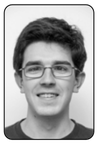


CS10 Head TA
Michael Ball

The Beauty and Joy of Computing

Lecture #8
Concurrency

"KOOMEY'S LAW" – EFFICIENCY 2X EVERY 18 MO

Prof Jonathan Koomey looked at 6 decades of data and found that energy efficiency of computers doubles roughly every 18 months. This is even more relevant as battery-powered devices become more popular. Restated, it says that for a fixed computing load, the amount of battery you need drops by half every 18 months. This was true before transistors!

www.technologyreview.com/computing/38548/

Concurrency: A Definition

Concurrency: A property of computer systems in which several computations are executing simultaneously, and potentially interacting with each other.

Concurrency is Everywhere!

Examples:

- Mouse cursor movement while Snap*!* calculates.
- Screen clock advances while typing in a text.
- Busy cursor spins while browser connects to server, waiting for response
- Walking while chewing gum

Concurrency & Parallelism

Intra-computer

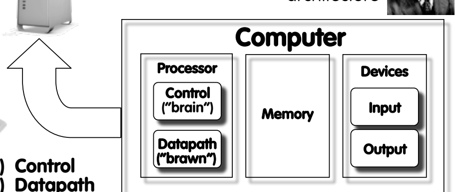
- Today's lecture
- Multiple computing "helpers" are cores within one machine
- Aka "multi-core"
  - Although GPU parallism is also "intra-computer"

Inter-computer

- Future lecture
- Multiple computing "helpers" are different machines
- Aka "distributed computing"
  - Grid & cluster computing

Anatomy: 5 components of any Computer

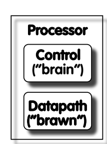
John von Neumann invented this architecture



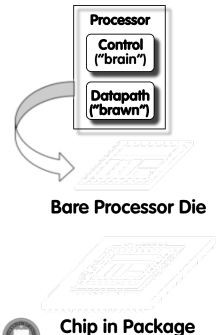
a) Control
b) Datapath
c) Memory
d) Input
e) Output

What causes the most headaches for SW and HW designers with multi-core computing?

But what is INSIDE a Processor?



But what is INSIDE a Processor?

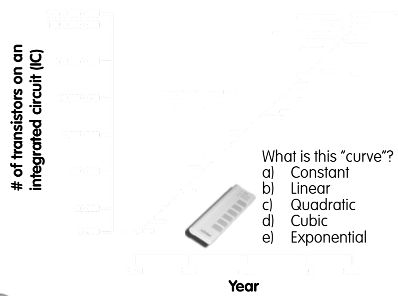


- Primarily Crystalline Silicon
- 1 mm – 25 mm on a side
- 2009 "feature size" (aka process) ~ 45 nm = 45 x 10^{-9} m (then 32, 22, and 16 [by yr 2013])
- 100 - 1000M transistors
- 3 - 10 conductive layers
- "CMOS" (complementary metal oxide semiconductor) - most common
- Package provides:
  - spreading of chip-level signal paths to board-level
  - heat dissipation.
- Ceramic or plastic with gold wires.

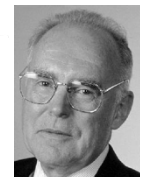
en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Moore's_law

Moore's Law

Predicts: 2X Transistors / chip every 2 years

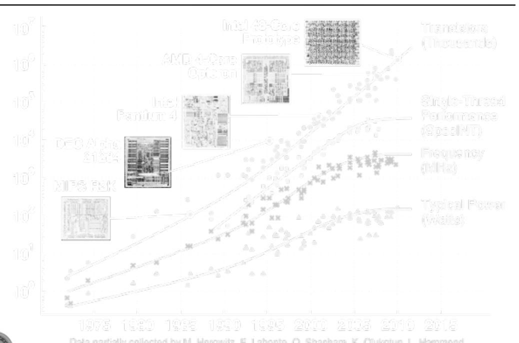


What is this "curve"?
a) Constant
b) Linear
c) Quadratic
d) Cubic
e) Exponential

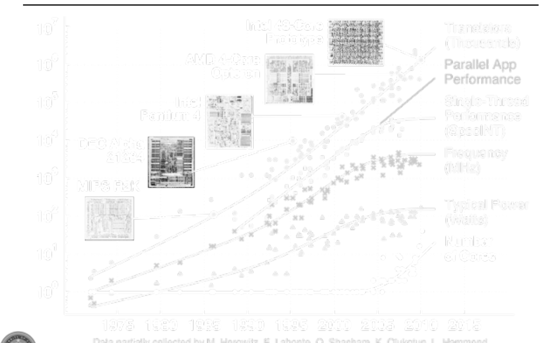


Gordon Moore
Intel Cofounder
B.S. Cal 1950!

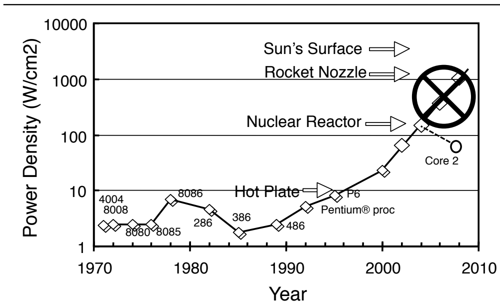
Moore's Law and related curves



Moore's Law and related curves



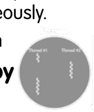
Power Density Prediction circa 2000

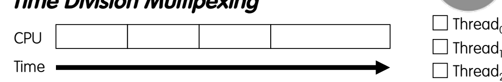


Source: S. Borkar (Intel)

Background: Threads

- A *Thread* stands for "thread of execution", is a single stream of instructions
  - A program / process can split, or fork itself into separate threads, which can (in theory) execute simultaneously.
  - An easy way to describe/think about parallelism
- A single CPU can execute many threads by *Time Division Multipexing*

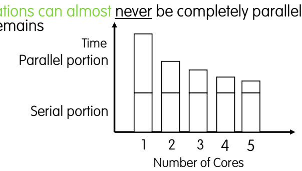




- *Multithreading* is running multiple threads through the same hardware en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Amdahl's_law

Speedup Issues : Amdahl's Law

- Applications can almost never be completely parallelized; some serial code remains



- s is serial fraction of program, P is # of cores (was processors)
- **Amdahl's law:**

Speedup(P) = Time(1) / Time(P)

$\leq 1 / (s + [(1-s) / P)]$, and as $P \rightarrow \infty$

$\leq 1 / s$

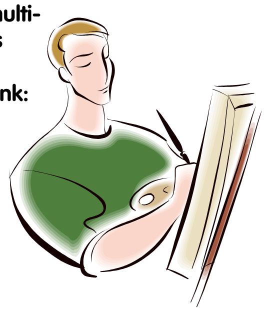
- Even if the parallel portion of your application speeds up perfectly, your performance may be limited by the sequential portion

Speedup Issues : Overhead

- **Even assuming no sequential portion, there's…**
  - Time to think how to divide the problem up
  - Time to hand out small "work units" to workers
  - All workers may not work equally fast
  - Some workers may fail
  - There may be contention for shared resources
  - Workers could overwriting each others' answers
  - You may have to wait until the last worker returns to proceed (the slowest / weakest link problem)
  - There's time to put the data back together in a way that looks as if it were done by one

Life in a multi-core world…

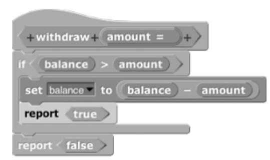
- **This "sea change" to multi-core parallelism means that the computing community has to rethink:**
  a) Languages
  b) Architectures
  c) Algorithms
  d) Data Structures
  e) All of the above



en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Concurrent_computing

But parallel programming is hard!

- **What if two people were calling withdraw at the same time?**
  - E.g., balance=100 and two withdraw 75 each
  - Can anyone see what the problem *could* be?
  - This is a race condition
- **In most languages, this is a problem.**
  - In Snap*!*, the system doesn't let two of these run at once.

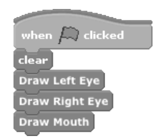


"Non-Deterministic" Parallel Code

- **Two (or more) scripts are running at the same time, BUT we don't know what order they will be run in!**
- **Each individual script runs its blocks in order, but the processor (Snap*!*) will swap between running script A and script B.**

How Many Possible Outputs?

- **We want this code to draw a cute winky-face, but there's a problem with parallelizing it!**
- **How many possible outputs can we have?**
- **A) 1**
- **B) 3**
- **C) 4**
- **D) 7**
- **E) 8**



en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Deadlock

Another concurrency problem … deadlock!

- **Two people need to draw a graph but there is only one pencil and one ruler.**
  - One grabs the pencil
  - One grabs the ruler
  - Neither release what they hold, waiting for the other to release
- **Livelock also possible**
  - Movement, no progress

Summary

- **"Sea change" of computing because of inability to cool CPUs means we're now in multi-core world**
- **This brave new world offers lots of potential for innovation by computing professionals, but challenges persist**