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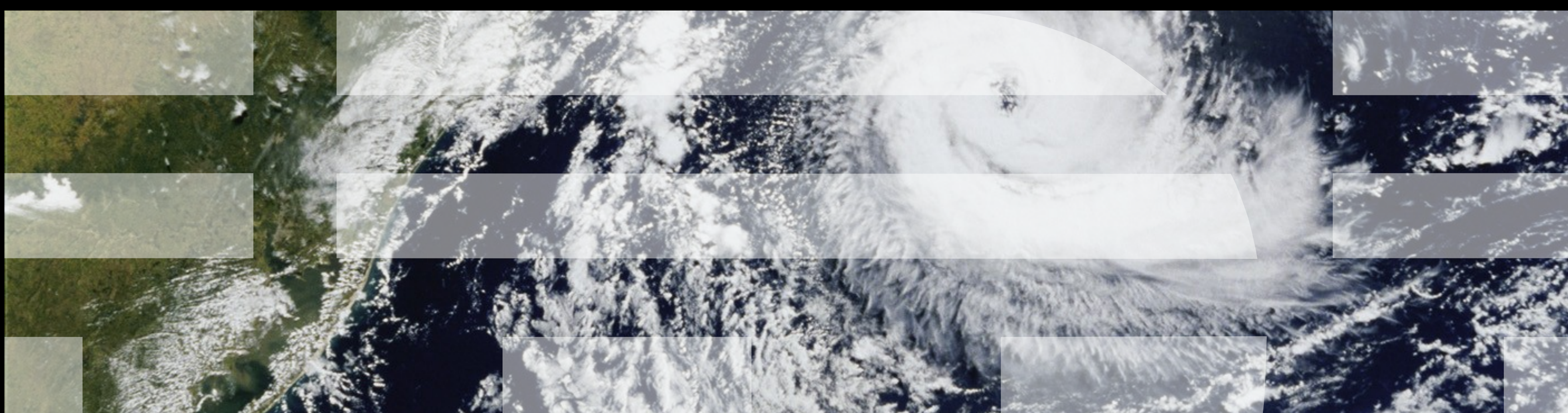
Linux-Kernel Community Validation Practices



Two Definitions and a Consequence

- A non-trivial software system contains at least one bug
- A reliable software system contains no known bugs

- Therefore, any non-trivial reliable software system contains at least one bug that you don't know about
- Yet there are more than a billion users of the Linux kernel
  - In practice, validation is about reducing risk
  - Can formal verification now take a front-row seat in this risk reduction?
- ***What would need to happen for me to include formal verification in my Linux-kernel RCU regression testing?***

Current Linux-Kernel Regression Testing

- Stress-test suite example: “rcutorture”
  - http://lwn.net/Articles/154107/, http://lwn.net/Articles/622404/
- “Intelligent fuzz testing”: “trinity”, “syzkaller”
  - http://codemonkey.org.uk/projects/trinity/
  - https://github.com/google/syzkaller/wiki/Found-Bugs
- Test suite including static analysis: “0-day test robot”
  - https://lwn.net/Articles/514278/
- Integration testing: “linux-next tree”
  - https://lwn.net/Articles/571980/
- **Above is old technology – but not entirely ineffective**
  - 2010: wait for -rc3 or -rc4. 2013: No problems with -rc1
- Formal verification in design, but not in regression testing
  - http://lwn.net/Articles/243851/, https://lwn.net/Articles/470681/, https://lwn.net/Articles/608550/

Formal Verification and Regression Testing: Requirements

(1) Either automatic translation or no translation required
- Automatic discarding of irrelevant portions of the code
- Manual translation provides opportunity for human error!

(2) Correctly handle environment, including memory model
- The QRCU validation benchmark is an excellent cautionary tale

(3) Reasonable memory and CPU overhead
- Bugs must be located in practice as well as in theory
- Linux-kernel RCU is 15KLoC (plus 5KLoC tests) and release cycles are short

(4) Map to source code line(s) containing the bug
- "Something is wrong somewhere" is not helpful: I already **know** bugs exist

(5) Modest input outside of source code under test
- Preferably glean much of the specification from the source code itself (empirical spec!)
- Specifications are software and can have their own bugs

(6) Find relevant bugs
- Low false-positive rate, weight towards likelihood of occurrence (fixes create bugs!)

Discussion

Ongoing Work

- Ahmed, Groce, and Jensen: Use mutation generation and formal verification to find holes in rcutorture
  - Several holes found, one hiding a real bug
- Liang, Tautschnig, and Kroening: Experiments verifying RCU and uses of RCU using CBMC
- Alglave, Maranget, Parri, Stern, and many arch maintainers: Derive formal memory model for Linux kernel
  - Including RCU, and will drive other tool development
- I hope to someday apply L4's techniques
  - But these currently don't handle all of RCU's code

Formal Validation Tools Used and Regression Testing

- Promela and Spin
  - Holzmann: "The Spin Model Checker"
  - I have used Promela/Spin in design for more than 20 years, but:
    - Limited problem size, long run times, large memory consumption
    - Does not implement memory models (assumes sequential consistency)
    - Special language, difficult to translate from C
- ARMMEM and PPCMEM (2)
  - Alglave, Maranget, Pawan, Sarkar, Sewell, Williams, Nardelli: "PPCMEM/ARMMEM: A Tool for Exploring the POWER and ARM Memory Models"
    - Very limited problem size, long run times, large memory consumption
    - Restricted pseudo-assembly language, manual translation required
- Herd (2, 3)
  - Alglave, Maranget, and Tautschnig: "Herding Cats: Modelling, Simulation, Testing, and Data-mining for Weak Memory"
    - Very limited problem size (but much improved run times and memory consumption)
    - Restricted pseudo-assembly language, manual translation required

Useful, but not for regression testing

Cautiously Optimistic For Future CBMC Version

(1) Either automatic translation or no translation required
- No translation required from C, discards irrelevant code quite well

(2) Correctly handle environment, including memory model
- SC and TSO, hopefully will do other memory models in the future

(3) Reasonable memory and CPU overhead
- OK for Tiny RCU and some tiny uses of concurrent RCU, Tree RCU WIP
- Jury is out for concurrent linked-list manipulations
- "If you live by heuristics, you will die by heuristics"

(4) Map to source code line(s) containing the bug
- Yes, reasonably good backtrace capability

(5) Modest input outside of source code under test
- Yes, modest boilerplate required, can use existing assertions

(6) Find relevant bugs
- Jury still out

Kroening, Clarke, and Lerda, "A tool for checking ANSI-C programs", *Tools and Algorithms for the Construction and Analysis of Systems, 2004,* pp. 168-176.

Formal Verification Challenge

Formal Verification Challenge

- Testing has many shortcomings
  - Cannot find bugs in code not exercised
  - Cannot reasonably exhaustively test even small software systems
- Nevertheless, a number of independently developed test harnesses have found bugs in Linux-kernel RCU
  - Trinity, 0-day test robot, -next testing, mutation testing
- As far as I know, no independently developed formal-verification model has yet found a bug in Linux-kernel RCU
  - Therefore, this challenge:

Formal Verification Challenge

- Can you verify SYSIDLE from C source?
  - Or, better yet, find a bug
- This Verification Challenge 2:
  - http://paulmck.livejournal.com/38016.html
- Mathieu Desnoyers and I verified (separately) with Promela:
  - https://www.kernel.org/pub/linux/kernel/people/paulmck/Validation/sysidle/
- But neither Promela/spin is not suitable for regression testing
- Can your formal-verification tool regression-test SYSIDLE?
- Or find some other Linux-kernel bug?

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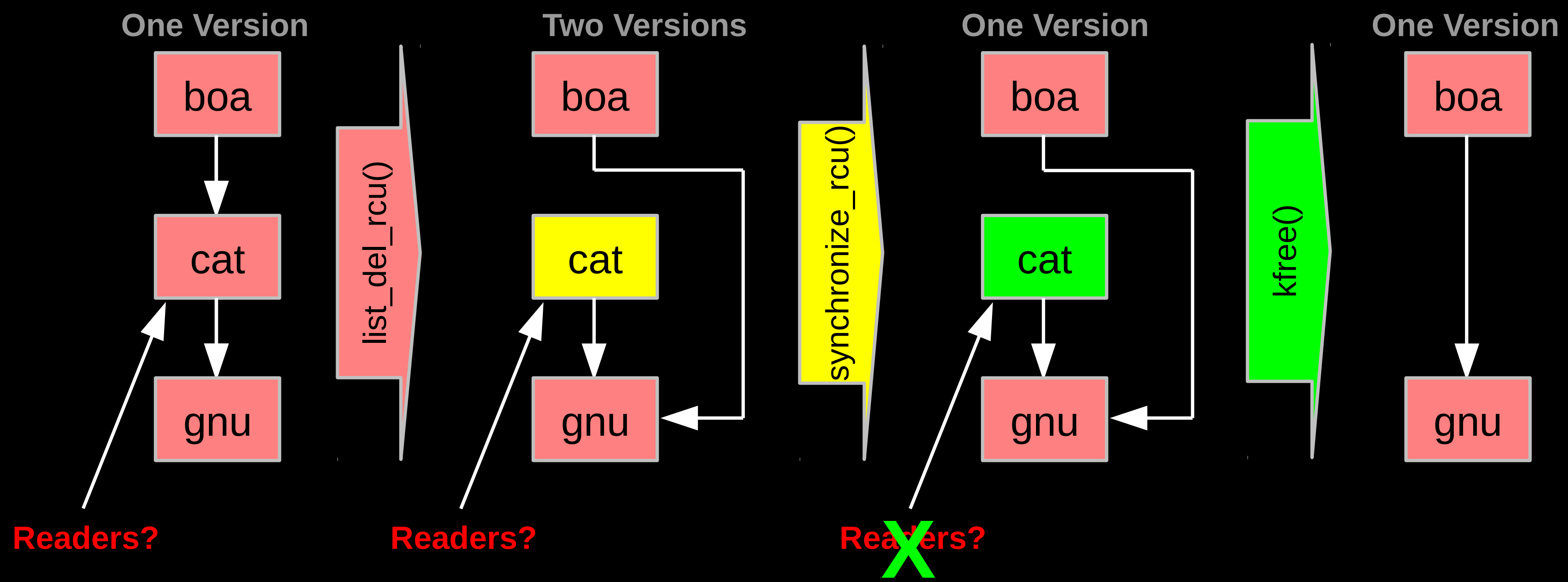
Backup RCU Slides

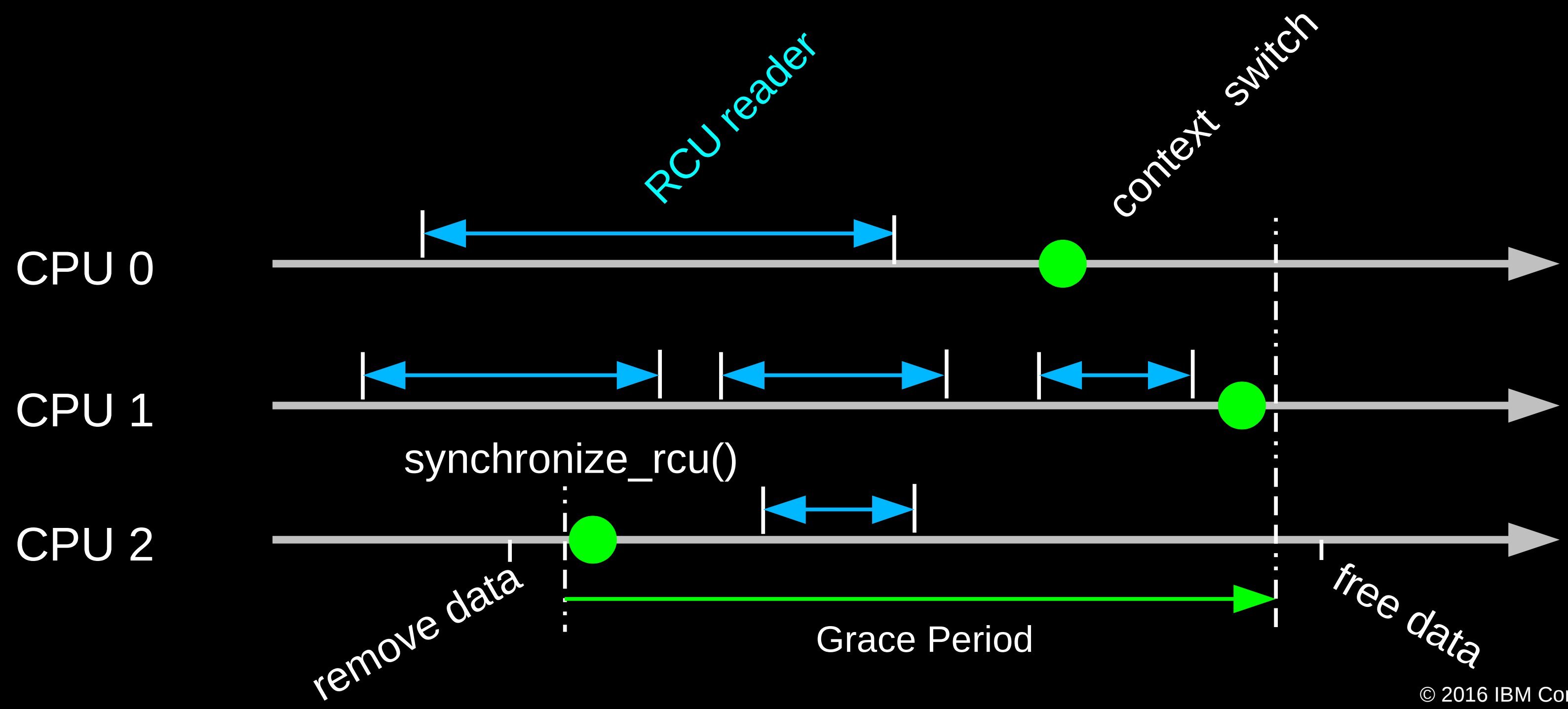
RCU Removal From Linked List

- Combines waiting for readers and multiple versions:
  - Writer removes the cat's element from the list (list_del_rcu())
  - Writer waits for all readers to finish (synchronize_rcu())
  - Writer can then free the cat's element (kfree())



Waiting for Pre-Existing Readers

- Non-preemptive environment (CONFIG_PREEMPT=n)
  - RCU readers are not permitted to block
  - Same rule as for tasks holding spinlocks
- CPU context switch means all that CPU's readers are done
- *Grace period* ends after all CPUs execute a context switch



Toy Implementation of RCU: 20 Lines of Code

- Read-side primitives:

```
#define rcu_read_lock()
#define rcu_read_unlock()
#define rcu_dereference(p) \
({ \
        typeof(p) _p1 = (*(volatile typeof(p)*)&(p)); \
        smp_read_barrier_depends(); \
        _p1; \
})
```

- Update-side primitives

```
#define rcu_assign_pointer(p, v) \
({ \
        smp_wmb(); \
        (p) = (v); \
})
void synchronize_rcu(void)
{
        int cpu;

        for_each_online_cpu(cpu)
                run_on(cpu);
}
```

Only 9 of which are needed on sequentially consistent systems

To Probe Deeper (RCU)

- https://queue.acm.org/detail.cfm?id=2488549
  - "Structured Deferral: Synchronization via Procrastination" (also in July 2013 CACM)
- http://doi.ieeecomputersociety.org/10.1109/TPDS.2011.159 and http://www.computer.org/cms/Computer.org/dl/trans/td/2012/02/extras/ttd2012020375s.pdf
  - "User-Level Implementations of Read-Copy Update"
- git://lttng.org/userspace-rcu.git (User-space RCU git tree)
- http://people.csail.mit.edu/nickolai/papers/clements-bonsai.pdf
  - Applying RCU and weighted-balance tree to Linux mmap_sem.
- http://www.usenix.org/event/atc11/tech/final_files/Triplett.pdf
  - RCU-protected resizable hash tables, both in kernel and user space
- http://www.usenix.org/event/hotpar11/tech/final_files/Howard.pdf
  - Combining RCU and software transactional memory
- http://wiki.cs.pdx.edu/rp/: Relativistic programming, a generalization of RCU
- http://lwn.net/Articles/262464/, http://lwn.net/Articles/263130/, http://lwn.net/Articles/264090/
  - "What is RCU?" Series
- http://www.rdrop.com/users/paulmck/RCU/RCUdissertation.2004.07.14e1.pdf
  - RCU motivation, implementations, usage patterns, performance (micro+sys)
- http://www.livejournal.com/users/james_morris/2153.html
  - System-level performance for SELinux workload: >500x improvement
- http://www.rdrop.com/users/paulmck/RCU/hart_ipdps06.pdf
  - Comparison of RCU and NBS (later appeared in JPDC)
- http://doi.acm.org/10.1145/1400097.1400099
  - History of RCU in Linux (Linux changed RCU more than vice versa)
- http://read.seas.harvard.edu/cs261/2011/rcu.html
  - Harvard University class notes on RCU (Courtesy of Eddie Koher)
- http://www.rdrop.com/users/paulmck/RCU/ (More RCU information)

To Probe Deeper (1/5)

- Hash tables:
  - http://kernel.org/pub/linux/kernel/people/paulmck/perfbook/perfbook-e1.html Chapter 10
- Split counters:
  - http://kernel.org/pub/linux/kernel/people/paulmck/perfbook/perfbook.html Chapter 5
  - http://events.linuxfoundation.org/sites/events/files/slides/BareMetal.2014.03.09a.pdf
- Perfect partitioning
  - Candide et al: “Dynamo: Amazon's highly available key-value store”
    - http://doi.acm.org/10.1145/1323293.1294281
  - McKenney: “Is Parallel Programming Hard, And, If So, What Can You Do About It?”
    - http://kernel.org/pub/linux/kernel/people/paulmck/perfbook/perfbook.html Section 6.5
  - McKenney: “Retrofitted Parallelism Considered Grossly Suboptimal”
    - Embarrassing parallelism vs. humiliating parallelism
    - https://www.usenix.org/conference/hotpar12/retro%EF%AC%81tted-parallelism-considered-grossly-sub-optimal
  - McKenney et al: “Experience With an Efficient Parallel Kernel Memory Allocator”
    - http://www.rdrop.com/users/paulmck/scalability/paper/mpalloc.pdf
  - Bonwick et al: “Magazines and Vmem: Extending the Slab Allocator to Many CPUs and Arbitrary Resources”
    - http://static.usenix.org/event/usenix01/full_papers/bonwick/bonwick_html/
  - Turner et al: “PerCPU Atomics”
    - http://www.linuxplumbersconf.org/2013/ocw//system/presentations/1695/original/LPC%20-%20PerCpu%20Atomics.pdf

To Probe Deeper (2/5)

- Stream-based applications:
  - Sutton: “Concurrent Programming With The Disruptor”
    - http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UvE389P6Er4
    - http://lca2013.linux.org.au/schedule/30168/view_talk
  - Thompson: “Mechanical Sympathy”
    - http://mechanical-sympathy.blogspot.com/
- Read-only traversal to update location
  - Arcangeli et al: “Using Read-Copy-Update Techniques for System V IPC in the Linux 2.5 Kernel”
    - https://www.usenix.org/legacy/events/usenix03/tech/freenix03/full_papers/arcangeli/arcangeli_html/index.html
  - Corbet: “Dcache scalability and RCU-walk”
    - https://lwn.net/Articles/419811/
  - Xu: “bridge: Add core IGMP snooping support”
    - http://kerneltrap.com/mailarchive/linux-netdev/2010/2/26/6270589
  - Triplett et al., “Resizable, Scalable, Concurrent Hash Tables via Relativistic Programming”
    - http://www.usenix.org/event/atc11/tech/final_files/Triplett.pdf
  - Howard: “A Relativistic Enhancement to Software Transactional Memory”
    - http://www.usenix.org/event/hotpar11/tech/final_files/Howard.pdf
  - McKenney et al: “URCU-Protected Hash Tables”
    - http://lwn.net/Articles/573431/

To Probe Deeper (3/5)

- Hardware lock elision: Overviews
  - Kleen: "Scaling Existing Lock-based Applications with Lock Elision"
    - http://queue.acm.org/detail.cfm?id=2579227
- Hardware lock elision: Hardware description
  - POWER ISA Version 2.07
    - http://www.power.org/documentation/power-isa-version-2-07/
  - Intel® 64 and IA-32 Architectures Software Developer Manuals
    - http://www.intel.com/content/www/us/en/processors/architectures-software-developer-manuals.html
  - Jacobi et al: "Transactional Memory Architecture and Implementation for IBM System z"
    - http://www.microsymposia.org/micro45/talks-posters/3-jacobi-presentation.pdf
- Hardware lock elision: Evaluations
  - http://pcl.intel-research.net/publications/SC13-TSX.pdf
  - http://kernel.org/pub/linux/kernel/people/paulmck/perfbook/perfbook.html Section 16.3
- Hardware lock elision: Need for weak atomicity
  - Herlihy et al: "Software Transactional Memory for Dynamic-Sized Data Structures"
    - http://research.sun.com/scalable/pubs/PODC03.pdf
  - Shavit et al: "Data structures in the multicore age"
    - http://doi.acm.org/10.1145/1897852.1897873
  - Haas et al: "How FIFO is your FIFO queue?"
    - http://dl.acm.org/citation.cfm?id=2414731
  - Gramoli et al: "Democratizing transactional programming"
    - http://doi.acm.org/10.1145/2541883.2541900

To Probe Deeper (4/5)

- RCU
  - Desnoyers et al.: “User-Level Implementations of Read-Copy Update”
    - http://www.rdrop.com/users/paulmck/RCU/urcu-main-accepted.2011.08.30a.pdf
    - http://www.computer.org/cms/Computer.org/dl/trans/td/2012/02/extras/ttd2012020375s.pdf
  - McKenney et al.: “RCU Usage In the Linux Kernel: One Decade Later”
    - http://rdrop.com/users/paulmck/techreports/survey.2012.09.17a.pdf
    - http://rdrop.com/users/paulmck/techreports/RCUUsage.2013.02.24a.pdf
  - McKenney: “Structured deferral: synchronization via procrastination”
    - http://doi.acm.org/10.1145/2483852.2483867
  - McKenney et al.: “User-space RCU” https://lwn.net/Articles/573424/
- Possible future additions
  - Boyd-Wickizer: “Optimizing Communications Bottlenecks in Multiprocessor Operating Systems Kernels”
    - http://pdos.csail.mit.edu/papers/sbw-phd-thesis.pdf
  - Clements et al: “The Scalable Commutativity Rule: Designing Scalable Software for Multicore Processors”
    - http://www.read.seas.harvard.edu/~kohler/pubs/clements13scalable.pdf
  - McKenney: “N4037: Non-Transactional Implementation of Atomic Tree Move”
    - http://www.rdrop.com/users/paulmck/scalability/paper/AtomicTreeMove.2014.05.26a.pdf
  - McKenney: “C++ Memory Model Meets High-Update-Rate Data Structures”
    - http://www2.rdrop.com/users/paulmck/RCU/C++Updates.2014.09.11a.pdf

To Probe Deeper (5/5)

- RCU theory and semantics, academic contributions (partial list)
  - Gamsa et al., “Tornado: Maximizing Locality and Concurrency in a Shared Memory Multiprocessor Operating System”
    - http://www.usenix.org/events/osdi99/full_papers/gamsa/gamsa.pdf
  - McKenney, “Exploiting Deferred Destruction: An Analysis of RCU Techniques”
    - http://www.rdrop.com/users/paulmck/RCU/RCUdissertation.2004.07.14e1.pdf
  - Hart, “Applying Lock-free Techniques to the Linux Kernel”
    - http://www.cs.toronto.edu/~tomhart/masters_thesis.html
  - Olsson et al., “TRASH: A dynamic LC-trie and hash data structure”
    - http://ieeexplore.ieee.org/xpl/freeabs_all.jsp?arnumber=4281239
  - Desnoyers, “Low-Impact Operating System Tracing”
    - http://www.lttng.org/pub/thesis/desnoyers-dissertation-2009-12.pdf
  - Dalton, “The Design and Implementation of Dynamic Information Flow Tracking ...”
    - http://csl.stanford.edu/~christos/publications/2009.michael_dalton.phd_thesis.pdf
  - Gotsman et al., “Verifying Highly Concurrent Algorithms with Grace (extended version)”
    - http://software.imdea.org/~gotsman/papers/recycling-esop13-ext.pdf
  - Liu et al., “Mindicators: A Scalable Approach to Quiescence”
    - http://dx.doi.org/10.1109/ICDCS.2013.39
  - Tu et al., “Speedy Transactions in Multicore In-memory Databases”
    - http://doi.acm.org/10.1145/2517349.2522713
  - Arbel et al., “Concurrent Updates with RCU: Search Tree as an Example”
    - http://www.cs.technion.ac.il/~mayaarl/podc047f.pdf

Backup Promela/PPCMEM/Herd Slides

Promela Model of Incorrect Atomic Increment (1/2)

```
#define NUMPROCS 2

byte counter = 0;
byte progress[NUMPROCS];

proctype incrementer(byte me)
{
  int temp;

  temp = counter;
  counter = temp + 1;
  progress[me] = 1;
}
```

Promela Model of Incorrect Atomic Increment (2/2)

```
init {
  int i = 0;
  int sum = 0;

  atomic {
    i = 0;
    do
    :: i < NUMPROCS ->
      progress[i] = 0;
      run incrementer(i);
      i++
    :: i >= NUMPROCS -> break
    od;
  }
  atomic {
    i = 0;
    sum = 0;
    do
    :: i < NUMPROCS ->
      sum = sum + progress[i];
      i++
    :: i >= NUMPROCS -> break
    od;
    assert(sum < NUMPROCS || counter == NUMPROCS)
  }
}
```

PPCMEM Example Litmus Test for IRIW

```
PPC IRIW.litmus
""
(* Traditional IRIW. *)
{
0:r1=1; 0:r2=x;
1:r1=1;         1:r4=y;
2:      2:r2=x; 2:r4=y;
3:      3:r2=x; 3:r4=y;
}
 P0             | P1             | P2                    | P3                    ;
 stw r1,0(r2)   | stw r1,0(r4)   | lwz r3,0(r2)          | lwz r3,0(r4)          ;
                |                | sync                  | sync                  ;
                |                | lwz r5,0(r4)          | lwz r5,0(r2)          ;

exists
(2:r3=1 /\ 2:r5=0 /\ 3:r3=1 /\ 3:r5=0)
```

Fourteen CPU hours and 10 GB of memory

Herd Example Litmus Test for Incorrect IRIW

```
PPC IRIW-lwsync-f.litmus
""
(* Traditional IRIW. *)
{
0:r1=1; 0:r2=x;
1:r1=1;         1:r4=y;
2:      2:r2=x; 2:r4=y;
3:      3:r2=x; 3:r4=y;
}
 P0           | P1           | P2                 | P3                 ;
 stw r1,0(r2) | stw r1,0(r4) | lwz r3,0(r2)       | lwz r3,0(r4)       ;
              |              | lwsync             | lwsync             ;
              |              | lwz r5,0(r4)       | lwz r5,0(r2)       ;

exists
(2:r3=1 /\ 2:r5=0 /\ 3:r3=1 /\ 3:r5=0)

. . .

Positive: 1 Negative: 15
Condition exists (2:r3=1 /\ 2:r5=0 /\ 3:r3=1 /\ 3:r5=0)
Observation IRIW Sometimes 1 15
```