# The Worker/Wrapper Transformation

Andy Gill<sup>1</sup> Graham Hutton<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Galois, Inc.

<sup>2</sup>University of Nottingham

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## The Worker/Wrapper Transformation

The Worker/Wrapper Transformation is a rewrite technique which changes the type of a (recursive) computation

- Worker/wrapper has been used inside the Glasgow Haskell compiler since its inception to rewriting functions that use lifted values (thunks) into equivalent and more efficient functions that use unlifted values.
- This talk will explain why worker/wrapper works!
- Much, much more general that just exploiting strictness analysis
- Worker/wrapper is about changing types

### Changing the type of a computation . . .

- is pervasive in functional programming
- useful in practice
- the essence of turning a specification into an implementation

#### Thesis:

• The Worker/Wrapper Transformation is a great technique for changing types

#### This talk

- Examples of what worker/wrapper can do
- Formalize the Worker/Wrapper Transformation (why it works)
- Give a recipe for its use
- Show how to apply our worker/wrapper recipe to some examples

## Example 1: Strictness Exploitation

### **Before** fac :: Int -> Int -> Int fac n m = if n == 1then m else fac (n - 1) (m \* n)

- n is trivially strict, m is provably strict
- Can use Int#, a strict version of Int that is passed by value for n and m

```
After
fac n m = box (work (unbox n) (unbox m))
work :: Int# -> Int# -> Int#
work n# m# = if n# ==# 1#
            then m#
            else work (n# -# 1#) (m# *# n#)
```

## Example 2: Avoiding Needless Deconstruction

```
Before
last :: [a] -> a
last [] = error "last: []"
last (x: []) = x
last(x:xs) = last xs
```

- The recursive call of last never happens with an empty list
- Subsequent recursive invocations performs a needless check for an empty list

```
After
last []
       = error "last: []"
last (x:xs) = work x xs
work :: a -> [a] -> a
work x [] = x
work x (y:ys) = work y ys
```

## Example 3: Efficient nub

```
Before
nub :: [Int] -> [Int]
nub [] = []
nub (x:xs) = x : nub (filter (\y -> not (x == y)) xs)
```

- filter is applied to the tail of the argument list on each recursive call, to avoid duplication
- It would be more efficient to remember the elements that have already been issued

```
After

nub :: [Int] -> [Int]

nub xs = work xs empty

work :: [Int] -> Set Int -> [Int]

work xs except =

case dropWhile (\ x -> x 'member' except) xs of

[] -> []

(x:xs) -> x : work xs (insert x except)
```

## Example 4: Memoization

# Before fib :: Nat -> Nat fib n = if n < 2 then 1 else fib (n-1) + fib (n-2)

- Memoization is a well-known optimization for fib
- Memoization is just a change in representation over the recursive call

```
After

fib :: Nat -> Nat
fib n = work !! n

work :: [Nat]
work = map f [0..]
where f = if n < 2 then 1 else work !! (n-1) + work !! (n-2)
```

## Example 5: Double-barreled CPS Translation

#### **Before**

- CPS changes the result type from A to  $(A \rightarrow X) \rightarrow X$
- Again, just a change in representation

#### After

### Changing the *representation* of a computation . . .

- is pervasive in functional programming
- useful in practice
- the essence of turning a specification into an implementation
- is what worker/wrapper does

```
last :: [a] -> a
last =
```

• Create the worker out of the body and an invented coercion to the target type

last :: [a] -> a

```
last :: [a] -> a
last = \ \ v \rightarrow case \ v \ of
                  [] -> error "last: []"
                  (x:xs) -> last work x xs
last_work :: a -> [a] -> a
last_work = \ x xs ->
         (\ v \rightarrow case v of
                     [] -> error "last: []"
                     (x:xs) \rightarrow case xs of
                                 [] -> x
                                 (:) \rightarrow last xs) (x:xs)
```

- Create the worker out of the body and an invented coercion to the target type
- Invent the wrapper which call the worker

```
last :: [a] -> a
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                                [] -> x
                                (:) \rightarrow last xs) (x:xs)
```

- Create the worker out of the body and an invented coercion to the target type
- Invent the wrapper which call the worker
- These functions are mutually recursive

# Inline Wrapper

```
last :: [a] -> a
last = \ \ v \rightarrow case \ v \ of
                  [] -> error "last: []"
                  (x:xs) -> last_work x xs
last work :: a -> [a] -> a
last_work = \ x xs ->
         (\ v \rightarrow case v of
                     [] -> error "last: []"
                     (x:xs) \rightarrow case xs of
                                 □ -> x
                                 (:) \rightarrow last xs) (x:xs)
```

We now inline last inside last\_work

## Inline Wrapper

```
last :: [a] -> a
last = \ \ v \rightarrow case \ v \ of
                  [] -> error "last: []"
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last_work = \ x xs ->
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                    [] -> error "last: []"
                    (x:xs) \rightarrow case xs of
                                 [] -> x
                                 (:)->
                 (\ v \rightarrow case v of
                            [] -> error "last: []"
                            (x:xs) \rightarrow last_work x xs) xs) (x:xs)
```

- We now inline last inside last\_work
- last\_work is now trivially recursive.

## Simplify work

```
last :: [a] -> a
last = \ \ v \rightarrow case \ v \ of
                  [] -> error "last: []"
                  (x:xs) -> last_work x xs
last work :: a -> [a] -> a
last_work = \ x xs ->
        (\ v \rightarrow case v of
                    [] -> error "last: []"
                    (x:xs) \rightarrow case xs of
                                 [] -> x
                                 (:) ->
                 (\ v \rightarrow case v of
                            [] -> error "last: []"
                            (x:xs) \rightarrow last_work x xs) xs) (x:xs)
```

• We now simplify the worker

## Simplify work

```
case xs of
[] -> x
  (x:xs) -> last_work x xs
```

- We now simplify the worker
- Reaching our efficient implementation

# The Informal Worker Wrapper Methodology

• From a recursive function, construct two new functions

#### Wrapper

- Replacing the original function
- Coerces call to Worker

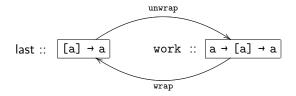
#### Worker

- Performs main computation
- Syntactically contains the body of the original function
- Coerces call from Wrapper
- The initial worker and wrapper are mutually recursive
- We then inline the wrapper inside the worker, and simplify
- We end up with
  - An efficient recursive worker
  - An impedance matching non-recursive wrapper

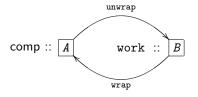
# Questions about the Worker/Wrapper Transformation

- Is the technique actually correct?
- How can this be proved?
- Under what conditions does it hold?
- How should it be used in practice?

# wrap and unwrap



# wrap and unwrap in General



16 / 36

comp :: A

comp = fix body for some body ::  $A \rightarrow A$ 

wrap ::  $B \rightarrow A$  is a coercion from type B to A unwrap ::  $A \rightarrow B$  is a coercion from type A to B

 $wrap \cdot unwrap = id_A$  (basic worker/wrapper assumption)

#### Derivation

comp = fix body

```
comp :: A
comp = fix body for some body :: A \rightarrow A
wrap :: B \rightarrow A is a coercion from type B to A
unwrap :: A \rightarrow B is a coercion from type A to B
wrap · unwrap = id<sub>A</sub> (basic worker/wrapper assumption)
```

#### Derivation

```
comp = fix body
= { id is the identity for · }
comp = fix (id · body)
```

```
comp :: A
comp = fix body for some body :: A \rightarrow A

wrap :: B \rightarrow A is a coercion from type B to A
unwrap :: A \rightarrow B is a coercion from type A to B

wrap · unwrap = id<sub>A</sub> (basic worker/wrapper assumption)
```

#### Derivation

```
comp = fix body
= { id is the identity for · }
comp = fix (id · body)
= { assuming wrap · unwrap = id }
comp = fix (wrap · unwrap · body)
```

```
comp :: A
comp = fix body for some body :: A \rightarrow A

wrap :: B \rightarrow A is a coercion from type B to A
unwrap :: A \rightarrow B is a coercion from type A to B

wrap · unwrap = id<sub>A</sub> (basic worker/wrapper assumption)
```

#### Derivation

```
comp = fix body
= { id is the identity for · }
comp = fix (id · body)
= { assuming wrap · unwrap = id }
comp = fix (wrap · unwrap · body)
= { rolling rule }
comp = wrap (fix (unwrap · body · wrap))
```

17 / 36

```
comp :: A
comp = fix body for some body :: A \rightarrow A
wrap :: B \rightarrow A is a coercion from type B to A
unwrap :: A \rightarrow B is a coercion from type A to B
wrap : unwrap = id<sub>A</sub> (basic worker/wrapper assumption)
```

#### Derivation

```
comp = fix body
= { id is the identity for · }
comp = fix (id · body)
= { assuming wrap · unwrap = id }
comp = fix (wrap · unwrap · body)
= { rolling rule }
comp = wrap (fix (unwrap · body · wrap))
= { define work = fix (unwrap · body · wrap) }
comp = wrap work
work = fix (unwrap · body · wrap)
```

```
comp :: A
```

comp = fix body for some body ::  $A \rightarrow A$ 

wrap ::  $B \rightarrow A$  is a coercion from type B to A unwrap ::  $A \rightarrow B$  is a coercion from type A to B

 $wrap \cdot unwrap = id_A$ 

(basic worker/wrapper assumption)

## Worker/Wrapper Theorem

If the above prerequisites hold, then

can be rewritten as

where work :: B is defined by

# The Worker/Wrapper Assumptions

```
Key step of proof
fix (id · body)
= { assuming wrap · unwrap = id }
fix (wrap · unwrap · body)
```

We can actually use any of three different assumptions here

```
\begin{array}{rcl} & & & \text{wrap } \cdot \text{unwrap} & = & \text{id} & \text{(basic assumption)} \\ & & & & \\ & & & \\ & & & \\ & & & \\ & & & \\ & & & \\ & & & \\ & & & \\ & & & \\ & & & \\ & & & \\ & & & \\ & & & \\ & & & \\ & & & \\ & & & \\ & & & \\ & & & \\ & & & \\ & & & \\ & & & \\ & & & \\ & & & \\ & & & \\ & & & \\ & & & \\ & & & \\ & & & \\ & & & \\ & & & \\ & & & \\ & & & \\ & & & \\ & & & \\ & & & \\ & & & \\ & & & \\ & & & \\ & & & \\ & & & \\ & & & \\ & & & \\ & & & \\ & & & \\ & & & \\ & & & \\ & & & \\ & & & \\ & & & \\ & & & \\ & & & \\ & & & \\ & & & \\ & & & \\ & & & \\ & & & \\ & & & \\ & & & \\ & & & \\ & & & \\ & & & \\ & & & \\ & & & \\ & & & \\ & & & \\ & & & \\ & & & \\ & & & \\ & & & \\ & & & \\ & & & \\ & & & \\ & & & \\ & & & \\ & & & \\ & & & \\ & & & \\ & & & \\ & & & \\ & & & \\ & & & \\ & & & \\ & & & \\ & & & \\ & & & \\ & & & \\ & & & \\ & & & \\ & & & \\ & & & \\ & & & \\ & & & \\ & & & \\ & & & \\ & & & \\ & & & \\ & & & \\ & & & \\ & & & \\ & & & \\ & & & \\ & & & \\ & & & \\ & & & \\ & & & \\ & & & \\ & & & \\ & & & \\ & & & \\ & & & \\ & & & \\ & & & \\ & & & \\ & & & \\ & & & \\ & & & \\ & & & \\ & & & \\ & & & \\ & & & \\ & & & \\ & & & \\ & & & \\ & & & \\ & & & \\ & & & \\ & & & \\ & & & \\ & & & \\ & & & \\ & & & \\ & & & \\ & & & \\ & & & \\ & & & \\ & & & \\ & & & \\ & & & \\ & & & \\ & & & \\ & & & \\ & & & \\ & & & \\ & & & \\ & & & \\ & & & \\ & & & \\ & & & \\ & & & \\ & & & \\ & & & \\ & & & \\ & & & \\ & & & \\ & & & \\ & & & \\ & & & \\ & & & \\ & & & \\ & & & \\ & & & \\ & & & \\ & & & \\ & & & \\ & & & \\ & & & \\ & & & \\ & & & \\ & & & \\ & & & \\ & & & \\ & & & \\ & & & \\ & & & \\ & & & \\ & & & \\ & & & \\ & & & \\ & & & \\ & & & \\ & & & \\ & & & \\ & & & \\ & & & \\ & & & \\ & & & \\ & & & \\ & & & \\ & & & \\ & & & \\ & & & \\ & & & \\ & & & \\ & & & \\ & & & \\ & & & \\ & & & \\ & & & \\ & & & \\ & & & \\ & & & \\ & & & \\ & & & \\ & & & \\ & & & \\ & & & \\ & & & \\ & & & \\ & & & \\ & & & \\ & & & \\ & & & \\ & & & \\ & & & \\ & & & \\ & & & \\ & & & \\ & & & \\ & & & \\ & & & \\ & & & \\ & & & \\ & & & \\ & & & \\ & & & \\ & & & \\ & & & \\ & & & \\ & & & \\ & & & \\ & & & \\ & & & \\ & & & \\ & & & \\ & & & \\ & & & \\ & & & \\ & & & \\ & & & \\ & & & \\ & & & \\ & & & \\ & & & \\ & & & \\ & & & \\ & & & \\ &
```

# The Worker/Wrapper Recipe

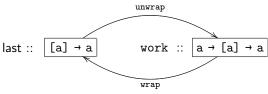
#### Recipe

- Express the computation as a least fixed point;
- Choose the desired new type for the computation;
- Define conversions between the original and new types;
- Check they satisfy one of the worker/wrapper assumptions;
- Apply the worker/wrapper transformation;
- Simplify the resulting definitions.

We simplify to remove the overhead of the wrap and unwrap coercions, often using fusion, including the worker/wrapper fusion property.

## The Worker/Wrapper Fusion Property

If wrap  $\cdot$  unwrap = id, then (unwrap  $\cdot$  wrap) work = work



```
wrap fn = \ xs \rightarrow case xs of
                          [] -> error "last: []"
                          (x:xs) \rightarrow fn x xs
unwrap fn = \ x xs \rightarrow fn (x:xs)
last = fix body
body last = \ v \rightarrow case v of
                               -> error "last: []"
                           (x: []) \rightarrow x
                           (x:xs) \rightarrow last xs
```

# Testing the basic worker/wrapper assumption: Does wrap · unwrap = id?

```
wrap . unwrap
= \{ apply wrap, unwrap and \cdot \}
\ fn ->
   (\ xs -> case xs of
                    [] -> error "last: []"
                    (x:xs) \rightarrow (\ x xs \rightarrow fn (x:xs)) x xs)
= \{ \beta \text{-reduction } \}
\ fn ->
   (\ xs -> case xs of
                    [] -> error "last: []"
                    (x:xs) \rightarrow fn (x:xs)
Clearly not equal to id :: ([a] \rightarrow a) \rightarrow ([a] \rightarrow a)
```

```
wrap . unwrap . body
= \{ apply wrap, unwrap and \cdot \}
(\ fn ->
  (\ xs -> case xs of
                  [] -> error "last: []"
                  (x:xs) \rightarrow (\ x xs \rightarrow fn (x:xs)) x xs))
    (\ last v \rightarrow case v of
                           [] -> error "last: []"
                           (x: []) \rightarrow x
                           (x:xs) \rightarrow last xs)
```

```
wrap . unwrap . body
= \{ apply wrap, unwrap and \cdot \}
= \{ \beta \text{-reductions } \}
(\ fn ->
  (\ xs -> case xs of
                  [] -> error "last: []"
                  (x:xs) \rightarrow case (x:xs) of
                           [] -> error "last: []"
                           (x: []) \rightarrow x
                           (x:xs) \rightarrow fn xs)
```

```
wrap . unwrap . body
= \{ apply wrap, unwrap and \cdot \}
= \{ \beta \text{-reductions } \}
= { case of known constructors }
(\ fn ->
  (\ xs -> case xs of
                  [] -> error "last: []"
                  (x:xs) -> case xs of
                                 [] -> x
                                 xs \rightarrow fn xs)
```

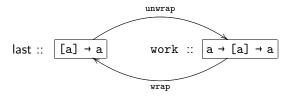
```
wrap . unwrap . body
= \{ apply wrap, unwrap and \cdot \}
= \{ \beta \text{-reductions } \}
= { case of known constructors }
= { common up case }
(\ fn ->
  (\ xs -> case xs of
                  [] -> error "last: []"
                  (x:[]) \rightarrow x
                  (x:xs) \rightarrow fn xs)
```

Which equals body. QED.

# Applying the Worker/Wrapper Transformation

#### Before

last = fix body



```
last :: [a] -> a
last xs = case xs of
             □ -> error "last: □"
            (x:xs) -> work x xs
work :: a -> [a] -> a
work = fix ( (\ fn x xs \rightarrow fn (x:xs))
             . (\ last v \rightarrow case v of
                        [] -> error "last: []"
                        (x: []) \rightarrow x
                        (x:xs) \rightarrow last xs)
             . (\ fn xs -> case xs of
                       [] -> error "last: []"
                       (x:xs) \rightarrow fn x xs
```

24 / 36

```
last :: [a] -> a
last xs = case xs of
             [] -> error "last: []"
             (x:xs) \rightarrow work x xs
work :: a -> [a] -> a
work = fix ( \ fn x xs ->
                     case (x:xs) of
                       [] -> error "last: []"
                       (x:[]) \rightarrow x
                       (x:xs) \rightarrow case xs of
                                     [] -> error "last: []"
                                     (x:xs) \rightarrow fn x xs
```

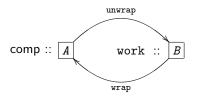
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last :: [a] -> a
last xs = case xs of
            [] -> error "last: []"
            (x:xs) -> work x xs
work :: a -> [a] -> a
work = fix ( \ fn x xs ->
                   case xs of
                     [] -> x
                     xs -> case xs of
                             [] -> error "last: []"
                             (x:xs) \rightarrow fn x xs
```

24 / 36

24 / 36

## When does the Worker/Wrapper Transformation Succeed?

When unwrap · wrap fuse!



Emerging heuristic...

#### Simplification Friendly

Pre-conditions: any of basic, body or fix unwrap · wrap = id<sub>B</sub>

When A is "larger" than B

#### Worker/Wrapper Fusion

Pre-condition:

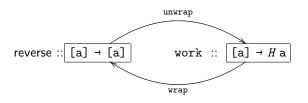
 $wrap \cdot unwrap = id_A$ 

When B is "larger" than A

More powerful fusion methods can also be used



### Creating Workers and Wrappers for reverse



```
type H a = [a] -> [a]
a2c :: H a -> [a]
a2c f = f []

c2a :: [a] -> H a
c2a xs = \ ys -> xs ++ ys

wrap fn = \ xs -> a2c (fn xs)
unwrap fn = \ xs -> c2a (fn xs)
```

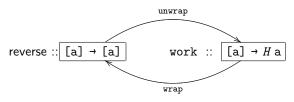
# Testing the basic worker/wrapper assumption: Does wrap · unwrap = id?

```
wrap . unwrap
= { apply wrap, unwrap }
(\ fn xs \rightarrow a2c (fn xs)) . (\ fn xs \rightarrow c2a (fn xs))
= \{ apply \cdot \}
\ f -> (\ fn xs -> a2c (fn xs)) ((\ fn xs -> c2a (fn xs)) f)
= \{ \beta \text{-reduction } \}
\ f \rightarrow (\ fn xs \rightarrow a2c (fn xs)) (\ xs \rightarrow c2a (f xs))
= \{ \beta \text{-reduction } \}
\ f \rightarrow (\ xs \rightarrow a2c ((\ xs \rightarrow c2a (f xs)) xs))
= \{ \beta \text{-reduction } \}
\ f \rightarrow (\ xs \rightarrow a2c (c2a (f xs)))
```

#### Does $a2c \cdot c2a = id$ ?

```
a2c . c2a
= \{ apply a2c, c2a \}
(\ f \rightarrow f []) . (\ xs ys \rightarrow xs ++ ys)
= \{ apply \cdot \}
\ zs -> (\ f -> f []) ((\ xs ys -> xs ++ ys) zs)
= \{ \beta \text{-reduction } \}
\ zs -> (\ f -> f []) (\ ys -> zs ++ ys)
= \{ \beta \text{-reduction } \}
\ zs -> (\ ys -> zs ++ ys) []
= \{ \beta \text{-reduction } \}
\ zs -> zs ++ []
= { [] is the identity for ++ }
\ zs \rightarrow zs
```

#### Improving Reverse



• Inline • and simplify using  $\beta$ -reduction.

- We now have the structure to being something akin to rippling.
- Goal:
  - Move the c2a to just in front of a2c, giving c2a (a2c (rev xs))
  - Unapply unwrap and unwrap, giving unwrap (wrap rev)
  - Use the Worker/Wrapper fusion law

#### The Worker/Wrapper Fusion Property

If wrap  $\cdot$  unwrap = id, then (unwrap  $\cdot$  wrap) work = work

- We use distribution over case to push c2a inside the case expression
- This relies on c2a being strict

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- We use distribution over case to push c2a inside the case expression
- This relies on c2a being strict
- c2a has made progress towards our goal
- c2a [] = id (by applying c2a, ++)

- $c2a (e1 ++ e2) = c2a e1 \cdot c2a e2$
- We can now unapply unwrap and wrap

33 / 36

- $c2a (e1 ++ e2) = c2a e1 \cdot c2a e2$
- We can now unapply unwrap and wrap
- And we can use the Worker/Wrapper Fusion Property

- $c2a (e1 ++ e2) = c2a e1 \cdot c2a e2$
- We can now unapply unwrap and wrap
- And we can use the Worker/Wrapper Fusion Property
- We have removed the overhead of the coercion

- $\bullet$  After further uses of apply, we reach a clean implementation using  ${\tt fix}$
- We now can apply fix (and other small transformations)

- After further uses of apply, we reach a clean implementation using fix
- We now can apply fix (and other small transformations)
- Efficient reverse!

#### **Conclusions**

- Worker/wrapper is a general and systematic approach to transforming a computation of one type into an equivalent computation of another type
- It is straightforward to understand and apply, requiring only basic equational reasoning techniques, and often avoiding the need for induction
- It allows many seemingly unrelated optimization techniques to be captured inside a single unified framework

#### Further Work

- Monadic and Effectful Constructions
- Mechanization
- Implement inside the Haskell Equational Reasoning Assistant
- Consider other patterns of recursion

www.workerwrapper.com