



 <http://web.stanford.edu/class/cs106l/>



## Special Topics

RAII, smart pointers, building projects, and more!

CS106L - Spring 23



# Attendance!

<https://bit.ly/427hqhe>





# Announcements!

- **This is our last real class!** Thursday's class will be extra office hours!
- Late days for assignments **are automatic** – no need to let us know if you're using them!
- For assignments, the general guideline for if it counts as completed is **if it runs**. Build errors result in no completion.



## CONTENTS



### 01. RAII

A coding standard and practice

### 02. Smart Pointers

Putting SMFs to good use

### 03. Building C++ Projects

`./build_and_run.sh` ... what?





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## Identifying code paths

How many code paths exist in this function?

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**Code path: A single  
run-through of the code that  
the computer would see**

## Let's consider each possibility!

Case 1: p doesn't like chocolate or milkshakes

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**TOTAL: 3**

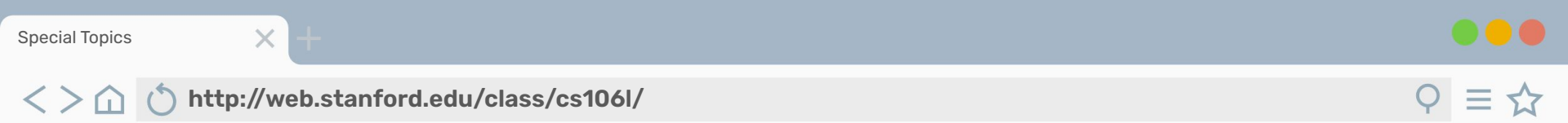
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...are we?

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When a function has an error, it can crash the program.



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However, we can write code to handle these to let us continue!

- This is “catching” the exception!

```
try {  
    // code that we check for exceptions  
}  
catch([exception type] e1) { // "if"  
    // behavior when we encounter an error  
}  
catch([other exception type] e2) { // "else if"  
    // ...  
}  
catch { // the "else" statement  
    // catch-all (haha)  
}
```

## Now, how many code paths do we see?

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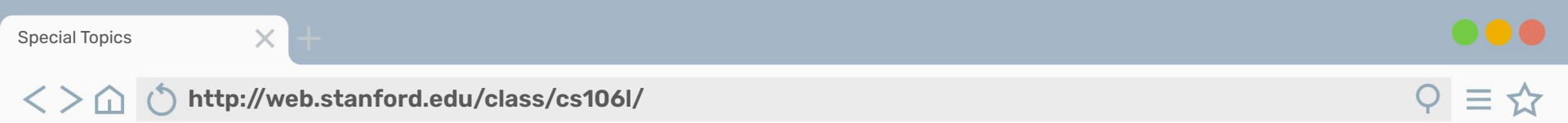
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- (10) operators may be user-overloaded, thus may throw
- (1) copy constructor of string for return value may throw



# Takeaway

There are often more code paths than meet the eye!



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- Make sure to cover all possible paths in test cases for production code.



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There are often more code paths than meet the eye!

- Make sure to cover all possible paths in test cases for production code.
- Or, catch any errors that could create other potential paths!

## What else could go wrong?

Thinking of exceptions, keep an eye out for anything else that could potentially go awry.

Do you see anything suspicious about this code?

```
string get_name_and_print_sweet_tooth(int id_number) {
    Person* p = new Person(id_number); // assume the constructor fills in variables
    if (p->favorite_food() == "chocolate" ||
        p->favorite_drink() == "milkshake") {
        cout << p->first() << " "
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## What else could go wrong?

What happens if an exception is thrown?

Can we guarantee that we won't leak memory?

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## This problem isn't unique to pointers!

There are many resources that need to be returned after use:

	Acquire	Release
Heap memory	<code>new</code>	<code>delete</code>
Files	<code>open</code>	<code>close</code>
Locks	<code>try_lock</code>	<code>unlock</code>
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## This problem isn't unique to pointers!

There are many resources that need to be returned after use:

**How do we guarantee  
resources are returned  
even in the event of  
exceptions?**

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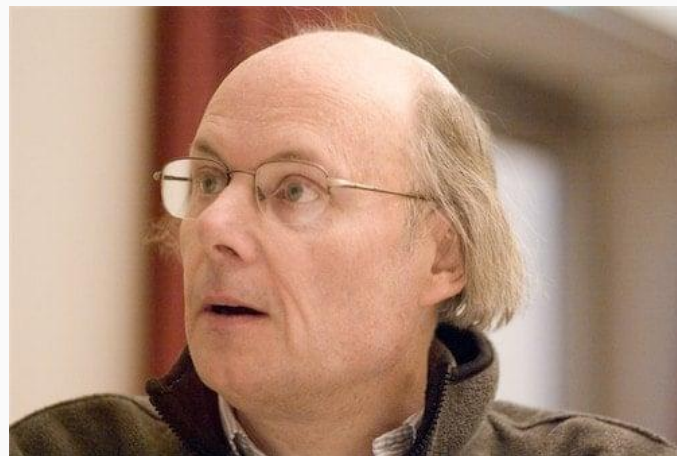


# RAII: Resource Acquisition is Initialization

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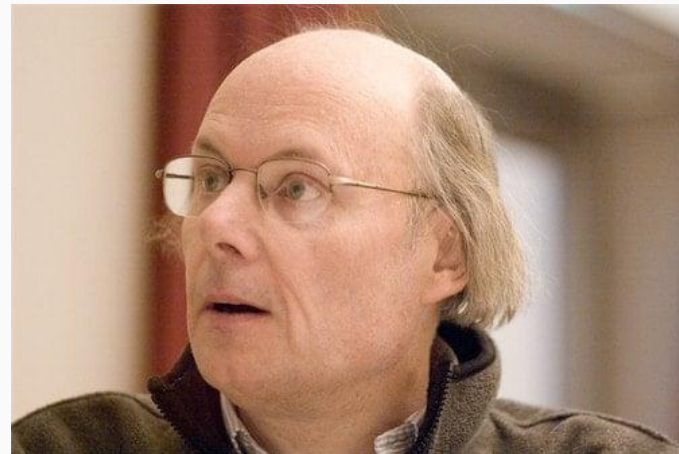




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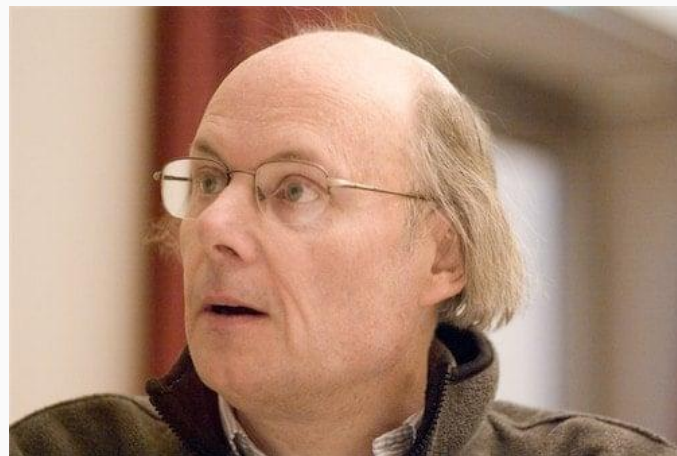


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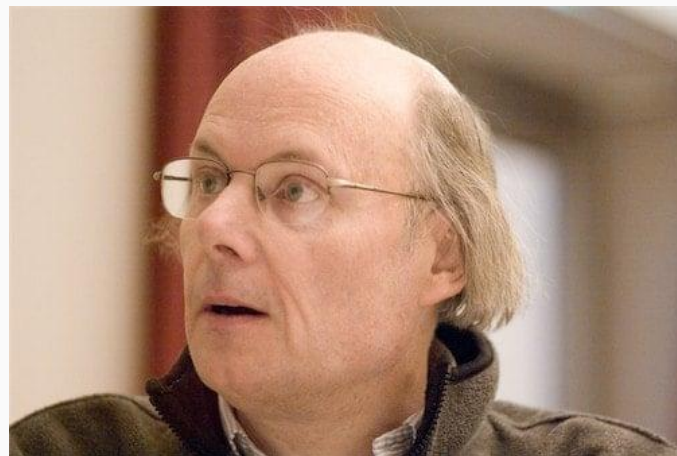


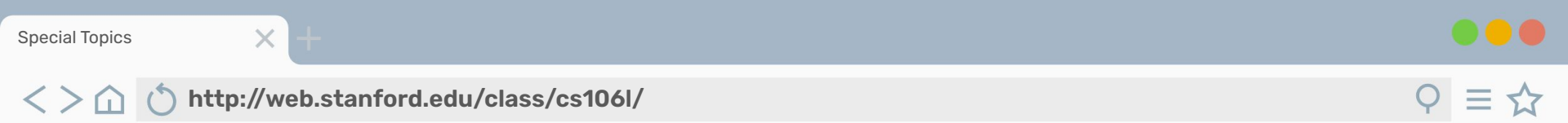
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Why care about this?

- Objects should be usable immediately after creation.
- There should never be a "half-valid" state of an object, where it exists in memory but is not accessible to/used by the program.
- The destructor is always called (when the object goes out of scope), so the resource is always freed!

## Is this RAI-compliant?

You've seen this in 106B!

```
void printFile() {  
    ifstream input;  
    input.open("hamlet.txt");  
  
    string line;  
    while (getline(input, line)) { // might throw exception  
        cout << line << endl;  
    }  
  
    input.close();  
}
```

# No!

The ifstream is not opened and closed in the constructor and destructor.

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    input.close();  
}
```

## Neither is a naked mutex!

Check out CS111 for more on what this is!

```
void cleanDatabase (mutex& databaseLock,  
                   map<int, int>& database) {  
    databaseLock.lock();  
  
    // other threads will not modify database  
    // modify the database  
    // if exception thrown, mutex never unlocked!  
  
    databaseLock.unlock();  
}
```

## How do we fix it?

Let's implement a class whose entire job is to acquire the lock in the constructor and release it in the destructor.

```
void cleanDatabase (mutex& databaseLock,  
                    map<int, int>& database) {  
    lock_guard<mutex> lg(databaseLock);  
  
    // other threads will not modify database  
    // modify the database  
    // if exception thrown, mutex is unlocked!  
  
    // no need to unlock at end, as it's handle by the lock_guard  
}
```



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# What about RAI for memory?

## R.11: Avoid calling `new` and `delete` explicitly

### Reason

The pointer returned by `new` should belong to a resource handle (that can call `delete`). If the pointer returned by `new` is assigned to a plain/naked pointer, the object can be leaked.

### Note

In a large program, a naked `delete` (that is a `delete` in application code, rather than part of code devoted to resource management) is a likely bug: if you have  $N$  `delete`s, how can you be certain that you don't need  $N+1$  or  $N-1$ ? The bug may be latent: it may emerge only during maintenance. If you have a naked `new`, you probably need a naked `delete` somewhere, so you probably have a bug.

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We can do the same thing for memory!

- These wrapper pointers are called “smart pointers.”



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**Weak pointers are observers of an object, not owners!**

## In practice

From this...

```
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    Node* n = new Node;  
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void rawPtrFn() {  
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```

...to this!

```
void rawPtrFn() {  
    std::unique_ptr<Node> n(new Node);  
    // do things with n  
    // automatically freed!  
}
```



## Why can't we copy `unique_ptr`?

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`shared_ptr` gets around this for us by only deallocating memory when all of the `shared_ptr`s have gone out of scope.





## Creating smart pointers...

```
std::unique_ptr<T> up{new T};
```

```
std::shared_ptr<T> sp{new T};
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```
std::weak_ptr<T> wp = sp;
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**This is still explicitly  
calling new!**

## We can fix it!

```
std::unique_ptr<T> up{new T};  
std::unique_ptr<T> up = std::make_unique<T>();  
  
std::shared_ptr<T> sp{new T};  
std::shared_ptr<T> sp = std::make_shared<T>();  
  
std::weak_ptr<T> wp = sp;  
// can only be copy/move constructed (or empty)!
```



## Which is better?

Always use `std::make_unique<T>` and `std::make_shared<T>!`



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Always use `std::make_unique<T>` and `std::make_shared<T>`!

- If we don't use `make_shared`, then we're allocating memory twice (once for `sp`, and once for new `T`)!



## Which is better?

Always use `std::make_unique<T>` and `std::make_shared<T>`!

- If we don't use `make_shared`, then we're allocating memory twice (once for `sp`, and once for `new T`)!
- We should be consistent across smart pointers – if we use `make_shared`, also use `make_unique`!



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## CONTENTS



### 01. RAII

A coding standard and practice

### 02. Smart Pointers

Putting SMFs to good use

### 03. Building C++ Projects

`./build_and_run.sh` ... what?





# Compilation Crash Course

After your program is written, it needs to be translated to a language your computer can understand.





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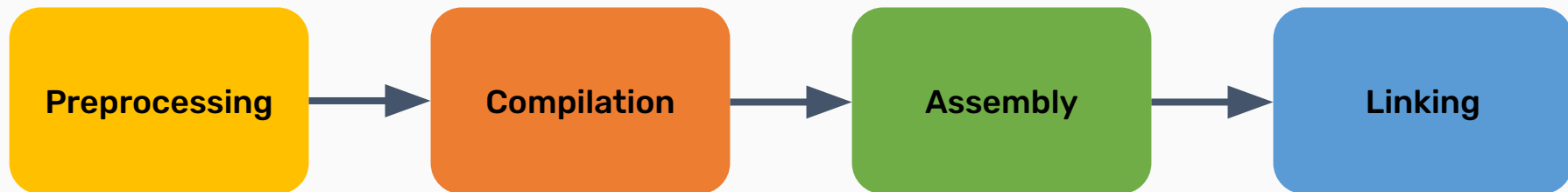
This is done through the process known as compiling!

A compiler is just any program that turns translates code from one language to another.

A common one for C++ to machine-readable code is g++!

# Compilation Crash Course

There are four main stages in a compiler:



# Preprocessing

During this stage, the code is cleaned up before compilation.

- Any preprocessor commands (starting with # in C++ and C) are handled.
- Comments and excess white space are stripped.

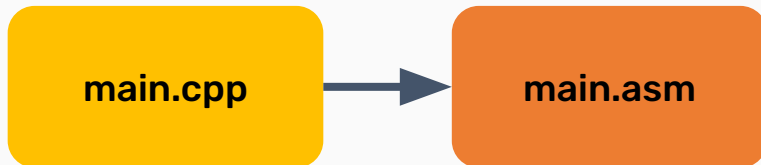
**main.cpp**

# Compilation

This (weirdly named) stage involves the actual translation to assembly!

- Code written in C++ is converted to assembly code.
- Code originally written in assembly can stay the same!
- The assembly is specific to the machine's architecture.

At this point, the code is still human readable.



# Assembly

Here, the assembler converts assembly to object code.

- Object code is the actual machine readable code (i.e binary) the processor runs.
- Assembly code is the human-readable equivalent, with mappings for these machine instructions to something we can understand.

The assembler converts each file/piece of the program individually; they are not yet combined properly into a program.

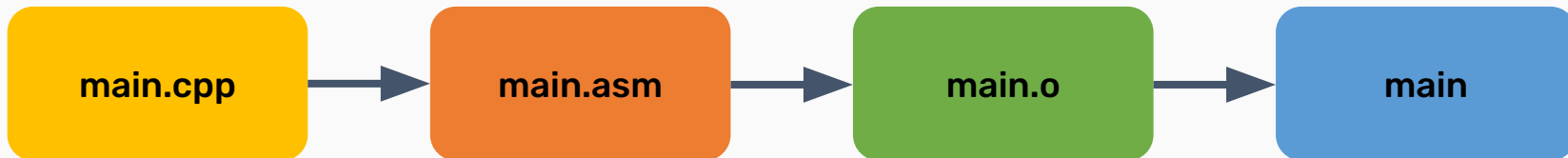


# Linking

The linker takes each piece of object code and arranges it into one program.

- Individual files are “stitched” together in order!
- Symbols are filled in so functions can be called and variables referenced across file boundaries.

We finally have an executable program!







## What do make and Makefiles do?

`make` is a "build system" program that helps you compile!

- It uses `g++` as its main engine.
- It can be utilized by creating a configuration file known as a **Makefile**!
- Let's take a look at a simple **Makefile** to get some practice!

# CS111 Example

```
TARGET = sh111

CXXBASE = g++
CXX = $(CXXBASE) -std=c++17
CXXFLAGS = -ggdb -O -Wall -Werror

CPPFLAGS =
LIBS =

OBS = sh111.o
HEADERS =

all: $(TARGET)

$(OBS): $(HEADERS)

$(TARGET): $(OBS)
    $(CXX) -o $@ $(OBS) $(LIBS)

clean:
    rm -f $(TARGET) $(LIB) $(OBS) $(LIBOBS) *~ .*~ _test_data*

.PHONY: all clean starter
```

# CS111 Example

```
TARGET = sh111
```

```
CXXBASE = g++  
CXX = $(CXXBASE) -std=c++17  
CXXFLAGS = -ggdb -O -Wall -Werror
```

```
CPPFLAGS =  
LIBS =
```

```
OBJS = sh111.o  
HEADERS =
```

```
all: $(TARGET)
```

```
$(OBJS): $(HEADERS)
```

```
$(TARGET): $(OBJS)  
$(CXX) -o $@ $(OBJS) $(LIBS)
```

Flags

Targets

Rules

```
$(TARGET) $(LIB) *~ .*~ _test_data*  
.PHONY: all clean starter
```



## So then what is cmake?

If we have Makefiles already, why use cmake?



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- cmake is a cross-platform make!



## So then what is cmake?

If we have Makefiles already, why use cmake?

- cmake is a cross-platform make!
- make is a build system, and cmake creates entire build systems!
  - Another level of abstraction that takes in an even higher-level config file, ties in external libraries, and outputs a Makefile, which is then run.



## Example cmake file

```
cmake_minimum_required(VERSION 3.0)
project(wikiracer)

set(CMAKE_CXX_STANDARD 17)
set(CMAKE_CXX_STANDARD_REQUIRED True)

find_package(cpr CONFIG REQUIRED)

# adding all files
add_executable(main main.cpp wikiscraper.cpp.o error.cpp)

target_link_libraries(main PRIVATE cpr)
```



## Example cmake file (ours!)

```
cmake_minimum_required(VERSION 3.0)
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```

**Looks closer to a coding  
language as we know it!**



## Summary

- Exceptions are errors in your code at runtime that can crash the program if you don't catch them.
- RAII says you should only acquire dynamically allocated resources (like memory, locks, sockets, etc) in the constructor, and you should release them in the destructor.
  - This is what some STL classes do to handle memory using smart pointers!
- To build our own projects, we must go through compilation with either a Makefile or using another build system!



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**Thanks!**

Next up: End of the class! :(

