

# CSE 3100: Systems Programming

## Part 2

### Lecture 1: Introduction to Processes



# The Rock's Laundry Problem



1



2



- The Rock (pictured above) needs your help doing laundry before the premier of his new movie.
- The Rock has 2 loads of laundry and needs them done in 1 hour.
- Each load of laundry takes 1 hour to do in a washing machine.
- If you finish his laundry on time he will take you to see his new movie.
- If you don't finish on time he will drop a rock on your foot (that is how he got the name "The Rock").

# The Rock's Laundry Problem

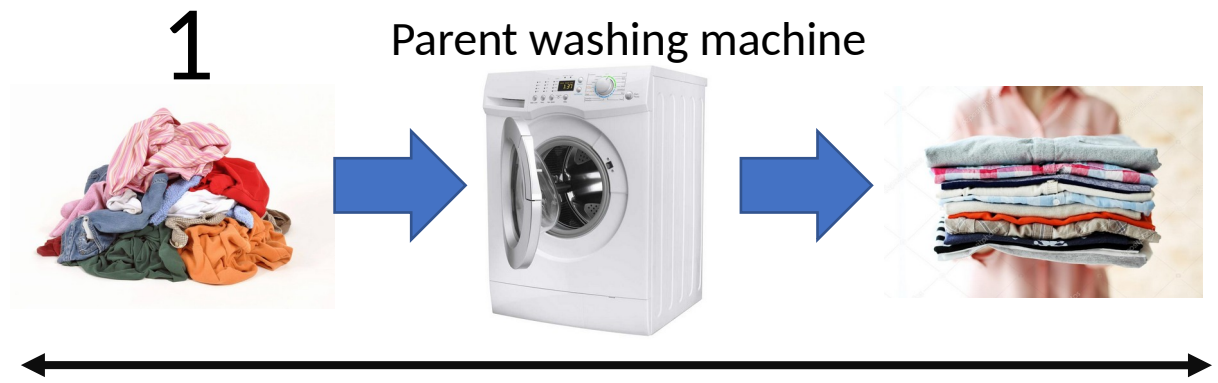
- If you use 1 washing machine what will happen?



Total Time = 2 Hours



If you use 2 washing machine *IN PARALLEL* what will happen?



1 Hour



1 Hour

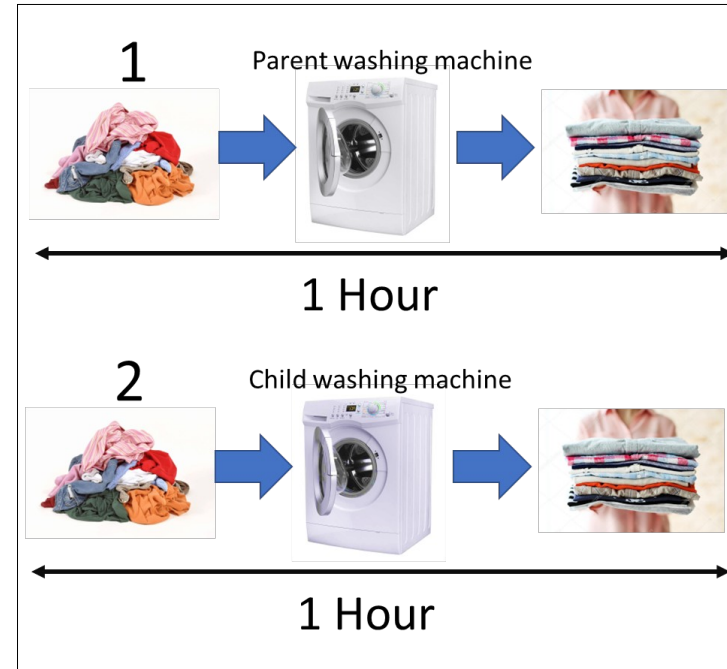


Total Time = 1 Hour





# The Rock's Laundry Problem Conclusions



- By doing multiple processes at the same time we can speed up computation.
- How would we create multiple processes on a computer to do computations in parallel?
- Answer: The Fork Function.

# Fork Function Example

```
1  #include <stdio.h>
2  #include <unistd.h>
3
4  int main()
5  {
6      pid_t value; // process identification used to represent process id
7      value = fork(); //call the fork function to start a separate process
8      printf("In main: value =%d\n", value); //print the id of the process
9  }
```

Output of the code:

```
kaleel@CentralCompute:~$ gcc test.c -o test
kaleel@CentralCompute:~$ ./test
In main: value =809
In main: value =0
```


# *What the heck is actually going on?*



```
1  #include <stdio.h>
2  #include <unistd.h>
3
4  int main()
5  {
6      pid_t value; // process identification used to represent process id
7      value = fork(); //call the fork function to start a separate process
8      printf("In main: value =%d\n", value); //print the id of the process
9  }
```

Start in main, the program loads into memory etc.

# *What the heck is actually going on?*




```
1  #include <stdio.h>
2  #include <unistd.h>
3
4  int main()
5  {
6      pid_t value; // process identification used to represent process id
7      value = fork(); //call the fork function to start a separate process
8      printf("In main: value =%d\n", value); //print the id of the process
9  }
```

We create a variable to identify the process we are currently working in. Think about this as a variable to help us figure out whether we are doing laundry in the child or parent “washing machine”.



# *What the heck is actually going on?*



```
1  #include <stdio.h>
2  #include <unistd.h>
3
4  int main()
5  {
6      pid_t value; // process identification used to represent process id
7      value = fork(); //call the fork function to start a separate process
8      printf("In main: value =%d\n", value); //print the id of the process
9  }
```


Call the fork function.

Now this creates a NEW child process. Essentially where fork is called, we start a clone of the code, running at the fork line.

Note: we still have the parent process running AT THE SAME TIME.

# *What the heck is actually going on?*


## Parent Process



```
1  #include <stdio.h>
2  #include <unistd.h>
3
4  int main()
5  {
6      pid_t value; // process identification used to represent process id
7      value = fork(); //call the fork function to start a separate process
8      printf("In main: value =%d\n", value); //print the id of the process
9  }
```

- We now have a child process and parent process BOTH running at the same time.
- Which code will end first? It's a bit complicated.
- For this example, we will arbitrarily go through the child first but in reality either process may finish first in this case (up to the OS).


## Child Process



```
1  #include <stdio.h>
2  #include <unistd.h>
3
4  int main()
5  {
6      pid_t value; // process identification used to represent process id
7      value = fork(); //call the fork function to start a separate process
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```

## Child Process




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2  #include <unistd.h>
3
4  int main()
5  {
6      pid_t value; // process identification used to represent process id
7      value = fork(); //call the fork function to start a separate process
8      printf("In main: value =%d\n", value); //print the id of the process
9  }
```

- In the child process we'll go to the print statement and print the id.
- Note children processes are given ID 0.


# *What the heck is actually going on?*

## Parent Process



```
1  #include <stdio.h>
2  #include <unistd.h>
3
4  int main()
5  {
6      pid_t value; // process identification used to represent process id
7      value = fork(); //call the fork function to start a separate process
8      printf("In main: value =%d\n", value); //print the id of the process
9  }
```

## Child Process




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1  #include <stdio.h>
2  #include <unistd.h>
3
4  int main()
5  {
6      pid_t value; // process identification used to represent process id
7      value = fork(); //call the fork function to start a separate process
8      printf("In main: value =%d\n", value); //print the id of the process
9  }
```

- We reach line 9, the end of the code and we're done.

```
In main: value =0
```

# *What the heck is actually going on?*

## Parent Process



```
1  #include <stdio.h>
2  #include <unistd.h>
3
4  int main()
5  {
6      pid_t value; // process identification used to represent process id
7      value = fork(); //call the fork function to start a separate process
8      printf("In main: value =%d\n", value); //print the id of the process
9  }
```

- Now let's look back at the parent and finish the code.
- For the parent we were on line 7 in fork.
- Because we forked pid\_t is given a unique value in this version of the code.
- Time to go to line 8.


## Child Process

```
1  #include <stdio.h>
2  #include <unistd.h>
3
4  int main()
5  {
6      pid_t value; // process identification used to represent process id
7      value = fork(); //call the fork function to start a separate process
8      printf("In main: value =%d\n", value); //print the id of the process
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# *What the heck is actually going on?*

## Parent Process

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4  int main()
5  {
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7      value = fork(); //call the fork function to start a separate process
8      printf("In main: value =%d\n", value); //print the id of the process
9  }
```



- We reach the print statement.
- Remember in this version of the code we assigned a value to pid\_t using fork.

## Child Process


```
1  #include <stdio.h>
2  #include <unistd.h>
3
4  int main()
5  {
6      pid_t value; // process identification used to represent process id
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# *What the heck is actually going on?*

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9  }
```



In main: value =809

## Child Process

```
1  #include <stdio.h>
2  #include <unistd.h>
3
4  int main()
5  {
6      pid_t value; // process identification used to represent process id
7      value = fork(); //call the fork function to start a separate process
8      printf("In main: value =%d\n", value); //print the id of the process
9  }
```

# Questions You Should Be Asking Yourself Right Now




*Why is the process id different in cloned versions of the code?*

Answer: Because we want to write ONE code but have different parts of the code to do different things in parallel.

The process ID allows us to do that.

```
1  #include <stdio.h>
2  #include <unistd.h>
3
4  int main()
5  {
6      pid_t value; // process identification used to represent process id
7      value = fork(); //call the fork function to start a separate process
8      if(value != 0) //this means we are in the parent process
9      {
10         printf("Let's do the first load of laundry.");
11     }
12     else if(value == 0) //this means we are the child process
13     {
14         printf("Let's do the second load of laundry.");
15     }
16 }
```

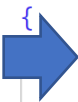
## Parent Process:



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```

Here this is the parent process so it will have a non-zero ID value.

## Child Process:


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Let's do the first load of laundry.


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11     }
12     else if(value == 0) //this means we are the child process
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14          printf("Let's do the second load of laundry.");
15     }
16 }
```

Here this is the child process so it will have a zero ID value.

Let's do the second load of laundry.

## Parent Process:

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2  #include <unistd.h>
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Here this is the parent process so it will have a non-zero ID value.

Let's do the first load of laundry.

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14         printf("Let's do the second load of laundry.");
15     }
16 }
```



Here this is the child process so it will have a zero ID value.

Let's do the second load of laundry.

# Questions You Should Be Asking Yourself

## Right Now 2



*Do the parent and child (clone) have independent memory?*

```
1  #include <stdio.h>
2  #include <unistd.h>
3
4  int main()
5  {
6      pid_t value; // process identification used to represent process id
7      int x = 100; //some variable
8      value = fork(); //call the fork function to start a separate process
9      if(value != 0)//this means we are in the parent process
10     {
11         x = 5;
12         printf("The value of x in the parent process is =%d\n", x);
13     }
14     else if(value == 0) //this means we are the child process
15     {
16         sleep(2); //add some intentional delay so this process finishes slower
17         printf("The value of x in the child process is =%d\n", x);
18     }
19 }
20 }
```

*If the parent and child have independent memory  
what should be printed?*

```
1  #include <stdio.h>
2  #include <unistd.h>
3
4  int main()
5  {
6      pid_t value; // process identification used to represent process id
7      int x = 100; //some variable
8      value = fork(); //call the fork function to start a separate process
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15     {
16         sleep(2); //add some intentional delay so this process finishes slower
17         printf("The value of x in the child process is =%d\n", x);
18     }
19 }
20
```

```
kaleel@CentralCompute:~$ ./test
The value of x in the parent process is =5
kaleel@CentralCompute:~$ The value of x in the child process is =100
```

Variables are new copies in a new process!

By now you should be a process expert...so  
time for some basic definitions.



# Process Basics

- A **process** is an instance of a program being executed
  - Core operating system (OS) concept
- In a **multiprocessing** OS
  - Multiple programs can be executed at the same time
  - Multiple instances of a program can be executed at the same time
- Executing multiple programs
  - Single-core: time-sharing
  - Multi-core: true parallelism + time-sharing

# Process Management: OS View

- OS maintains a process table
  - Each process has a table entry, called process control block (PCB)
  - Typical PCB info

| Process management        | Memory management             | File management   |
|---------------------------|-------------------------------|-------------------|
| Registers                 | Pointer to text segment info  | Root directory    |
| Program counter           | Pointer to data segment info  | Working directory |
| Program status word       | Pointer to stack segment info | File descriptors  |
| Stack pointer             |                               | User ID           |
| Process state             |                               | Group ID          |
| Priority                  |                               |                   |
| Scheduling parameters     |                               |                   |
| Process ID                |                               |                   |
| Parent process            |                               |                   |
| Process group             |                               |                   |
| Signals                   |                               |                   |
| Time when process started |                               |                   |
| CPU time used             |                               |                   |
| Children's CPU time       |                               |                   |
| Time of next alarm        |                               |                   |

- OS **scheduler** picks processes to be executed at any given time
  - When a process is suspended, its state is saved in PCB

# Process Management: User's View

- Events which cause process creation
  - System initialization
  - User request to create a new process (e.g., **shell command**)
  - Executing a **shell script**, which may create many processes
- Events which cause process termination
  - Normal program exit
  - Error exit
  - Fatal error, e.g., segmentation fault
  - Killed by user command or signal (Ctrl-C)

# Useful Unix Commands Related to Processes

- **ps**
  - List running processes
- **pstree**
  - Display the **tree** of processes
- **top**
  - Dynamic view of memory & CPU usage + processes that use most resources (to exit top, press q)
- **kill**
  - Kill a process given its **process ID**
  - Try **-9** option if simple kill does not work

# Process Management: Programmer's View



- Process birth

- Processes are created by other processes!
- A process always starts as a **clone** of its parent process
- Then the process may **upgrade itself** to run a different executable
  - Child process **retains access** to the files open in the parent

- Process life

- Child process can create its own children processes

- Process death

- Eventually calls **exit** or **abort** to commit "suicide"
- Or gets killed

# Birth via Cloning



Pictured: Clone Troopers from Star Trek created using the Fork function.

- The function to create a new process in your code

```
#include  
<unistd.h>  
  
pid_t  
fork(void);
```

- Child is an exact copy of the parent
  - Both return from fork()
- **Only difference is the returned value**
  - In the **parent** process:
    - fork() returns the process identifier of the child (> 0)
    - If a failure occurred, it returns -1 (and sets errno)
  - In the **child** process: fork() returns 0 (zero)



Question Time: When launching a parent process and a child process which one will always return first?

Possible Answers:

1. The child process always returns first.
2. The parent process always returns first.
3. It is impossible to tell with the information given.
4. I am sleeping in class.

# Concurrency

- Parent and child processes return from `fork()` concurrently
  - They may return at the same time (on a multicore machine) or one after the other
  - Cannot assume that they return at the same time or which one “returns first” (even on a uni-core)
    - Order is chosen by OS scheduler

# Cloning effects

- On memory
    - The parent and child memory 100% identical
    - But are viewed as distinct by OS (“copy-on-write”)
    - Any memory change (stack/heap) affects only that copy
    - Thus the parent and child can quickly diverge
  - On files
    - All files open in the parent are accessible in the child!
    - I/O operations in either one move the file position indicator
- In particular
- `stdin`, `stdout`, and `stderr` of the parent are accessible in the child



## *What can the parent do while the child process is running?*

- Depends on application!
  - It could wait until the child is done (dies!)
    - Typical of a shell like bash/ksh/zsh/csh/....
  - It could run concurrently and check back on the child later
  - It could run concurrently and ignore the child
    - If child dies it enters a **zombie** state

# Waiting on a child

```
#include <sys/wait.h>
```

```
pid_t    wait(int * status);
```

```
pid_t    waitpid(pid_t pid, int * status, int options);
```

- Purpose
  - Block the calling process until a child is terminated
    - Or other state changes specified by options
  - Report status in \*status (which is ignored if NULL is passed)
    - The cause of death
    - The exit status of the child (what he returned from main)
  - Return value identifies the child process (or -1 on error)
- Run “**man -S2 wait**” for full details

# Zombies!

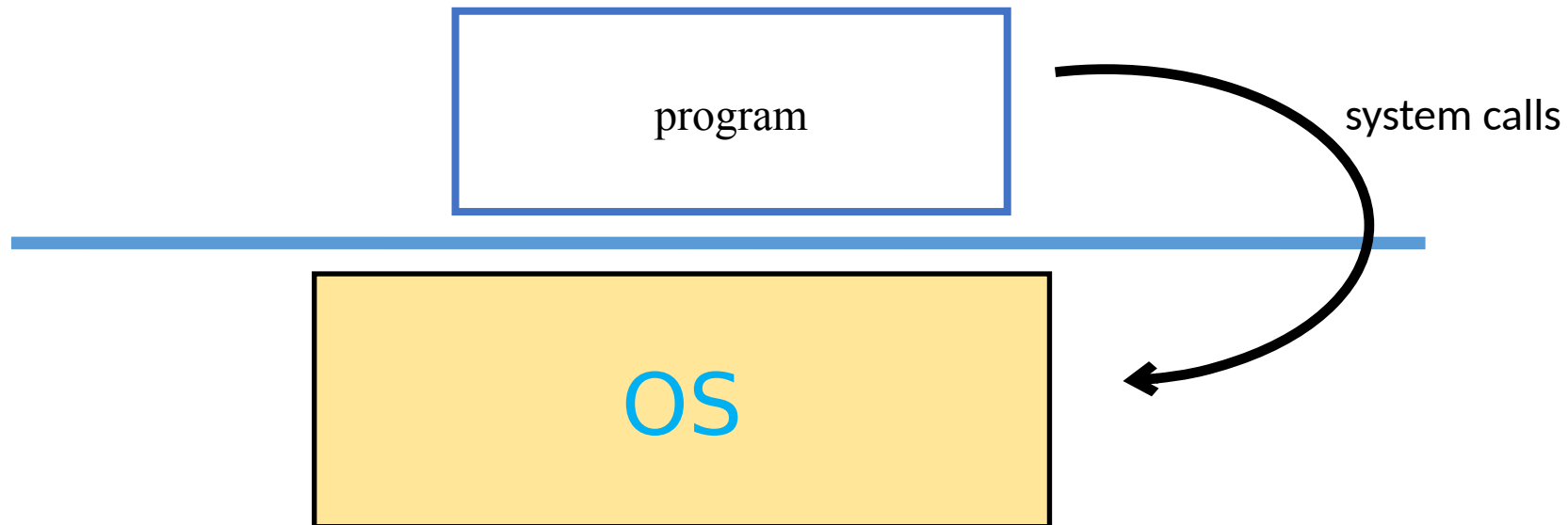


- A dead process, waiting to be 'reaped' (checked by its parent)
  - You cannot kill it, because it is already dead
  - Most resources released, but still uses an entry in the process table
- Parents should check their kids
  - On some systems, parents can say they do not want to check
- When a parent dies, 'init' becomes the new parent
  - Then the zombie child is reaped

# System calls

- APIs used to request services from the OS kernel
  - Example: `fork()`
  - System calls are more expensive than normal function calls
  - Manuals for system calls are in section 2


`man -S2 intro ; man -S2 syscalls`




# One more Forking Example

```
1  #include <stdio.h>
2  #include <unistd.h>
3
4  int main()
5  {
6      pid_t value;
7      value = fork();
8      value = fork();
9      printf("In main: value =%d\n", value);
10     return 0;
11 }
```






```
1  #include <stdio.h>
2  #include <unistd.h>
3
4  int main()
5  {
6      pid_t value;
7      value = fork();
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9      printf("In main: value =%d\n", value);
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```



```
1  #include <stdio.h>
2  #include <unistd.h>
3
4  int main()
5  {
6      pid_t value;
7      value = fork();
8      value = fork();
9      printf("In main: value =%d\n", value);
10     return 0;
11 }
```

Parent Process:

pid\_t = 371




```
1  #include <stdio.h>
2  #include <unistd.h>
3
4  int main()
5  {
6      pid_t value;
7      value = fork();
8      value = fork();
9      printf("In main: value =%d\n", value);
10     return 0;
11 }
```

- The parent process clones a child which will start running on line 8.

Child Process:


pid\_t = 0



```
1  #include <stdio.h>
2  #include <unistd.h>
3
4  int main()
5  {
6      pid_t value;
7      value = fork();
8      value = fork();
9      printf("In main: value =%d\n", value);
10     return 0;
11 }
```

Parent Process:

pid\_t = 371




```
1  #include <stdio.h>
2  #include <unistd.h>
3
4  int main()
5  {
6      pid_t value;
7      value = fork();
8      value = fork();
9      printf("In main: value =%d\n", value);
10     return 0;
11 }
```

- Line 8 in the child is another call to fork though!

Child Process:


pid\_t = 372



```
1  #include <stdio.h>
2  #include <unistd.h>
3
4  int main()
5  {
6      pid_t value;
7      value = fork();
8      value = fork();
9      printf("In main: value =%d\n", value);
10     return 0;
11 }
```

Another Child Process:


pid\_t = 0



```
1  #include <stdio.h>
2  #include <unistd.h>
3
4  int main()
5  {
6      pid_t value;
7      value = fork();
8      value = fork();
9      printf("In main: value =%d\n", value);
10     return 0;
11 }
```

Parent Process:

pid\_t = 371




```
1  #include <stdio.h>
2  #include <unistd.h>
3
4  int main()
5  {
6      pid_t value;
7      value = fork();
8      value = fork();
9      printf("In main: value =%d\n", value);
10     return 0;
11 }
```

- Go back to the parent process. We just finished line 7. Time to call line 8.

Child Process:


pid\_t = 372



```
1  #include <stdio.h>
2  #include <unistd.h>
3
4  int main()
5  {
6      pid_t value;
7      value = fork();
8      value = fork();
9      printf("In main: value =%d\n", value);
10     return 0;
11 }
```

Another Child Process:


pid\_t = 0



```
1  #include <stdio.h>
2  #include <unistd.h>
3
4  int main()
5  {
6      pid_t value;
7      value = fork();
8      value = fork();
9      printf("In main: value =%d\n", value);
10     return 0;
11 }
```

Parent Process:

pid\_t = 371




```
1  #include <stdio.h>
2  #include <unistd.h>
3
4  int main()
5  {
6      pid_t value;
7      value = fork();
8      value = fork();
9      printf("In main: value =%d\n", value);
10     return 0;
11 }
```

- Uh oh line 8 is ANOTHER call to fork.

Child Process:


pid\_t = 372



```
1  #include <stdio.h>
2  #include <unistd.h>
3
4  int main()
5  {
6      pid_t value;
7      value = fork();
8      value = fork();
9      printf("In main: value =%d\n", value);
10     return 0;
11 }
```

Another other Child Process:


pid\_t = 0



```
1  #include <stdio.h>
2  #include <unistd.h>
3
4  int main()
5  {
6      pid_t value;
7      value = fork();
8      value = fork();
9      printf("In main: value =%d\n", value);
10     return 0;
11 }
```

Another Child Process:


pid\_t = 0



```
1  #include <stdio.h>
2  #include <unistd.h>
3
4  int main()
5  {
6      pid_t value;
7      value = fork();
8      value = fork();
9      printf("In main: value =%d\n", value);
10     return 0;
11 }
```

Parent Process:


pid\_t = 371



```
1  #include <stdio.h>
2  #include <unistd.h>
3
4  int main()
5  {
6      pid_t value;
7      value = fork();
8      value = fork();
9      printf("In main: value =%d\n", value);
10     return 0;
11 }
```

Done forking, print the  
pid\_t value!

Another other Child Process:  
pid\_t = 0




```
1  #include <stdio.h>
2  #include <unistd.h>
3
4  int main()
5  {
6      pid_t value;
7      value = fork();
8      value = fork();
9      printf("In main: value =%d\n", value);
10     return 0;
11 }
```

Done forking, print the  
pid\_t value!

- Now advance one line in each part of the process.

Child Process:


pid\_t = 372



```
1  #include <stdio.h>
2  #include <unistd.h>
3
4  int main()
5  {
6      pid_t value;
7      value = fork();
8      value = fork();
9      printf("In main: value =%d\n", value);
10     return 0;
11 }
```

Done forking, print the  
pid\_t value!

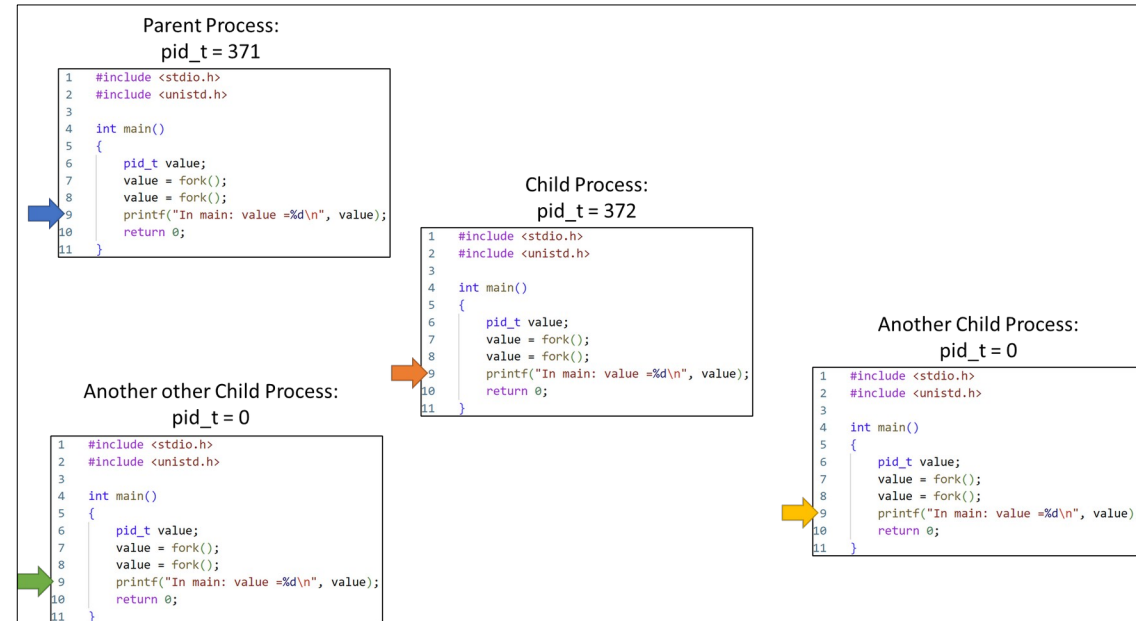
Another Child Process:  
pid\_t = 0



```
1  #include <stdio.h>
2  #include <unistd.h>
3
4  int main()
5  {
6      pid_t value;
7      value = fork();
8      value = fork();
9      printf("In main: value =%d\n", value);
10     return 0;
11 }
```

Done forking, print the  
pid\_t value!

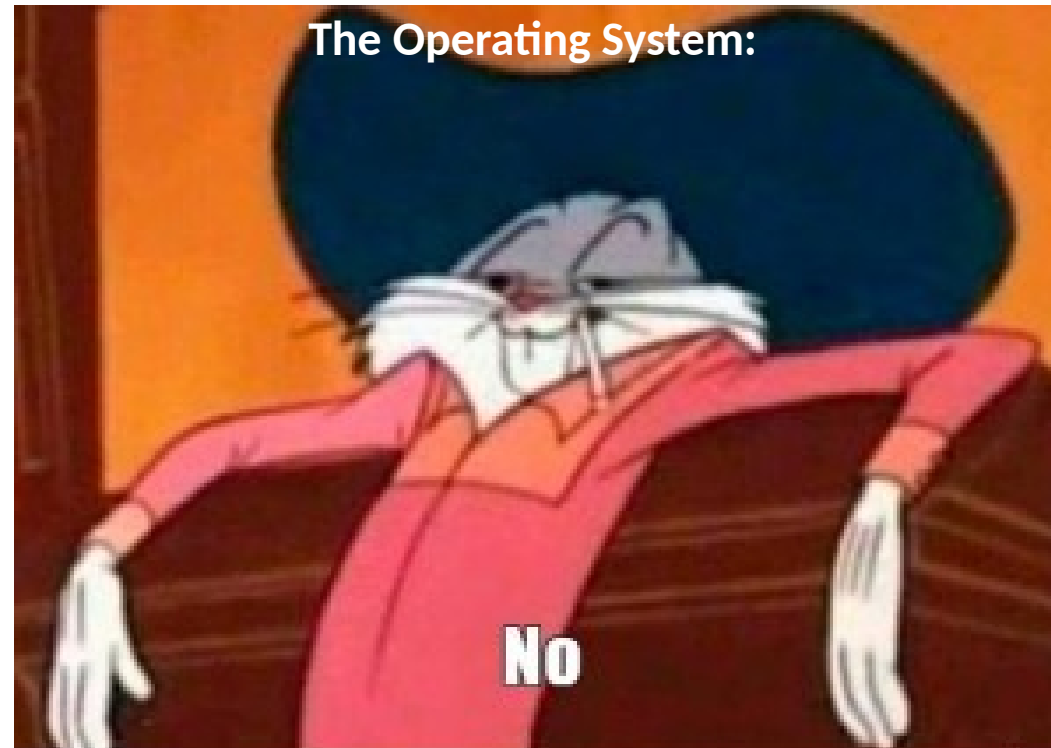
# Quick Question



- We know that the pit\_d value will be printed in each of the processes. We also know the printed values will be 371, 0, 372 and 0.
- Can we correctly predict the ORDER in which the values will be printed before this code runs?

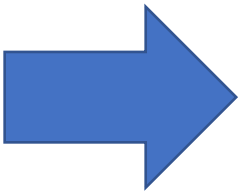
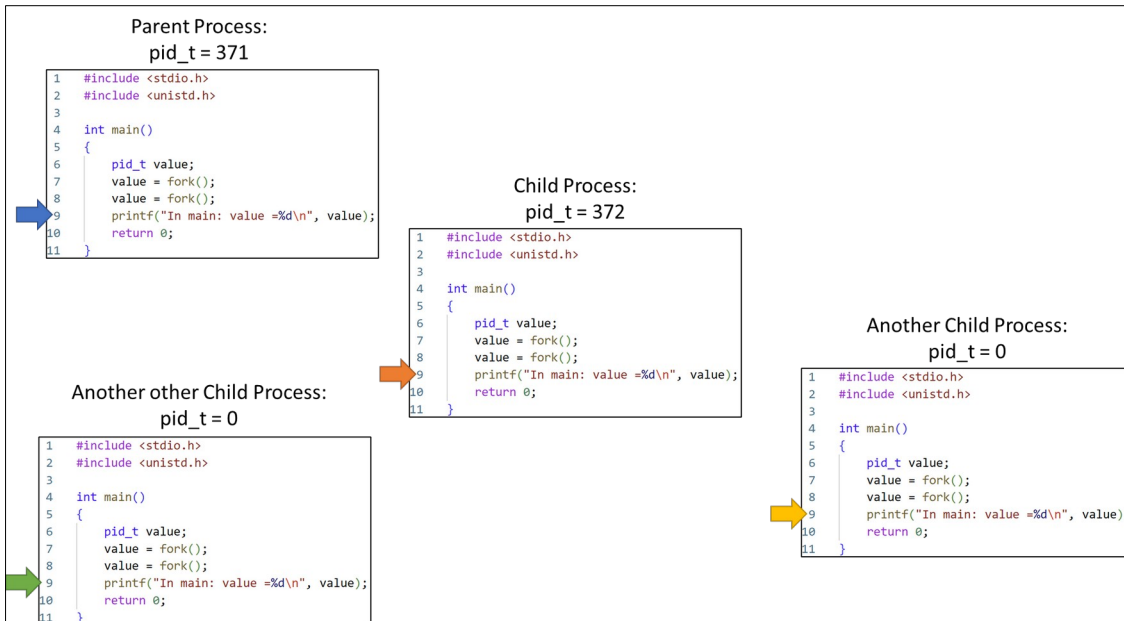


*Can we correctly predict the ORDER in which the values will be printed before this code runs?*



(It is up to the OS to schedule things)

# The multi-fork code output:



```
kaleel@CentralCompute:~$ ./test
In main: value =371
In main: value =372
In main: value =0
In main: value =0
```

# Lecture Conclusions



- To run things in parallel we need to run multiple processes.
- We use the fork function to create processes, i.e., parents and children.
- Cloning processes can be very tricky when it comes to tracking completion time and variables.

# Figure Sources

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