CSCI 104
Iterators

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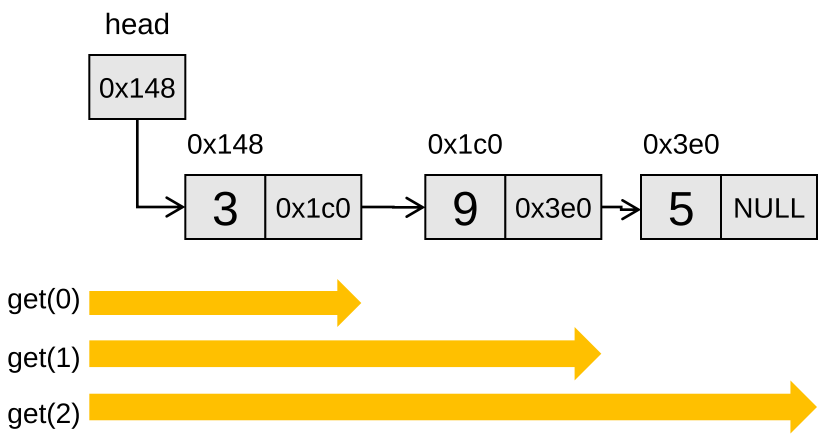
ITERATORS

Iteration

- Consider how you iterate over all the elements in a list
  - Use a for loop and get() or operator[]
- For an array list this is fine since each call to get() is O(1)
- For a linked list, calling get(i) requires taking i steps through the linked list
  - 0^{th} call = 0 steps
  - 1^{st} call = 1 step
  - 2^{nd} call = 2 steps
  - $0+1+2+\ldots+n-2+n-1 = O(n^2)$
- You are repeating the work of walking the list…

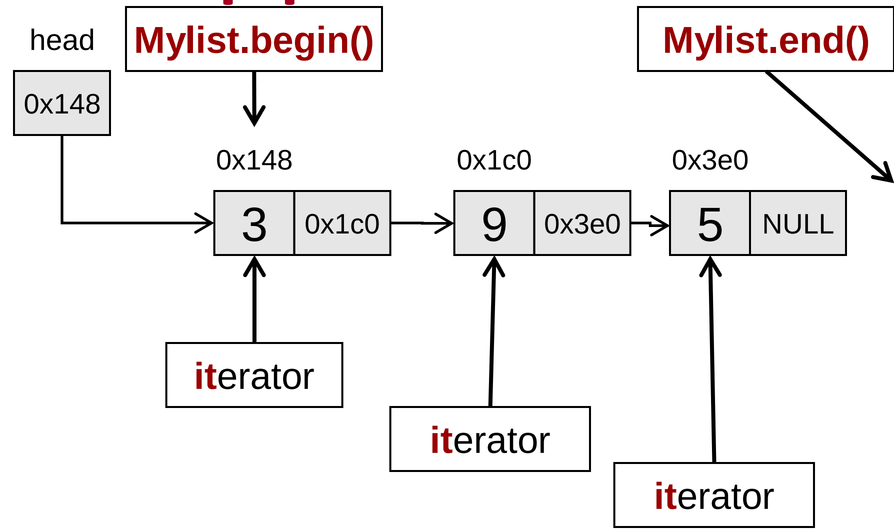
```
ArrayList<int> mylist;
...
for(int i=0; i < mylist.size(); ++i)
{
  cout << mylist.get(i) << endl;
}
```

```
LinkedList<int> mylist;
...
for(int i=0; i < mylist.size(); ++i)
{
  cout << mylist.get(i) << endl;
}
```



Iteration: A Better Approach

- Solution: Don't use get(i)
- Use an **iterator**
  - **Stores internal state variable (i.e. another pointer) that remembers where you are and allows taking steps efficiently**
- Iterator tracks the internal location of each successive item
- Iterators provide the semantics of a pointer (they look, smell, and act like a pointer to the values in the list
- Assume
  - Mylist.begin() returns an "iterator" to the beginning itme
  - Mylist.end() returns an iterator "one-beyond" the last item
  - ++it (preferrer) or it++ moves iterator on to the next value




```
LinkedList<int> mylist;
...
iterator it = mylist.begin()
for(it = mylist.begin();
    it !=  mylist.end();
    ++it)
{
  cout << *it << endl;
}
```

Why Iterators

- Can be more efficient
  - Keep internal state variable for where you are in your iteration process so you do NOT have to traverse (re-walk) the whole list every time you want the next value
- Hides the underlying implementation details from the user
  - User doesn't have to know whether its an array or linked list behind the scene to know how to move to the next value
    - To take a step with a pointer in array: ++ptr
    - To take a step with a pointer in a linked list: ptr = ptr->next
  - For some of the data structures like a BST the underlying structure is more complex and to go to the next node in a BST is not a trivial task

REVIEW OF OPERATOR OVERLOADING

A "Dumb" Pointer Class

- Challenge: Use operator overloading to make a "Dumb" pointer class (i.e. show how an object can do what a pointer can already do)
- Operator*
  - Should return reference (T&) to item pointed at
- Operator->
  - Per C++ standard (just do it)…should return a pointer (T*) to item be referenced
- Operator++() - Preincrement
  - Should return reference to itself iterator& (i.e. return *this)
- Operator++(int) - Postincrement
  - Should return another iterator pointing to current item will updating itself to point at the next
- Operator== & !=

```
template <typename T>
class DumbPtr
{ private:
    T* p_;
  public:
    DumbPtr(T* p) : p_(p) { }
    T& operator*() { return *p_; }
    T* operator->() { return p_; }
    DumbPtr& operator++()  // pre-inc
     { ++p_; return *this; }
    DumbPtr operator++(int)  // post-inc
     { DumbPtr x; x.p_ = p_; ++p_; return x; }
    bool operator==(const DumbPtr& rhs);
     { return p_ == rhs.p_; }
    bool operator!=(const DumbPtr& rhs);
     { return p_ != rhs.p_; }
};

int main() {
  int data[10];
  DumbPtr<int> ptr(data);
  for(int i=0; i < 10; i++){
    cout << *ptr;  ++ptr;
  }
  string s;  DumbPtr<string> sptr(&s);
  cout << sptr->size() << endl;
}
```

Pre- vs. Post-Increment

- Recall what makes a function signature unique is combination of name AND number/type of parameters
  - int f1() and void f1() are the same
  - int f1(int) and void f1() are unique
- When you write: obj++ or ++obj the name of the function will be the same: operator++
- To differentiate the designers of C++ arbitrarily said, we'll pass a dummy int to the operator++() for POST-increment
- So the prototypes look like this…
  - Preincrement: iterator& operator++();
  - Postincrement: iterator operator++(int);
    - Prototype the 'int' argument, but ignore it…never use it…
    - It's just to differentiate pre- from post-increment

Pre- vs. Post-Increment

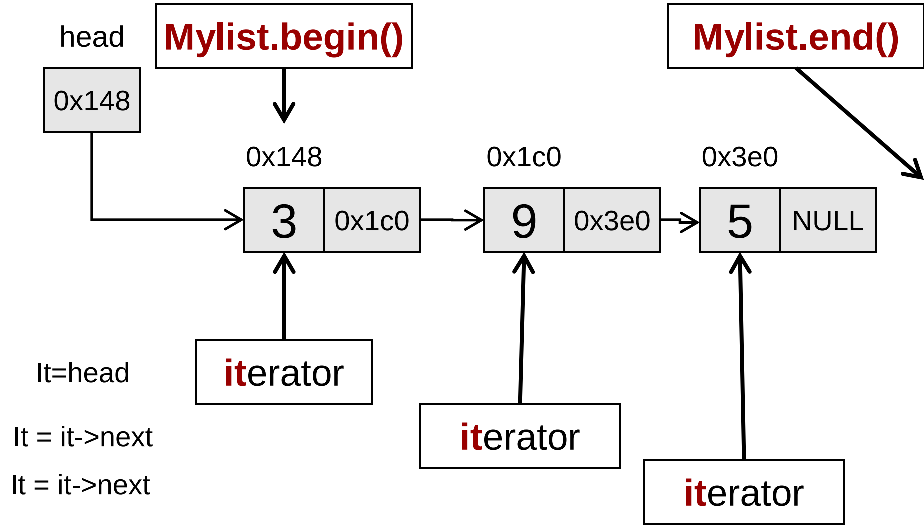
- Consider an expression like the following (a=1, b=5):
  - (a++ * b) + (a * ++b)
  - 1*5 + 2*6
  - Operator++ has higher precedence than multiply (*), so we do it first but the post increment means it should appear as if the old value of a is used
  - To achieve this, we could have the following kind of code:
  - a++ => { int x = a; a = a+1; return x; }
    - Make a copy of a (which we will use to evaluate the current expr.
    - Increment a so its ready to be used the next time
    - Return the copy of a that we made
  - Preincrement is much easier because we can update the value and then just use it
  - ++b => { b = b+1; return b;}
- Takeaway: Post-increment is "less efficient" because it causes a copy to be made

More operator overloading…

DEFINING ITERATORS

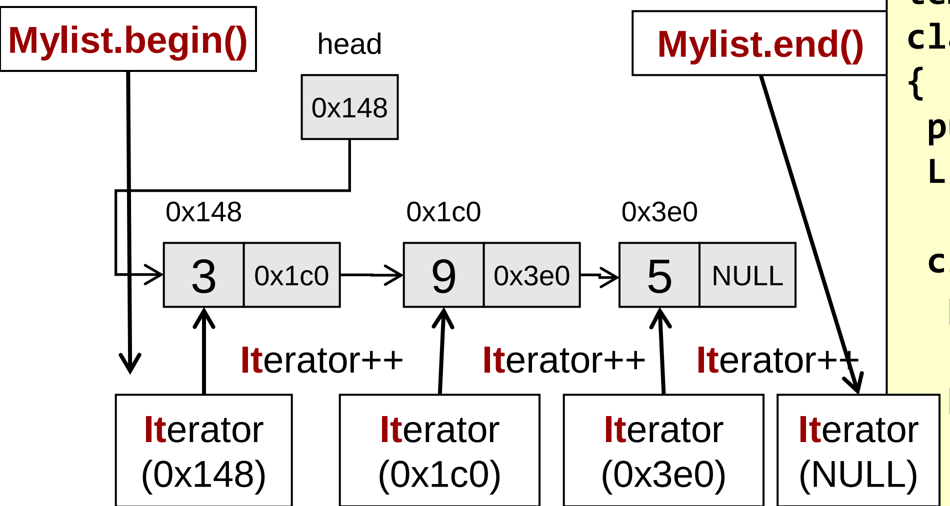
Building Our First Iterator

- Let's add an iterator to our Linked List class
  - Will be an object/class that holds some data that allows us to get an item in our list and move to the next item
  - How do you iterate over a linked list normally:
    - `Item<T>* temp = head;`
    - `While(temp) temp = temp->next;`
  - So my iterator object really just needs to model (contain) that 'temp' pointer
- Iterator needs following operators:
  - `*`
  - `->`
  - `++`
  - `== / !=`
  - `< > <= >= + - (maybe)`




```
template <typename T>
struct Item {
  T val;
  Item<T>* next;
};

template <typename T>
class LList {
public:
   LList();  // Constructor
   ~LList();  // Destructor

 private:
   Item<T>* head_;
};
```

Implementing Our First Iterator

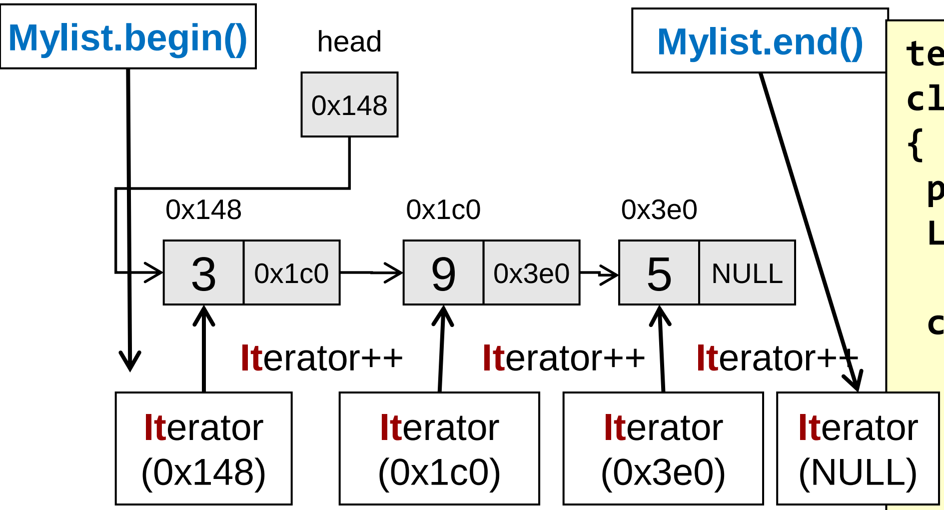



```
template<typename T>
class LList
{
 public:
 LList() { head_ = NULL; }

 class iterator {
  private:
    Item<T>* curr_;
  public:
    iterator& operator++() ;
    iterator operator++(int);
    T& operator*();
    T* operator->();
    bool operator!=(const iterator & other);
    bool operator==(const iterator & other);
  };

 private:
  Item<T>* head_;
  int size_;
};
```

- We store the Item<T> pointer to our current item/node during iteration
- We return the value in the Item when we dereference the iterator
- We update the pointer when we increment the iterator

Note: Though class iterator is defined inside LList<T>, it is completely separate and what's private to iterator can't be access by LList<T> and vice versa

Outfitting LList to Support Iterators



- begin() and end() should return a new iterator that points to the head or end of the list
- But how should begin() and end() seed the iterator with the correct pointer?

```
template<typename T>
class LList
{
 public:
 LList() { head_ = NULL; }

 class iterator {
  private:
    Item<T>* curr_;
  public:
    iterator& operator++() ;
    iterator operator++(int);
    T& operator*();
    T* operator->();
    bool operator!=(const iterator & other);
    bool operator==(const iterator & other);
  };

 iterator begin()  { ???  }
 iterator end() { ???  }

 private:
  Item<T>* head_;
  int size_;
};
```

Outfitting LList to Support Iterators

- We could add a public constructor…
- But that's bad form, because then anybody outside the LList could create their own iterator pointing to what they want it to point to…
  - Only LList<T> should create iterators
  - So what to do??

```
template<typename T>
class LList
{
 public:
 LList() { head_ = NULL; }

 class iterator {
  private:
    Item<T>* curr_;
  public:
    iterator(Item<T>* init) : curr_(init) {}
    iterator& operator++() ;
    iterator operator++(int);
    T& operator*();
    T* operator->();
    bool operator!=(const iterator & other);
    bool operator==(const iterator & other);
  };

 iterator begin()  { ???  }
 iterator end() { ???  }

 private:
  Item<T>* head_;
  int size_;
};
```

Friends and Private Constructors

- Let's only have the iterator class grant access to its "trusted" friend: Llist
- Now LList<T> can access iterators private data and member functions
- And we can add a private constructor that only 'iterator' and 'LList<T>' can use
  - This prevents outsiders from creating iterators that point to what they choose
- Now begin() and end can create iterators via the private constructor & return them

```
template<typename T>
class LList
{ public:
  LList() { head_ = NULL; }

 class iterator {
  private:
    Item<T>* curr_;
    iterator(Item<T>* init) : curr_(init) {}
  public:
    friend class LList<T>;
    iterator(Item<T>* init);
    iterator& operator++() ;
    iterator operator++(int);
    T& operator*();
    T* operator->();
    bool operator!=(const iterator & other);
    bool operator==(const iterator & other);
  };
 iterator begin()  { iterator it(head_);
                     return it;    }
 iterator end()    { iterator it(NULL);
                     return it;    }
 private:
  Item<T>* head_;
  int size_;
};
```

Expanding to ArrayLists

- What internal state would an ArrayList iterator store?
- What would begin() stuff the iterator with?
- What would end() stuff the iterator with that would mean "1 beyond the end"?

Const Iterators

- If a LList<T> is passed in as a const argument, then begin() and end() will violate the const'ness because they aren't declared as const member functions
  - iterator begin() const;
  - iterator end() const;
- While we could change them, it would violate the idea that the List will stay const, because once someone has an iterator they really CAN change the List's contents
- Solution: Add a second iterator type: const_iterator

```
template<typename T>
class LList
{ public:
   LList() { head_ = NULL; }

  class iterator {
  };
  // non-const member functions
  iterator begin()  { iterator it(head_);
                      return it;     }
  iterator end()    { iterator it(NULL);
                      return it;     }
 private:
   Item<T>* head_;
   int size_;
};


void printMyList(const LList<int>& mylist)
{
   LList<int>::iterator it;
   for(it = mylist.begin(); // compile error
       it != mylist.end();
       ++it)
   {  cout << *it << endl; }
}
```

Const Iterators

- The const_iterator type should return references and pointers to const T's
- We should add an overloaded begin() and end() that are const member functions and return const_iterators

```
template<typename T>
class LList
{ public:
  LList() { head_ = NULL; }

 class iterator {
    ...
 };
 iterator begin();
 iterator end();

 class const_iterator {
  private:
    Item<T>* curr_;
    const_iterator(Item<T>* init);
  public:
    friend class LList<T>;
    iterator& operator++() ;
    iterator operator++(int);
    T const & operator*();
    T const * operator->();
    bool operator!=(const iterator & other);
    bool operator==(const iterator & other);
  };
  const_iterator begin() const;
  const_iterator end() const;
};
```

Const Iterators

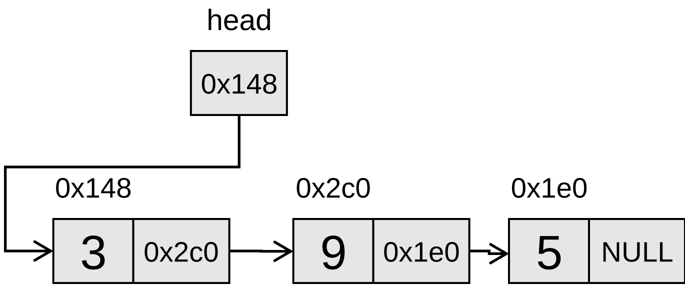
- An updated example

```
void printMyList(const LList<int>& mylist)
{
  LList<int>::const_iterator it;
  for(it = mylist.begin(); // no more error
      it != mylist.end();
      ++it)
  {  cout << *it << endl; }
}
```

!= vs <

- It's common idiom to have the loop condition use != over <
- Some iterators don't support '<' comparison
  - Why? Think about what we're comparing with our LList<T>::iterator
  - We are comparing the pointer…Is the address of Item at location 1 guaranteed to be less-than the address of Item at location 2?

```
void printMyList(const LList<int>& mylist)
{
  LList<int>::const_iterator it;

  for(it = mylist.begin(); it != mylist.end(); ++it)
  {  cout << *it << endl; }


  for(it = mylist.begin(); it < mylist.end(); ++it)
  {  cout << *it << endl; }


}
```



Kinds of Iterators

- This leads us to categorize iterators based on their capabilities (of the underlying data organization)
- Access type
  - Input iterators: Can only READ the value be pointed to
  - Output iterators: Can only WRITE the value be pointed to
- Movement/direction capabilities
  - Forward Iterator: Can only increment (go forward)
    - `++it`
  - Bidirectional Iterators: Can go in either direction
    - `++it or --it`
  - Random Access Iterators: Can jump beyond just next or previous
    - `it + 4   or   it - 2`
- Which movement/direction capabilities can our LList<T>::iterator naturally support

Recall: Implicit Type Conversion

- Would the following if condition make sense?
- No! If statements want Boolean variables

```
class Student {
  private:  int id; double gpa;
};
int main()
{
  Student s1;
  if(s1){  cout << "Hi" << endl; }
  return 0;
}
```

- But you've done things like this before
  - Operator>> returns an ifstream&

```
ifstream ifile(filename);
...
while( ifile >> x )
{  ...  }
```

- So how does ifstream do it?
  - With an "implicit type conversion operator overload"
  - Student::operator bool()
    - Code to specify how to convert a Student to a bool
  - Student::operator int()
    - Code to specify how to convert a Student to an int

```
class Student {
  private:
   int id; double gpa;
  public:
   operator bool() { return gpa>= 2.0;}
   operator int() { return id; }
};

Student s1;
if(s1)           // calls operator bool() and
   int x = s1; // calls operator int()
```

Iterators With Implicit Conversions

- Can use operator bool() for iterator

```
template<typename T>
class LList
{ public:
  LList() { head_ = NULL; }

 class iterator {
  private:
   Item<T>* curr_;
  public:
   operator bool()
      { return curr_ != NULL; }
 };
};


void printMyList(LList<int>& mylist)
{
  LList<int>::iterator it = mylist.begin();
  while(it){
    cout << *it++ << endl;
  }

}
```

Finishing Up

- Iterators provide a nice abstraction between user and underlying data organization
  - Wait until we use trees and other data organizations
- Due to their saved internal state they can be more efficient than simpler approaches [like get(i)]

Plugging the leaks

SMART POINTERS

C++11, 14, 17

- Most of what we have taught you in this class are language features that were part of C++ since the C++98 standard
- New, helpful features have been added in C++11, 14, and now 17 standards
  - Beware: compilers are often a bit slow to implement the standards so check the documentation and compiler version
  - You often must turn on special compile flags to tell the compiler to look for C++11 features, etc.
    - For g++ you would need to add: **-std=c++11** or **-std=c++0x**
- Many of the features in the these revisions to C++ are originally part of 3rd party libraries such as the Boost library

Pointers or Objects? Both!

- In C++, the dereference operator (*) should appear before…
  - A pointer to an object
  - An actual object
- "Good" answer is
  - A Pointer to an object
- "Technically correct" answer…
  - EITHER!!!!
- Due to operator overloading we can make an object behave as a pointer
  - Overload operator *, &, ->, ++, etc.

```
class Thing
{

};

int main()
{
  Thing t1;
  Thing *ptr = &t1

  // Which is legal?
  *t1;
  *ptr;
}
```

A "Dumb" Pointer Class

- We can make a class operate like a pointer
- Use template parameter as the type of data the pointer will point to
- Keep an actual pointer as private data
- Overload operators
- This particular class doesn't really do anything useful
  - It just does what a normal pointer would do

```
template <typename T>
class dumb_ptr
{ private:
    T* p_;
  public:
    dumb_ptr(T* p) : p_(p) { }
    T& operator*() { return *p_; }
    T* operator->() { return p_; }
    dumb_ptr& operator++()  // pre-inc
     { ++p_; return *this; }
};

int main()
{
  int data[10];
  dumb_ptr<int> ptr(data);

  for(int i=0; i < 10; i++){
    cout << *ptr;  ++ptr;
  }
}
```

A "Useful" Pointer Class

- I can add automatic memory deallocation so that when my local "unique_ptr" goes out of scope, it will automatically delete what it is pointing at

```
template <typename T>
class unique_ptr
{ private:
    T* p_;
  public:
    unique_ptr(T* p) : p_(p) { }
    ~unique_ptr() { delete p_; }
    T& operator*() { return *p_; }
    T* operator->() { return p_; }
    unique_ptr& operator++() // pre-inc
     { ++p_; return *this; }
};

int main()
{
  unique_ptr<Obj> ptr(new Obj);
  // ...
  ptr->all_words()
  // Do I need to delete Obj?
}
```

A "Useful" Pointer Class

- What happens when I make a copy?
- Can we make it impossible for anyone to make a copy of an object?
  - Remember C++ provides a default "shallow" copy constructor and assignment operator

```
template <typename T>
class unique_ptr
{ private:
    T* p_;
  public:
    unique_ptr(T* p) : p_(p) { }
    ~unique_ptr() { delete p_; }
    T& operator*() { return *p_; }
    T* operator->() { return p_; }
    unique_ptr& operator++() // pre-inc
     { ++p_; return *this; }
};

int main()
{
  unique_ptr<Obj> ptr(new Obj);
  unique_ptr<Obj> ptr2 = ptr;
  // ...
  ptr2->all_words();
  // Does anything bad happen here?
}
```

Hiding Functions

- Can we make it impossible for anyone to make a copy of an object?
  - Remember C++ provides a default "shallow" copy constructor and assignment operator
- Yes!!
  - Put the copy constructor and operator= declaration in the private section…now the implementations that the compiler provides will be private (not accessible)
- You can use this technique to hide "default constructors" or other functions

```
template <typename T>
class unique_ptr
{ private:
    T* p_;
  public:
    unique_ptr(T* p) : p_(p) { }
    ~unique_ptr() { delete p_; }
    T& operator*() { return *p_; }
    T* operator->() { return p_; }
    unique_ptr& operator++() // pre-inc
     { ++p_; return *this; }
  private:
    unique_ptr(const UsefultPtr& n);
    unique_ptr& operator=(const
                      UsefultPtr& n);
};

int main()
{
  unique_ptr<Obj> ptr(new Obj);
  unique_ptr<Obj> ptr2 = ptr;
  // Try to compile this?
}
```

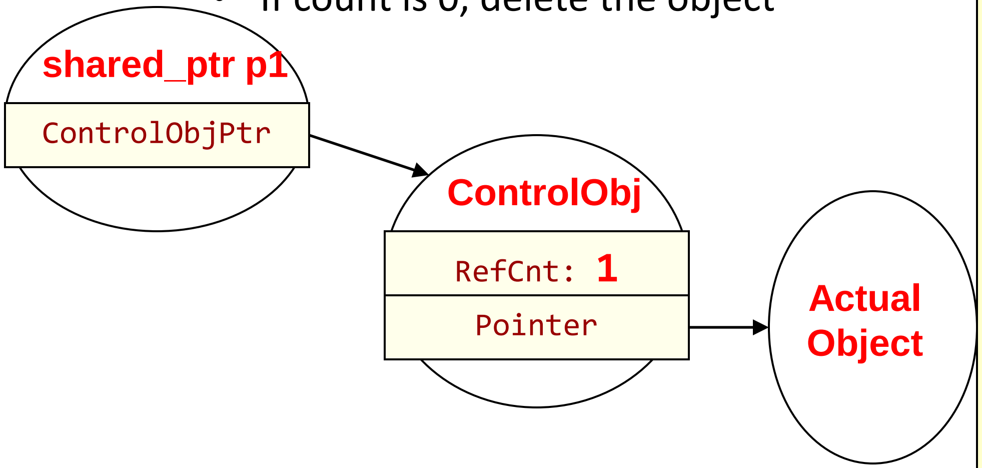
A "shared" Pointer Class

- Could we write a pointer class where we can make copies that somehow "know" to only delete the underlying object when the last copy of the smart pointer dies?
- Basic idea
  - shared_ptr class will keep a count of how many copies are alive
  - shared_ptr destructor simply decrements this count
    - If count is 0, delete the object

```
template <typename T>
class shared_ptr
{ public:
    shared_ptr(T* p);
    ~shared_ptr();
    T& operator*();
    shared_ptr& operator++();
}
shared_ptr<Obj> f1()
{
  shared_ptr<Obj> ptr(new Obj);
  cout << "In F1\n" << *ptr << endl;
  return ptr;
}

int main()
{
  shared_ptr<Obj> p2 = f1();
  cout << "Back in main\n" << *p2;
  cout << endl;
  return 0;
}
```

A "shared" Pointer Class

- Basic idea
  - shared_ptr class will keep a count of how many copies are alive
  - Constructors/copies increment this count
  - shared_ptr destructor simply decrements this count
    - If count is 0, delete the object




```
int main()
{
  shared_ptr<Obj> p1(new Obj);
  doit(p1);
  return 0;
}

void doit(shared_ptr<Obj> p2)
{
 if(...){
     shared_ptr<Obj> p3 = p2;

 }
}
```

A "shared" Pointer Class

- Basic idea
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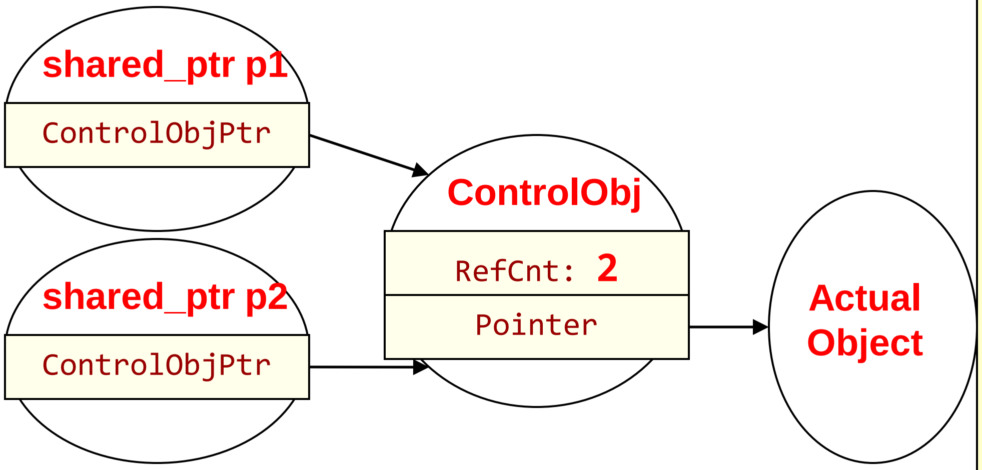


```
int main()
{
  shared_ptr<Obj> p1(new Obj);
  doit(p1);
  return 0;
}

void doit(shared_ptr<Obj> p2)
{
 if(...){
     shared_ptr<Obj> p3 = p2;

 }
}
```

A "shared" Pointer Class

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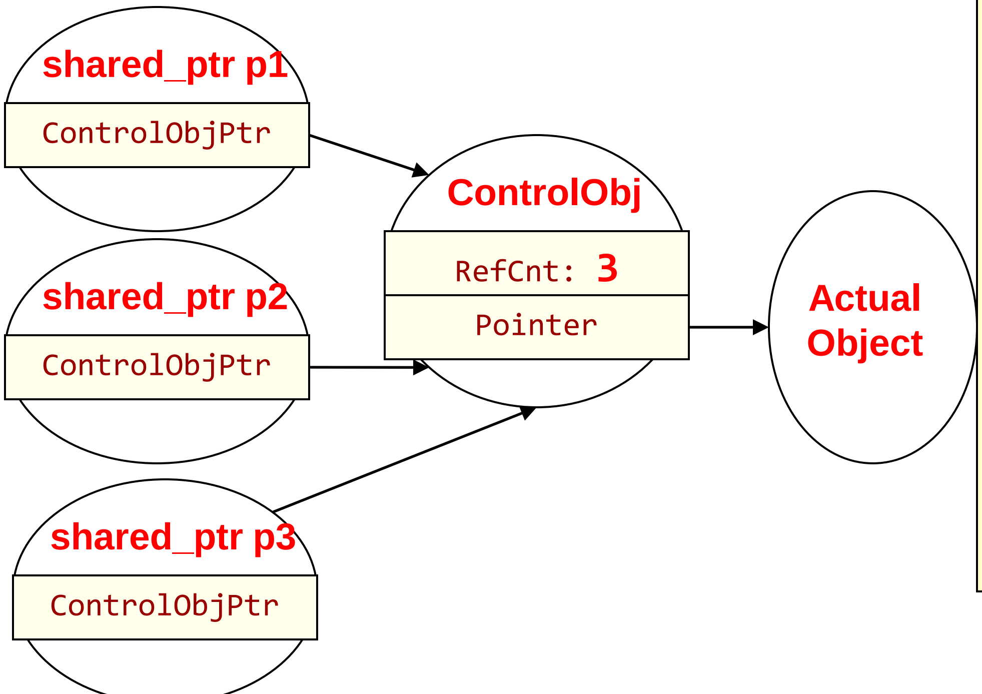
```
int main()
{
  shared_ptr<Obj> p1(new Obj);
  doit(p1);
  return 0;
}

void doit(shared_ptr<Obj> p2)
{
 if(...){
     shared_ptr<Obj> p3 = p2;

 }
}
```



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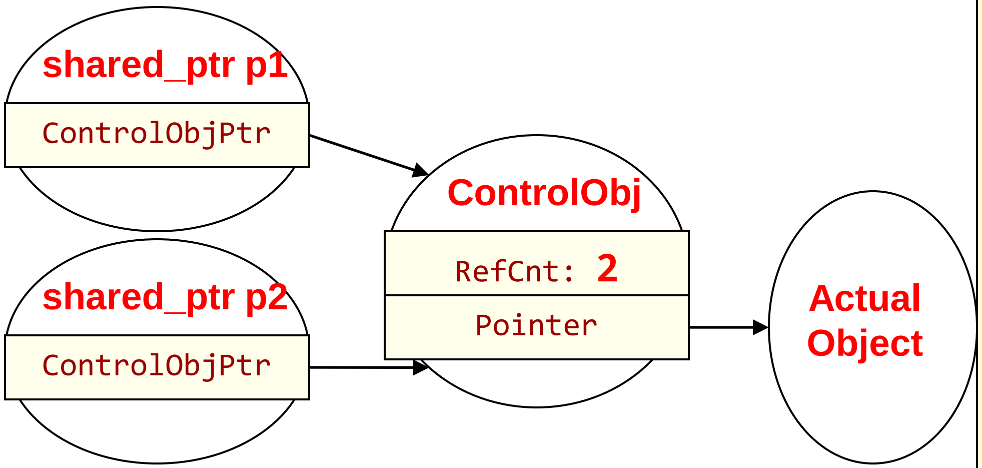


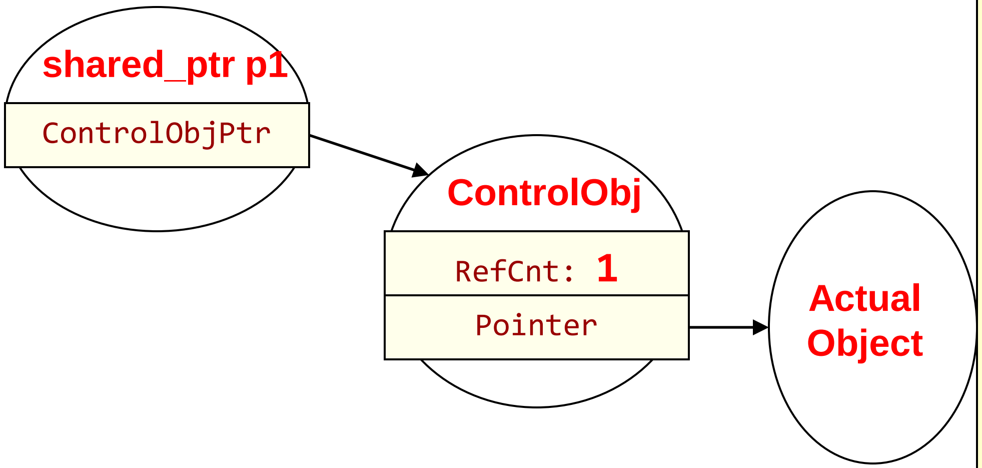

```
int main()
{
  shared_ptr<Obj> p1(new Obj);
  doit(p1);
  return 0;
}

void doit(shared_ptr<Obj> p2)
{
 if(...){
     shared_ptr<Obj> p3 = p2;

 } // p3 dies
}
```

A "shared" Pointer Class

- Basic idea
  - shared_ptr class will keep a count of how many copies are alive
  - shared_ptr destructor simply decrements this count
    - If count is 0, delete the object



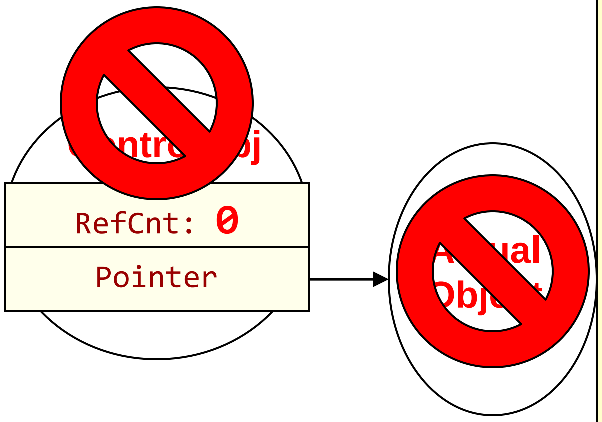

```
int main()
{
  shared_ptr<Obj> p1(new Obj);
  doit(p1);
  return 0;
}

void doit(shared_ptr<Obj> p2)
{
 if(...){
     shared_ptr<Obj> p3 = p2;

 } // p3 dies
} // p2 dies
```

A "shared" Pointer Class

- Basic idea
  - shared_ptr class will keep a count of how many copies are alive
  - shared_ptr destructor simply decrements this count
    - If count is 0, delete the object




```
int main()
{
  shared_ptr<Obj> p1(new Obj);
  doit(p1);
  return 0;
} // p1 dies

void doit(shared_ptr<Obj> p2)
{
 if(...){
     shared_ptr<Obj> p3 = p2;

 } // p3 dies
} // p2 dies
```

C++ shared_ptr

- C++ std::shared_ptr / boost::shared_ptr
  - Boost is a best-in-class C++ library of code you can download and use with all kinds of useful classes
- Can only be used to point at dynamically allocated data (since it is going to call delete on the pointer when the reference count reaches 0)
- Compile in g++ using '-std=c++11' since this class is part of the new standard library version

```
#include <memory>
#include "obj.h"
using namespace std;

shared_ptr<Obj> f1()
{
  shared_ptr<Obj> ptr(new Obj);
  // ...
  cout << "In F1\n" << *ptr << endl;
  return ptr;
}

int main()
{
  shared_ptr<Obj> p2 = f1();
  cout << "Back in main\n" << *p2;
  cout << endl;
  return 0;
}
```

```
$ g++ -std=c++11 shared_ptr1.cpp obj.cpp
```

C++ shared_ptr

- Using shared_ptr's you can put pointers into container objects (vectors, maps, etc) and not have to worry about iterating through and deleting them
- When myvec goes out of scope, it deallocates what it is storing (shared_ptr's), but that causes the shared_ptr destructor to automatically delete the Objs
- Think about your project homeworks…this might be (have been) nice

```
#include <memory>
#include <vector>
#include "obj.h"
using namespace std;

int main()
{
  vector<shared_ptr<Obj> > myvec;

  shared_ptr<Obj> p1(new Obj);
  myvec.push_back( p1 );

  shared_ptr<Obj> p2(new Obj);
  myvec.push_back( p2 );

  return 0;
  // myvec goes out of scope...
}
```

```
$ g++ -std=c++11 shared_ptr1.cpp obj.cpp
```

shared_ptr vs. unique_ptr

- Both will perform automatic deallocation
- Unique_ptr only allows one pointer to the object at a time
  - Copy constructor and assignment operator are hidden as private functions
  - Object is deleted when pointer goes out of scope
  - Does allow "move" operation
    - If interested read more about this on your own
    - C++11 defines "move" constructors (not just copy constructors) and "rvalue references" etc.
- Shared_ptr allow any number of copies of the pointer
  - Object is deleted when last pointer copy goes out of scope
- Note: Many languages like python, Java, C#, etc. all use this idea of reference counting and automatic deallocation (aka garbage collection) to remove the burden of memory management from the programmer

References

- http://www.umich.edu/~eecs381/handouts/C++11_smart_ptrs.pdf
- http://stackoverflow.com/questions/3476938/example-to-use-shared-ptr