

Memory and Arrays

CSE 333 Winter 2025

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Administrivia (1)

- ❖ Exercise 0 due this morning
 - Any significant problems getting it done on time? If unusual situation, please contact the staff with an email message so we can help
- Sample solution will be posted late today and linked to calendar
 - Requires CSE login – please do not distribute
 - Non-CSE students should have received guest accounts for the quarter. Let us know (email to cse333-staff) if you're not set up, but we'll probably need for you to contact support[at]cs to get it resolved
- ❖ Exercise 1 out now, due Friday morning, 10 am
- ❖ Office hours have started now – see the course calendar!
- ❖ Discussion board: prefer public postings to private, unless it has specific code or other details that should not be shared.
 - Then the answers can help more people and we can reduce duplicate effort to answer the same question(s) multiple times.
 - Anon postings are fine if you're feeling bashful. 😊

Administrivia (2)

- ❖ Homework 0 posted later today – due Monday, 11 pm
 - Logistics and infrastructure for projects – should be quick
 - Gitlab repos with starter code created later tonight. Will announce on ed when done.
 - There will be time to go over the setup in sections tomorrow. Bring your laptop! (if you have one) Please clone your repo tomorrow or Friday. If anything is wrong *send mail to cse333-staff[at]cs (right away!)* so we can fix accounts/repos before the weekend if possible.

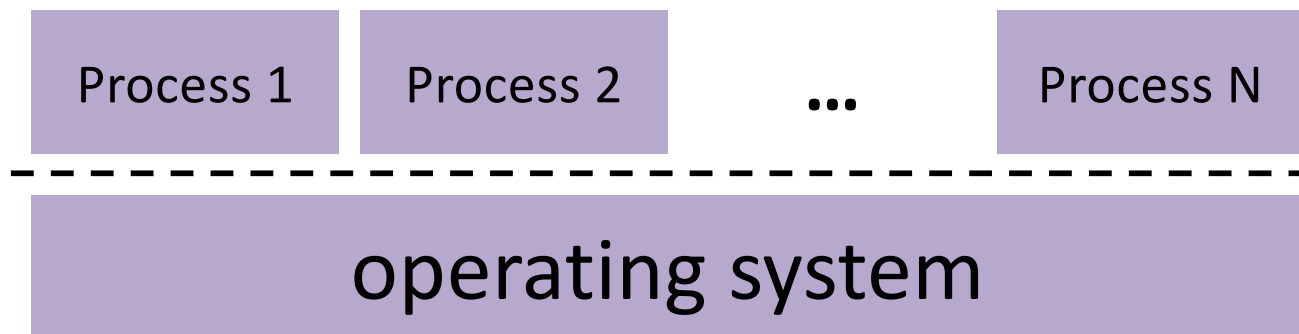
- ❖ Reference system for grading is *current* CSE lab/attu/VM
 - For both exercises and homework (project) code
 - It's your job to be sure your solution(s) work there
 - Just because it works on ReallyCoolLinuxDistribution® doesn't mean it necessarily works on other Linux systems, including ours – there are lots of subtle differences between Linux systems that can cause problems

Lecture Outline

- ❖ **C's Memory Model** (refresher)
- ❖ Pointers (refresher)
- ❖ Arrays

OS and Processes

- ❖ The OS lets you run multiple applications at once
 - An application runs within an OS “process”
 - The OS timeslices each CPU between runnable processes
 - This happens *very quickly*: ~100 times per second



Processes and Virtual Memory

- ❖ The OS gives each process the illusion of its own private memory
 - Called the process' **address space**
 - Contains the process' virtual memory, visible only to it (via virtual memory page table translation)
 - 2^{64} bytes on a 64-bit machine

0xFF...FF



process' address space



0x00...00

Virtual Memory

Contains code,
data, libraries,
stack, etc.

Loading

- ❖ When the OS loads a program it:
 - 1) Creates an address space
 - 2) Inspects the executable file to see what's in it
 - 3) (Lazily) copies regions of the file into the right place in the address space
 - 4) Does any final linking, relocation, or other needed preparation

0xFF...FF

OS kernel [protected]

Stack



Shared Libraries



Heap

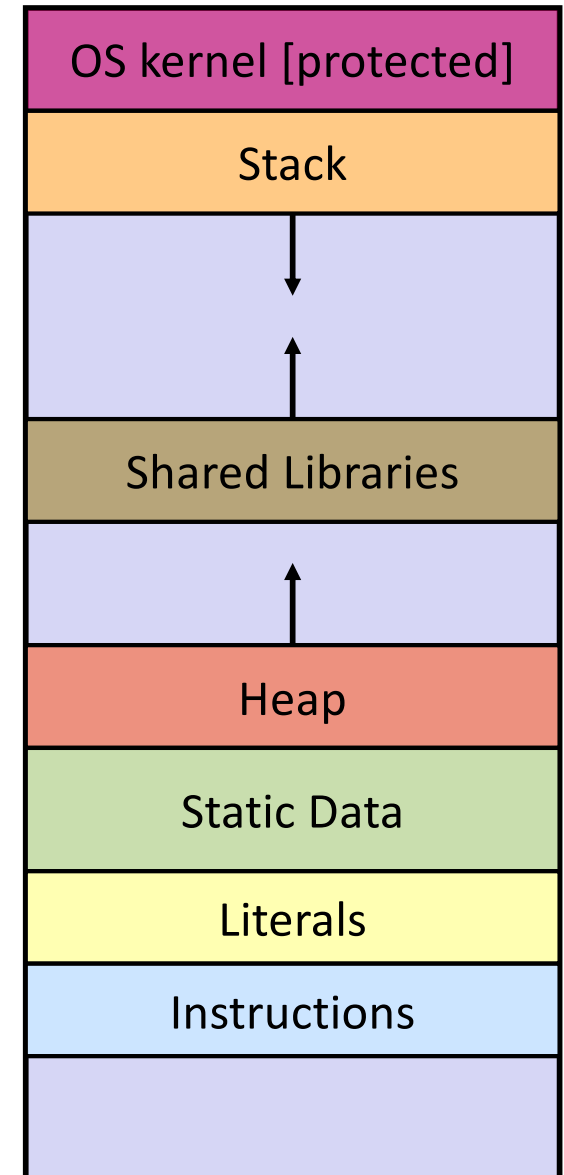
Read/Write Segment
*.data, .bss*Read-Only Segment
.text, .rodata

0x00...00

Memory Management

- ❖ *Local* variables on the Stack
 - **Automatically** allocated and freed via calling conventions (`push`, `pop`, `mov`)
- ❖ *Global* and *static* variables in Data
 - **Statically** allocated/freed when the process starts/exits
- ❖ ***Dynamically-allocated*** data on the Heap
 - `malloc()` to request; must call `free()` to release, otherwise **memory leak**

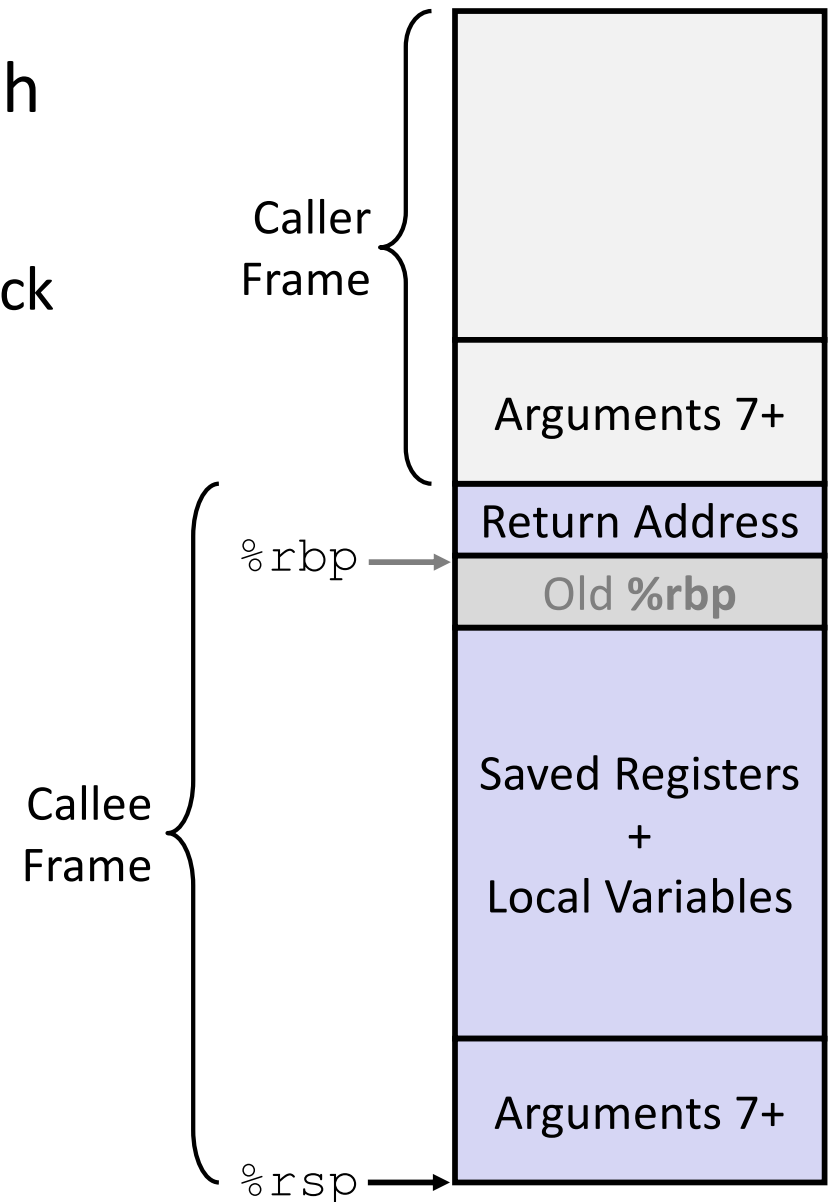
0xFF...FF



0x00...00

Review: The Stack

- ❖ Used to store data associated with function calls
 - Compiler-inserted code manages stack frames for you
- ❖ Stack frame (x86-64) includes:
 - Address to return to
 - Saved registers
 - Based on calling conventions
 - Local variables
 - Argument build
 - Only if > 6 used



Stack in Action

Note: arrow points to *next* instruction to be executed (like in `gdb`).

stack.c

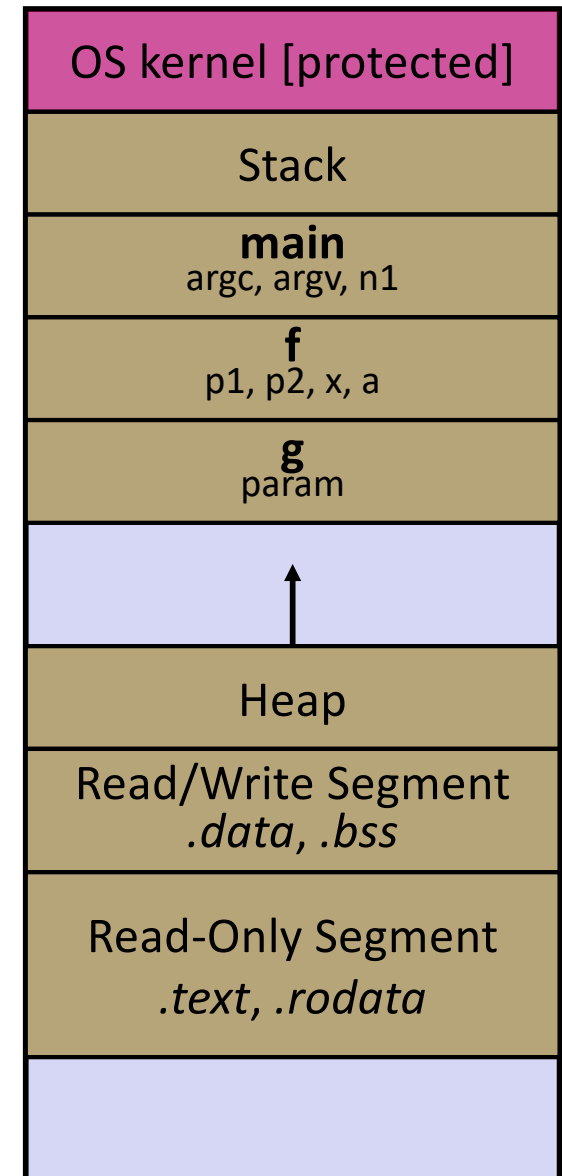
```
#include <stdint.h>

int f(int, int);
int g(int);

→ int main(int argc, char** argv) {
→   int n1 = f(3, -5);
    n1 = g(n1);
}

→ int f(int p1, int p2) {
    int x;
    int a[3];
    ...
    x = g(a[2]);
    return x;
}

→ int g(int param) {
→   return param * 2;
}
```



Stack in Action

Note: arrow points to *next* instruction to be executed (like in `gdb`).

stack.c

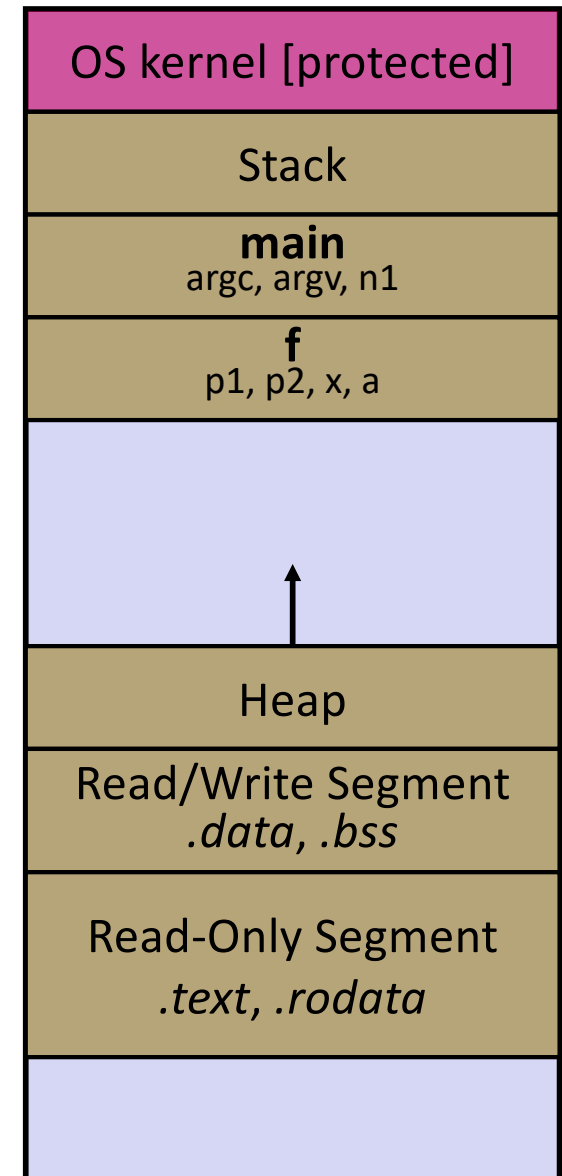
```
#include <stdint.h>

int f(int, int);
int g(int);

int main(int argc, char** argv) {
    int n1 = f(3, -5);
    n1 = g(n1);
}

int f(int p1, int p2) {
    int x;
    int a[3];
    ...
    x = g(a[2]);
    return x;
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Stack in Action

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stack.c

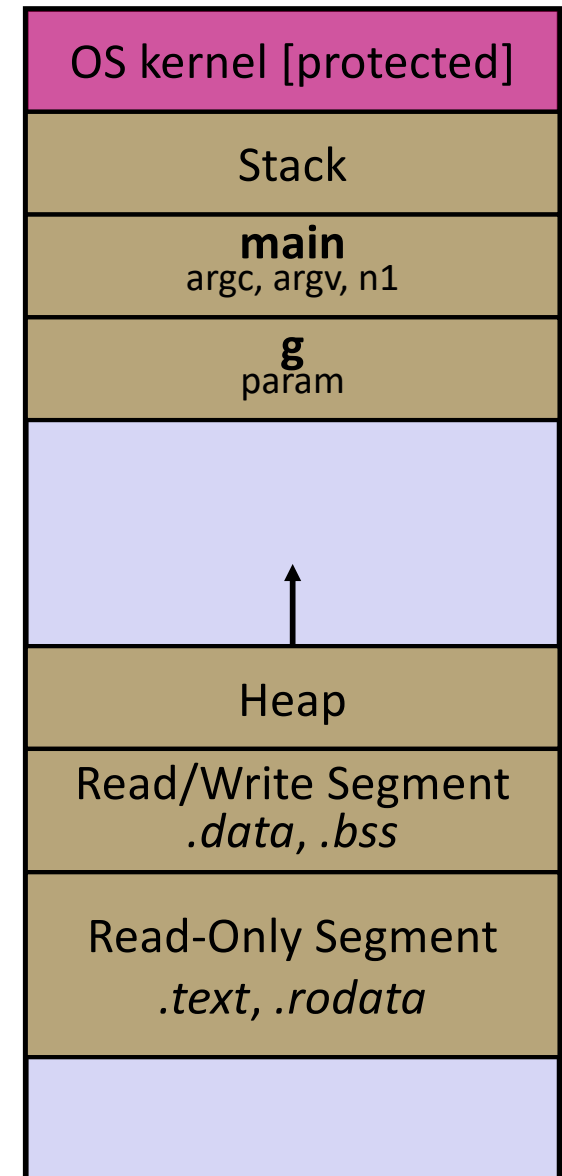
```
#include <stdint.h>

int f(int, int);
int g(int);

int main(int argc, char** argv) {
    int n1 = f(3, -5);
    n1 = g(n1);
}

int f(int p1, int p2) {
    int x;
    int a[3];
    ...
    x = g(a[2]);
    return x;
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int g(int param) {
    return param * 2;
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Stack in Action

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stack.c

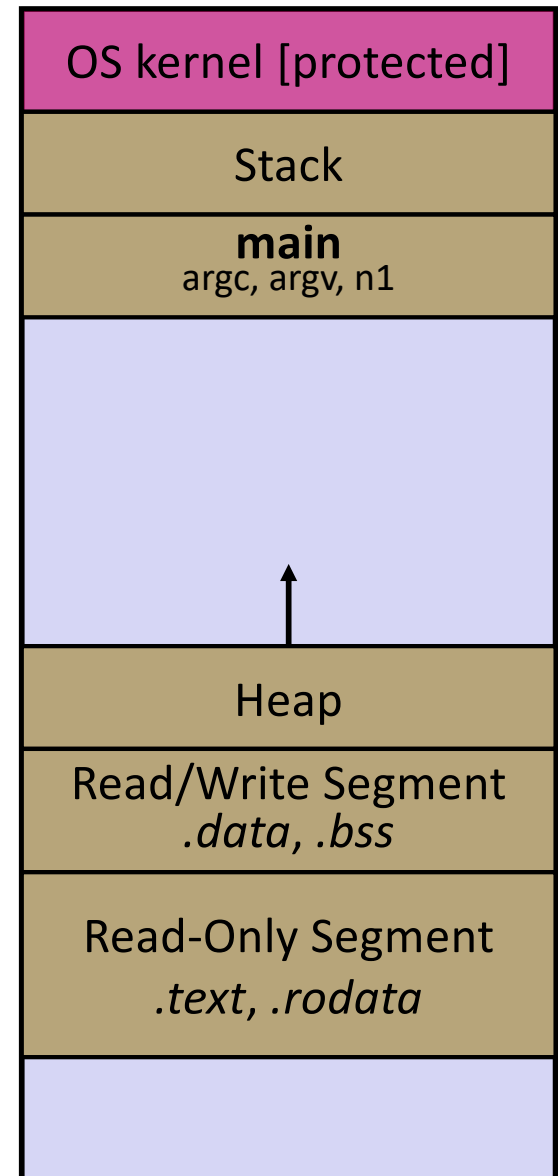
```
#include <stdint.h>

int f(int, int);
int g(int);

int main(int argc, char** argv) {
    int n1 = f(3, -5);
    n1 = g(n1);
}

int f(int p1, int p2) {
    int x;
    int a[3];
    ...
    x = g(a[2]);
    return x;
}

int g(int param) {
    return param * 2;
}
```



Lecture Outline

- ❖ C's Memory Model (refresher)
- ❖ **Pointers** (refresher)
- ❖ Arrays

Pointers

❖ Variables that store addresses

- It points to somewhere in the process' virtual address space
- `&foo` produces the virtual address of `foo`

❖ Generic definition: `type* name;` or `type *name;`

- Recommended: do not define multiple pointers on same line:

`int *p1, p2;` not the same as `int *p1, *p2;`

- Instead, use:
`int *p1;`
`int *p2;`

❖ *Dereference* a pointer using the unary `*` operator

- Access the memory referred to by a pointer

Pointer Example

pointy.c

```
#include <stdio.h>
#include <stdint.h>

int main(int argc, char** argv) {
    int x = 351;
    int* p;      // p is a pointer to a int

    p = &x;      // p now contains the addr of x
    printf("&x is %p\n", &x);
    printf(" p is %p\n", p);
    printf(" x is %d\n", x);

    *p = 333;    // change value of x
    printf(" x is %d\n", x);

    return 0;
}
```

Something Curious

- ❖ What happens if we run `pointy.c` several times?

```
bash$ gcc -Wall -std=c11 -o pointy pointy.c
```

Run 1:

```
bash$ ./pointy
&x is 0x7ffff9e28524
p is 0x7ffff9e28524
x is 351
x is 333
```

Run 2:

```
bash$ ./pointy
&x is 0x7fffe847be34
p is 0x7fffe847be34
x is 351
x is 333
```

Run 3:

```
bash$ ./pointy
&x is 0x7fffe7b14644
p is 0x7fffe7b14644
x is 351
x is 333
```

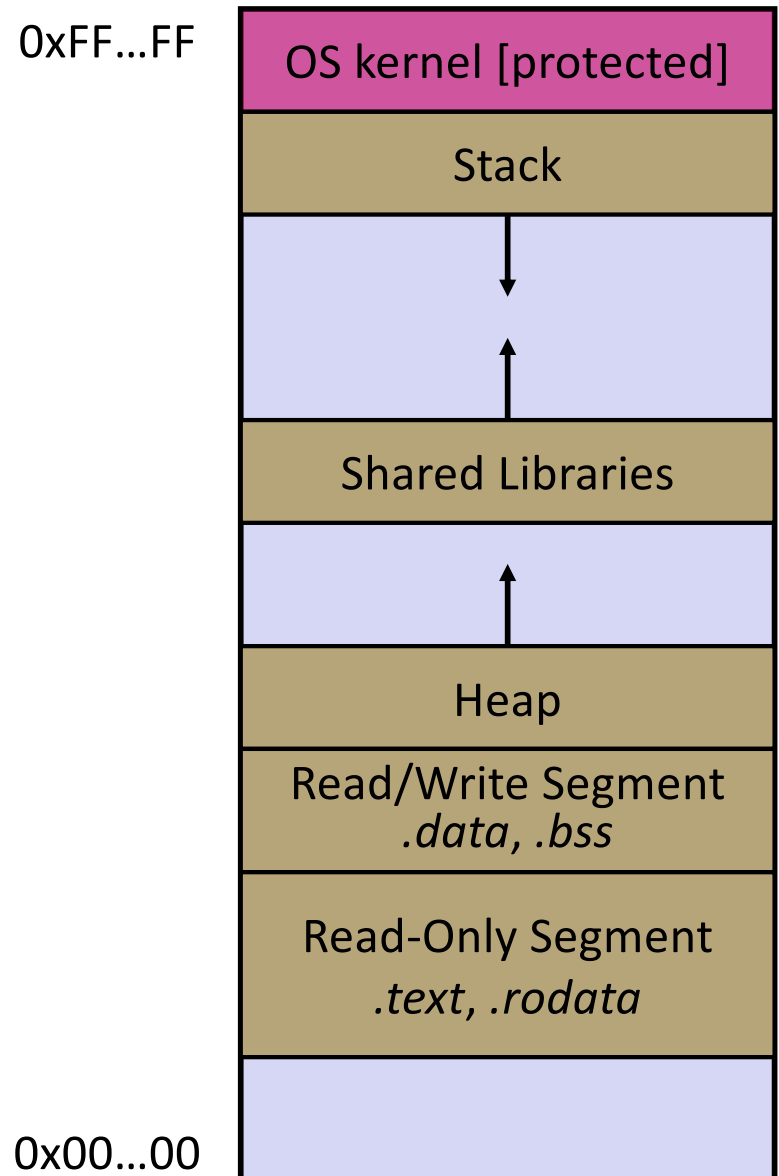
Run 4:

```
bash$ ./pointy
&x is 0x7fffff0dfe54
p is 0x7fffff0dfe54
x is 351
x is 333
```

Address Space Layout Randomization

- ❖ Linux uses *address space layout randomization* (ASLR) for added security
 - Randomizes:
 - Base of stack
 - Shared library (`mmap`) location
 - Makes Stack-based buffer overflow attacks tougher
 - Makes debugging tougher
 - Can be disabled (`gdb` does this by default); Google if curious

0xFF...FF



0x00...00

Lecture Outline

- ❖ C's Memory Model (refresher)
- ❖ Pointers (refresher)
- ❖ **Arrays**

Arrays

❖ Definition: `type name [size]`

- Allocates `size * sizeof(type)` bytes of *contiguous* memory
- Normal usage is a compile-time constant for `size`
(e.g. `int scores[175];`)
- Initially, array values are “garbage” (i.e., uninitialized, unknown)

❖ Size of an array

- Not stored anywhere – array does not know its own size!
 - `sizeof(array)` only works in variable scope of array definition
- Recent versions of C (but *not* C++) allowed variable-length arrays
 - Uncommon; nowadays considered bad practice [*we won't use*]

```
int n = 175;  
int scores[n]; // OK in C99
```

Using Arrays

❖ Initialization: `type name[size] = {val0, ..., valN};`

- `{ }` initialization can *only* be used at time of definition
- If no `size` supplied, infers from length of array initializer

❖ Array name used as identifier for “collection of data”

- `name[index]` specifies an element of the array and can be used as an assignment target or as a value in an expression
- Array name (by itself) evaluates to the address of the start of the array
 - Cannot be assigned to / changed

```
int primes[6] = {2, 3, 5, 6, 11, 13};  
primes[3] = 7;  
primes[100] = 0; // memory smash!
```

Multi-dimensional Arrays

❖ Generic 2D format:

```
type name[rows][cols] = {{values}, ..., {values}};
```

- Still allocates a single, contiguous chunk of memory
- C stores arrays in *row-major* order

```
// a 2-row, 3-column array of doubles
double grid[2][3];

// a 3-row, 5-column array of ints
int matrix[3][5] = {
    {0, 1, 2, 3, 4},
    {0, 2, 4, 6, 8},
    {1, 3, 5, 7, 9}
};
```

- 2-D arrays normally only useful if size known in advance. Otherwise use dynamically-allocated data and pointers (later)

Arrays as Parameters

- ❖ It's tricky to use arrays as parameters
 - What happens when you use an array name as an argument?
 - Arrays do not know their own size

```
int sumAll(int a[]); // prototype

int main(int argc, char** argv) {
    int numbers[] = {9, 8, 1, 9, 5};
    int sum = sumAll(numbers);
    return 0;
}

int sumAll(int a[]) {
    int i, sum = 0;
    for (i = 0; i < ...???)
}
```

Solution 1: Declare Array Size

```
int sumAll(int a[5]); // prototype

int main(int argc, char** argv) {
    int numbers[] = {9, 8, 1, 9, 5};
    int sum = sumAll(numbers);
    printf("sum is: %d\n", sum);
    return 0;
}

int sumAll(int a[5]) {
    int i, sum = 0;
    for (i = 0; i < 5; i++) {
        sum += a[i];
    }
    return sum;
}
```

- ❖ Problem: loss of generality/flexibility

Solution 2: Pass Size as Parameter

```
int sumAll(int a[], int size); // prototype

int main(int argc, char** argv) {
    int numbers[] = {9, 8, 1, 9, 5};
    int sum = sumAll(numbers, 5);
    printf("sum is: %d\n", sum);
    return 0;
}

int sumAll(int a[], int size) {
    int i, sum = 0;
    for (i = 0; i < size; i++) {
        sum += a[i];
    }
    return sum;
}
```

arraysum.c

- Standard idiom in C programs

Returning an Array

- ❖ Local variables, including arrays, are allocated on the Stack
 - They “disappear” when a function returns!
 - Can’t safely return local arrays from functions
 - Can’t return an array as a return value – why not?

```
int* copyArray(int src[], int size) {  
    int i, dst[size];    // allowed in C99  
  
    for (i = 0; i < size; i++) {  
        dst[i] = src[i];  
    }  
  
    return dst; // no compiler error, but wrong!  
}              // returns ptr to abandoned memory!
```

buggy_copyarray.c

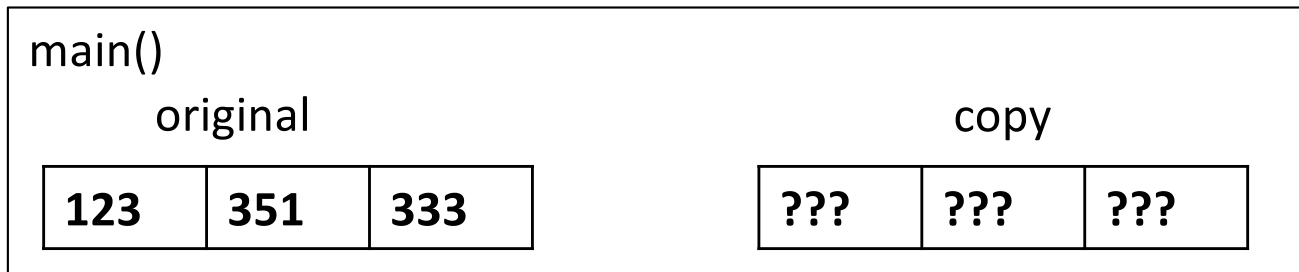
Solution: Output Parameter

- ❖ Create the “returned” array in the caller
 - Pass it as an **output parameter** to `copyarray()`
 - A pointer parameter that allows the called function to store values that the caller can use
 - Works because arrays are “passed” as pointers

```
void copyArray(int src[], int dst[], int size) {  
    int i;  
  
    for (i = 0; i < size; i++) {  
        dst[i] = src[i];  
    }  
}
```

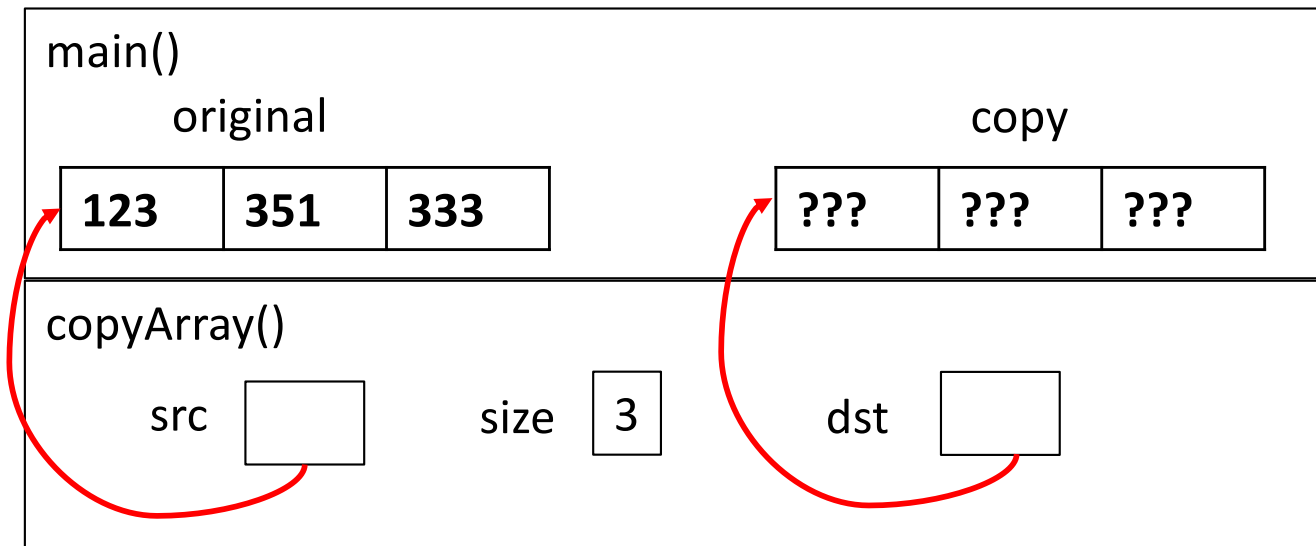
copyarray.c

Array Memory Diagram



```
int main() {  
    int original[] = {123, 351, 333};  
    int copy[3];  
    copyArray(original, copy, 3);  
}  
  
void copyArray(int src[], int dst[], int size) {  
    for (int i = 0; i < size; i++) {  
        dst[i] = src[i];  
    }  
}
```

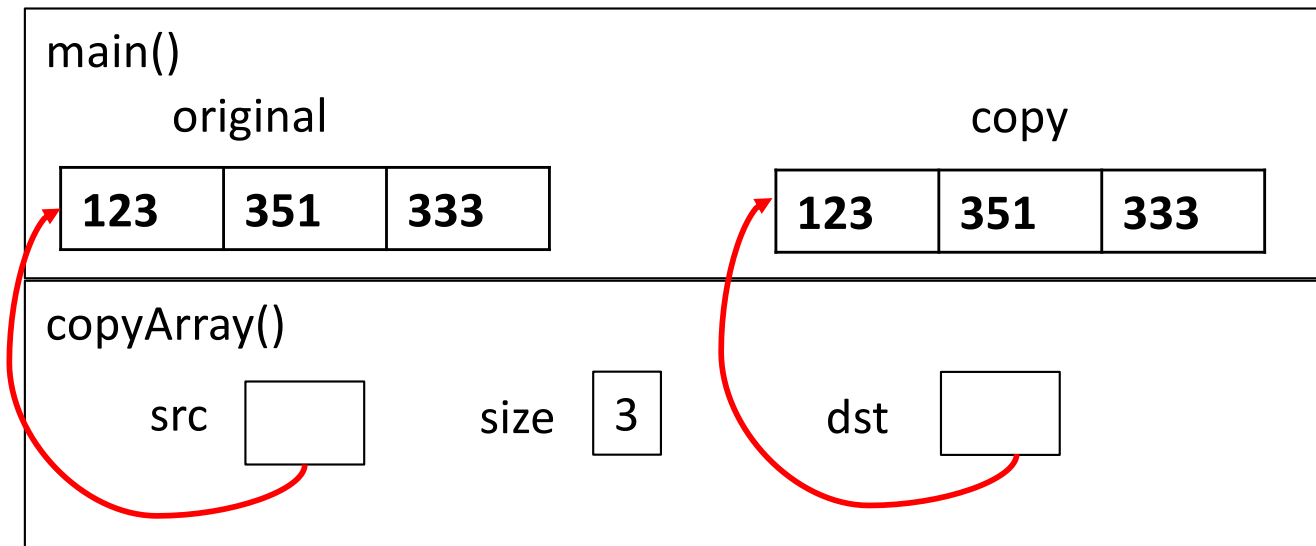
Array Memory Diagram



```
int main() {  
    int original[] = {123, 351, 333};  
    int copy[3];  
    copyArray(original, copy, 3);  
}  
  
void copyArray(int src[], int dst[], int size) {  
    for (int i = 0; i < size; i++) {  
        dst[i] = src[i];  
    }  
}
```

`dst[i]` is really
`*(dst+i)`. We
aren't changing `dst`!

Array Memory Diagram



```
int main() {  
    int original[] = {123, 351, 333};  
    int copy[3];  
    copyArray(original, copy, 3);  
}  
  
void copyArray(int src[], int dst[], int size) {  
    for (int i = 0; i < size; i++) {  
        dst[i] = src[i];  
    }  
}
```

`dst[i]` is really
`*(dst+i)`. We
aren't changing `dst`!

Output Parameters

❖ Output parameters are common in library functions

- `long int strtol(char* str, char** endptr, int base);`
- `int sscanf(char* str, char* format, ...);`

```
int    num, i;
char*  pEnd;
char*  str1 = "333 rocks"; // ptr to read-only const data
char   str2[10];

// converts "333 rocks" into long -- pEnd is conversion end
num = (int) strtol(str1, &pEnd, 10);

// reads string into arguments based on format string
num = sscanf("3 blind mice", "%d %s", &i, str2);
```

outparam.c

Parameters: reference vs. value

- ❖ There are two fundamental parameter-passing schemes in programming languages
- ❖ **Call-by-value**
 - Parameter is a local variable initialized with a copy of the calling argument when the function is called; manipulating the parameter only changes the copy, *not* the calling argument
 - **C, Java**, C++ (most things)
- ❖ **Call-by-reference**
 - Parameter is an alias for the supplied argument; manipulating the parameter manipulates the calling argument
 - C++ references (we'll see these later)

So what's the story for arrays?

- ❖ Is it call-by-value or call-by-reference?
- ❖ Technical answer: a `T[ ]` array parameter is “promoted” to a pointer of type `T*`, and the *pointer* is passed by value
 - So it acts like a call-by-reference array (if callee changes the array parameter elements it changes the caller's array)
 - But it's really a call-by-value pointer (the callee can change the pointer parameter to point to something else(!))

```
void copyArray(int src[], int dst[], int size) {  
    int i;  
    dst = src;    // evil! dst now points to same array as src  
    for (i = 0; i < size; i++) {  
        dst[i] = src[i];    // copies source array to itself!  
    }  
}
```

Array Parameters – [] or * ?

- ❖ Array parameters are *actually* pointers to the beginning of the array
 - The [] syntax for parameter types is just for convenience
 - Use whichever best helps the reader

This code:

```
void f(int a[]);

int main( ... ) {
    int a[5];
    ...
    f(a);
    return EXIT_SUCCESS;
}

void f(int a[]) { ... }
```

Equivalent to:

```
void f(int* a);

int main( ... ) {
    int a[5];
    ...
    f(&a[0]);
    return EXIT_SUCCESS;
}

void f(int* a) { ... }
```

Extra Exercises

- ❖ Some lectures contain “Extra Exercise” slides
 - Extra practice for you to do on your own without the pressure of being graded
 - You may use libraries and helper functions as needed
 - Early ones may require reviewing 351 material or looking at documentation for things we haven’t discussed in 333 yet
 - Always good to provide test cases in `main()`
- ❖ Solutions for these exercises will be posted on the course website
 - You will get the most benefit from implementing your own solution before looking at the provided one

Extra Exercise #1

- ❖ Write a function that:
 - Accepts an array of 32-bit unsigned integers and a length
 - Reverses the elements of the array in place
 - Returns nothing (`void`)

Extra Exercise #2

- ❖ Write a function that:
 - Accepts a string as a parameter
 - Returns:
 - The first white-space separated word in the string as a newly-allocated string
 - AND the size of that word
 - (probably need to wait until we look at malloc/free later)