigned int stride = 1;
4.      stride < blockDim.x; stride *= 2)
5. {
6.     syncthreads();
7.     if (t % (2*stride) == 0)
8.         partialSum[t] += partialSum[t+stride];
9. }

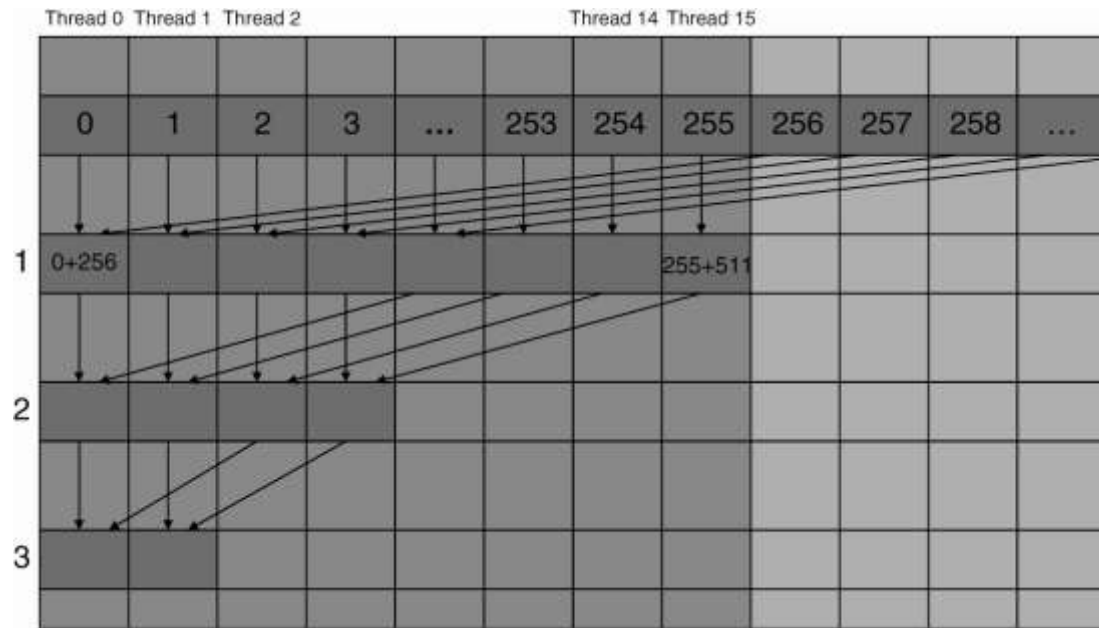
```



Example: Sum Reduction Kernel

Performance Issue: Thread Diversion

```
1. __shared__ float partialSum[];  
2. unsigned int t = threadIdx.x;  
3. for (unsigned int l = blockDim.x >> 1;  
4.     l > 0; l >>= 1)  
5. {  
6.     __syncthreads();  
7.     if (t < l)  
8.         partialSum[l] += partialSum[l + stride];  
9. }
```



Why is this version better than the previous one?

Example: Sum Reduction Kernel

Performance Issue: Global Memory

- Typical application: process massive amount of data within short period of time
 - From global memory
 - large amount + short period = huge bandwidth requirement
- Two main challenges regarding global memory:
 - Long latency
 - Relatively limited bandwidth

Dealing With Global Memory: **TILING**

- We have seen this before
- Make use of shared memory available in SMs to reduce trips to global memory

Dealing With Global Memory: Coalescing

- To more effectively move data from global memory to shared memory and registers
- For best results: can be used with tiling
- Global memory:
 - DRAM
 - Reading a bit is slow
 - So memory is implemented to read several bits in parallel

Dealing With Global Memory: Coalescing

- If an application can make use of data from **multiple consecutive locations**, the DRAM can supply the data in much higher rate.
- Kernel must arrange its data access accordingly
- When all threads in a warp execute a load instruction:
 - The hardware detects whether the addresses are consecutive
 - The hardware combines (coalesces) all accesses in a consolidated access to consecutive DRAM locations

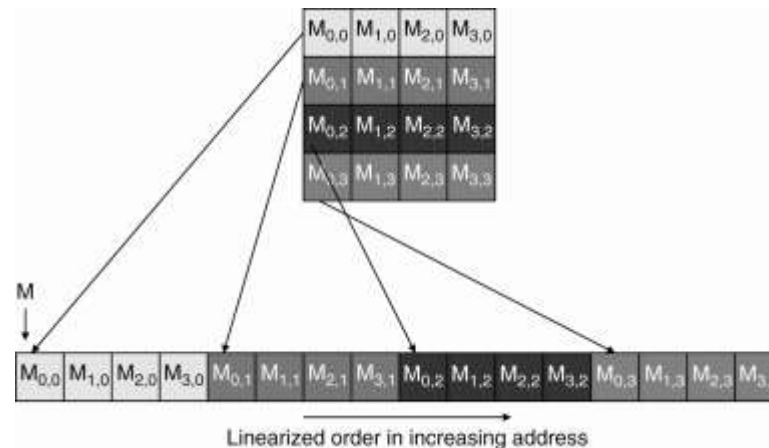
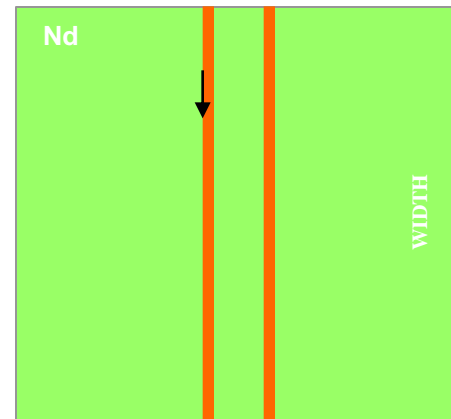
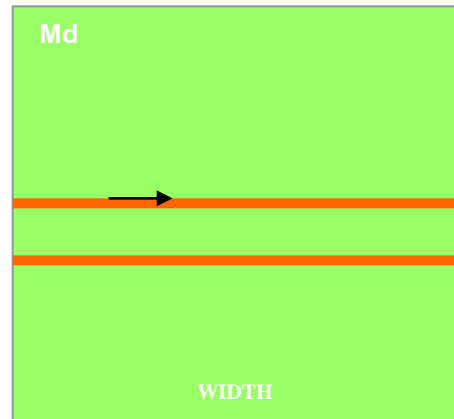
Dealing With Global Memory: Coalescing

Not coalesced

coalesced

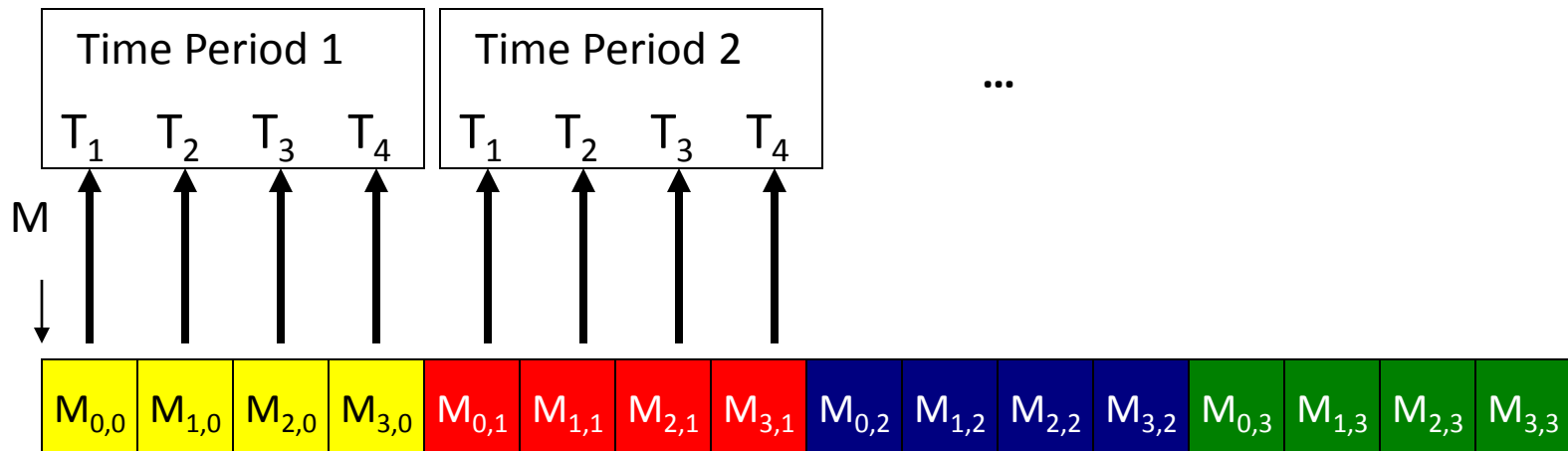
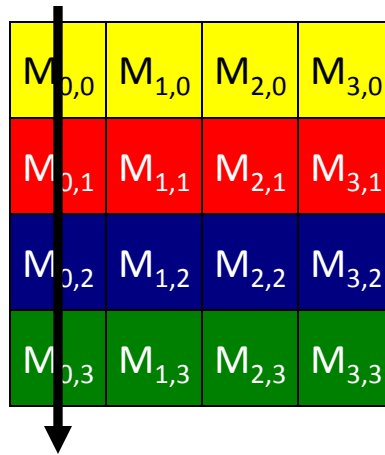
Thread 1

Thread 2

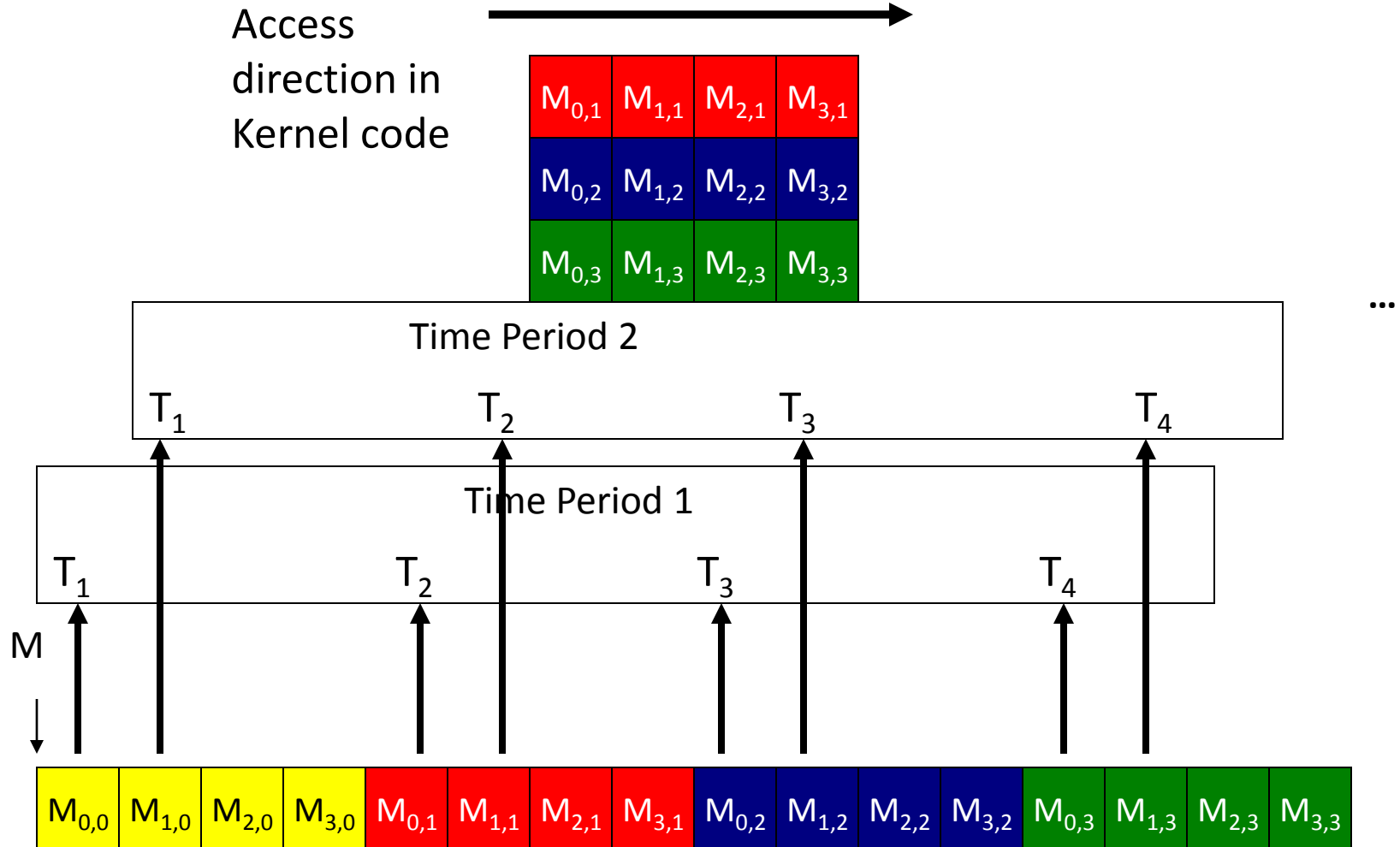


Dealing With Global Memory: Coalescing

Access
direction in
Kernel code

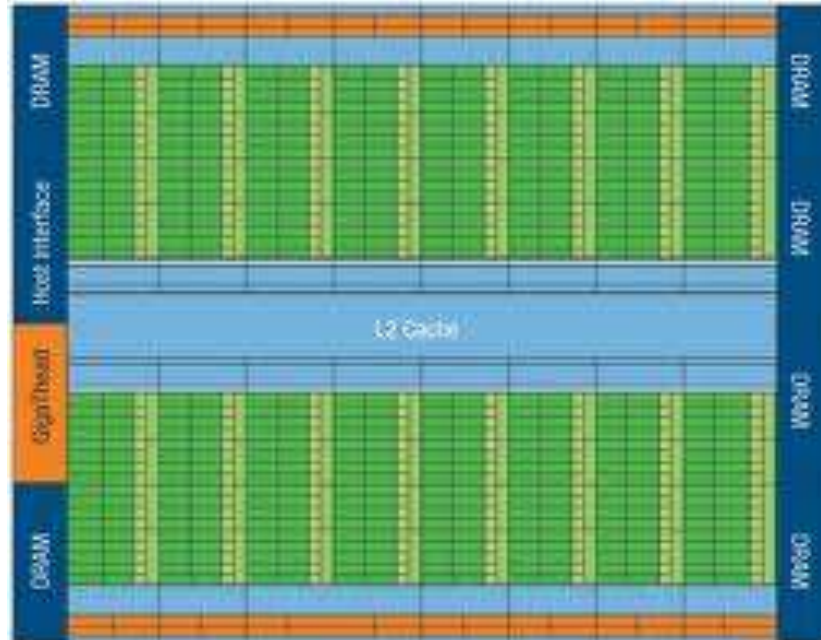


Dealing With Global Memory: Coalescing



Dealing With Global Memory: Cache

- Fermi has cache for global memory
- Caches automatically coalesce most of kernel access patterns



Dealing With Global Memory: Prefetching

Prefetch next data elements while consuming the current data elements.

This increases the number of independent instructions between memory accesses and consumers

```
Loop {  
  
  Load current tile to shared  
    memory  
  
  __syncthreads()  
  
  Compute current tile  
  
  __syncthreads()  
}
```

A Without prefetching

```
Load first tile from global memory into  
  registers  
  
Loop {  
  Deposit tile from registers to shared  
    memory  
  __syncthreads()  
  
  Load next tile from global memory into  
    registers  
  
  Compute current tile  
  
  __syncthreads()  
}
```

B With prefetching

Performance Issue: SM Resources

- Execution resources in SM include:
 - registers
 - block slots
 - thread slots
- There is an interaction among the resources that you must take into account.

Performance Issue: SM Resources

Example: Assume G80 executing the matrix multiplication with 16x16 thread blocks (8 block slots, 768 thread slots, 8192 registers)

If a thread needs 10 registers then:

- A block needs $10 \times 16 \times 16 = 2560$ registers
- 3 blocks \rightarrow 7680 registers (under the 8192 limit)
- We can't add another block (will make it 10240)
- 3 blocks \times 256 threads/block = 768 (within limit)

By using 1 extra variable the program saw a 1/3 reduction in warp parallelism
 \rightarrow performance cliff

Assume the programmer declares one more auto var:

- $11 \times 16 \times 16 = 2816$ registers per block
- 3 blocks $\rightarrow 3 \times 2816 = 8448$ (above limit)
- SM reduces #blocks by 1 \rightarrow 5632 registers required
- This reduces the number of threads in SM to $2 \times 256 \rightarrow 512$

Performance Issue: SM Resources

Example: Still with G80:

- An instruction takes 4 cycles
- Assume 4 independent instructions between global memory load and its use
- Global memory latency is 200 cycles

To keep execution units fully utilized:

We need to have $200/(4 \times 4) = 14$ warps

Assume an extra register allows the programmer to use a transformation to increase independent instructions from 4 to 8, then:

- Now we need $200/(4 \times 8) = 7$ warps
- Blocks reduced from 3 to 2 -> warps reduced from 24 to 16
- Still we can fully utilize execution units

**Trading thread-level
parallelism with increased
thread performance**

Performance Issue: Instruction Mix

```
for (int k = 0; k < BLOCK_SIZE; ++k)
    Pvalue += Ms[ty][k] * Ns[k][tx];
```

Is the above code efficient?

- Extra instructions to update loop counter
- Extra instructions for conditional branch at the end of each iteration
- Using k to access matrices incurs address arithmetic instructions.
- All of the above compete with the floating-point calculations for limited instruction processing bandwidth.

2 FP arithmetic

2 address arithmetic instructions

1 loop branch instructions

1 loop increment instructions



only 1/3 instructions are FP operations

Performance Issue: Instruction Mix

```
for (int k = 0; k < BLOCK_SIZE; ++k)  
    Pvalue += Ms[ty][k] * Ns[k][tx];
```



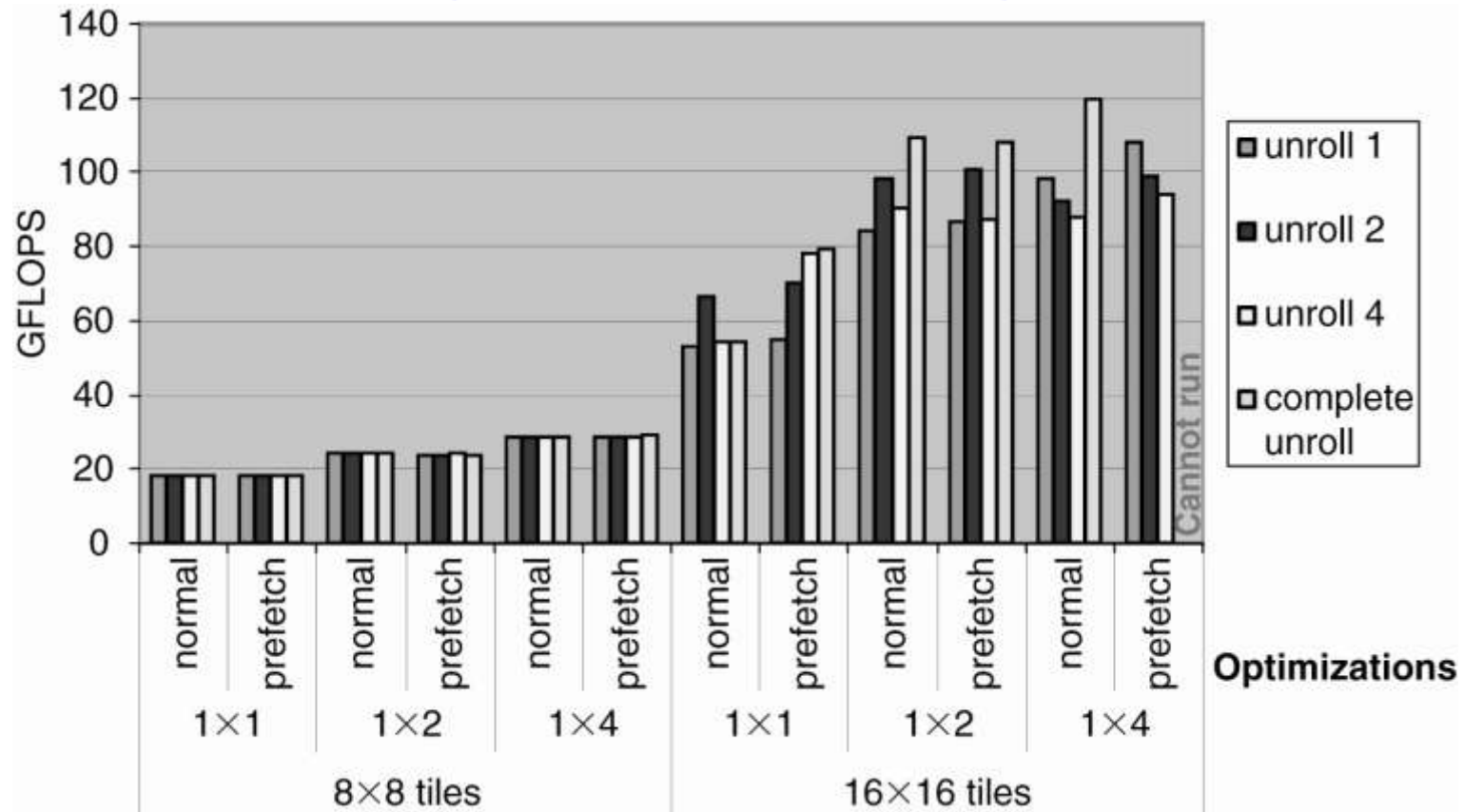
```
Pvalue += Ms[ty][0] * Ns[0][tx] + ...  
          Ms[ty][15] * Ns[15][tx];
```

Loop unrolling

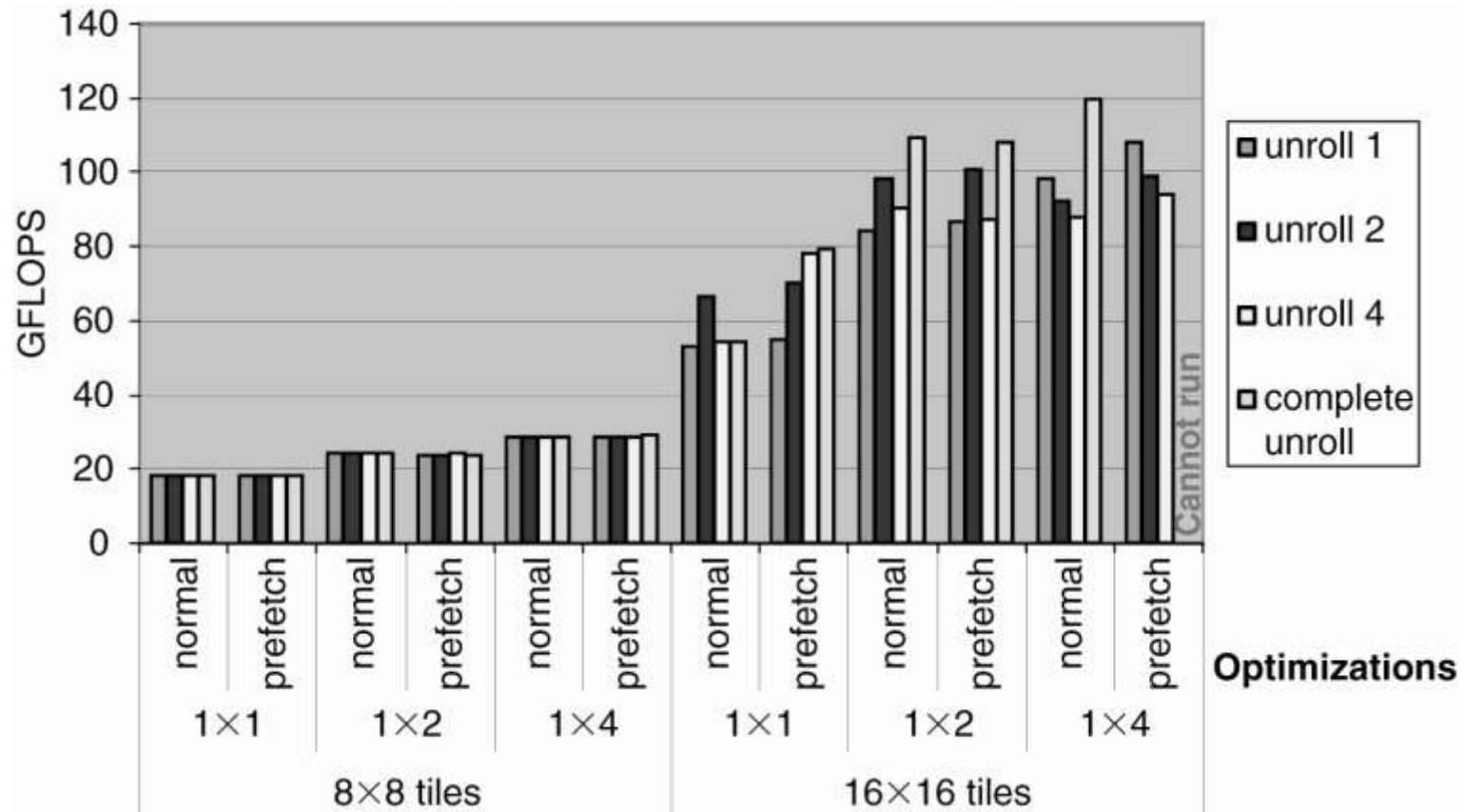
Performance Issue: Thread Granularity

- Algorithmic decision
- It is often advantageous to put more work into each thread and use fewer threads
 - When redundant work exists between threads
 - Example: Let a thread compute 2 tiles
- + Less redundant work
- + Potentially more independent instructions
- More resources requirements

Putting It All Together



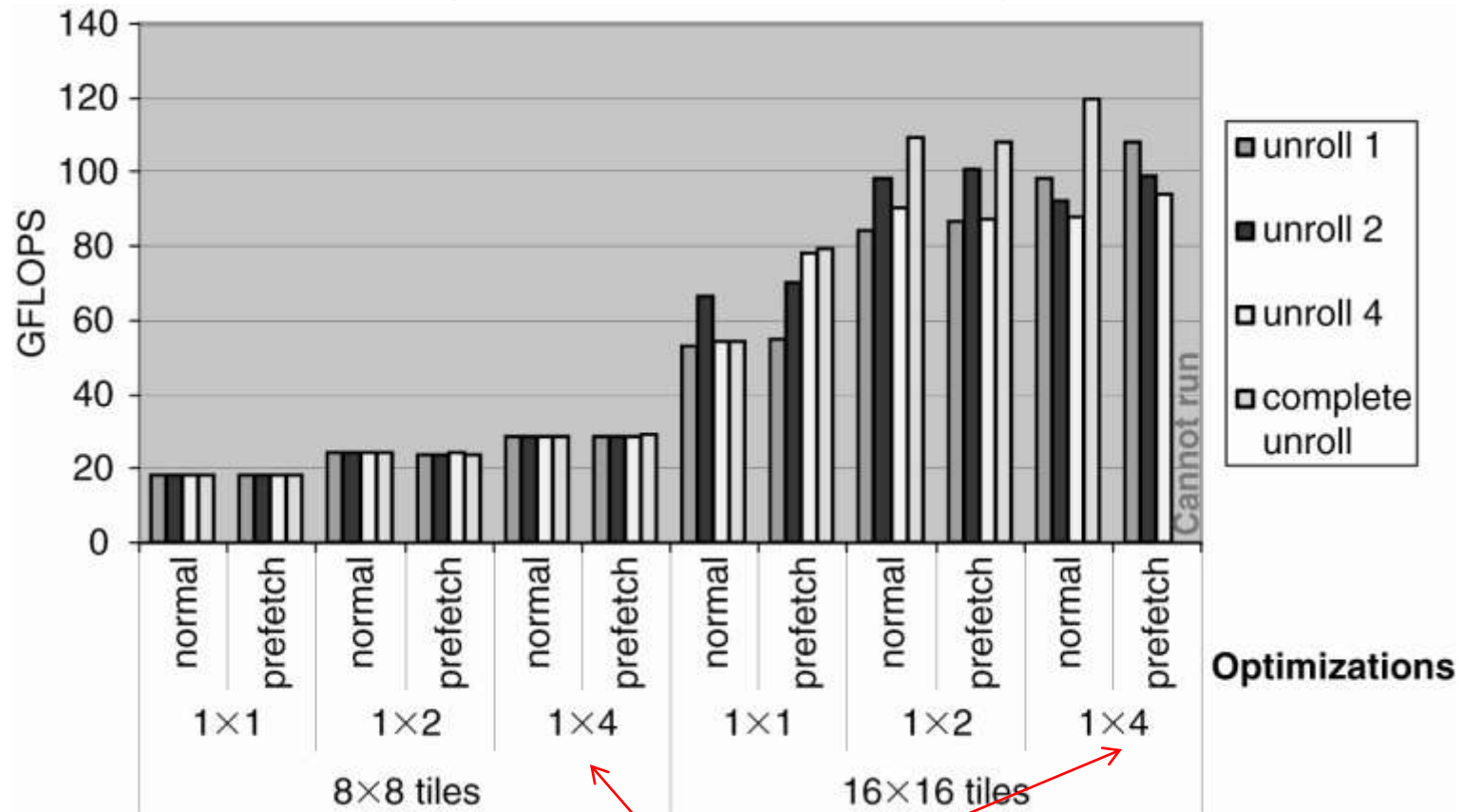
Putting It All Together



Until tile reaches 16x16 neither loop unrolling nor data prefetch helps.

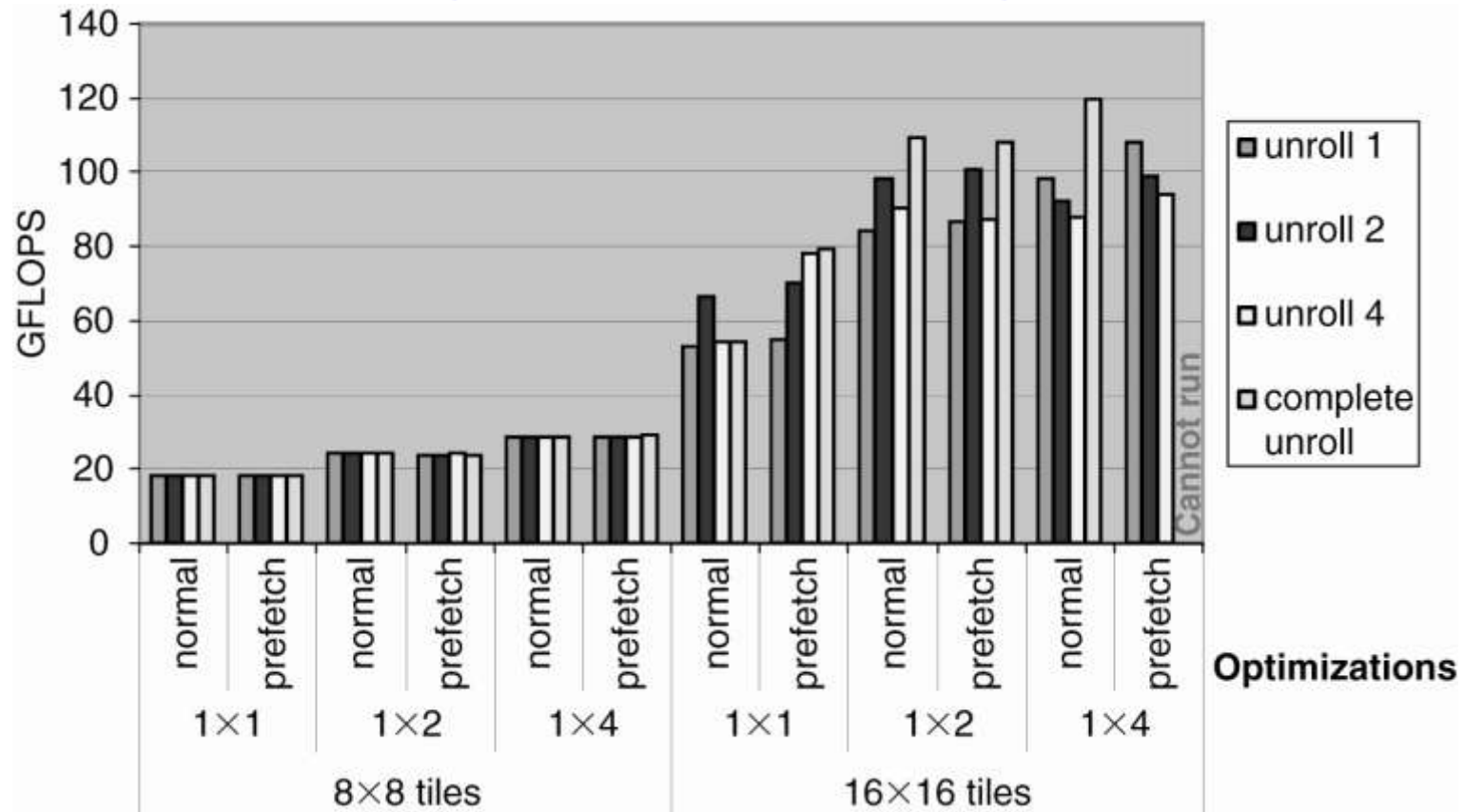
For small tile size, global memory bandwidth severely limits performance.

Putting It All Together



Granularity adjustment can reduce global memory access.

Putting It All Together



Data prefetching becomes less beneficial as thread granularity increases.

Conclusions

- As we program GPUs we need to pay attention to several performance bottlenecks:
 - Branch diversion
 - Global memory latency
 - Global memory bandwidth
 - Limited resources
- We have several techniques in our arsenal to enhance performance
 - Try to make threads in the same warp follow the same control flow
 - Tiling
 - Coalescing
 - Loop unrolling
 - Increase thread granularity
 - Trade one resource for another
- Pay attention to interaction among techniques
- We are done with chapter 6