

Mutual Exclusion: Primitives and Implementation Considerations

Too Much Milk: Lessons

- ◆ Software solution (Peterson's algorithm) works, but it is unsatisfactory
 - Solution is complicated; proving correctness is tricky even for the simple example
 - While thread is waiting, it is consuming CPU time
 - Asymmetric solution exists for 2 processes.

- ◆ How can we do better?
 - Use hardware features to eliminate busy waiting
 - Define higher-level programming abstractions to simplify concurrent programming

Concurrency Quiz

If two threads execute this program concurrently, how many different final values of X are there?

Initially, X == 0.

Thread 1

```
void increment() {  
    int temp = X;  
    temp = temp + 1;  
    X = temp;  
}
```

Thread 2

```
void increment() {  
    int temp = X;  
    temp = temp + 1;  
    X = temp;  
}
```

Answer:

A. 0

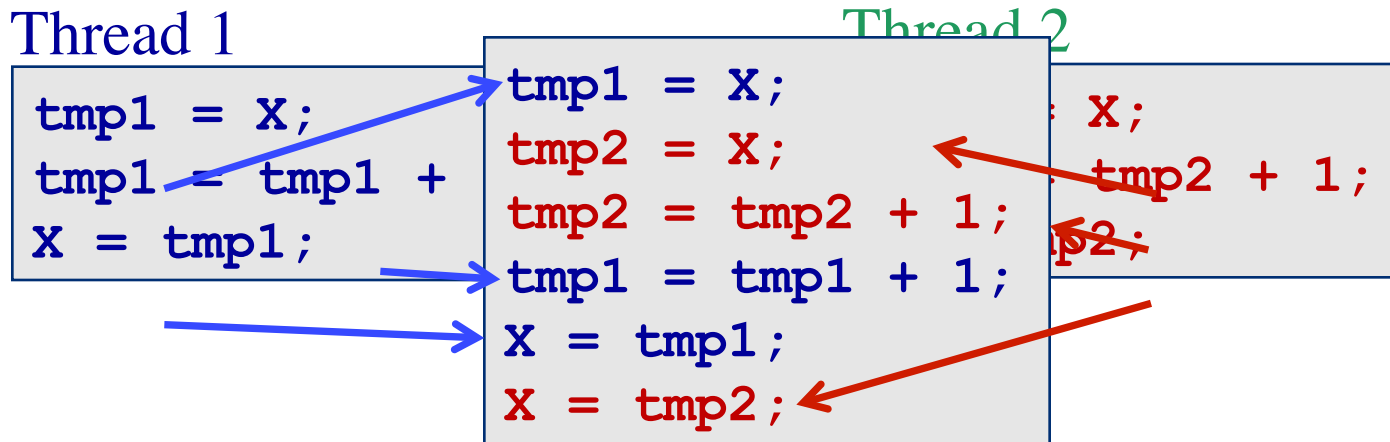
B. 1

C. 2

D. More than 2

Schedules/Interleavings

- ◆ Model of concurrent execution
- ◆ Interleave statements from each thread into a single thread
- ◆ If **any** interleaving yields incorrect results, some synchronization is needed



If $X == 0$ initially, $X == 1$ at the end. **WRONG** result!

Locks fix this with Mutual Exclusion

```
void increment() {  
    lock.acquire();  
    int temp = X;  
    temp = temp + 1;  
    X = temp;  
    lock.release();  
}
```

- ◆ Mutual exclusion ensures only safe interleavings
 - *When is mutual exclusion too safe?*

Introducing Locks

- ◆ **Locks** – implement mutual exclusion
 - Two methods
 - ❖ Lock::Acquire() – wait until lock is free, then grab it
 - ❖ Lock::Release() – release the lock, waking up a waiter, if any
- ◆ With locks, too much milk problem is very easy!
 - Check and update happen as one unit (exclusive access)

```
Lock.Acquire();  
if (noMilk) {  
    buy milk;  
}  
Lock.Release();
```

```
Lock.Acquire();  
x++;  
Lock.Release();
```

How can we implement locks?

How to think about synchronization code

- ◆ Every thread has the same pattern
 - Entry section: code to attempt entry to critical section
 - Critical section: code that requires isolation (e.g., with mutual exclusion)
 - Exit section: cleanup code after execution of critical region
 - Non-critical section: everything else
- ◆ There can be multiple critical regions in a program
 - Only critical regions that access the same resource (e.g., data structure) need to synchronize with each other

```
while(1) {  
    Entry section  
    Critical section  
    Exit section  
    Non-critical section  
}
```

The correctness conditions

◆ Safety

- Only one thread in the critical region

◆ Liveness

- Some thread that enters the entry section eventually enters the critical region
- Even if other thread takes forever in non-critical region

◆ Bounded waiting

- A thread that enters the entry section enters the critical section within some bounded number of operations.

◆ Failure atomicity

- It is OK for a thread to die in the critical region
- Many techniques do not provide failure atomicity

```
while(1) {  
    Entry section  
    Critical section  
    Exit section  
    Non-critical section  
}
```


Read-Modify-Write (RMW)

- ◆ Implement locks using read-modify-write instructions
 - As an atomic and isolated action
 1. read a memory location into a register, **AND**
 2. write a new value to the location
 - Implementing RMW is tricky in multi-processors
 - ❖ Requires cache coherence hardware. Caches snoop the memory bus.
- ◆ Examples:
 - Test&set instructions (most architectures)
 - ❖ Reads a value from memory
 - ❖ Write “1” back to memory location
 - Compare & swap (a.k.a. cmpxchg on x86)
 - ❖ Test the value against some constant
 - ❖ If the test returns true, set value in memory to different value
 - ❖ Report the result of the test in a flag
 - ❖ if [addr] == r1 then [addr] = r2;
 - Double Compare & Swap (68000)
 - ❖ Variant: if [addr1] == r1 then [addr2] = r2
 - Exchange, locked increment, locked decrement (x86)
 - Load linked/store conditional (PowerPC,Alpha, MIPS)

Implementing Locks with Test&set

```
int lock_value = 0;  
int* lock = &lock_value;
```

```
Lock::Acquire() {  
    while (test&set(lock) == 1)  
        ; //spin  
}
```

```
Lock::Release() {  
    *lock = 0;  
}
```

- ◆ If lock is free (`lock_value == 0`), then `test&set` reads 0 and sets value to 1 → lock is set to busy and `Acquire` completes
- ◆ If lock is busy, the `test&set` reads 1 and sets value to 1 → no change in lock's status and `Acquire` loops
- ◆ Does this lock have bounded waiting?

Locks and Busy Waiting

```
Lock::Acquire() {  
    while (test&set(lock) == 1)  
        ; // spin  
}
```

- ◆ Busy-waiting:
 - Threads consume CPU cycles while waiting
 - Low latency to acquire
- ◆ Limitations
 - Occupies a CPU core
 - What happens if threads have different priorities?
 - ❖ Busy-waiting thread remains runnable
 - ❖ If the thread waiting for a lock has higher priority than the thread occupying the lock, then ?
 - ❖ Ugh, I just wanted to lock a data structure, but now I'm involved with the scheduler!
 - What if programmer forgets to unlock?

Remember to always release locks

- ◆ Java provides a convenient mechanism.

```
import
    java.util.concurrent.locks.ReentrantLock;
public static final aLock = new
    ReentrantLock();

aLock.lock();
try {
    ...
} finally {
    aLock.unlock();
}
return 0;
```

Remember to always release locks

- ◆ Java also has implicit locks:

```
synchronized void method(void) {  
    XXX  
}
```

is short for

```
void method(void) {  
    synchronized(this) {  
        XXX }}
```

is short for

```
void method(void) {  
    this.l.lock();  
    try {  
        XXX } finally {  
            this.l.unlock(); }  
}
```

Cheaper Locks with Cheaper busy waiting

Using Test&Set

```
Lock::Acquire() {  
while (test&set(lock) == 1);  
}
```

With busy-waiting

```
Lock::Release() {  
*lock = 0;  
}
```

```
Lock::Acquire() {  
while(1) {  
if (test&set(lock) == 0) break;  
else sleep(1);  
}
```

With voluntary yield of CPU

```
Lock::Release() {  
*lock = 0;  
}
```

- ◆ What is the problem with this?
 - A. CPU usage B. Memory usage C. Lock::Acquire() latency
 - D. Memory bus usage E. Messes up interrupt handling

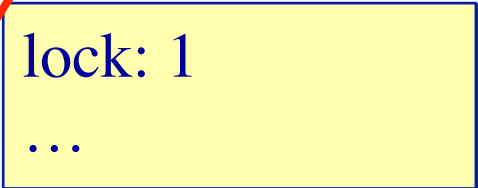
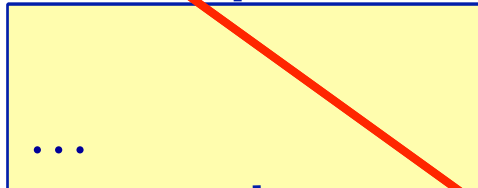
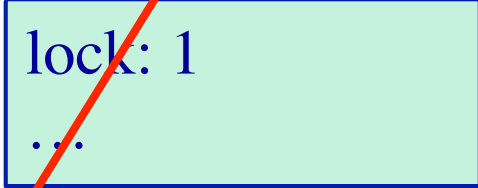
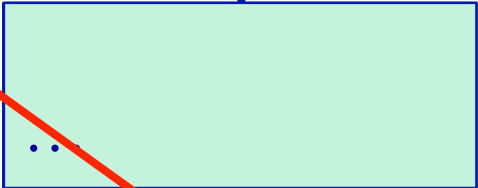
Test & Set with Memory Hierarchies

What happens to lock variable's cache line when different cpu's contend for the same lock?

Load
can
stall

```
CPU A  
while(test&set(lock));  
// in critical region
```

```
CPU B  
while(test&set(lock));
```



Line bounces
between caches

Cheap Locks with Cheap busy waiting

Using Test&Test&Set

```
Lock::Acquire() {  
while (test&set(lock) == 1);  
}
```

Busy-wait on in-memory copy

```
Lock::Release() {  
*lock = 0;  
}
```

```
Lock::Acquire() {  
while(1) {  
while (*lock == 1); // spin just reading  
if (test&set(lock) == 0) break;  
}
```

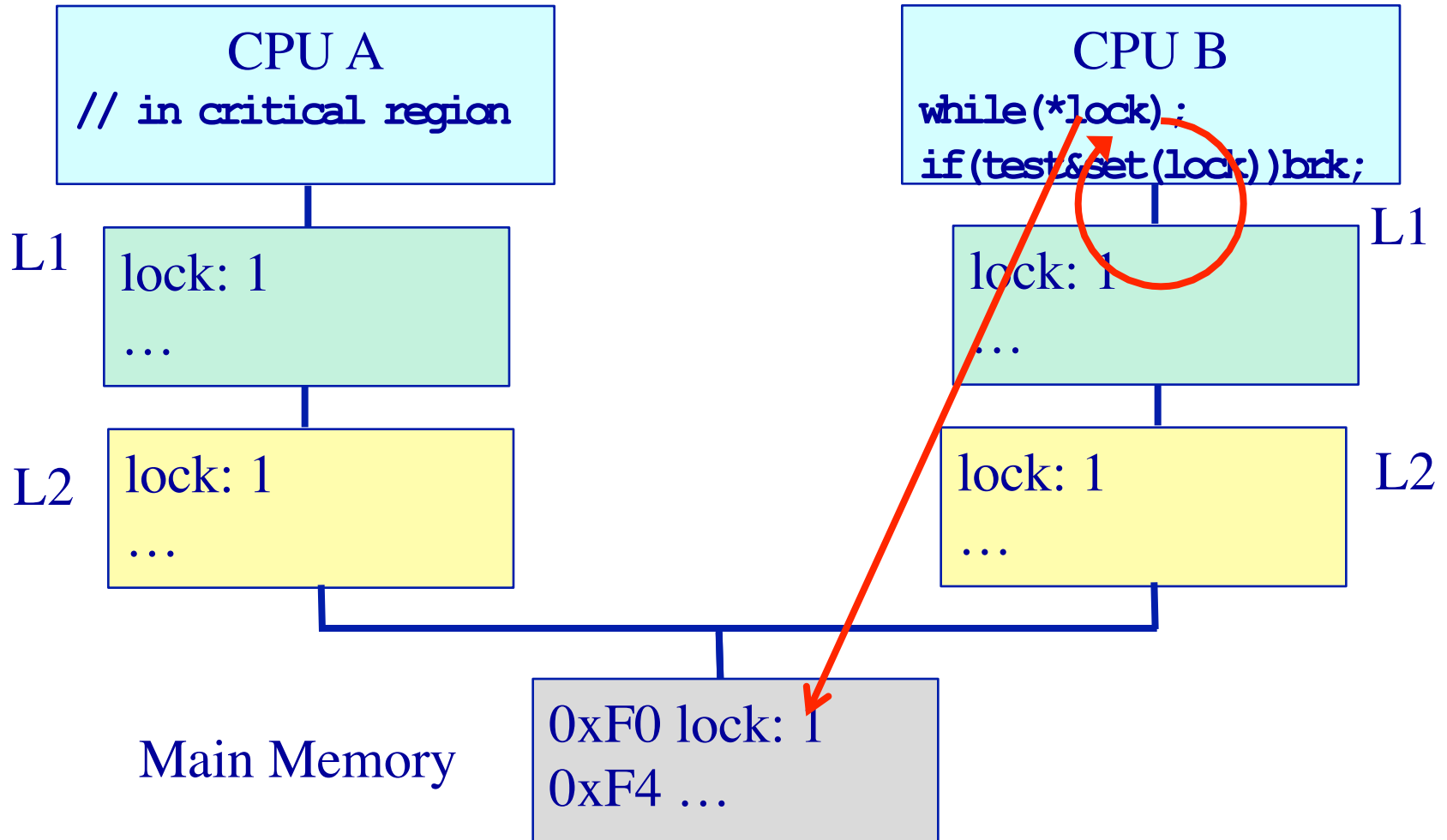
Busy-wait on cached copy

```
Lock::Release() {  
*lock = 0;  
}
```

- ◆ What is the problem with this?
 - A. CPU usage B. Memory usage C. Lock::Acquire() latency
 - D. Memory bus usage E. Does not work

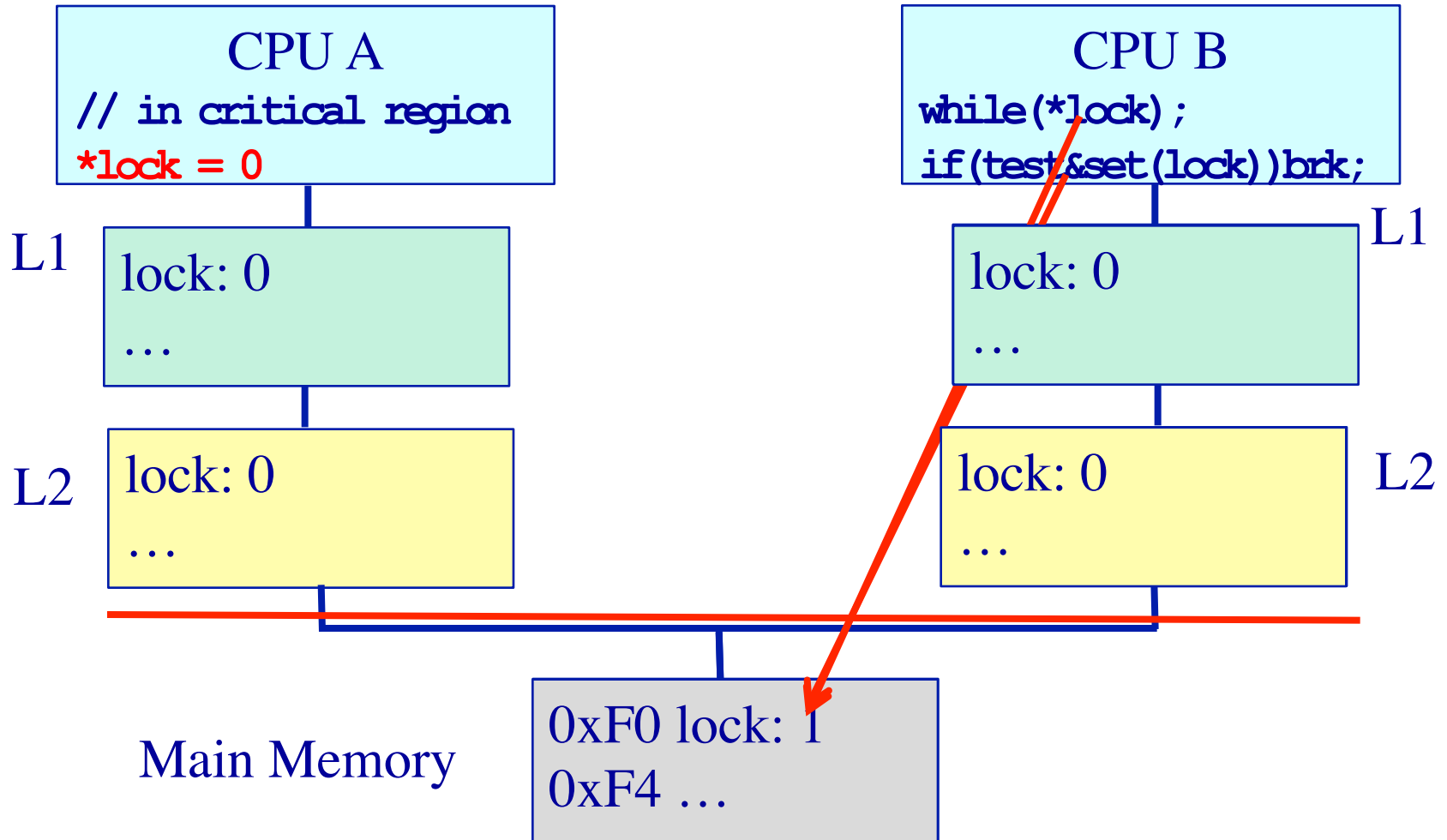
Test & Set with Memory Hierarchies

What happens to lock variable's cache line when different cpu's contend for the same lock?



Test & Set with Memory Hierarchies

What happens to lock variable's cache line when different cpu's contend for the same lock?



Implementing Locks: Summary

- ◆ Locks are higher-level programming abstraction
 - Mutual exclusion can be implemented using locks
- ◆ Lock implementation generally requires some level of hardware support
 - Details of hardware support affects efficiency of locking
- ◆ Locks can busy-wait, and busy-waiting cheaply is important
 - Soon come primitives that block rather than busy-wait

Best Practices for Lock Programming (So Far...)

- ◆ When you enter a critical region, check what may have changed while you were spinning
 - Did Jill get milk while I was waiting on the lock?
- ◆ Always unlock any locks you acquire

Implementing Locks without Busy Waiting (blocking)

Using Test&Set

```
Lock::Acquire() {  
  while (test&set(lock) == 1)  
    ; // spin  
}
```

With busy-waiting

```
Lock::Release() {  
  *lock := 0;  
}
```

```
Lock::Switch() {  
  q_lock = 0;  
  pid = schedule();  
  if(waited_on_lock(pid))  
    while(test&set(q_lock)==1) ;  
  dispatch pid  
}
```

```
Lock::Acquire() {  
  if (test&set(q_lock) == 1) {  
    Put TCB on wait queue for lock;  
    Lock::Switch(); // dispatch thread  
  }
```

Without busy-waiting, use a queue

```
Lock::Release() {  
  if (wait queue is not empty) {  
    Move 1 (or all?) waiting threads to ready  
    queue;  
  }  
  *q_lock = 0;
```

Must only 1 thread be awakened?

Implementing Locks: Summary

- ◆ Locks are higher-level programming abstraction
 - Mutual exclusion can be implemented using locks
- ◆ Lock implementations have 2 key ingredients:
 - Hardware instruction that does atomic read-modify-write
 - ❖ Uni- and multi-processor architectures
 - Blocking mechanism
 - ❖ Busy waiting, or
 - ❖ Block on a scheduler queue in the OS
- ◆ Locks are good for mutual exclusion but weak for coordination, e.g., producer/consumer patterns.

Why Locks are Hard (Preview)

- ◆ Coarse-grain locks
 - Simple to develop
 - Easy to avoid deadlock
 - Few data races
 - Limited concurrency

- ◆ Fine-grain locks
 - Greater concurrency
 - Greater code complexity
 - Potential deadlocks
 - ❖ Not composable
 - Potential data races
 - ❖ Which lock to lock?

```
// WITH FINE-GRAIN LOCKS
void move(T s, T d, Obj key) {
    LOCK(s);
    LOCK(d);
    tmp = s.remove(key);
    d.insert(key, tmp);
    UNLOCK(d);
    UNLOCK(s);
}
```

```
Thread 0          Thread 1
move(a, b, key1);
                    move(b, a, key2);
```

DEADLOCK!