

# Exceptional Control Flow: Exceptions and Processes

15-213 : Introduction to Computer Systems  
14<sup>th</sup> Lecture, Oct. 15, 2015

## Instructors:

Randal E. Bryant and David R. O'Hallaron

# Today

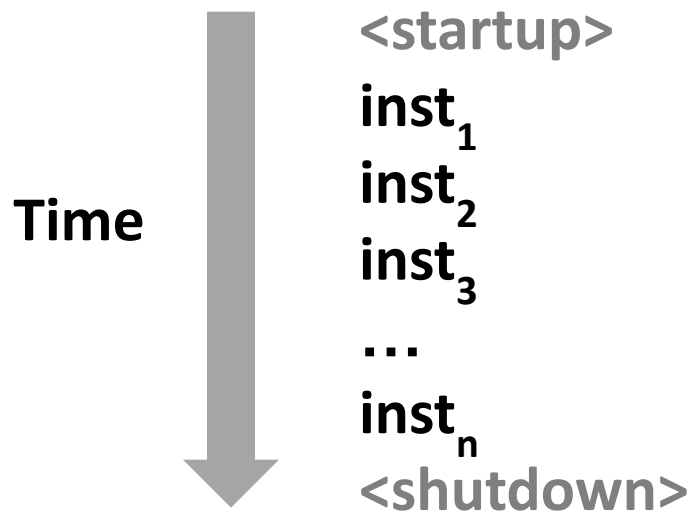
- **Exceptional Control Flow**
- Exceptions
- Processes
- Process Control

# Control Flow

## ■ Processors do only one thing:

- From startup to shutdown, a CPU simply reads and executes (interprets) a sequence of instructions, one at a time
- This sequence is the CPU's *control flow* (or *flow of control*)

### *Physical control flow*



# Altering the Control Flow

## ■ Up to now: two mechanisms for changing control flow:

- Jumps and branches
- Call and return

React to changes in *program state*

## ■ Insufficient for a useful system:

Difficult to react to changes in *system state*

- Data arrives from a disk or a network adapter
- Instruction divides by zero
- User hits Ctrl-C at the keyboard
- System timer expires

## ■ System needs mechanisms for “exceptional control flow”

# Exceptional Control Flow

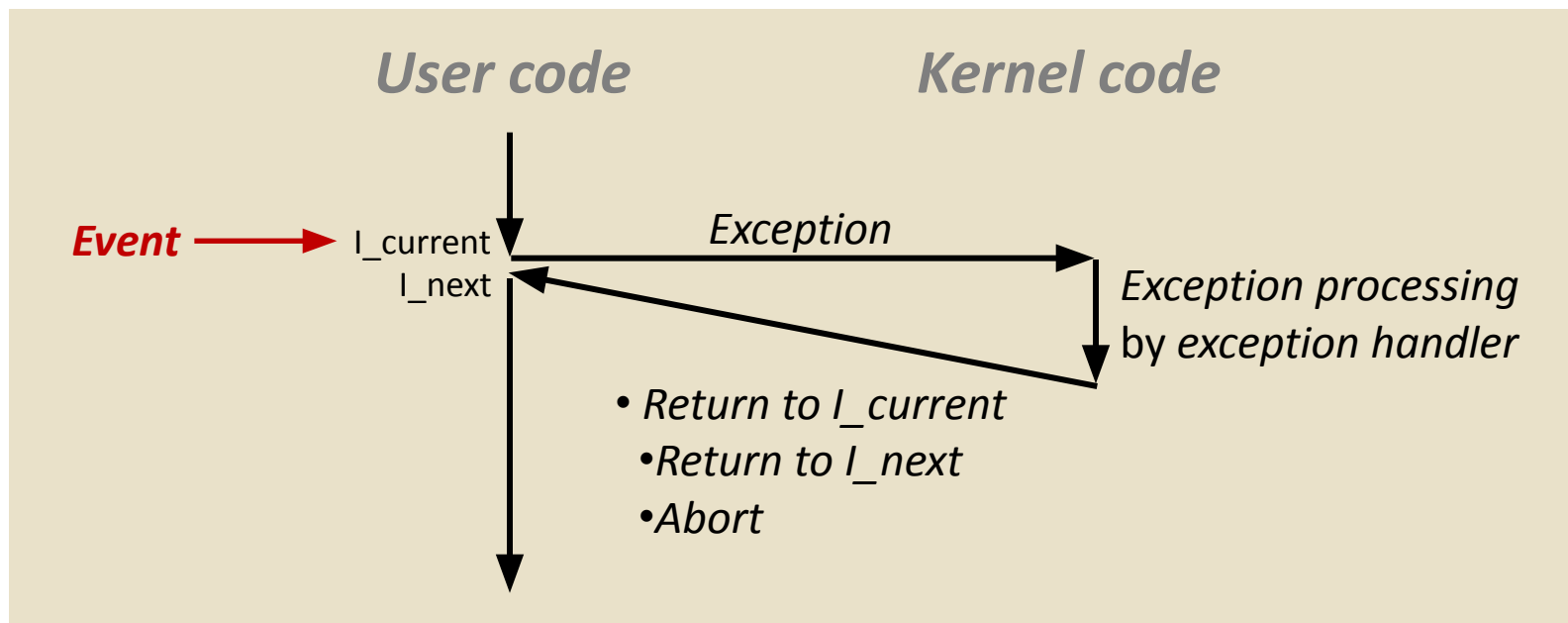
- **Exists at all levels of a computer system**
- **Low level mechanisms**
  - 1. **Exceptions**
    - Change in control flow in response to a system event (i.e., change in system state)
    - Implemented using combination of hardware and OS software
- **Higher level mechanisms**
  - 2. **Process context switch**
    - Implemented by OS software and hardware timer
  - 3. **Signals**
    - Implemented by OS software
  - 4. **Nonlocal jumps**: `setjmp()` and `longjmp()`
    - Implemented by C runtime library

# Today

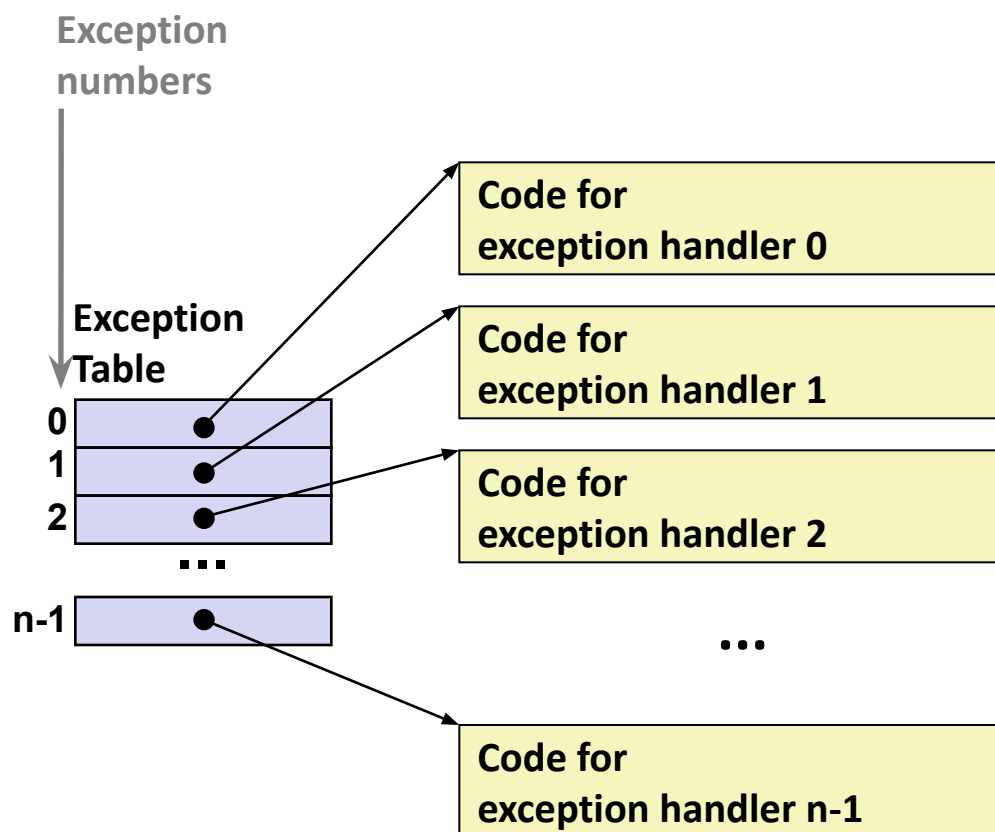
- Exceptional Control Flow
- **Exceptions**
- Processes
- Process Control

# Exceptions

- An **exception** is a transfer of control to the OS *kernel* in response to some *event* (i.e., change in processor state)
  - Kernel is the memory-resident part of the OS
  - Examples of events: Divide by 0, arithmetic overflow, page fault, I/O request completes, typing Ctrl-C



# Exception Tables



- Each type of event has a unique exception number  $k$
- $k$  = index into exception table (a.k.a. interrupt vector)
- Handler  $k$  is called each time exception  $k$  occurs



# Asynchronous Exceptions (Interrupts)

- **Caused by events external to the processor**
  - Indicated by setting the processor's *interrupt pin*
  - Handler returns to “next” instruction
  
- **Examples:**
  - Timer interrupt
    - Every few ms, an external timer chip triggers an interrupt
    - Used by the kernel to take back control from user programs
  - I/O interrupt from external device
    - Hitting Ctrl-C at the keyboard
    - Arrival of a packet from a network
    - Arrival of data from a disk

# Synchronous Exceptions

- **Caused by events that occur as a result of executing an instruction:**
  - ***Traps***
    - Intentional
    - Examples: ***system calls***, breakpoint traps, special instructions
    - Returns control to “next” instruction
  - ***Faults***
    - Unintentional but possibly recoverable
    - Examples: page faults (recoverable), protection faults (unrecoverable), floating point exceptions
    - Either re-executes faulting (“current”) instruction or aborts
  - ***Aborts***
    - Unintentional and unrecoverable
    - Examples: illegal instruction, parity error, machine check
    - Aborts current program

# System Calls

- Each x86-64 system call has a unique ID number
- Examples:

<i>Number</i>	<i>Name</i>	<i>Description</i>
0	<code>read</code>	Read file
1	<code>write</code>	Write file
2	<code>open</code>	Open file
3	<code>close</code>	Close file
4	<code>stat</code>	Get info about file
57	<code>fork</code>	Create process
59	<code>execve</code>	Execute a program
60	<code>_exit</code>	Terminate process
62	<code>kill</code>	Send signal to process

# System Call Example: Opening File

- User calls: `open(filename, options)`
- Calls `__open` function, which invokes system call instruction `syscall`

```
0000000000e5d70 <__open>:
```

```
...
```

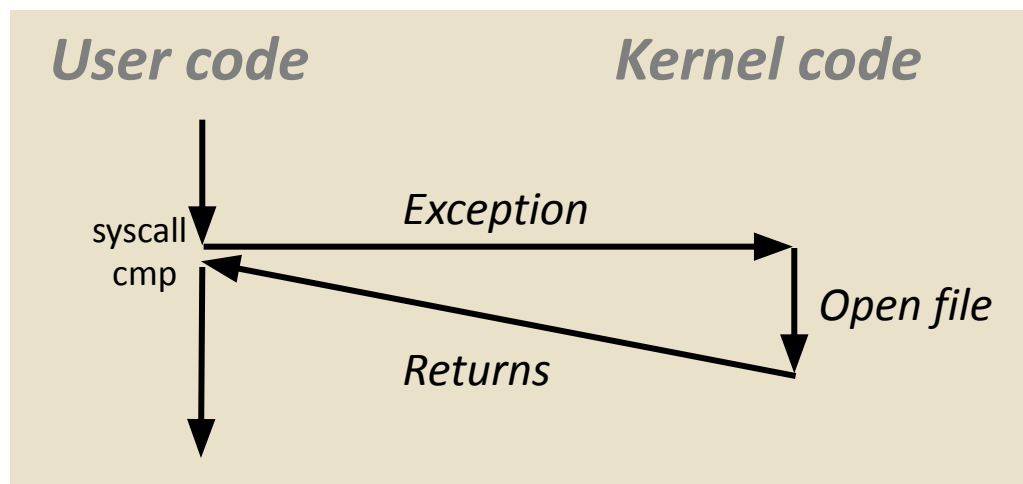
```
e5d79: b8 02 00 00 00    mov $0x2,%eax # open is syscall #2
```

```
e5d7e: 0f 05            syscall      # Return value in %rax
```

```
e5d80: 48 3d 01 f0 ff ff  cmp $0xfffffffffff001,%rax
```

```
...
```

```
e5dfa: c3              retq
```



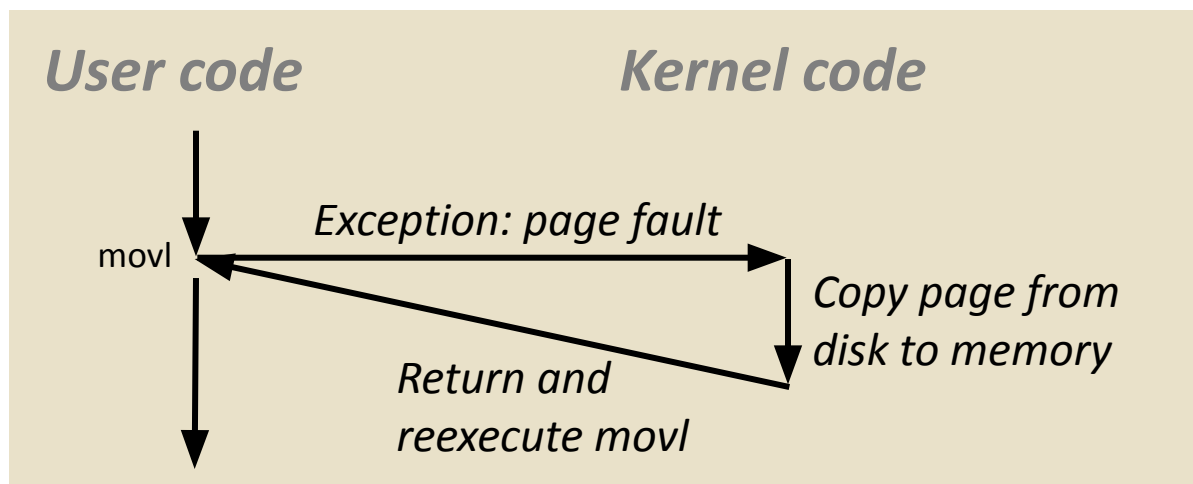
- `%rax` contains syscall number
- Other arguments in `%rdi`, `%rsi`, `%rdx`, `%r10`, `%r8`, `%r9`
- Return value in `%rax`
- Negative value is an error corresponding to negative `errno`

# Fault Example: Page Fault

- User writes to memory location
- That portion (page) of user's memory is currently on disk

```
int a[1000];  
main ()  
{  
    a[500] = 13;  
}
```

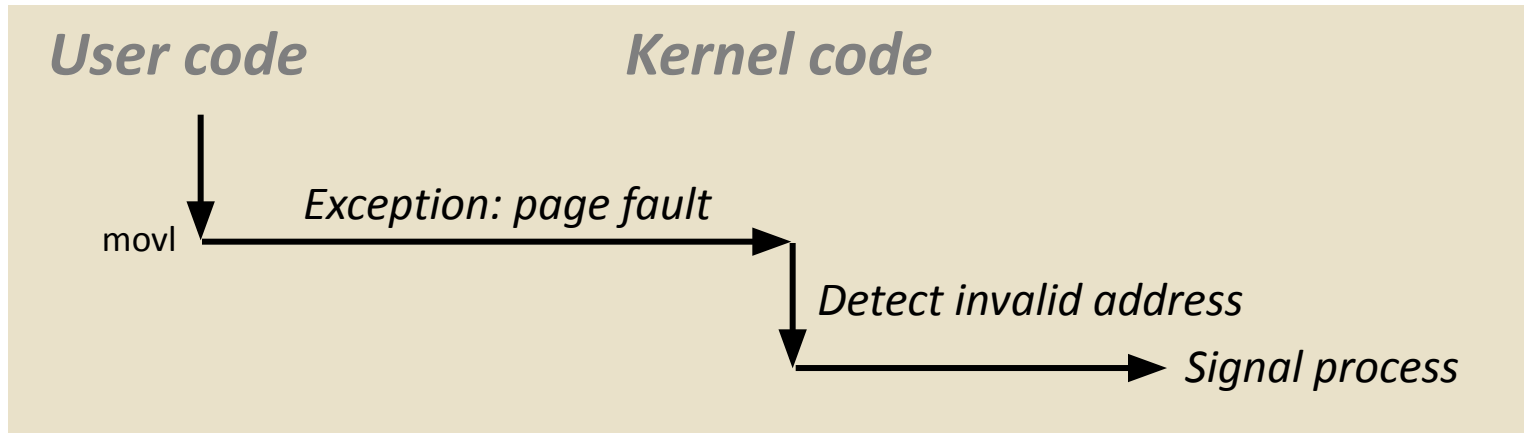
```
80483b7:  c7 05 10 9d 04 08 0d  movl    $0xd,0x8049d10
```



# Fault Example: Invalid Memory Reference

```
int a[1000];  
main ()  
{  
    a[5000] = 13;  
}
```

80483b7: c7 05 60 e3 04 08 0d movl \$0xd,0x804e360



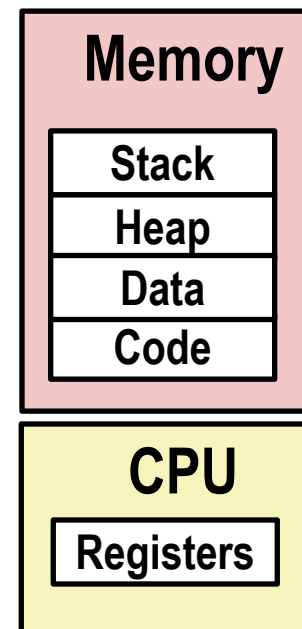
- Sends **SIGSEGV** signal to user process
- User process exits with “segmentation fault”

# Today

- Exceptional Control Flow
- Exceptions
- **Processes**
- Process Control

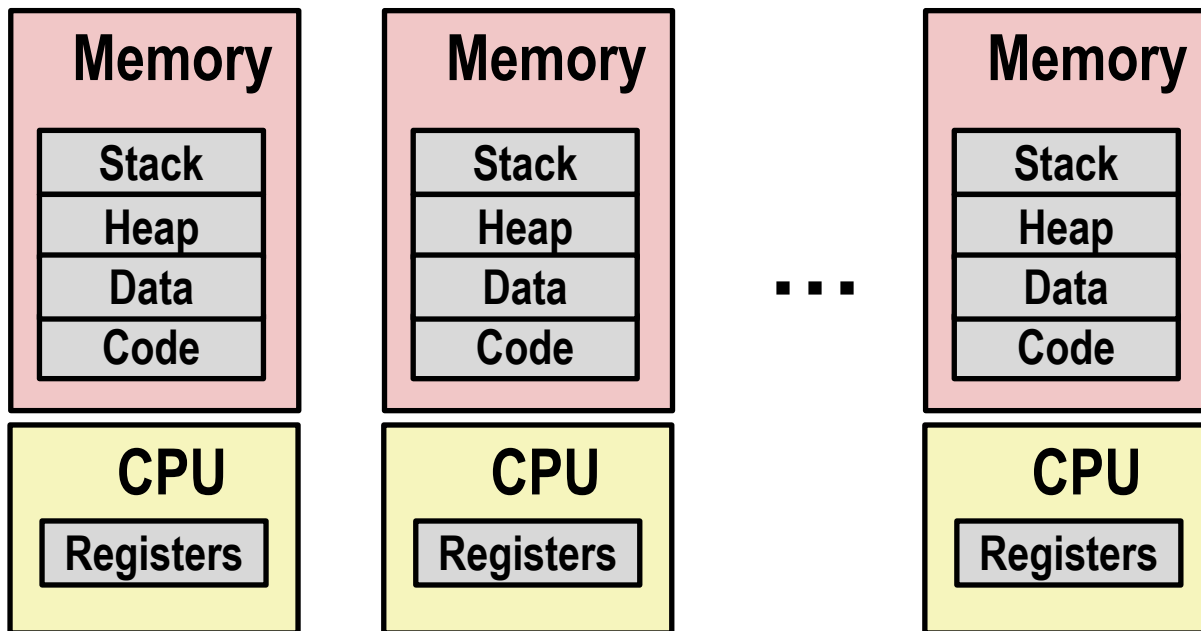
# Processes

- **Definition:** A *process* is an instance of a running program.
  - One of the most profound ideas in computer science
  - Not the same as “program” or “processor”
  
- **Process provides each program with two key abstractions:**
  - *Logical control flow*
    - Each program seems to have exclusive use of the CPU
    - Provided by kernel mechanism called *context switching*
  - *Private address space*
    - Each program seems to have exclusive use of main memory.
    - Provided by kernel mechanism called *virtual memory*



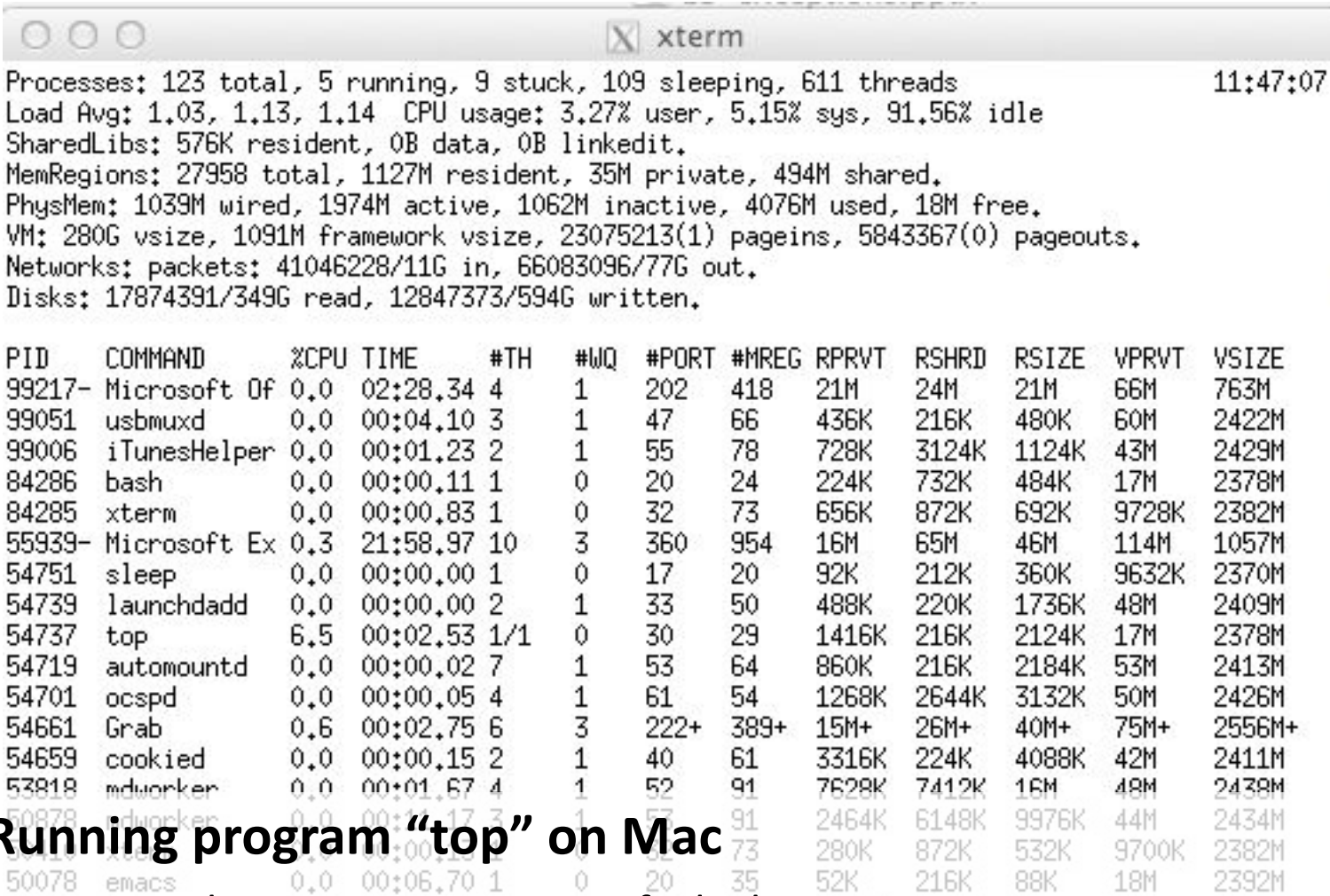


# Multiprocessing: The Illusion



- **Computer runs many processes simultaneously**
  - Applications for one or more users
    - Web browsers, email clients, editors, ...
  - Background tasks
    - Monitoring network & I/O devices

# Multiprocessing Example



```

Processes: 123 total, 5 running, 9 stuck, 109 sleeping, 611 threads
Load Avg: 1.03, 1.13, 1.14  CPU usage: 3.27% user, 5.15% sys, 91.56% idle
SharedLibs: 576K resident, 0B data, 0B linkedit.
MemRegions: 27958 total, 1127M resident, 35M private, 494M shared.
PhysMem: 1039M wired, 1974M active, 1062M inactive, 4076M used, 18M free.
VM: 280G vsize, 1091M framework vsize, 23075213(1) pageins, 5843367(0) pageouts.
Networks: packets: 41046228/11G in, 66083096/77G out.
Disks: 17874391/349G read, 12847373/594G written.

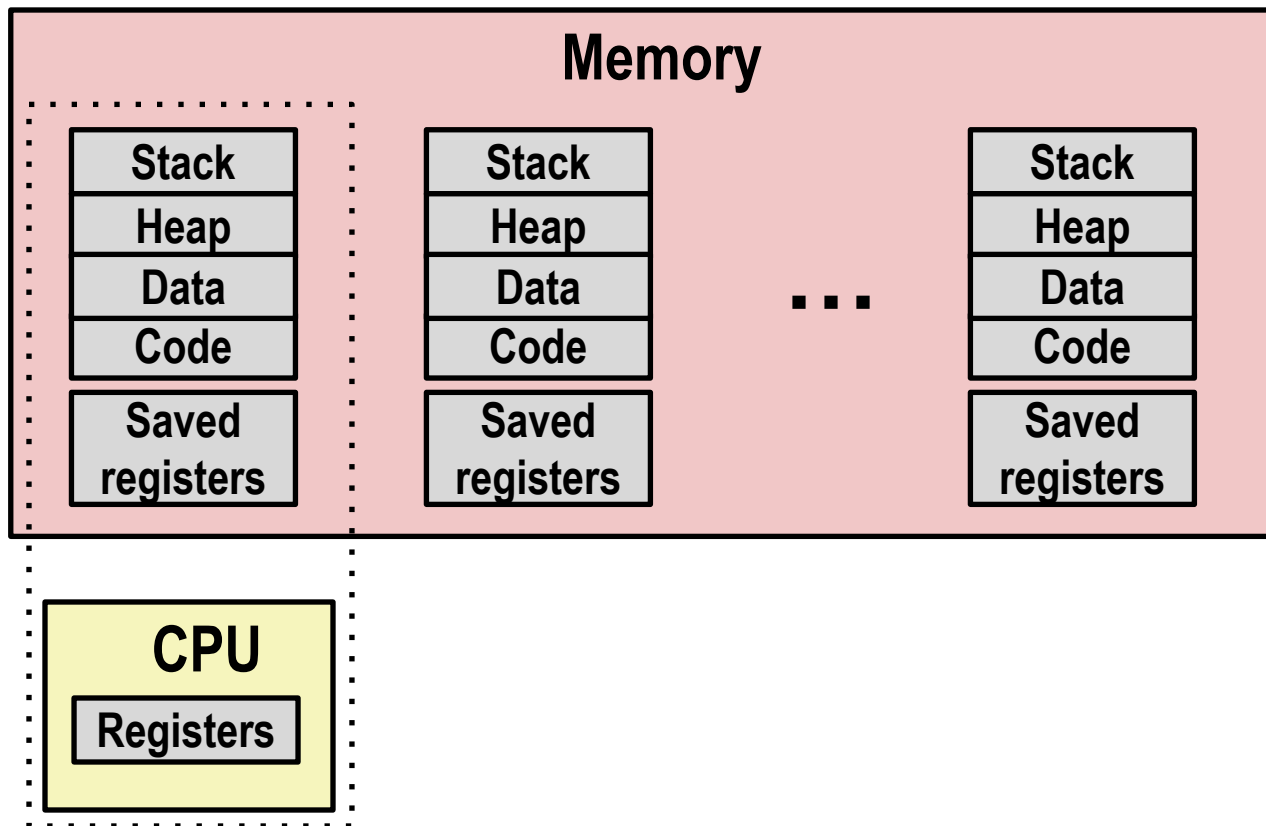
PID    COMMAND      %CPU  TIME    #TH   #WQ    #PORT  #MREG  RPRVT  RSHRD  RSIZE  VPRVT  VSIZE
99217-  Microsoft Of 0.0   02:28.34 4     1     202    418    21M    24M    21M    66M    763M
99051   usbmuxd      0.0   00:04.10 3     1     47     66     436K   216K   480K   60M    2422M
99006   iTunesHelper 0.0   00:01.23 2     1     55     78     728K   3124K  1124K  43M    2429M
84286   bash         0.0   00:00.11 1     0     20     24     224K   732K   484K   17M    2378M
84285   xterm        0.0   00:00.83 1     0     32     73     656K   872K   692K   9728K  2382M
55939-  Microsoft Ex 0.3   21:58.97 10    3     360    954    16M    65M    46M    114M   1057M
54751   sleep        0.0   00:00.00 1     0     17     20     92K    212K   360K   9632K  2370M
54739   launchdadd   0.0   00:00.00 2     1     33     50     488K   220K   1736K  48M    2409M
54737   top          6.5   00:02.53 1/1    0     30     29     1416K  216K   2124K  17M    2378M
54719   automountd   0.0   00:00.02 7     1     53     64     860K   216K   2184K  53M    2413M
54701   ocsdpd       0.0   00:00.05 4     1     61     54     1268K  2644K  3132K  50M    2426M
54661   Grab         0.6   00:02.75 6     3     222+   389+   15M+   26M+   40M+   75M+   2556M+
54659   cookied      0.0   00:00.15 2     1     40     61     3316K  224K   4088K  42M    2411M
53818   mdworker     0.0   00:01.67 4     1     52     91     7628K  7412K  16M    48M    2438M
50978   mdworker     0.0   00:01.17 3     1     53     91     2464K  6148K  9976K  44M    2434M
50078   emacs        0.0   00:06.70 1     0     20     35     52K    216K   88K    18M    2392M

```

## ■ Running program “top” on Mac

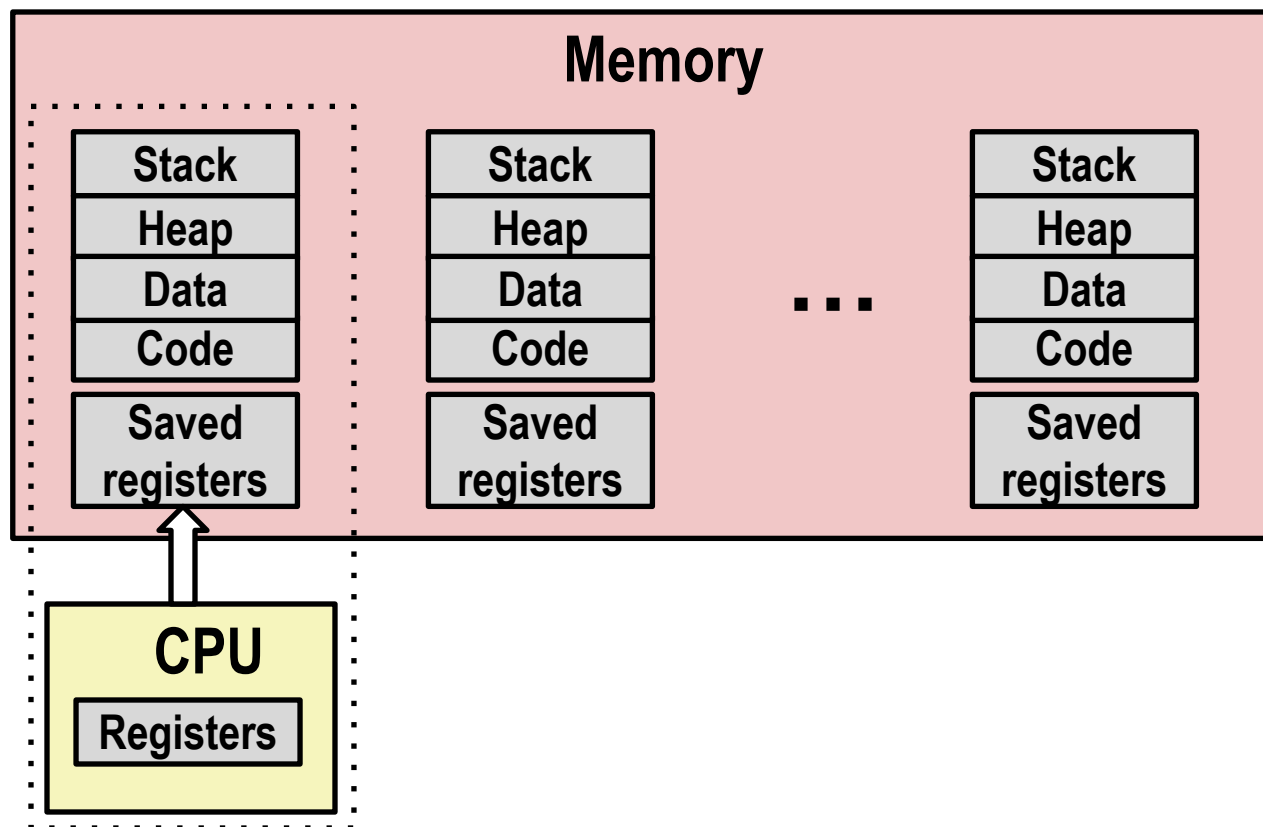
- System has 123 processes, 5 of which are active
- Identified by Process ID (PID)

# Multiprocessing: The (Traditional) Reality



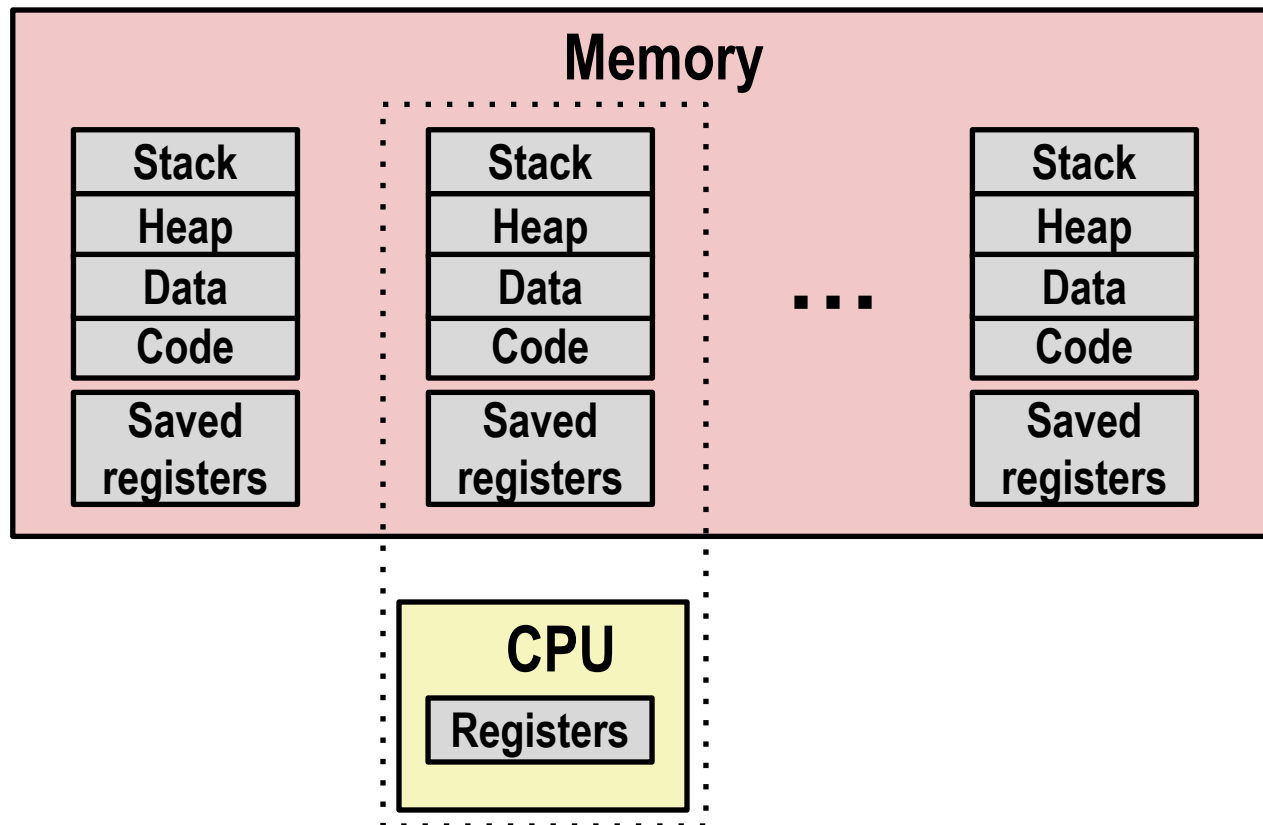
- **Single processor executes multiple processes concurrently**
  - Process executions interleaved (multitasking)
  - Address spaces managed by virtual memory system (later in course)
  - Register values for nonexecuting processes saved in memory

# Multiprocessing: The (Traditional) Reality



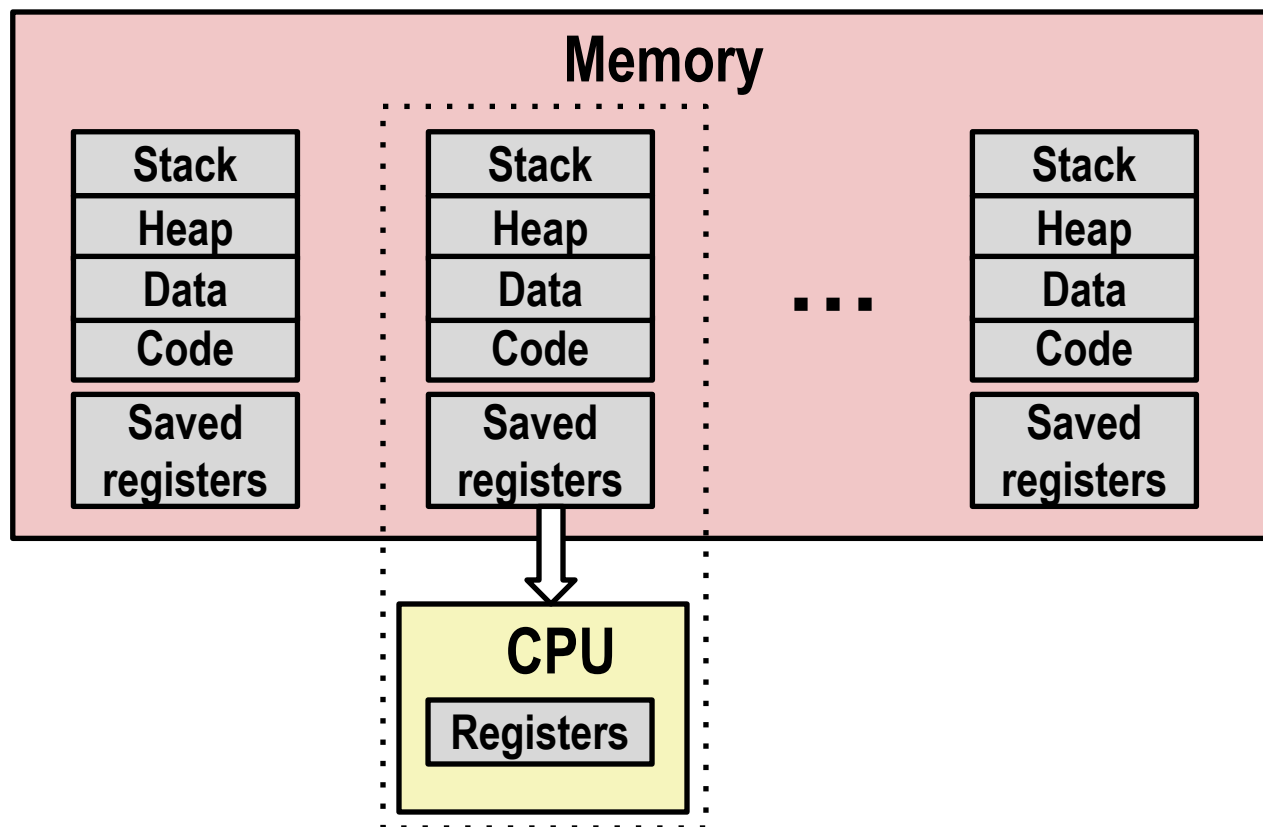
- Save current registers in memory

# Multiprocessing: The (Traditional) Reality



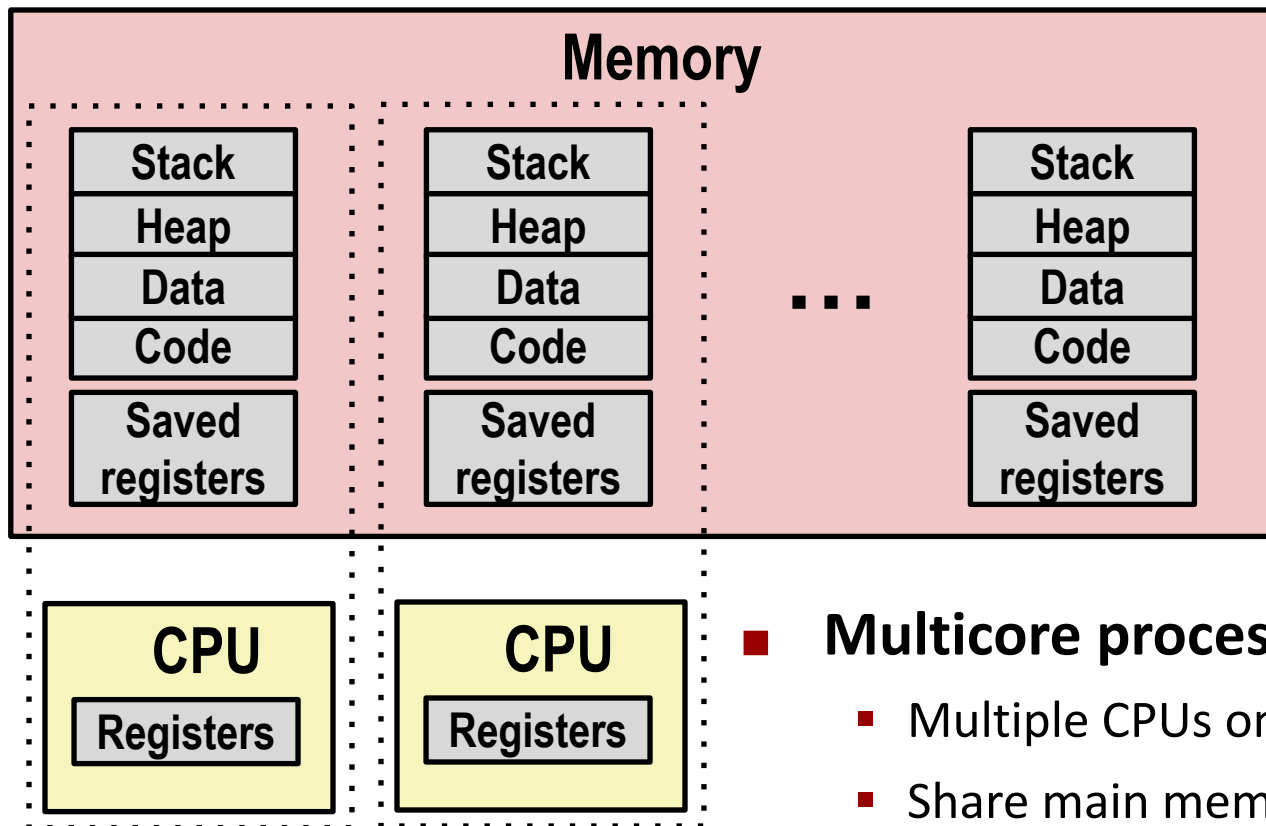
- **Schedule next process for execution**

# Multiprocessing: The (Traditional) Reality



- Load saved registers and switch address space (context switch)

# Multiprocessing: The (Modern) Reality

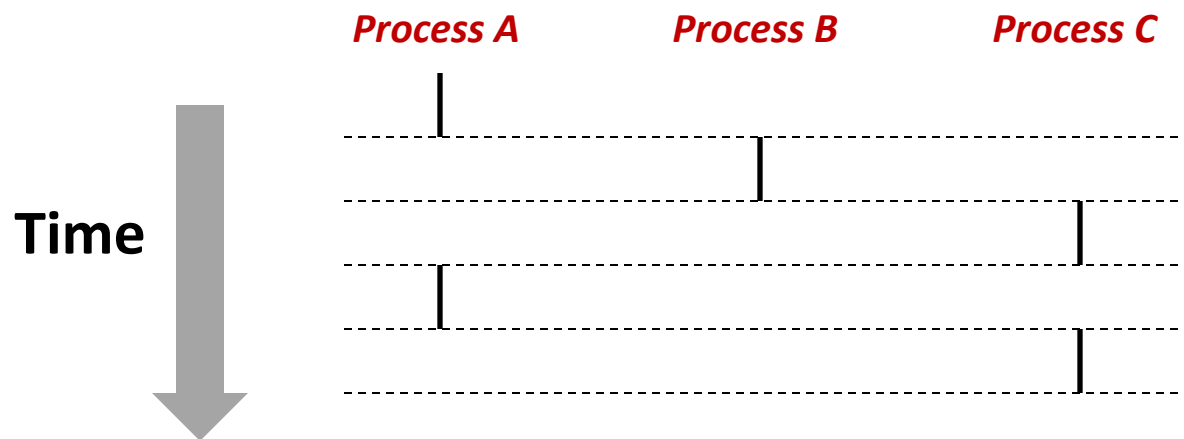


## ■ Multicore processors

- Multiple CPUs on single chip
- Share main memory (and some of the caches)
- Each can execute a separate process
  - Scheduling of processors onto cores done by kernel

# Concurrent Processes

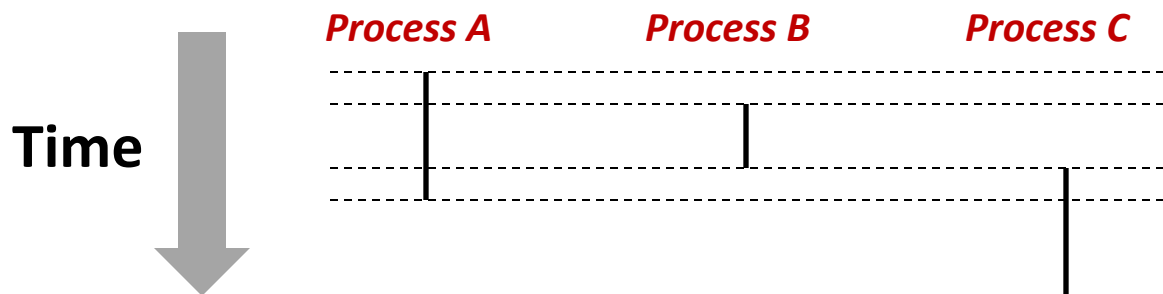
- Each process is a logical control flow.
- Two processes *run **concurrently** (are concurrent)* if their flows overlap in time
- Otherwise, they are ***sequential***
- Examples (running on single core):
  - Concurrent: A & B, A & C
  - Sequential: B & C





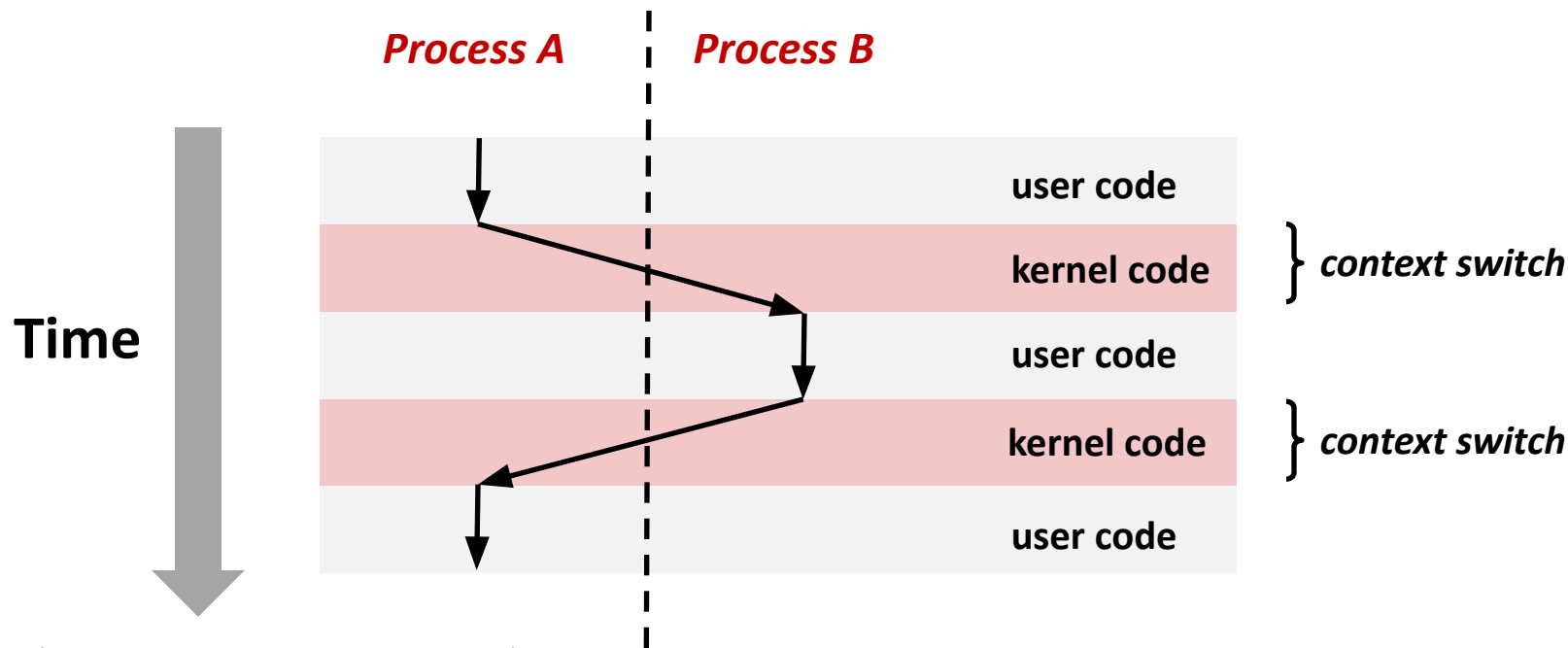
# User View of Concurrent Processes

- Control flows for concurrent processes are physically disjoint in time
- However, we can think of concurrent processes as running in parallel with each other



# Context Switching

- Processes are managed by a shared chunk of memory-resident OS code called the *kernel*
  - Important: the kernel is not a separate process, but rather runs as part of some existing process.
- Control flow passes from one process to another via a *context switch*



# Today

- Exceptional Control Flow
- Exceptions
- Processes
- **Process Control**

# System Call Error Handling

- On error, Linux system-level functions typically return -1 and set global variable `errno` to indicate cause.
- Hard and fast rule:
  - You must check the return status of every system-level function
  - Only exception is the handful of functions that return `void`
- Example:

```
if ((pid = fork()) < 0) {  
    fprintf(stderr, "fork error: %s\n", strerror(errno));  
    exit(0);  
}
```

# Error-reporting functions

- Can simplify somewhat using an *error-reporting function*:

```
void unix_error(char *msg) /* Unix-style error */
{
    fprintf(stderr, "%s: %s\n", msg, strerror(errno));
    exit(0);
}
```

```
if ((pid = fork()) < 0)
    unix_error("fork error");
```

# Error-handling Wrappers

- We simplify the code we present to you even further by using Stevens-style error-handling wrappers:

```
pid_t Fork(void)
{
    pid_t pid;

    if ((pid = fork()) < 0)
        unix_error("Fork error");
    return pid;
}
```

```
pid = Fork();
```

# Obtaining Process IDs

- `pid_t getpid(void)`
  - Returns PID of current process
- `pid_t getppid(void)`
  - Returns PID of parent process

# Creating and Terminating Processes

From a programmer's perspective, we can think of a process as being in one of three states

## ■ Running

- Process is either executing, or waiting to be executed and will eventually be *scheduled* (i.e., chosen to execute) by the kernel

## ■ Stopped

- Process execution is *suspended* and will not be scheduled until further notice (next lecture when we study signals)

## ■ Terminated

- Process is stopped permanently



# Terminating Processes

- **Process becomes terminated for one of three reasons:**
  - Receiving a signal whose default action is to terminate (next lecture)
  - Returning from the `main` routine
  - Calling the `exit` function
- **`void exit(int status)`**
  - Terminates with an *exit status* of `status`
  - Convention: normal return status is 0, nonzero on error
  - Another way to explicitly set the exit status is to return an integer value from the main routine
- **`exit` is called **once** but **never** returns.**

# Creating Processes

- *Parent process* creates a new running *child process* by calling `fork`
- `int fork(void)`
  - Returns 0 to the child process, child's PID to parent process
  - Child is *almost* identical to parent:
    - Child get an identical (but separate) copy of the parent's virtual address space.
    - Child gets identical copies of the parent's open file descriptors
    - Child has a different PID than the parent
- `fork` is interesting (and often confusing) because it is called *once* but returns *twice*

# fork Example

```
int main()
{
    pid_t pid;
    int x = 1;

    pid = Fork();
    if (pid == 0) { /* Child */
        printf("child : x=%d\n", ++x);
        exit(0);
    }

    /* Parent */
    printf("parent: x=%d\n", --x);
    exit(0);
}
```

*fork.c*

```
linux> ./fork
parent: x=0
child : x=2
```

- Call once, return twice
- Concurrent execution
  - Can't predict execution order of parent and child
- Duplicate but separate address space
  - `x` has a value of 1 when fork returns in parent and child
  - Subsequent changes to `x` are independent
- Shared open files
  - `stdout` is the same in both parent and child

# Modeling fork with Process Graphs

- **A *process graph* is a useful tool for capturing the partial ordering of statements in a concurrent program:**
  - Each vertex is the execution of a statement
  - $a \rightarrow b$  means  $a$  happens before  $b$
  - Edges can be labeled with current value of variables
  - `printf` vertices can be labeled with output
  - Each graph begins with a vertex with no inedges
- **Any *topological sort* of the graph corresponds to a feasible total ordering.**
  - Total ordering of vertices where all edges point from left to right

# Process Graph Example

```

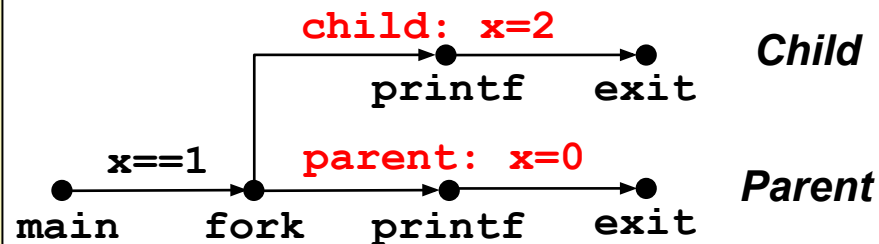
int main()
{
    pid_t pid;
    int x = 1;

    pid = Fork();
    if (pid == 0) { /* Child */
        printf("child : x=%d\n", ++x);
        exit(0);
    }

    /* Parent */
    printf("parent: x=%d\n", --x);
    exit(0);
}

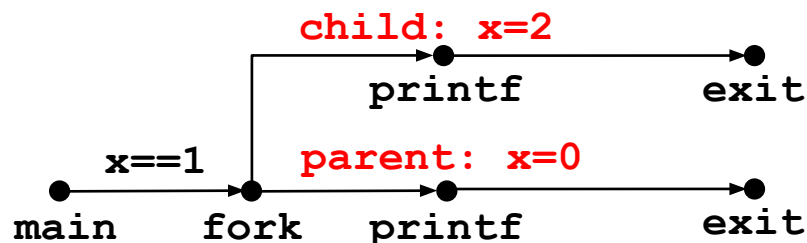
```

*fork.c*

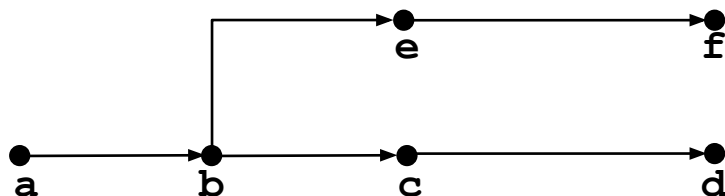


# Interpreting Process Graphs

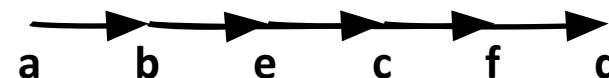
## ■ Original graph:



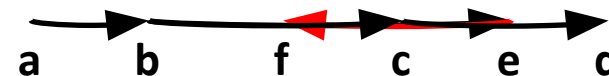
## ■ Relabelled graph:



## Feasible total ordering:



## Infeasible total ordering:

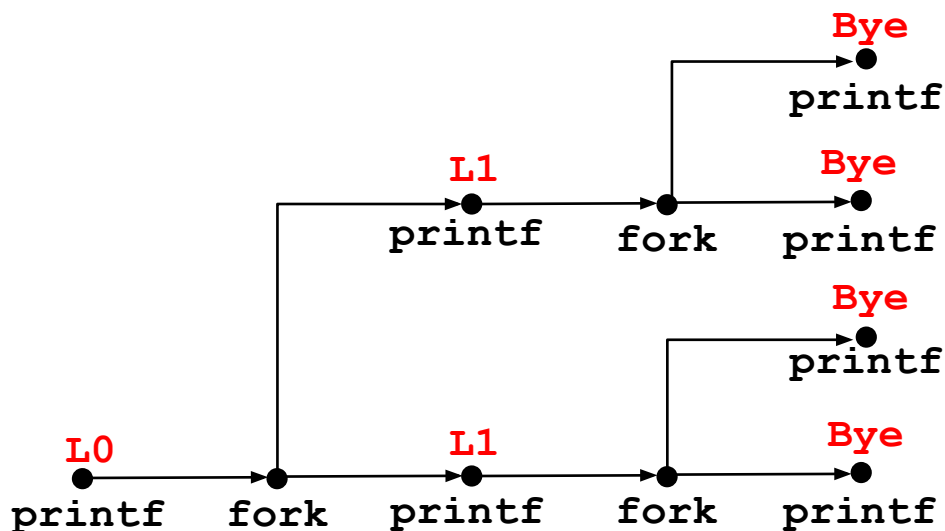


# fork Example: Two consecutive forks

```

void fork2()
{
    printf("L0\n");
    fork();
    printf("L1\n");
    fork();
    printf("Bye\n");
}
forks.c

```



Feasible output:

**L0**  
**L1**  
**Bye**  
**Bye**  
**L1**  
**Bye**  
**Bye**

Infeasible output:

**L0**  
**Bye**  
**L1**  
**Bye**  
**L1**  
**Bye**  
**Bye**

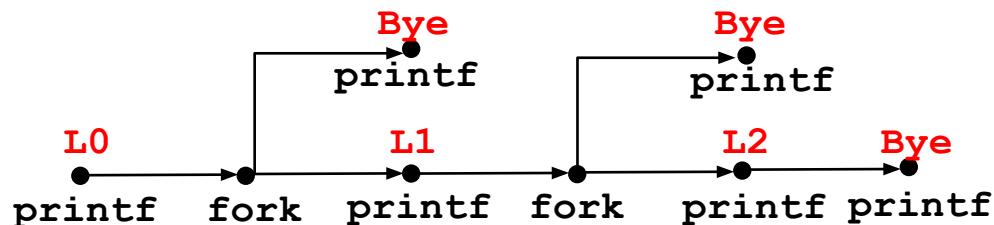
# fork Example: Nested forks in parent

```

void fork4()
{
    printf("L0\n");
    if (fork() != 0) {
        printf("L1\n");
        if (fork() != 0) {
            printf("L2\n");
        }
    }
    printf("Bye\n");
}

```

*forks.c*



Feasible output:

L0  
L1  
Bye  
Bye  
L2  
Bye

Infeasible output:

L0  
Bye  
L1  
Bye  
Bye  
L2



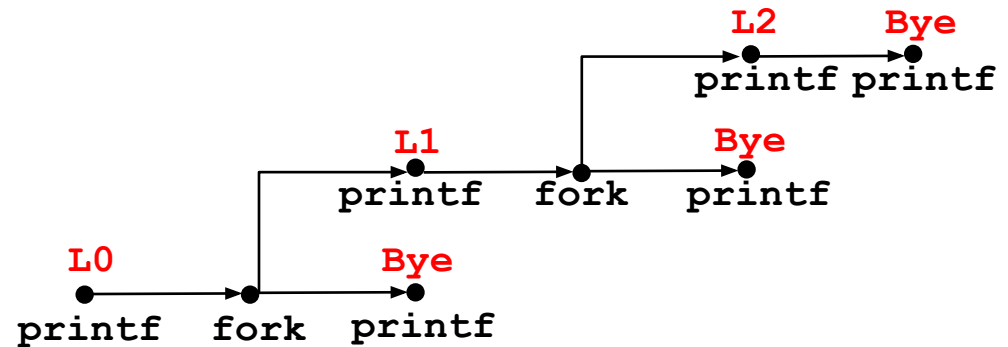
# fork Example: Nested forks in children

```

void fork5()
{
    printf("L0\n");
    if (fork() == 0) {
        printf("L1\n");
        if (fork() == 0) {
            printf("L2\n");
        }
    }
    printf("Bye\n");
}

```

*forks.c*



Feasible output:

L0  
Bye  
L1  
L2  
Bye  
Bye

Infeasible output:

L0  
Bye  
L1  
Bye  
Bye  
L2

# Reaping Child Processes

## ■ Idea

- When process terminates, it still consumes system resources
  - Examples: Exit status, various OS tables
- Called a “zombie”
  - Living corpse, half alive and half dead

## ■ Reaping

- Performed by parent on terminated child (using `wait` or `waitpid`)
- Parent is given exit status information
- Kernel then deletes zombie child process

## ■ What if parent doesn't reap?

- If any parent terminates without reaping a child, then the orphaned child will be reaped by `init` process (`pid == 1`)
- So, only need explicit reaping in long-running processes
  - e.g., shells and servers

# Zombie Example

```
void fork7() {
    if (fork() == 0) {
        /* Child */
        printf("Terminating Child, PID = %d\n", getpid());
        exit(0);
    } else {
        printf("Running Parent, PID = %d\n", getpid());
        while (1)
            ; /* Infinite loop */
    }
}
```

*forks.c*

```
linux> ./forks 7 &
[1] 6639
```

```
Running Parent, PID = 6639
```

```
Terminating Child, PID = 6640
```

```
linux> ps
```

PID	TTY	TIME	CMD
6585	ttyp9	00:00:00	tcsh
6639	ttyp9	00:00:03	forks
6640	ttyp9	00:00:00	forks <defunct>
6641	ttyp9	00:00:00	ps

```
linux> kill 6639
```

```
[1] Terminated
```

```
linux> ps
```

PID	TTY	TIME	CMD
6585	ttyp9	00:00:00	tcsh
6642	ttyp9	00:00:00	ps

**ps** shows child process as “defunct” (i.e., a zombie)

Killing parent allows child to be reaped by **init**

# Non-terminating Child Example

```
void fork8()
{
    if (fork() == 0) {
        /* Child */
        printf("Running Child, PID = %d\n",
            getpid());
        while (1)
            ; /* Infinite loop */
    } else {
        printf("Terminating Parent, PID = %d\n",
            getpid());
        exit(0);
    }
}
```

*forks.c*

```
linux> ./forks 8
Terminating Parent, PID = 6675
Running Child, PID = 6676
```

```
linux> ps
```

PID	TTY	TIME	CMD
6585	ttyp9	00:00:00	tcsh
6676	ttyp9	00:00:06	forks
6677	ttyp9	00:00:00	ps

```
linux> kill 6676
```

```
linux> ps
```

PID	TTY	TIME	CMD
6585	ttyp9	00:00:00	tcsh
6678	ttyp9	00:00:00	ps

Child process still active even though parent has terminated

Must kill child explicitly, or else will keep running indefinitely

# `wait`: Synchronizing with Children

- Parent reaps a child by calling the `wait` function
- `int wait(int *child_status)`
  - Suspends current process until one of its children terminates
  - Return value is the `pid` of the child process that terminated
  - If `child_status != NULL`, then the integer it points to will be set to a value that indicates reason the child terminated and the exit status:
    - Checked using macros defined in `wait.h`
      - `WIFEXITED`, `WEXITSTATUS`, `WIFSIGNALED`, `WTERMSIG`, `WIFSTOPPED`, `WSTOPSIG`, `WIFCONTINUED`
      - See textbook for details

# wait: Synchronizing with Children

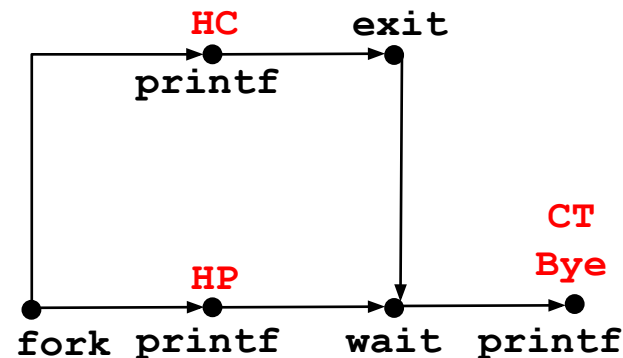
```

void fork9() {
    int child_status;

    if (fork() == 0) {
        printf("HC: hello from child\n");
        exit(0);
    } else {
        printf("HP: hello from parent\n");
        wait(&child_status);
        printf("CT: child has terminated\n");
    }
    printf("Bye\n");
}

```

*forks.c*



Feasible output:

HC  
HP  
CT  
Bye

Infeasible output:

HP  
CT  
Bye  
HC

# Another wait Example

- If multiple children completed, will take in arbitrary order
- Can use macros WIFEXITED and WEXITSTATUS to get information about exit status

```
void fork10() {  
    pid_t pid[N];  
    int i, child_status;  
  
    for (i = 0; i < N; i++)  
        if ((pid[i] = fork()) == 0) {  
            exit(100+i); /* Child */  
        }  
    for (i = 0; i < N; i++) { /* Parent */  
        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 terminate abnormally\n", wpid);  
    }  
}
```

*forks.c*

# waitpid: Waiting for a Specific Process

- `pid_t waitpid(pid_t pid, int &status, int options)`
  - Suspends current process until specific process terminates
  - Various options (see textbook)

```
void fork11() {  
    pid_t pid[N];  
    int i;  
    int child_status;  
  
    for (i = 0; i < N; i++)  
        if ((pid[i] = fork()) == 0)  
            exit(100+i); /* Child */  
    for (i = N-1; i >= 0; i--) {  
        pid_t wpid = waitpid(pid[i], &child_status, 0);  
        if (WIFEXITED(child_status))  
            printf("Child %d terminated with exit status %d\n",  
                wpid, WEXITSTATUS(child_status));  
        else  
            printf("Child %d terminate abnormally\n", wpid);  
    }  
}
```

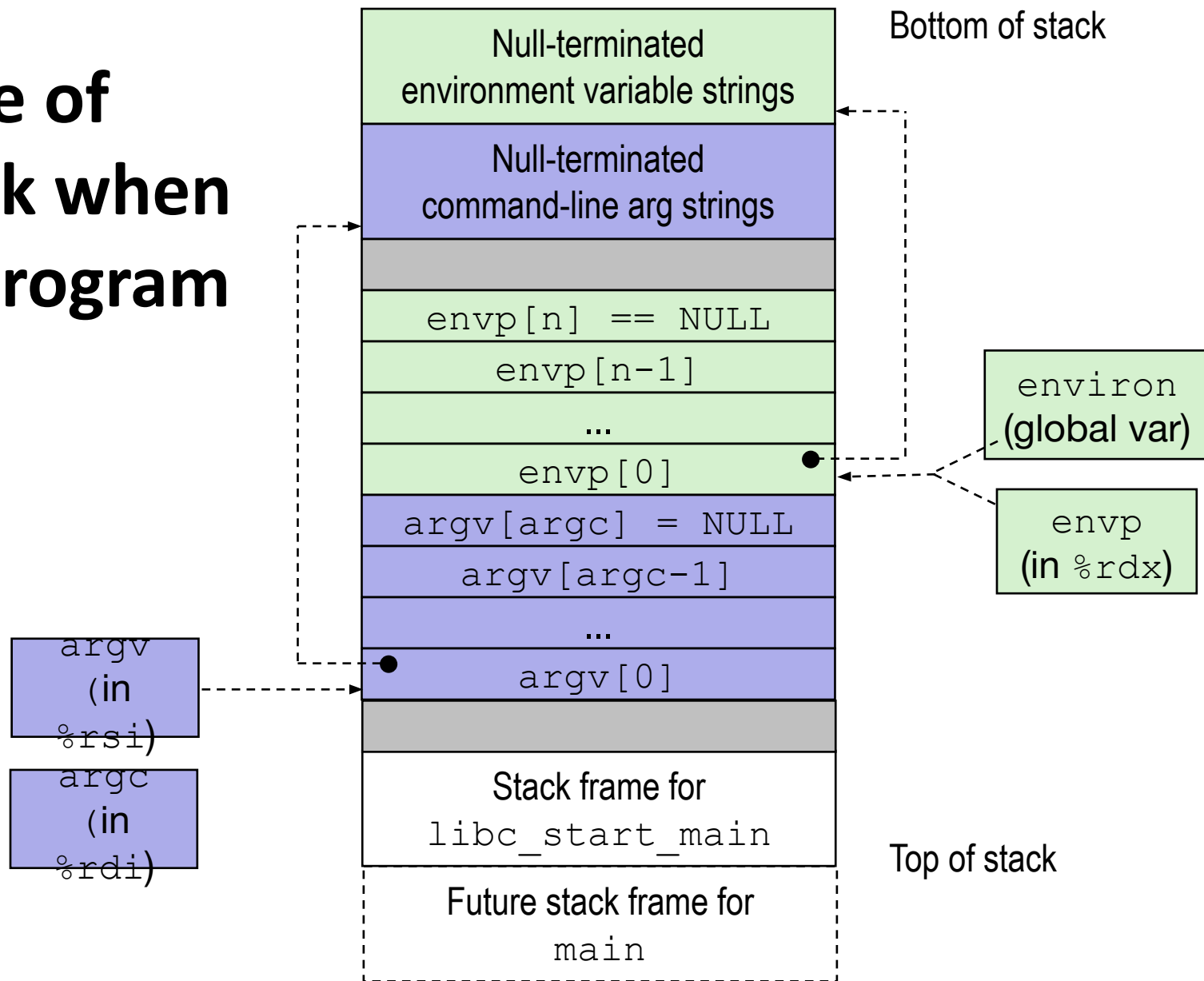
*forks.c*



# execve: Loading and Running Programs

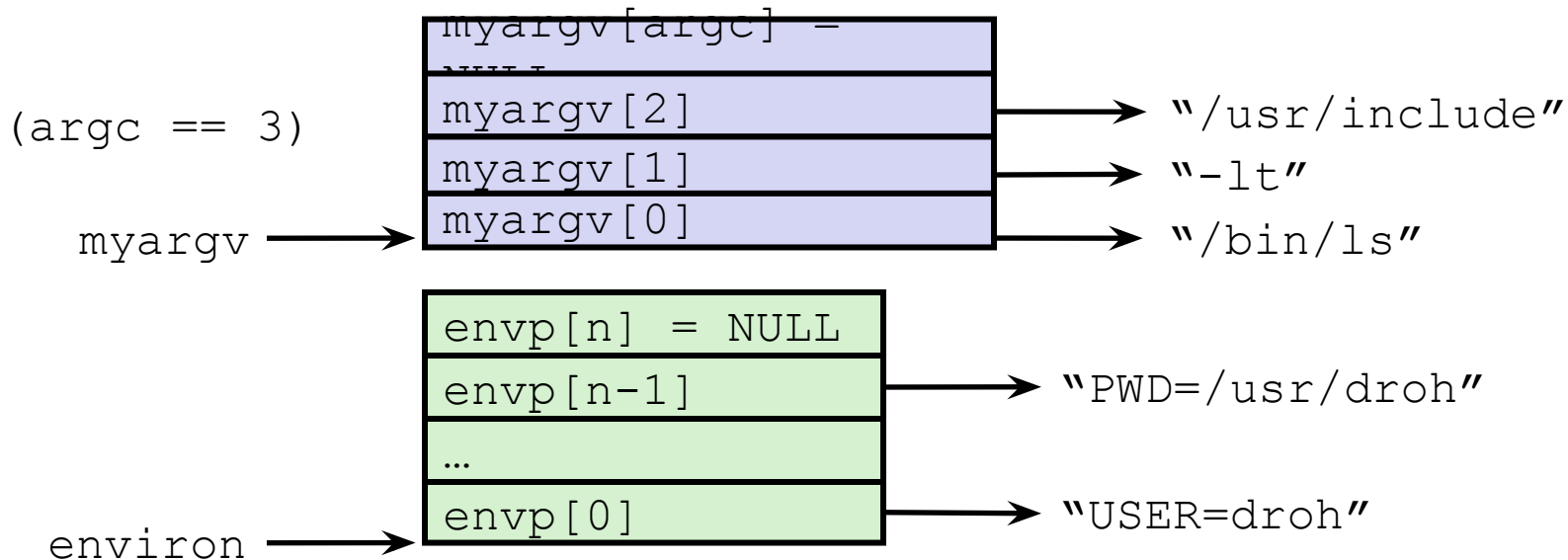
- `int execve(char *filename, char *argv[], char *envp[])`
- **Loads and runs in the current process:**
  - Executable file **filename**
    - Can be object file or script file beginning with `#!interpreter` (e.g., `#!/bin/bash`)
  - ...with argument list **argv**
    - By convention `argv[0]==filename`
  - ...and environment variable list **envp**
    - “name=value” strings (e.g., `USER=droh`)
    - `getenv`, `putenv`, `printenv`
- **Overwrites code, data, and stack**
  - Retains PID, open files and signal context
- Called **once** and **never** returns
  - ...except if there is an error

# Structure of the stack when a new program starts



# execve Example

- Executes `"/bin/ls -lt /usr/include"` in child process using current environment:



```

if ((pid = Fork()) == 0) { /* Child runs program */
    if (execve(myargv[0], myargv, environ) < 0) {
        printf("%s: Command not found.\n", myargv[0]);
        exit(1);
    }
}

```

# Summary

## ■ Exceptions

- Events that require nonstandard control flow
- Generated externally (interrupts) or internally (traps and faults)

## ■ Processes

- At any given time, system has multiple active processes
- Only one can execute at a time on a single core, though
- Each process appears to have total control of processor + private memory space

# Summary (cont.)

## ■ Spawning processes

- Call `fork`
- One call, two returns

## ■ Process completion

- Call `exit`
- One call, no return

## ■ Reaping and waiting for processes

- Call `wait` or `waitpid`

## ■ Loading and running programs

- Call `execve` (or variant)
- One call, (normally) no return