

# An operational semantics for the C99 restrict type qualifier

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## A motivating example

- ▶ **Aliasing**: different symbolic names refer to the same object
- ▶ **Pointee**: the object pointed to by a pointer

```
int foo1(int* p, int* q) {  
    *p = 10;  
    *q = 11;  
    return *p; // if p and q do not alias, *p must evaluate to 10  
               // if p and q alias, *p must evaluate to 11  
}
```

## A motivating example

- **Restrict**: programmer-provided information to inform the compiler specific pointers do not alias under certain conditions

```
// Programmer: hi compiler! I promise you p and q will not alias
int foo2(int* restrict p, int* restrict q) {
    *p = 10;
    *q = 11;
    return *p; // if p and q do not alias, *p must evaluate to 10
               // if p and q alias, *p must evaluate to 11
}
```



## A motivating example

```
// Programmer: hi compiler! I promise you p and q will not alias  
// Compiler: nice! Thanks to this information, I optimized your code  
int foo2_optimized(int* restrict p, int* restrict q) {  
    *p = 10;  
    *q = 11;  
    return *p 10;  
}
```

$p \rightarrow \boxed{10} \quad q \rightarrow \boxed{11}$

## The promise can be broken

```
int foo1(int* p, int* q) {  
    *p = 10;  
    *q = 11;  
    return *p;  
}
```

```
int foo2(int* restrict p, int* restrict q) {  
    *p = 10;  
    *q = 11;  
    return *p 10;  
}
```

## The promise can be broken

```
int foo1(int* p, int* q) {  
    *p = 10;  
    *q = 11;  
    return *p;  
}  
  
int foo2(int* restrict p, int* restrict q) {  
    *p = 10;  
    *q = 11;  
    return *p 10;  
}  
  
int main() {  
    int x;  
    printf("%d, %d\n", foo1(&x, &x), foo2(&x, &x));  
}
```

p, q → 11

- ▶ Prints 11, 10, *i.e.* the optimized code has a different result than the original code
- ▶ Is the optimization incorrect?

# Undefined behavior

- ▶ The programmer **broke** the promise by making  $p$  and  $q$  alias
- ▶ This induces **undefined behavior (UB, ~~⊥~~)**
  - ▷ The compiler may *assume* a program is free of UB
  - ▷ It does not need to consider such programs when justifying optimizations (*i.e.* the introductory optimization is sound)
- ▶ In this presentation we only consider UB induced by restrict, but many other kinds exist (uninitialized memory loads, signed integer overflow, out-of-bounds accesses, ...)

# Undefined behavior

- ▶ To understand what uses of restrict induce undefined behavior, one should consult the ISO standard



## 6.7.3.1 Formal definition of restrict

- 1 Let **D** be a declaration of an ordinary identifier that provides a means of designating an object **P** as a restrict-qualified pointer to type **T**.  
⋮
- 3 In what follows, a pointer expression **E** is said to be *based* on object **P** if (at some sequence point in the execution of **B** prior to the evaluation of **E**) modifying **P** to point to a copy of the array object into which it formerly pointed would change the value of **E**.<sup>137)</sup> Note that “based” is defined only for expressions with pointer types.
- 4 During each execution of **B**, let **L** be any lvalue that has **&L** based on **P**. If **L** is used to access the value of the object **X** that it designates, and **X** is also modified (by any means), then the following requirements apply: **T** shall not be const-qualified. Every other lvalue used to access the value of **X** shall also have its address based on **P**. Every access that modifies **X** shall be considered also to modify **P**, for the purposes of this subclause. If **P** is assigned the value of a pointer expression **E** that is based on another restricted pointer  
⋮

## 6.7.3.1 Formal definition of restrict

- ▶ Four N-documents submitted since 2018
- ▶ Gustedt (2024)<sup>1</sup>: “By its title it is a promise (to provide a formal definition) but it is in fact very delicate mix up of semantic concepts that make it almost impossible to comprehend from the given text.”
- ▶ MacDonald *et al.* (2022, 2024)<sup>2</sup> report a bug in the definition of “based on”

1 Let  $\mathbf{D}$  be a declaration of an ordinary identifier that provides a means of designating an object  $\mathbf{P}$  as a restrict-qualified pointer to type  $\mathbf{T}$ .

⋮

3 In what follows, a pointer expression  $\mathbf{E}$  is said to be *based* on object  $\mathbf{P}$  if (at some sequence point in the execution of  $\mathbf{B}$  prior to the evaluation of  $\mathbf{E}$ ) modifying  $\mathbf{P}$  to point to a copy of the array object into which it formerly pointed would change the value of  $\mathbf{E}$ .<sup>137</sup>)  
Note that “based” is defined only for expressions with pointer types.

4 During each execution of  $\mathbf{B}$ , let  $\mathbf{L}$  be any lvalue that has  $\&\mathbf{L}$  based on  $\mathbf{P}$ . If  $\mathbf{L}$  is used to access the value of the object  $\mathbf{X}$  that it designates, and  $\mathbf{X}$  is also modified (by any means), then the following requirements apply:  $\mathbf{T}$  shall not be const-qualified. Every other lvalue used to access the value of  $\mathbf{X}$  shall also have its address based on  $\mathbf{P}$ . Every access that modifies  $\mathbf{X}$  shall be considered also to modify  $\mathbf{P}$ , for the purposes of this subclause. If  $\mathbf{P}$  is assigned the value of a pointer expression  $\mathbf{E}$  that is based on another restricted pointer

⋮

---

<sup>1</sup>Gustedt, The semantics of the restrict qualifier

<sup>2</sup>MacDonald, Tong, and Uecker, Defect With Wording Of restrict Specification

# Goals

We want a definition for restrict which is:

- ① **Unambiguous**, *i.e.* a formal semantics
- ② **Consistent** with the standard definition (to the extent possible) and/or existing compiler optimizations
- ③ **Executable** such that one can test a program for UB
- ④ **Suitable** to be used for proving compiler optimizations correct (future work)

## Approach (formal semantics)

- ▶ A vast landscape of formal semantics exists for C, e.g. CompCert, CH<sub>2</sub>O and Cerberus
- ▶ Most of these projects have omitted restrict, except the executable C-in- $\mathbb{K}$  semantics

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<sup>1</sup>Hathhorn, Ellison, and Roşu, “Defining the undefinedness of C”.

## Approach (formal semantics)

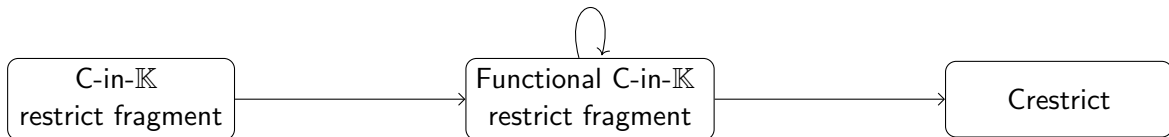
- ▶ A vast landscape of formal semantics exists for C, e.g. CompCert, CH<sub>2</sub>O and Cerberus
- ▶ Most of these projects have omitted restrict, except the executable C-in- $\mathbb{K}$  semantics
- ▶ The paper<sup>1</sup> contains only a single paragraph on restrict, an extensive evaluation reveals several problems (2)
- ▶ As a rewrite-based semantics, it is not suitable for reasoning about optimization correctness à la CompCert (4)
  - ① Unambiguous: ✓
  - ② Consistent: ✗
  - ③ Executable: ✓
  - ④ Suitable: !

---

<sup>1</sup>Hathhorn, Ellison, and Roşu, “Defining the undefinedness of C”.

# Contributions

- ▶ Extensive evaluation
- ▶ Identify six problems
- ▶ Solve the problems (**consistency**, goal 2)



- ▶ Understand the semantics
- ▶ Redevelop the semantics closer to CompCert style (**suitability**, goal 4)
- ▶ Integrate in a big-step semantics
- ▶ Interpreter implementation (**executable**, goal 3)

## Restrict definition (simplified)

- ▶ A pointer is “based on” a restrict pointer if it depends on its value:

```
int x; int* restrict p = &x; int* q = p; // q is based on p
```

- ▶ A **promise** that a restrict qualified pointer and pointers “based on” it will **not alias** with other pointers during the **scope** it is alive if:
  - ▷ The pointer is used to **access** the object it points to
  - ▷ The object pointed to is **modified** (by any means)

# The language<sup>1</sup> (simplified)

## Types

$$\begin{aligned} st \in SimpleType & ::= \text{I32} \mid \text{Ptr } \tau \\ \tau_q \in TypeQualifier & ::= \text{NoRestrict} \mid \text{Restrict} \\ \tau \in Type & ::= (st, \tau_q) \end{aligned}$$

---

<sup>1</sup>A small language based on Blazy and Leroy, “Mechanized semantics for the Clight subset of the C language”



# The C-in- $\mathbb{K}$ semantics

Two features are jointly used to support restrict:

- ① Pointer values have some extra information, called **bases**
  - ▷ Tracks on which restrict qualified pointer(s) a pointer is based
  - ▷ Used to distinguish pointers to the same address

$$b \in Block, si \in Scopeld \quad := \quad \mathbb{Z}$$
$$bas \in Bases \quad := \quad Set(Block \times Scopeld)$$
$$Val \quad ::= \quad Ptr (Block \times Bases) \mid \dots$$

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$b \in \text{Block}, si \in \text{Scopeld} \quad := \quad \mathbb{Z}$

$bas \in \text{Bases} \quad := \quad \text{Set}(\text{Block} \times \text{Scopeld})$   
Address of restrict pointer — Restrict pointer declaration scope

$Val \quad ::= \quad \text{Ptr}(\text{Block} \times \text{Bases}) \mid \dots$   
Address of the pointee —

# The C-in- $\mathbb{K}$ semantics

Two features are jointly used to support restrict:

- 2 The **restrict stack** tracks what memory accesses are allowed by maintaining a per-location **restrict state**

$$RestrictState \quad ::= \text{OnlyRead } bas \mid \text{Restricted } bas \mid \text{Unrestricted}$$
$$R \in RestrictStack \quad := \text{List}(Scopeld \times (Block \rightarrow RestrictState))$$

# The C-in- $\mathbb{K}$ semantics

Two features are jointly used to support restrict:

- 2 The **restrict stack** tracks what memory accesses are allowed by maintaining a per-location **restrict state**

$RestrictState ::= \text{OnlyRead } bas \mid \text{Restricted } bas \mid \text{Unrestricted}$   
Load via Ptr  $(\_, bas)$       Store via Ptr  $(\_, bas)$       Loads via pointers with different bases  
 $R \in RestrictStack := List(\text{Scopeld} \times (Block \rightarrow RestrictState))$   
Scope in which the access occurred

## The introductory example under the C-in- $\mathbb{K}$ semantics

```
// Scope sifoo
int foo(int* restrict p, int* restrict q) {
    *p = 10;
    *q = 11;
    return *p;
}
```

```
// Scope simain
int main() {
    int x;
    foo(&x, &x);
}
```

M:



R:



## The introductory example under the C-in- $\mathbb{K}$ semantics

```
// Scope sifoo
int foo(int* restrict p, int* restrict q) {
    *p = 10;
    *q = 11;
    return *p;
}
```

```
// Scope simain
int main() {
    int x; // &x = bx
    foo(&x, &x);
}
```

M:

$\{b_x \mapsto \text{Undef}\}$
--------------------------------

R:

si <sub>main</sub>
--------------------

$\emptyset$
-------------

# The introductory example under the C-in- $\mathbb{K}$ semantics

```
// Scope si_foo    &p = b_p    &q = b_q
int foo(int* restrict p, int* restrict q) {
    *p = 10;
    *q = 11;
    return *p;
}
```

```
// Scope si_main
int main() {
    int x; // &x = b_x
    foo(&x, &x);
}
```

M:

$\{b_p \mapsto \text{Ptr}(b_x, \{(b_p, \text{si\_foo})\}),$ $b_q \mapsto \text{Ptr}(b_x, \{(b_q, \text{si\_foo})\}),$ $b_x \mapsto \text{Undef}\}$
--

R:

si_foo	$\emptyset$
si_main	$\emptyset$

## The introductory example under the C-in- $\mathbb{K}$ semantics

```
// Scope si_foo    &p = b_p    &q = b_q
int foo(int* restrict p, int* restrict q) {
    *p = 10;
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}
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```
// Scope si_main
int main() {
    int x; // &x = b_x
    foo(&x, &x);
}
```

M:

$\begin{aligned} &b_p \mapsto \text{Ptr}(b_x, \{(b_p, \text{si\_foo})\}), \\ &b_q \mapsto \text{Ptr}(b_x, \{(b_q, \text{si\_foo})\}), \\ &b_x \mapsto 10 \end{aligned}$
---

R:

si_foo	$\{b_x \mapsto \text{Restricted} \{(b_p, \text{si\_foo})\}\}$
si_main	$\emptyset$



# The introductory example under the C-in- $\mathbb{K}$ semantics

```
// Scope sifoo    &p = bp    &q = bq
int foo(int* restrict p, int* restrict q) {
    *p = 10;
    *q = 11;
    return *p;
}
```

```
// Scope simain
int main() {
    int x; // &x = bx
    foo(&x, &x);
}
```

Restricted  $\{(b_q, \text{si}_{\text{foo}})\} \sqcup \text{Restricted}\{(b_p, \text{si}_{\text{foo}})\} = \dots$

M:

$\{b_p \mapsto \text{Ptr}(b_x, \{(b_p, \text{si}_{\text{foo}})\}),$ $b_q \mapsto \text{Ptr}(b_x, \{(b_q, \text{si}_{\text{foo}})\}),$ $b_x \mapsto \text{Undef}\}$
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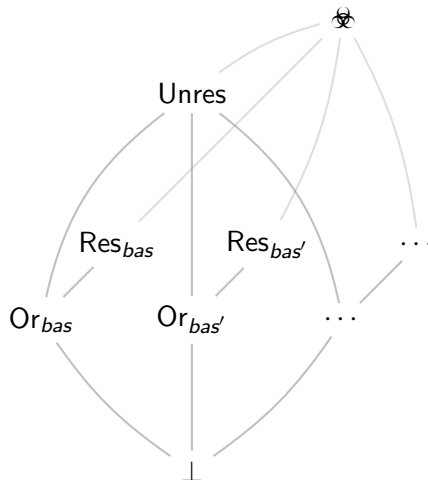
R:

si <sub>foo</sub>	$\{b_x \mapsto \text{Restricted}\{(b_p, \text{si}_{\text{foo}})\}\}$
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# The introductory example under the C-in- $\mathbb{K}$ semantics

Restricted  $\{(b_q, \text{si}_{\text{foo}})\} \sqcup \text{Restricted } \{(b_p, \text{si}_{\text{foo}})\} = \dots$

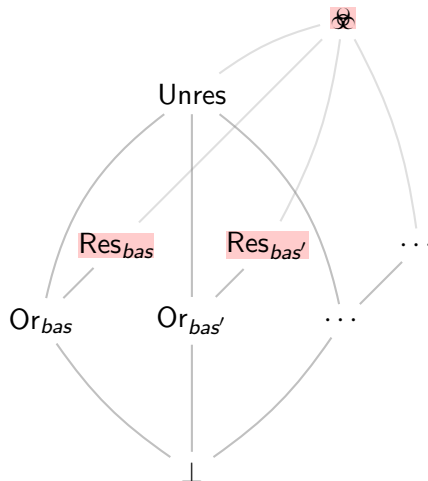
- ▶ The symmetric  $\sqcup$  operation describes the result of joining two restrict states
- ▶  $\text{Unres} = \text{Unrestricted}$ ,  $\text{Res}_{bas} = (\text{Restricted } bas)$  and  $\text{Or}_{bas} = (\text{OnlyRead } bas)$
- ▶  $bas \neq bas'$



# The introductory example under the C-in- $\mathbb{K}$ semantics

$$\text{Restricted } \{(b_q, \text{si}_{\text{foo}})\} \sqcup \text{Restricted } \{(b_p, \text{si}_{\text{foo}})\} = \emptyset$$

- ▶ The symmetric  $\sqcup$  operation describes the result of joining two restrict states
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# The introductory example under the C-in- $\mathbb{K}$ semantics

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    return *p;  
}
```

```
// Scope simain  
int main() {  
    int x; // &x = bx  
    foo(&x, &x);  
}
```

**UB:**  $\text{Restricted} \{(b_q, \text{si}_{\text{foo}})\} \sqcup \text{Restricted} \{(b_p, \text{si}_{\text{foo}})\} = \emptyset$

**M:**

$\{b_p \mapsto \text{Ptr}(b_x, \{(b_p, \text{si}_{\text{foo}})\}),$ $b_q \mapsto \text{Ptr}(b_x, \{(b_q, \text{si}_{\text{foo}})\}),$ $b_x \mapsto \text{Undef}\}$
--

**R:**

si <sub>foo</sub>	$\{b_x \mapsto \text{Restricted} \{(b_p, \text{si}_{\text{foo}})\}\}$
si <sub>main</sub>	$\emptyset$

# Evaluating the C-in- $\mathbb{K}$ semantics

- ▶ The semantics correctly gives undefined behavior to our introductory example!  
But, we argue, there are some problems:
- ▶ Too much undefined behavior (TMU)
  - ▷ Aliasing loads
  - ▷ Returning restrict pointers
- ▶ Too little undefined behavior (TLU)
  - ▷ Array of restrict pointers
  - ▷ Nested restrict pointers
  - ▷ Semantic preservation under inlining
  - ▷ Call to free

## Aliasing loads (TMU)

```
// Scope  $si_h$   
void h(int* q, int* restrict r, int* restrict s) {  
    *q = *r + *s;  
}
```

```
// Scope  $si_{main}$ 
```

```
int main() {  
    int x, y;  
    int* restrict p = &y;  
    *p = 0;  
    h(&x, p, p);  
}
```

$q \longrightarrow x \quad r, s \rightarrow y$

- ▶ Simplified version of example 3 from the ISO standard demonstrating DB
- ▶  $y$  does **not** get **modified** in the scope  $si_h$  of  $r, s$

## Aliasing loads (TMU)

*// Scope  $si_h$*

```
void h(int* q, int* restrict r, int* restrict s) {  
    *q = *r + *s;  
}
```

*// Scope  $si_{main}$*

```
int main() {  
    int x, y;  
    int* restrict p = &y;  
    *p = 0;  
    h(&x, p, p);  
}
```

M:



R:



# Aliasing loads (TMU)

// Scope  $si_h$

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void h(int* q, int* restrict r, int* restrict s) {  
    *q = *r + *s;  
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// Scope  $si_{main}$

```
int main() {  
    int x, y;  
    int* restrict p = &y;  
    *p = 0;  
    h(&x, p, p);  
}
```

M:

$\{b_x \mapsto \text{Undef}, b_y \mapsto \text{Undef}\}$
--

R:

$si_{main}$

$\emptyset$
-------------



## Aliasing loads (TMU)

```
// Scope  $si_h$   
void h(int* q, int* restrict r, int* restrict s) {  
    *q = *r + *s;  
}
```

```
// Scope  $si_{main}$   
int main() {  
    int x, y;  
    int* restrict p = &y;  
    *p = 0;  
    h(&x, p, p);  
}
```

M:

$\{ b_x \mapsto \text{Undef},$ $b_y \mapsto \text{Undef},$ $b_p \mapsto \text{Ptr}(b_y, \{(b_p, si_{main})\}) \}$
---

R:

$si_{main}$	$\emptyset$
-------------	-------------

# Aliasing loads (TMU)

```
// Scope sih
void h(int* q, int* restrict r, int* restrict s) {
    *q = *r + *s;
}
```

```
// Scope simain
int main() {
    int x, y;
    int* restrict p = &y;
    *p = 0;
    h(&x, p, p);
}
```

M:

$$\begin{aligned} & \{ b_x \mapsto \text{Undef}, \\ & \quad b_y \mapsto 0, \\ & \quad b_p \mapsto \text{Ptr}(b_y, \{(b_p, \text{si}_{\text{main}})\}) \} \end{aligned}$$

R:

si <sub>main</sub>	$\{ b_y \mapsto \text{Restricted} \{(b_p, \text{si}_{\text{main}})\} \}$
--------------------	--

## Aliasing loads (TMU)

```
// Scope  $si_h$ 
```

```
void h(int* q, int* restrict r, int* restrict s) {  
    *q = *r + *s;  
}
```

```
// Scope  $si_{main}$ 
```

```
int main() {  
    int x, y;  
    int* restrict p = &y;  
    *p = 0;  
    h(&x, p, p);  
}
```

M:

$\{b_x \mapsto \text{Undef}, b_y \mapsto 0,$ $b_p \mapsto \text{Ptr}(b_y, \{(b_p, si_{main})\}),$ $b_q \mapsto \text{Ptr}(b_x, \emptyset),$ $b_r \mapsto \text{Ptr}(b_y, \{(b_r, si_h), (b_p, si_{main})\}),$ $b_s \mapsto \text{Ptr}(b_y, \{(b_s, si_h), (b_p, si_{main})\})$ $\}$
--

R:

$si_h$	$\emptyset$
$si_{main}$	$\{b_y \mapsto \text{Restricted} \{(b_p, si_{main})\}\}$

# Aliasing loads (TMU)

```
// Scope sih
```

```
void h(int* q, int* restrict r, int* restrict s) {  
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int main() {  
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}
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M:

$\begin{aligned} &b_x \mapsto \text{Undef}, b_y \mapsto 0, \\ &b_p \mapsto \text{Ptr}(b_y, \{(b_p, \text{si}_{\text{main}})\}), \\ &b_q \mapsto \text{Ptr}(b_x, \emptyset), \\ &b_r \mapsto \text{Ptr}(b_y, \{(b_r, \text{si}_h), (b_p, \text{si}_{\text{main}})\}), \\ &b_s \mapsto \text{Ptr}(b_y, \{(b_s, \text{si}_h), (b_p, \text{si}_{\text{main}})\}) \end{aligned}$
---

R:

si <sub>h</sub>	$\{b_y \mapsto \text{OnlyRead} \{(b_r, \text{si}_h), (b_p, \text{si}_{\text{main}})\}\}$
si <sub>main</sub>	$\{b_y \mapsto \text{Restricted} \{(b_p, \text{si}_{\text{main}})\}\}$

# Aliasing loads (TMU)

```
// Scope sih
```

```
void h(int* q, int* restrict r, int* restrict s) {  
    *q = *r + *s;  
}
```

OnlyRead  $\{(b_r, si_h), (b_p, si_{main})\} \sqcup$

OnlyRead  $\{(b_s, si_h), (b_p, si_{main})\} = \dots$

M:

$\{ \dots,$ $b_r \mapsto \text{Ptr } (b_y, \{(b_r, si_h), (b_p, si_{main})\}),$ $b_s \mapsto \text{Ptr } (b_y, \{(b_s, si_h), (b_p, si_{main})\}) \}$
---

```
// Scope simain
```

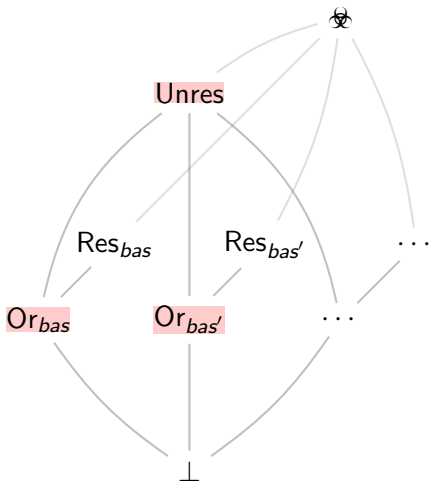
```
int main() {  
    int x, y;  
    int* restrict p = &y;  
    *p = 0;  
    h(&x, p, p);  
}
```

R:

si <sub>h</sub>	$\{b_y \mapsto \text{OnlyRead } \{(b_r, si_h), (b_p, si_{main})\}\}$
si <sub>main</sub>	$\{b_y \mapsto \text{Restricted } \{(b_p, si_{main})\}\}$

## Aliasing loads (TMU)

$\text{OnlyRead } \{(b_r, \text{si}_h), (b_p, \text{si}_{\text{main}})\} \sqcup \text{OnlyRead } \{(b_s, \text{si}_h), (b_p, \text{si}_{\text{main}})\} = \text{Unrestricted}$



# Aliasing loads (TMU)

```
// Scope  $si_h$ 
```

```
void h(int* q, int* restrict r, int* restrict s) {  
    *q = *r + *s;  
}
```

```
// Scope  $si_{main}$ 
```

```
int main() {  
    int x, y;  
    int* restrict p = &y;  
    *p = 0;  
    h(&x, p, p);  
}
```

M:

$\{ \dots, \\ b_r \mapsto \text{Ptr } (b_y, \{(b_r, si_h), (b_p, si_{main})\}), \\ b_s \mapsto \text{Ptr } (b_y, \{(b_s, si_h), (b_p, si_{main})\}) \}$
---

R:

$si_h$	$\{b_y \mapsto \text{Unrestricted}\}$
$si_{main}$	$\{b_y \mapsto \text{Restricted } \{(b_p, si_{main})\}\}$

# Aliasing loads (TMU)

```
// Scope sih
```

```
void h(int* q, int* restrict r, int* restrict s) {  
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int main() {  
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    *p = 0;  
    h(&x, p, p);  
}
```

M:

$\{ \dots, \\ b_r \mapsto \text{Ptr}(b_y, \{(b_r, \text{si}_h), (b_p, \text{si}_{\text{main}})\}), \\ b_s \mapsto \text{Ptr}(b_y, \{(b_s, \text{si}_h), (b_p, \text{si}_{\text{main}})\}) \}$
---

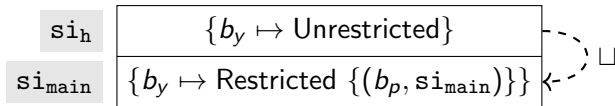
R:

si <sub>h</sub>	{ ..., b <sub>y</sub> $\mapsto$ Unrestricted }
si <sub>main</sub>	{ b <sub>y</sub> $\mapsto$ Restricted { (b <sub>p</sub> , si <sub>main</sub> ) } }



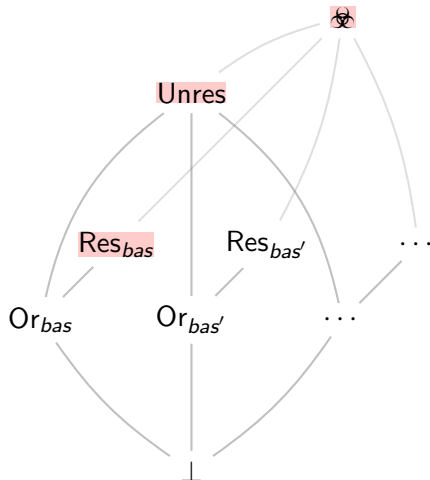
## Aliasing loads (TMU)

- ▶  $si_h$  is part of the execution of scope  $si_{main}$
- ▶ Join the restrict states when  $si_h$  terminates!



# Aliasing loads (TMU)

Restricted  $\{(b_p, \text{si}_{\text{main}})\} \sqcup \text{Unrestricted} = \text{⊥}$



## Aliasing loads (TMU)

- ▶ The fundamental problem with Unrestricted is **information loss**
- ▶ Idea: **remove** Unrestricted entirely and promote (OnlyRead  $bas$ ) to (OnlyRead  $fbas$ ) with  $fbas \in Set(Bases)$ , i.e. a **family of sets of bases**
  - ▶ Every set of the family represents a pointer used for a load
  - ▶ if  $|F_{bas}| > 1$  the semantics of Unrestricted apply
  - ▶ if  $F_{bas} = \{bas\}$  the semantics of (OnlyRead  $bas$ ) apply

# Aliasing loads (TMU)

```
// Scope sih
```

```
void h(int* q, int* restrict r, int* restrict s) {  
    *q = *r + *s;  
}
```

OnlyRead  $\{ \{ (b_r, si_h), (b_p, si_{main}) \} \} \sqcup$

OnlyRead  $\{ \{ (b_s, si_h), (b_p, si_{main}) \} \} = \dots$

M:

$\{ \dots, \\ b_r \mapsto \text{Ptr } (b_y, \{ (b_r, si_h), (b_p, si_{main}) \}), \\ b_s \mapsto \text{Ptr } (b_y, \{ (b_s, si_h), (b_p, si_{main}) \}) \}$
---

```
// Scope simain
```

```
int main() {  
    int x, y;  
    int* restrict p = &y;  
    *p = 0;  
    h(&x, p, p);  
}
```

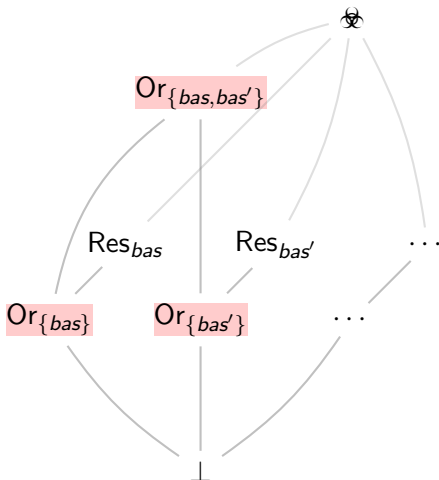
R:

si <sub>h</sub>	$\{ b_y \mapsto \text{OnlyRead } \{ \{ (b_r, si_h), (b_p, si_{main}) \} \} \}$
si <sub>main</sub>	$\{ b_y \mapsto \text{Restricted } \{ (b_p, si_{main}) \} \}$

## Aliasing loads (TMU)

$$\text{OnlyRead } \{ \{ (b_r, \text{si}_h), (b_p, \text{si}_{\text{main}}) \} \} \sqcup \text{OnlyRead } \{ \{ (b_s, \text{si}_h), (b_p, \text{si}_{\text{main}}) \} \} = \dots$$

- The updated symmetric  $\sqcup$  operation (simplified)
- $bas \neq bas'$



# Aliasing loads (TMU)

```
// Scope sih
```

```
void h(int* q, int* restrict r, int* restrict s) {  
    *q = *r + *s;  
}
```

M:

$$\{\dots, \\ b_r \mapsto \text{Ptr } (b_y, \{(b_r, \text{si}_h), (b_p, \text{si}_{\text{main}})\}), \\ b_s \mapsto \text{Ptr } (b_y, \{(b_s, \text{si}_h), (b_p, \text{si}_{\text{main}})\}) \}$$

R:

```
// Scope simain
```

```
int main() {  
    int x, y;  
    int* restrict p = &y;  
    *p = 0;  
    h(&x, p, p);  
}
```

si<sub>h</sub>

$$\{b_y \mapsto \text{OnlyRead } \{ \\ \{(b_r, \text{si}_h), (b_p, \text{si}_{\text{main}})\}, \\ \{(b_s, \text{si}_h), (b_p, \text{si}_{\text{main}})\} \} \\ \}$$

si<sub>main</sub>

$$\{b_y \mapsto \text{Restricted } \{(b_p, \text{si}_{\text{main}})\}\}$$

# Aliasing loads (TMU)

```
// Scope  $si_h$ 
```

```
void h(int* q, int* restrict r, int* restrict s) {  
    *q = *r + *s;  
}
```

M:

$$\{ \dots, \\ b_r \mapsto \text{Ptr } (b_y, \{(b_r, si_h), (b_p, si_{main})\}), \\ b_s \mapsto \text{Ptr } (b_y, \{(b_s, si_h), (b_p, si_{main})\}) \}$$

R:

```
// Scope  $si_{main}$ 
```

```
int main() {  
    int x, y;  
    int* restrict p = &y;  
    *p = 0;  
    h(&x, p, p);  
}
```

$si_h$

$$\{ \dots, b_y \mapsto \text{OnlyRead } \{ \\ \{(b_r, si_h), (b_p, si_{main})\}, \\ \{(b_s, si_h), (b_p, si_{main})\} \} \\ \}$$

$si_{main}$

$$\{ b_y \mapsto \text{Restricted } \{(b_p, si_{main})\} \}$$

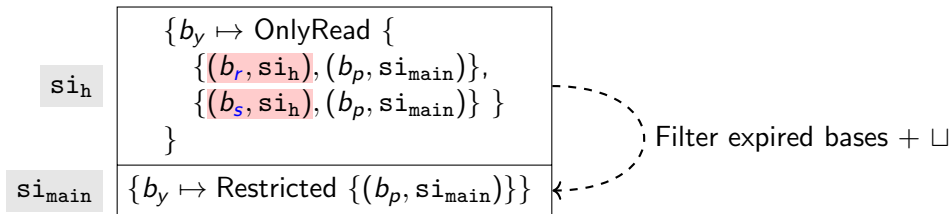
## Aliasing loads (TMU)

- ▶ Recall that the restrict rules only apply during the **scope a restrict pointer is alive**
- ▶ Filtering: when joining between scopes, remove bases from the expired scope  $si_h$



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- ▶ Recall that the restrict rules only apply during the **scope a restrict pointer is alive**
- ▶ Filtering: when joining between scopes, remove bases from the expired scope  $si_h$

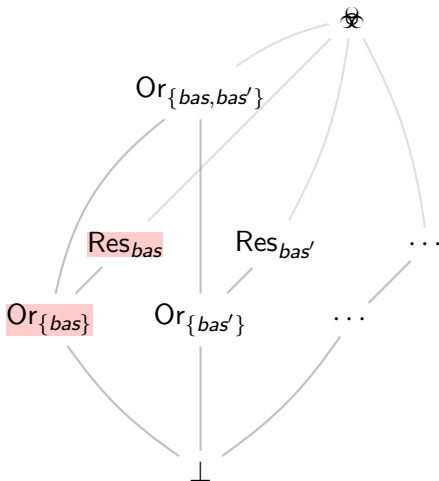


- ▶ Filtered state:  $\text{OnlyRead} \{ \{ (b_p, si_{main}) \} \}$
- ▶  $\text{OnlyRead} \{ \{ (b_p, si_{main}) \} \} \sqcup \text{Restricted} \{ (b_p, si_{main}) \} = \dots$

## Aliasing loads (TMU)

$$\text{OnlyRead } \{ \{ (b_p, \text{si}_{\text{main}}) \} \} \sqcup \text{Restricted } \{ (b_p, \text{si}_{\text{main}}) \} = \text{Restricted } \{ (b_p, \text{si}_{\text{main}}) \}$$

- ▶ The updated symmetric  $\sqcup$  operation (simplified)
- ▶  $bas \neq bas'$



## Aliasing loads (TMU)

- ▶ Loads via aliased pointers are now permitted 😊
- ▶ Achieved our goal of relaxing the semantics for this problem to give **less UB, consistent** with the ISO standard

# Crestrict refinements

- ▶ Too much undefined behavior (TMU)
  - ▷ Aliasing loads: **adjust restrict states and  $\sqcup$  lattice**
  - ▷ Returning restrict pointers: **track active scopes and filter pointer values**
- ▶ Too little undefined behavior (TLU)
  - ▷ Array of restrict pointers: **refine bases granularity to offsets**
  - ▷ Nested restrict pointers: **missing subclause and pointer values as a tree structure**
  - ▷ Semantic preservation under inlining: **deferred  $\rightarrow$  eager check**
  - ▷ Call to free: **update the restrict state**
- ▶ **Consistency**, goal 2 ✓ (*i.e.*, to the best of our knowledge)

# Evaluation

- ▶ Implemented the semantics in an interpreter, written in Rust (**executable**, goal 3 ✓)
- ▶ A (public) test suite dedicated to restrict does not exist
- ▶ Created our own suite of 96 tests, build around common restrict use cases and the discussed problems

# Conclusion

- ▶ Redeveloped the restrict fragment of the C-in- $\mathbb{K}$  semantics in a functional style (4)
- ▶ We argued it has six consistency problems
- ▶ We proposed changes to the semantic domains and rules to solve them (2)
- ▶ The new Crestrict semantics (1,3) were implemented in an interpreter and evaluated under a more extensive test suite

- ① Unambiguous: ✓
- ② Consistent: ✓
- ③ Executable: ✓
- ④ Suitable: ✓

## Future work

- ▶ Assignments between restrict pointers
- ▶ A more complete language
- ▶ Proving optimizations correct (the sequel of goal 4)
- ▶ ...





## Returning restrict pointers (TMU)

```
int* as_mut_ptr(int* restrict v) {  
    return v;  
}
```

Restricted  $\{(b_{v2}, \text{si}_{\text{as\_mut\_ptr\_2}})\} \sqcup$

Restricted  $\{(b_{v1}, \text{si}_{\text{as\_mut\_ptr\_1}})\} = \emptyset$

M:

$$\{b_a \mapsto 0, \\ b_p \mapsto \text{Ptr}(b_a, \{(b_{v1}, \text{si}_{\text{as\_mut\_ptr\_1}})\}), \\ b_q \mapsto \text{Ptr}(b_a, \{(b_{v2}, \text{si}_{\text{as\_mut\_ptr\_2}})\}) \}$$

```
int main() {  
    int a;
```

```
    int* p = as_mut_ptr(&a);  
    int* q = as_mut_ptr(&a);
```

R:

si<sub>main</sub>

$$\{b_a \mapsto \text{Restricted} \{(b_{v1}, \text{si}_{\text{as\_mut\_ptr\_1}})\}\}$$

```
    *p = 0;  
    *q = 0;
```

```
}
```

## Array of restrict pointers (TLU)

```
// Scope  $si_{main}$ 
```

```
int main() {
```

```
    int x;
```

```
    int* restrict a[2] = {&x, &x};
```

```
    *(a[0]) = 10;
```

```
    *(a[1]) = 11;
```

```
}
```

$\text{Restricted } \{(b_a, si_{main})\} \sqcup \text{Restricted } \{(b_a, si_{main})\}$   
 $= \text{Restricted } \{(b_a, si_{main})\}$

M:

$$\begin{aligned} & \{b_x \mapsto 10, \\ & b_a \mapsto \{\text{Ptr}(b_x, \{(b_a, si_{main})\}), \\ & \quad \text{Ptr}(b_x, \{(b_a, si_{main})\})\} \} \end{aligned}$$

R:

$$si_{main} \quad \{b_x \mapsto \text{Restricted } \{(b_a, si_{main})\}\}$$

# Semantic preservation under inlining (TLU)

```
// Scope sifoo
void foo(int* q) {
    *q = 0;
    while(1) {}
    // Never terminates
}
```

```
// Scope simain
int main() {
    int x = 5;
    int* restrict p = &x;
    *p;
    foo(&x);
}
```

M:

$\begin{aligned} &\{b_x \mapsto 5, \\ &\quad b_p \mapsto \text{Ptr}(b_x, \{(b_p, \text{si}_{\text{main}})\}), \\ &\quad b_q \mapsto \text{Ptr}(b_x, \emptyset) \} \end{aligned}$
--

R:

si <sub>h</sub>	$\{b_x \mapsto \text{Restricted } \emptyset\}$
si <sub>main</sub>	$\{b_x \mapsto \text{OnlyRead } \{(b_p, \text{si}_{\text{main}})\}\}$

# Semantic preservation under inlining (TLU)

```
// foo is inlined into main  
// Scope si_main  
int main() {  
    int x = 5;  
    int* restrict p = &x;  
    *p;  
    int* q = &x;  
    *q = 0;  
    while (1) {}  
}
```

Restricted  $\emptyset \sqcup \text{OnlyRead } \{(b_p, \text{si}_{\text{main}})\} = \text{⊗}$

M:

$$\{b_x \mapsto 5, \\ b_p \mapsto \text{Ptr}(b_x, \{(b_p, \text{si}_{\text{main}})\}), \\ b_q \mapsto \text{Ptr}(b_x, \emptyset) \}$$

R:

$\text{si}_{\text{main}} \quad \{b_x \mapsto \text{OnlyRead } \{(b_p, \text{si}_{\text{main}})\}\}$

## Call to free (TLU)

```
// Scope si_bar
void bar(int* s) {
    free(s);
}

// Scope si_foo
void foo(int* restrict q, int* r) {
    *q = 5;
    bar(r);
}

// Scope si_main
int main() {
    // Stored at b_v
    int* p = malloc(sizeof(int));
    foo(p, p);
}
```

M:

$\begin{aligned} &\{b_v \mapsto 5, \\ &\quad b_p \mapsto \text{Ptr}(b_v, \emptyset), \\ &\quad b_q \mapsto \text{Ptr}(b_v, \{(b_q, \text{si\_foo})\}), \\ &\quad b_r \mapsto \text{Ptr}(b_v, \emptyset) \} \end{aligned}$
---

R:

si <sub>h</sub>	$\{b_v \mapsto \text{Restricted}(b_q, \text{si\_foo})\}$
si <sub>main</sub>	$\emptyset$

## Nested restrict pointers (TLU)

```
// Scope si_foo
int foo(int *restrict *restrict p, int *restrict *restrict q) {
    **p = 10;
    **q = 11;
    return **p; // Optimized to 10 by GCC
}
// Scope si_main
int main() {
    int x;
    int* xp = &x;
    foo(&xp, &xp);
}
```

$p, q \rightarrow xp \rightarrow x$

- UB due to a subtle subclause of the standard

## Restrict definition (simplified)

- ▶ A pointer is “based on” a restrict pointer if it depends on its value:  
`int x; int* restrict p = &x; int* q = p; // q is based on p`
- ▶ A **promise** from the programmer to the compiler that a restrict qualified pointer and pointers “based on” it will **not alias** with other pointers during the **scope** it is alive if:
  - ▷ The pointer is used to **access** the object it points to
  - ▷ The object pointed to is **modified** (by any means)
- ▶ “Modifications of the object pointed to by a restrict pointer are considered to modify the restrict pointer object itself”

## Nested restrict pointers (TLU)

- ▶ What does “modifications of the object pointed to by a restrict pointer are considered to modify the restrict pointer object itself” mean?
- ▶ Modifications are represented by the restrict state Restricted



## Nested restrict pointers (TLU)

- ▶ What does “modifications of the object pointed to by a restrict pointer are considered to modify the restrict pointer object itself” mean?
- ▶ Modifications are represented by the restrict state `Restricted`

```
// Scope si_main
{
  int x; // &x = b_x
  int* restrict p = &x; // &p = b_p
  *p = 10; // Modification
}
```

M:

$$\{ b_x \mapsto 10, \\ b_p \mapsto \text{Ptr}(b_x, \{(b_p, \text{si\_main})\}) \}$$

R:

si_main	$\{ b_x \mapsto \text{Restricted} \{(b_p, \text{si\_main})\} \}$
---------	--

## Nested restrict pointers (TLU)

- ▶ What does “modifications of the object pointed to by a restrict pointer are considered to modify the restrict pointer object itself” mean?
- ▶ Modifications are represented by the restrict state **Restricted**

```
// Scope si_main
{
  int x; // &x = b_x
  int* restrict p = &x; // &p = b_p
  *p = 10; // Modification
}
```

M:

$$\{ b_x \mapsto 10, \\ b_p \mapsto \text{Ptr}(b_x, \{(b_p, \text{si\_main})\}) \}$$

R:

si\_main

$$\{ b_x \mapsto \text{Restricted} \{(b_p, \text{si\_main})\}, \\ b_p \mapsto \text{Restricted} \emptyset \}$$

## Nested restrict pointers (TLU)

```
// Scope si_foo
int foo(int *restrict *restrict p, int *restrict *restrict q) {
    **p = 10;
    **q = 11;
    return **p;
}
```

```
// Scope si_main
int main() {
    int x;
    int* xp = &x;
    foo(&xp, &xp);
}
```

M:

$\begin{aligned} &\{ b_x \mapsto \text{Undef}, \\ &\quad b_{xp} \mapsto \text{Ptr}(b_x, \emptyset), \\ &\quad b_p \mapsto \text{Ptr}(b_{xp}, \{(b_p, \text{si\_foo})\}), \\ &\quad b_q \mapsto \text{Ptr}(b_{xp}, \{(b_q, \text{si\_foo})\}) \} \end{aligned}$
--

R:

si_foo	{ ..., $b_{xp} \mapsto \text{OnlyRead } \{(b_p, \text{si\_foo})\}$ }
si_main	$\emptyset$

## Nested restrict pointers (TLU)

```
// Scope si_foo
```

```
int foo(int *restrict *restrict p, int *restrict *restrict q) {  
    **p = 10;  
    **q = 11;  
    return **p;  
}
```

```
// Scope si_main
```

```
int main() {  
    int x;  
    int* xp = &x;  
    foo(&xp, &xp);  
}
```

M:

$\begin{aligned} & \{ b_x \mapsto \text{Undef}, \\ & \quad b_{xp} \mapsto \text{Ptr}(b_x, \emptyset), \\ & \quad b_p \mapsto \text{Ptr}(b_{xp}, \{(b_p, \text{si\_foo})\}), \\ & \quad b_q \mapsto \text{Ptr}(b_{xp}, \{(b_q, \text{si\_foo})\}) \} \end{aligned}$
--

R:

si_foo	$\{ \dots, b_{xp} \mapsto \text{OnlyRead} \{(b_p, \text{si\_foo})\}, \\ b_x \mapsto \text{Restricted} \{(b_{xp}, \text{si\_foo})\} \}$
si_main	$\emptyset$

## Nested restrict pointers (TLU)

- ▶ We now need to change the restrict state of  $b_{xp}$  to Restricted
- ▶ The only Restricted state joinable with the current state is  $\text{Restricted} \{(b_p, \text{si}_{\text{foo}})\}$
- ▶ Problem: **not enough information** to produce this state, *i.e.* the semantics did a store through Ptr  $(b_x, \{(b_{xp}, \text{si}_{\text{foo}})\})$

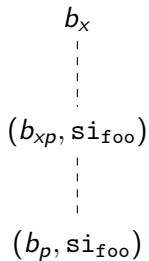
$\text{si}_{\text{foo}}$

$\{\dots, b_{xp} \mapsto \text{OnlyRead} \{(b_p, \text{si}_{\text{foo}})\},$ $b_x \mapsto \text{Restricted} \{(b_{xp}, \text{si}_{\text{foo}})\}\}$
$\emptyset$

$\text{si}_{\text{main}}$

## Nested restrict pointers (TLU)

- ▶ Idea: pointer value as a **tree** structure, to track how bases themselves are derived!
- ▶  $\text{Ptr } (b_x, \{((b_{xp}, \{((b_p, \emptyset), \text{si\_foo})\}), \text{si\_foo})\})$



## Nested restrict pointers (TLU)

```
// Scope si_foo
```

```
int foo(int *restrict *restrict p, int *restrict *restrict q) {  
    **p = 10;  
    **q = 11;  
    return **p;  
}
```

```
// Scope si_main
```

```
int main() {  
    int x;  
    int* xp = &x;  
    foo(&xp, &xp);  
}
```

M:

$\begin{aligned} &\{ b_x \mapsto \text{Undef}, \\ &\quad b_{xp} \mapsto \text{Ptr}(b_x, \emptyset), \\ &\quad b_p \mapsto \text{Ptr}(b_{xp}, \{((b_p, \emptyset), \text{si\_foo})\}), \\ &\quad b_q \mapsto \text{Ptr}(b_{xp}, \{((b_q, \emptyset), \text{si\_foo})\}) \} \end{aligned}$
--

R:

si_foo	$\{ \dots, b_{xp} \mapsto \text{Restricted} \{((b_p, \emptyset), \text{si\_foo})\}, \\ b_x \mapsto \text{Restricted} \{((b_{xp}, \{((b_p, \emptyset), \text{si\_foo})\}), \text{si\_foo})\} \}$
si_main	$\emptyset$

## Nested restrict pointers (TLU)

```
// Scope sifoo
```

```
int foo(int *restrict *restrict p, int *restrict *restrict q) {  
    **p = 10;  
    **q = 11;  
    return **p;  
}
```

```
// Scope simain
```

```
int main() {  
    int x;  
    int* xp = &x;  
    foo(&xp, &xp);  
}
```

M:

$\begin{aligned} &\{ b_x \mapsto \text{Undef}, \\ &\quad b_{xp} \mapsto \text{Ptr}(b_x, \emptyset), \\ &\quad b_p \mapsto \text{Ptr}(b_{xp}, \{((b_p, \emptyset), \text{si}_{\text{foo}})\}), \\ &\quad b_q \mapsto \text{Ptr}(b_{xp}, \{((b_q, \emptyset), \text{si}_{\text{foo}})\}) \} \end{aligned}$
--

R:

si <sub>foo</sub>	$\begin{aligned} &\{ \dots, b_{xp} \mapsto \text{Restricted} \{((b_p, \emptyset), \text{si}_{\text{foo}})\}, \\ &\quad b_x \mapsto \text{Restricted} \{((b_{xp}, \{((b_p, \emptyset), \text{si}_{\text{foo}})\}), \text{si}_{\text{foo}})\} \} \end{aligned}$
si <sub>main</sub>	$\emptyset$



## Nested restrict pointers (TLU)

```
// Scope sifoo
```

```
int foo(int *restrict *restrict p, int *restrict *restrict q) {
```

```
    **p = 10;
```

```
    **q = 11;
```

```
    return **p;
```

```
}
```

```
// Scope simain
```

```
int main() {
```

```
    int x;
```

```
    int* xp = &x;
```

```
    foo(&xp, &xp);
```

```
}
```

OnlyRead  $\{((b_q, \emptyset), \text{si}_{\text{foo}})\} \sqcup \text{Restricted}\{((b_p, \emptyset), \text{si}_{\text{foo}})\} = \dots$

M:

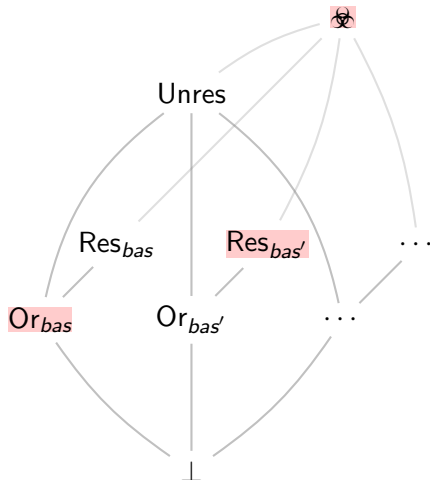
$\{ \dots, \\ b_q \mapsto \text{Ptr}(b_{xp}, \{((b_q, \emptyset), \text{si}_{\text{foo}})\}) \}$
--

R:

si <sub>foo</sub>	$\{ \dots, b_{xp} \mapsto \text{Restricted}\{((b_p, \emptyset), \text{si}_{\text{foo}})\}, \\ b_x \mapsto \text{Restricted}\{((b_{xp}, \{((b_p, \emptyset), \text{si}_{\text{foo}})\}), \text{si}_{\text{foo}})\} \}$
si <sub>main</sub>	$\emptyset$

## Nested restrict pointers (TLU)

OnlyRead  $\{((b_q, \emptyset), \text{si}_{\text{foo}})\} \sqcup \text{Restricted} \{((b_p, \emptyset), \text{si}_{\text{foo}})\} = \text{⊥}$



## Nested restrict pointers (TLU)

- ▶ Implemented a subtle subclause of the standard (in line with the GCC interpretation)
  - ▷ Updated pointer values to a **tree-like structure** to track how bases themselves are derived
- ▶ Achieved our goal of giving undefined behavior 😊

## Where are bases added to the pointer value?

```
// Scope  $\text{si}_{\text{main}}$ 
{
  int x; //  $\&x = b_x$ 
  int* restrict p =  $\&x$ ; //  $\&b_p$ 

  int* q = p; // Propagate the bases to q
  *p = ...; // Used directly in lvalue position
}
```

$$\frac{\frac{E(p) = b_p}{G, E \vdash p, \sigma \Downarrow_L (b_p, \emptyset), \sigma'} \text{ (Eld)} \quad \frac{\text{(load } \sigma' (b_p, \emptyset)) = \text{Ptr } (b_x, \emptyset), \sigma'' \quad \text{is\_restrict (type e)}}{G, E \vdash p, \sigma \Downarrow_R \text{add\_prov (Ptr } (b_x, \emptyset)) ((b_p, \emptyset), \text{si}_{\text{main}}), \sigma''} \text{ (ELvalConvRestrict)}}{G, E \vdash *p, \sigma \Downarrow_L (b_x, \{((b_p, \emptyset), \text{si}_{\text{main}})\}), \sigma''} \text{ (EDeref)}$$