Putting the brakes, on impending code breaks
Let a reference escape, have you?
Meld havoc, your code will, act of the blue
Get out, you will, of this bind
If your objects, you have confined

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Frequently asked questions from the previous class survey
- How are atomic variables (with exception of long + double) different from volatile variables?

Topics covered in this lecture
- Sharing & Composing Objects
- Making a class thread-safe
- Multivariable invariants and thread-safety
- Adding functionality to a thread-safe class

What we will be looking at
- Techniques for sharing and publishing objects
  - Safe access from multiple threads
  - Together with synchronization, sharing objects lays foundation for thread-safe classes

Synchronization
- What we have seen so far:
  - Atomicity and demarcating critical sections
- But it is also about memory visibility
  - We prevent one thread from modifying object state while another is using it
  - When state of an object is modified, other thread can see the changes that were made
Publication and Escape

- Publishing an object
  - Makes it available outside current scope
  - Storing a reference to it, returning from a non-private method, passing it as an argument to another method

- Escape
  - An object that is published when it should not have been

Pitfalls in publication

- Publishing internal state variables
  - Makes it difficult to preserve invariants
- Publishing objects before they are constructed
  - Compromises thread-safety

Most blatant form of publication

- Storing a reference in a public static field

```java
public static Set<Secret> knownSecrets;
public void initialize() {
    knownSecrets = new HashSet<Secret>();
}
```

- If you add a Secret to knownSecrets?
  - You also end up publishing that Secret

Allowing internal mutable state to escape

```java
public class PublishingState {
    private String[] states = new String[] {
        "AK", "AL", ...
    };
    public String[] getStates() {return states;}
}
```

- states has escaped its intended scope
  - What should have been private is now public
  - Any caller can modify its contents

Another way to publish internal state

```java
public class ThisEscape {
    public ThisEscape(EventSource source) {
        source.registerListener(new EventListener() {
            public void onEvent(Event e) {
                doSomething(e);
            }
        });
    }
}
```

- When EventListener is published, it publishes the enclosing ThisEscape instance
- Inner class instances contain hidden reference to enclosing instance

Abbreviated view of the classes generated by the javac

```java
public class ThisEscape$1 implements EventListener {
    private ThisEscape thisescape;
    final ThisEscape this;
    public ThisEscape$1(ThisEscape source) {
        this = source.registerListener(new ThisEscape$1(this));
        thisescape = source;
    }
    private void doSomething(Event e) {
        this.escape$000(e);
    }
}
```

- static void access$000(ThisEscape _this, Event event) { _this.doSomething(event); }
Safe construction practices

- An object is in a predictable, consistent state only after its constructor returns.
- Publishing an object within its constructor?
  - You are publishing an incompletely constructed object
  - Even if you are doing so in the last line of the constructor
- Rule: Don't allow this to escape during construction

A common mistake is to start a thread from a constructor

- When an object creates a thread in its constructor
  - Almost always shares its this reference with the new thread
  - Explicitly passing it to the constructor
  - Implicitly: The Thread or Runnable is an inner class of the owning object
- Nothing wrong with creating a thread in a constructor
  - Just don't start the Thread
  - Expose an initialize() method

Thread confinement

- Accessing shared, mutable data requires synchronization
  - Avoid this by not sharing
- If data is only accessed from a single thread?
  - No synchronization is needed
- When an object is confined to a thread?
  - Usage is thread-safe even if the object is not

Stack confinement

- Object can only be reached through local variables
- Local variables are intrinsically confined to the executing thread
  - Exist on executing thread's stack
  - Not accessible to other threads
Thread confinement of reference variables

```java
public int loadTheArk() {
    SortedSet<Animal> animals;
    // animals confined to method don't let
    // them escape
    return numPairs;
}
```

If you were to publish a reference to `animals`, stack confinement would be violated.

ThreadLocal

- Allows you to associate a per-thread value with a value-holding object
- Provides set and get accessor methods
  - Maintains a separate copy of value for each thread that uses it
  - `get` returns the most recent value passed to `set`
  - From the currently executing thread

Using ThreadLocal for thread confinement

```java
private static ThreadLocal<Connection> connectionHolder = new ThreadLocal<Connection>() {
    public Connection initialValue() {
        return DriverManager.getConnection(DB_URL);
    }
    public static Connection getConnection() {
        return connectionHolder.get();
    }
}
```

Each thread will have its own connection

When thread calls `ThreadLocal.get` for the first time?
- `initialValue()` provides the initial value

Common use of ThreadLocal

- Used when a frequently used operation requires a temporary object
- Wish to avoid reallocating temporary object on each invocation

```java
Integer.toString()
```

- Before 5.0 used `ThreadLocal` to store a 12-byte buffer for formatting result

Immutable objects

- State cannot be modified after construction
- All its fields are `final`
- Properly constructed
  - The `this` reference does not escape during construction
Immutable objects

```java
public final class ThreeStooges {
  private final Set<String> stooges = new HashSet<String>();
  public ThreeStooges() {
    stooges.add("Moe");
    stooges.add("Larry");
    stooges.add("Curly");
  }
  public boolean isStooge(String name) {
    return stooges.contains(name);
  }
}
```

Safe publication of objects

- Storing reference to an object into a public field is not enough to publish that object safely.

```java
public Holder holder;
public void initialize() {
  holder = new Holder(42);
}
```

Class at risk of failure if not published properly

```java
public class Holder {
  private int n;
  public Holder(int n) {
    this.n = n;
  }
  public void assertSanity() {
    if (n != n)
      throw new AssertionError("Statement is false");
  }
}
```

Thread may see a stale value first time it reads the field and an up-to-date value the next time.

Composing Objects

- We don't want to have to analyze each memory access to ensure the program is thread-safe.
- We wish to take thread-safe components and compose them into larger components or programs.
- We need to identify variables that form the object's state.
- Identify invariants that constrain the state variables.
- Establish a policy for managing concurrent access to the object's state.
Synchronization policy

- Defines how object coordinates access to its state
  - Without violating its invariants or post-conditions
- Specifies a combination of:
  - Immutability
  - Thread confinement
  - Locking

Looking at a counter

```java
public final class Counter {
    private long value = 0;

    public synchronized long getValue() {
        return value;
    }

    public synchronized long increment() {
        if (value == Long.MAX_VALUE) {
            throw new IllegalStateException("Counter Overflow");
        }
        value++;
        return value;
    }
}
```

Making a class thread-safe

- Ensure that invariants hold under concurrent access
  - We need to reason about state
- Object and variables have state space
  - Range of possible states
  - Keep this small so that it is easier to reason about

Classes have invariants that tag certain states as valid or invalid

- Looking back at our Counter example
  - The value field is a long
  - The state space ranges from Long.MIN_VALUE to Long.MAX_VALUE
  - The class places constraints on value
    - Negative values are not allowed

Operations may have post conditions that tag state transitions as invalid

- Looking back at our Counter example
  - If the current state of Counter is 17
    - The only valid next state is 18
  - When the next state is derived from the current state?
    - Compound action
  - Not all operations impose state transition constraints
    - For e.g. if a variable tracks current temperature, previous state doesn’t impact current state

Constraints and synchronization requirements

- If certain states are invalid?
  - Underlying state variables should be encapsulated
    - If not, client code can put it in an inconsistent state
- If an operation has invalid state transitions?
  - It must be made atomic

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Course: CS455: Introduction to Distributed Systems

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Looking at a case where invariants constrain multiple state variables

```java
public class NumberRange {
    private final AtomicInteger lower = new AtomicInteger(0);
    private final AtomicInteger upper = new AtomicInteger(0);

    public void setLower(int i) {
        if (i > upper.get())
            throw IllegalArgumentException("lower > upper!");
        lower.set(i);
    }

    public void setUpper(int i) {
        if (i < lower.get())
            throw IllegalArgumentException("upper < lower!");
        upper.set(i);
    }

    public boolean isInRange(int i) {
        return (i >= lower.get() && i <= upper.get());
    }
}
```

Problems with NumberRange

- Does not preserve invariant that constrains `lower` and `upper`
- The methods `setLower` and `setUpper` attempt this preservation
  - But they do so poorly!
  - They are check-then-act sequences that use insufficient locking that precludes atomicity

Multivariable invariants

- Related variables must be fetched or updated in an atomic operation
- Don’t:
  - Update one
  - Release and reacquire lock, and ...
  - Then update others
- The lock that guards the variables
  - Must be held for the duration of any operation that accesses them

State-dependent operations

- Objects may have state-based pre-conditions
  - E.g., cannot remove item from an empty queue
- In a single-threaded program
  - Operations simply fail
- In a concurrent program
  - Precondition may be true later because of the actions of another thread

State-dependent operations: Mechanisms

- `wait()/notify()`
  - Supported by the JVM and closely tied with intrinsic locking
- Other possibilities
  - Use classes such as blocking queues or semaphores
**State Ownership**

- Defining which variables form an object’s state
  - We wish to consider only that which the object owns
- Ownership
  - Not explicitly specified in the language
  - Element of program design

**State ownership**

- Object encapsulates the state it owns
  - Owns the state it encapsulates
- Owner gets to decide on the locking protocol
- If you publish a reference to a mutable object?
  - You no longer have exclusive control

**Instance confinement**

- Object may not be thread-safe
  - But we could still use it in a thread-safe fashion
- Ensure that:
  - It is accessed by only one thread
  - All accesses guarded by a lock

**Confinement and locking working together**

```java
public class PersonSet {
    private final Set<Person> mySet = new HashSet<Person>();
    public synchronized void addPerson(Person p) {
        mySet.add(p);
    }
    public synchronized boolean containsPerson(Person p) {
        return mySet.contains(p);
    }
}
```

**Looking at our previous example**

- State of PersonSet managed by HashSet, which is not thread-safe
  - But mySet is
    - Private
    - Not allowed to escape
    - Confined to PersonSet
But we have made no assumptions about Person

- If it is mutable, additional synchronization is needed
  - When accessing Person from PersonSet
- Reliable way to achieve this?
  - Make Person thread-safe
- Less-reliable way?
  - Guard Person objects with a lock
  - Ensure that clients follow protocol of acquiring appropriate lock, before accessing Person

Instance confinement is the easiest way to build thread-safe classes

- Class that confines it state can be analyzed for thread-safety
  - Without having to examine the whole program

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Guarding state with a private lock

```java
public class PrivateLock {
    private final Object myLock = new Object();
    private Widget widget; //guarded by myLock

    public void someMethod() {
        synchronized(myLock) {
            //Access and modify the state of the widget
        }
    }
}
```

Why guard state with a private lock?

- Doing so encapsulates the lock
  - Client code cannot acquire it!
- Publicly accessible lock allows client code to participate in its synchronization policy
  - Correctly or incorrectly
- Clients that improperly acquire an object's lock cause liveness issues
- Verifying correctness with public locks requires examining the entire program not just a class

Guarding state with a private lock

The contents of this slide-set are based on the following references

- https://www.javaspecialists.eu/archive/issue192b.html