

# Testing



The material for this lecture is drawn, in part, from  
*The Practice of Programming* (Kernighan & Pike) Chapter 6

# For Your Amusement



“On two occasions I have been asked [by members of Parliament!], ‘Pray, Mr. Babbage, if you put into the machine wrong figures, will the right answers come out?’ I am not able rightly to apprehend the kind of confusion of ideas that could provoke such a question.”

– Charles Babbage

“Program testing can be quite effective for showing the presence of bugs, but is hopelessly inadequate for showing their absence.”

– Edsger Dijkstra

“Beware of bugs in the above code; I have only proved it correct, not tried it.”

– Donald Knuth

# “Programming in the Large” Steps



## Design & Implement

- Program & programming style
- Common data structures and algorithms
- Modularity
- Building techniques & tools

## Debug

- Debugging techniques & tools

## Test

- Testing techniques <-- We are here

## Maintain

- Performance improvement techniques & tools

# Goals of this Lecture



## Help you learn about:

- Internal testing
- External testing
- General testing strategies

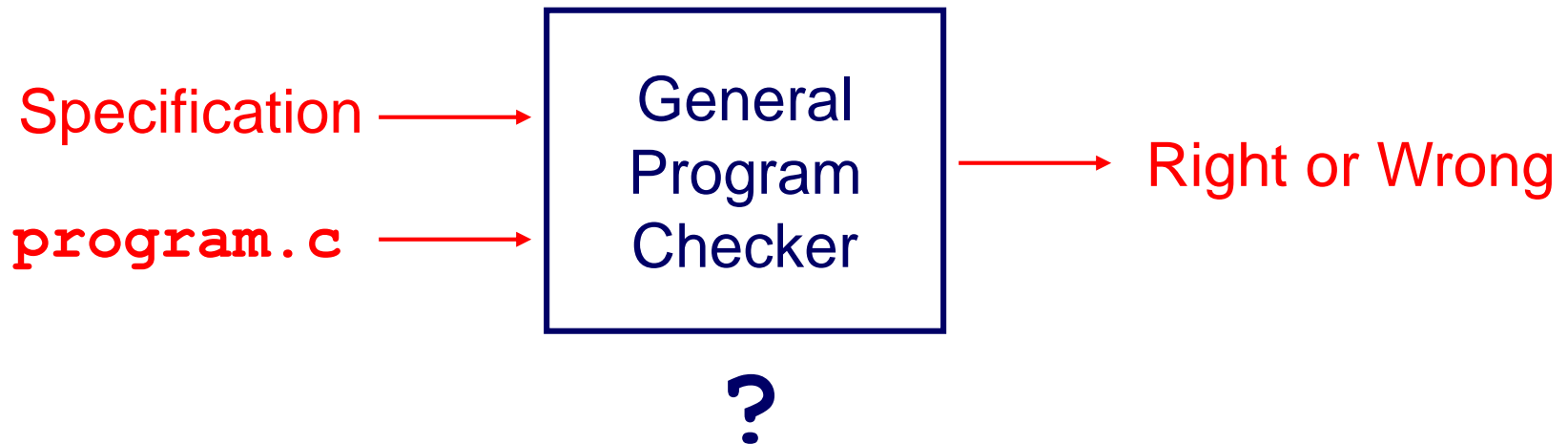
## Why?

- It's hard to know if a (large) program works properly
- A power programmer spends **at least as much time composing test code** as he/she spends composing the code itself
- A power programmer knows how to spend that time wisely

# Program Verification



**Ideally:** Prove that any given program is correct



In general: Undecidable

Preview of final lecture: For some (kinds of) properties, a Program Verifier can provide a proof (if right) or a counterexample (if wrong)

# Program Testing



**Pragmatically:** Convince yourself that a **specific** program **probably** works



# Agenda



## External testing

- Designing data to test your program

## Internal testing

- Designing your program to test itself

## General testing strategies

# Statement Testing



## (1) Statement testing

- “Testing to satisfy the criterion that each statement in a program be executed at least once during program testing.”
  - From the *Glossary of Computerized System and Software Development Terminology*





# Statement Testing Example

Example pseudocode:

```
if (condition1)
    statement1;
else
    statement2;
...
if (condition2)
    statement3;
else
    statement4;
...
```

**Statement testing:**

Should make sure both `if` statements and all 4 nested statements are executed

How many passes through code are required?

# Path Testing



## (2) Path testing

- “Testing to satisfy coverage criteria that each logical path through the program be tested. Often paths through the program are grouped into a finite set of classes. One path from each class is then tested.”
  - From the *Glossary of Computerized System and Software Development Terminology*



# Path Testing Example

Example pseudocode:

```
if (condition1)
    statement1;
else
    statement2;
...
if (condition2)
    statement3;
else
    statement4;
...
```

Path testing:

Should make sure all logical paths are executed

How many passes through code are required?

Four paths for four combinations of (condition1, condition 2): TT, TF, FT, FF

- Simple programs => maybe reasonable
- Complex program => combinatorial explosion!!!
  - Path test code fragments

# Boundary Testing



## (3) **Boundary** testing (alias **corner case** testing)

- “A testing technique using input values at, just below, and just above, the defined limits of an input domain; and with input values causing outputs to be at, just below, and just above, the defined limits of an output domain.”
  - From the *Glossary of Computerized System and Software Development Terminology*



# Boundary Testing Example

## Specification:

- Print the  $n$  elements of array  $a$  to `stdout`, in reverse order

## Attempt:

```
void printBackwards(int a[], unsigned int n)
{
    unsigned int i;
    for (i = n; i >= 0; i--)
        printf("%d\n", a[i]);
}
```

Apologies for the  
forward reference  
to arrays

Does it work?

# Stress Testing



## (4) **Stress** testing

- “Testing conducted to evaluate a system or component at or beyond the limits of its specified requirements”
  - From the *Glossary of Computerized System and Software Development Terminology*

# Stress Testing



Should stress the program with respect to:

- **Quantity** of data
  - Large data sets
- **Variety** of data
  - Textual data sets containing non-ASCII chars
  - Binary data sets
  - Randomly generated data sets

Should use computer to generate input sets

- Avoids human biases



# Stress Testing Example 1

## Specification:

- Print number of characters in stdin

## Attempt:

```
#include <stdio.h>
int main(void)
{ char charCount = 0;
  while (getchar() != EOF)
    charCount++;
  printf("%d\n", charCount);
  return 0;
}
```

Does it work?





# Stress Testing Example 2

## Specification:

- Read a line from `stdin`
- Store as string (without '`\n`') in array of length `ARRAY_LENGTH`

## Attempt:

```
int i;
char s[ARRAY_LENGTH];
for (i = 0; i < ARRAY_LENGTH-1; i++)
{  s[i] = getchar();
   if ((s[i] == EOF) || (s[i] == '\n')) break;
}
s[i] = '\0';
```

Does it work?

# External Testing Summary



External testing: Designing data to test your program

External testing taxonomy

- (1) Statement testing
- (2) Path testing
- (3) Boundary testing
- (4) Stress testing

# Agenda



## External testing

- Designing data to test your program

## Internal testing

- **Designing your program to test itself**

## General testing strategies

# Aside: The `assert` Macro



## `assert(int expr)`

- If `expr` evaluates to TRUE (non-zero):
  - Do nothing
- If `expr` evaluates to FALSE (zero):
  - Print message to `stderr` “assert at line x failed”
  - Exit the process

Useful for internal testing



# Aside: The `assert` Macro

## Disabling `asserts`

- To disable asserts, define `NDEBUG`...
- In code:

```
/*-----*/  
/* myprogram.c */  
/*-----*/  
#define NDEBUG  
...  
/* Asserts are disabled here. */  
...
```

- Or when building:

```
$ gcc217 -D NDEBUG myprogram.c -o myprogram
```



# Validating Parameters

## (1) Validate parameters

- At leading edge of each function, make sure values of parameters are valid

```
int f(int i, double d)
{
    assert(i has a reasonable value);
    assert(d has a reasonable value);
    ...
}
```



# Validating Parameters

- Example

```
/* Return the greatest common
   divisor of positive integers
   i and j. */

int gcd(int i, int j)
{
    assert(i > 0);
    assert(j > 0);
    ...
}
```

# Checking Invariants



## (2) Check invariants

- At leading edge of function, check aspects of data structures that should not vary; maybe at trailing edge too

```
int isValid(MyType object)
{
    ...
    /* Code to check invariants goes here.
       Return 1 (TRUE) if object passes
       all tests, and 0 (FALSE) otherwise. */
    ...
}

void myFunction(MyType object)
{
    assert(isValid(object));
    ...
    /* Code to manipulate object goes here. */
    ...
    assert(isValid(object));
}
```



# Checking Invariants



- Example
  - “Balanced binary search tree insertion” function
  - At leading edge:
    - Are nodes sorted?
    - Is tree balanced?
  - At trailing edge:
    - Are nodes still sorted?
    - Is tree still balanced?



# Checking Return Values

## (3) Check function return values

- Check values returned by called functions

```
f (someArgs) ;
```

```
...
```

Bad code (sometimes)

```
someRetVal = f (someArgs) ;  
if (someRetVal == badValue)  
    /* Handle the error */
```

```
...
```

Good code

```
if (f (someArgs) == badValue)  
    /* Handle the error */
```

```
...
```

Good code



# Checking Return Values

- Example:
  - scanf() returns number of values read
  - Caller should check return value

```
int i, j;  
...  
scanf("%d%d", &i, &j);
```

Bad code

```
int i, j;  
...  
if (scanf("%d%d", &i, &j) != 2)  
    /* Handle the error */
```

Good code

# Checking Return Values



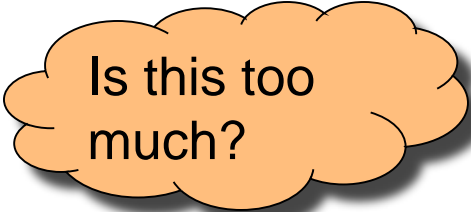
- Example:
  - printf() returns number of chars (not values) written
  - Can fail if writing to file and disk quota is exceeded
  - Caller should check return value???

```
int i = 1000;  
...  
printf("%d", i);
```

Bad code???

```
int i = 1000;  
...  
if (printf("%d", i) != 4)  
    /* Handle the error */
```

Good code???



Is this too much?

# Changing Code Temporarily



## (4) Change code temporarily

- Temporarily change code to generate artificial boundary or stress tests
- Example: Array-based sorting program
  - Temporarily make array very small
  - Does the program handle overflow?

# Leaving Testing Code Intact



## (5) Leave testing code intact

- Do not remove testing code when program is finished
  - In the “real world” no program ever is “finished”!!!
- If testing code is inefficient:
  - Embed in calls of `assert()`, or
  - Use `#ifdef...#endif` preprocessor directives
    - See Appendix

# Internal Testing Summary



Internal testing: Designing your program to test itself

## Internal testing techniques

- (1) Validating parameters
- (2) Checking invariants
- (3) Checking function return values
- (4) Changing code temporarily
- (5) Leaving testing code intact

**Beware of conflict between  
internal testing and code clarity**

# Agenda



## External testing

- Designing data to test your program

## Internal testing

- Designing your program to test itself

## General testing strategies



# Automation



## (1) Automate the tests

- Create **scripts** to test your **programs**
- Create software **clients** to test your **modules**
- Compare implementations (when possible)
  - Make sure independent implementations behave the same
- Know what output to expect (when possible)
  - Generate output that is easy to recognize as right or wrong

## Automated testing can provide:

- Much better coverage than manual testing
- Bonus: Examples of typical use of your code

# Testing Incrementally



## (2) Test incrementally

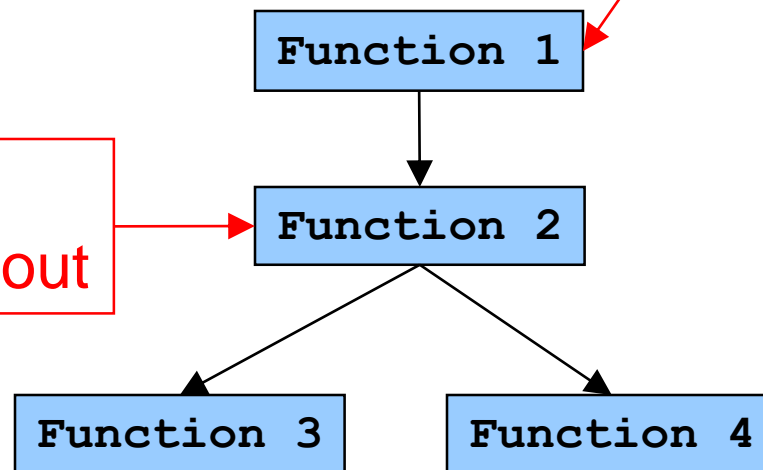
- Test as you compose code
  - Add test cases as you compose new code
- Do **regression testing**
  - After a bug fix, make sure program has not “regressed”
    - That is, make sure previously working code is not broken
  - Rerun all test cases
  - Note the value of automation!!!
- Create **scaffolds** and **stubs** as appropriate...

# Testing Incrementally



**Scaffold:** Temporary code that calls code that you care about

Code that you care about



**Stub:** Temporary code that is called by code that you care about

# Bug-Driven Testing



## (3) Let debugging drive testing

- Reactive mode...
  - Find a bug => create a test case that catches it
- Proactive mode...
  - Do **fault injection**
    - Intentionally (temporarily!) inject a bug
    - Make sure testing mechanism catches it
    - Test the testing!!!

# General Strategies Summary



## General testing strategies

- (1) Automation
- (2) Testing incrementally
- (3) Bug-driven testing



# Who Does the Testing?

## Programmers

- **White-box** testing
- Pro: Know the code => can test all statements/paths/boundaries
- Con: Know the code => biased by code design

## Quality Assurance (QA) engineers

- **Black-box** testing
- Pro: Do not know the code => unbiased by code design
- Con: Do not know the code => unlikely to test all statements/paths/boundaries

## Customers

- **Field** testing
- Pros: Use code in unexpected ways; “debug” specs
- Cons: Often don't like “participating”; difficult to generate enough cases

# Summary



## External testing taxonomy

- Statement testing
- Path testing
- Boundary testing
- Stress testing

## Internal testing techniques

- Validating parameters
- Checking invariants
- Checking function return values
- Changing code temporarily
- Leaving testing code intact

# Summary (cont.)



## General testing strategies

- Automation
  - Comparing implementations
  - Knowing what output to expect
- Testing incrementally
  - Regression testing
  - Scaffolds and stubs
- Bug-driven testing
  - Fault injection

Test the **code** – and the **tests**!



# Appendix: #ifdef



## Using #ifdef...#endif

```
...  
#ifdef TEST_FEATURE_X  
/* Code to test feature  
   X goes here. */  
#endif  
...
```

myprog.c

- To enable testing code:

```
$ gcc217 -D TEST_FEATURE_X myprog.c -o myprog
```

- To disable testing code:

```
$ gcc217 myprog.c -o myprog
```