What next?

Have used classes for OOP's essence: inheritance, overriding, dynamic dispatch

Now, what if we want to have more than just 1 superclass

- **Multiple inheritance**: allow > 1 superclasses
  - Useful but has some problems (see C++)
- **Ruby-style mixins**: 1 superclass; > 1 method providers
  - Often a fine substitute for multiple inheritance and has fewer problems (see also Scala traits)
- **Java/C#-style interfaces**: allow > 1 types
  - Mostly irrelevant in a dynamically typed language, but fewer problems

Multiple Inheritance

- If inheritance and overriding are so useful, why limit ourselves to one superclass?
  - Because the semantics is often awkward (this topic)
  - Because it makes static type-checking harder (not discussed)
  - Because it makes efficient implementation harder (not discussed)
- Is it useful? Sure!
  - Example: Make a ColorPt3D by inheriting from Pt3D and ColorPt (or maybe just from Color)
  - Example: Make a StudentAthlete by inheriting from Student and Athlete
  - With single inheritance, end up copying code or using non-OOP-style helper methods

Trees, dags, and diamonds

- Note: The phrases subclass, superclass can be ambiguous
  - There are immediate subclasses, superclasses
  - And there are transitive subclasses, superclasses
- Single inheritance: the class hierarchy is a tree
  - Nodes are classes
  - Parent is immediate superclass
  - Any number of children allowed
- Multiple inheritance: the class hierarchy no longer a tree
  - Cycles still disallowed (a directed-acyclic graph)
  - If multiple paths show that X is a (transitive) superclass of Y, then we have diamonds

What could go wrong?

- If V and Z both define a method m, what does Y inherit? What does super mean?
  - Directed resends useful (e.g., Z::super)
- What if X defines a method m that Z but not V overrides?
  - Can handle like previous case, but sometimes undesirable (e.g., ColorPt3D wants Pt3D's overrides to "win")
- If X defines fields, should Y have one copy of them (f) or two (V::f and Z::f)?
  - Turns out each behavior can be desirable (next slides)
  - So C++ has (at least) two forms of inheritance

3DColorPoints

If Ruby had multiple inheritance, we would want ColorPt3D to inherit methods that share one @x and one @y

```ruby
class Pt
  attr_accessor :x, :y
  ...
end
class ColorPt < Pt
  attr_accessor :color
  ...
end
class Pt3D < Pt
  attr_accessor :z
  ...
end
class ColorPt3D < Pt3D, ColorPt
  # override some methods
end
```
This code has `Person` define a pocket for subclasses to use, but an `ArtistCowboy` wants two pockets, one for each `draw` method.

```ruby
class Person
  attr_accessor :pocket
end

class Artist < Person # pocket for brush objects
  def draw # access pocket
    ...
  end
end

class Cowboy < Person # pocket for gun objects
  def draw # access pocket
    ...
  end
end

class ArtistCowboy < Artist, Cowboy # not Ruby!
end
```

**Mixins**

- A **mixin** is (just) a collection of methods
  - Less than a class: no instances of it
- Languages with mixins (e.g., Ruby modules) typically let a class have one superclass but **include** any number of mixins
- Semantics: **Including a mixin makes its methods part of the class**
  - Extending or overriding in the order mixins are included in the class definition
  - More powerful than helper methods because mixin methods can access methods (and instance variables) on `self` not defined in the mixin

**Example**

```ruby
module Doubler
  def double
    self + self # assume included in classes w/ +
  end
end

class String
  include Doubler
end

class AnotherPt
  attr_accessor :x, :y
  include Doubler
  def + other
    ans = AnotherPt.new
    ans.x = self.x + other.x
    ans.y = self.y + other.y
    ans
  end
end
```

**Lookup rules**

Mixins change our lookup rules slightly:

- When looking for receiver `obj`'s method `m`, look in `obj`'s class, then mixins that class includes (later includes shadow), then `obj`'s superclass, then the superclass' mixins, etc.

- As for instance variables, the mixin methods are included in the same object
  - So usually bad style for mixin methods to use instance variables since a name clash would be like our `CowboyArtist` pocket problem (but sometimes unavoidable?)

**The two big ones**

The two most popular/useful mixins in Ruby:

- **Comparable**: Defines `<`, `>`, `==`, `!=`, `>=`, `<=` in terms of `<=>`
- **Enumerable**: Defines many iterators (e.g., `map`, `find`) in terms of `each`

Great examples of using mixins:

- Classes including them get a bunch of methods for just a little work
- Classes do not “spend” their “one superclass” for this
- Do not need the complexity of multiple inheritance

- See the code for some examples

**Replacement for multiple inheritance?**

- A mixin works pretty well for `ColorPt3D`:
  - Color a reasonable mixin except for using an instance variable
```ruby
module Color
  attr_accessor :color
end
```

- A mixin works awkwardly-at-best for `ArtistCowboy`:
  - Natural for `Artist` and `Cowboy` to be `Person` subclasses
  - Could move methods of one to a mixin, but it is odd style and still does not get you two pockets
```ruby
module ArtistM ...
class Artist < Person
  include ArtistM
end
class ArtistCowboy < Cowboy
  include ArtistM
end
```
Statically-Typed OOP

• Now contrast multiple inheritance and mixins with Java/C#-style interfaces
• Important distinction, but interfaces are about static typing, which Ruby does not have
• So will use Java code after quick introduction to static typing for class-based OOP…
  – Sound typing for OOP prevents “method missing” errors

Classes as Types

• In Java/C#/etc. each class is also a type
• Methods have types for arguments and result

```java
class A {
    Object m1(Example e, String s) {...}
    Integer m2(A foo, Boolean b, Integer i) {...}
}
```

• If C is a (transitive) subclass of D, then C is a subtype of D
  – Type-checking allows subtype anywhere supertype allowed
  – So can pass instance of C to a method expecting instance of D

Interfaces are (or were) JustTypes

```java
interface Example {
    void m1(int x, int y);
    Object m2(Example x, String y);
}
```

• An interface is not a class; it is [er, used to be] only a type
  – Does not contain method definitions, only their signatures (types)
    • Unlike mixins
    • (Changed in Java 8, makes them more like mixins!)
  – Cannot use new on an interface
    • Like mixins

Implementing Interfaces

• A class can explicitly implement any number of interfaces
  – For class to type-check, it must implement every method in the interface with the right type
    • More on allowing subtypes later!
  – Multiple interfaces no problem; just implement everything

```java
class A implements Example {
    public void m1(int x, int y) {...}
    public Object m2(Example e, String s) {...}
}
class B implements Example {
    public void m1(int pizza, int beer) {...}
    public Object m2(Example e, String s) {...}
}
```

Multiple interfaces

• Interfaces provide no methods or fields
  – So no questions of method/field duplication when implementing multiple interfaces, unlike multiple inheritance
• What interfaces are for:
  – “Caller can give any instance of any class implementing I”
    • So callee can call methods in I regardless of class
  – So much more flexible type system
• Interfaces have little use in a dynamically typed language
  – Dynamic typing already much more flexible, with trade-offs we studied

Connections

Let’s now answer these questions:

• What does a statically typed OOP language need to support “required overriding”?
• How is this similar to higher-order functions?
• Why does a language with multiple inheritance (e.g., C++) not need Java/C#-style interfaces?

[Explaining Java’s abstract methods / C++’s pure virtual methods]
**Required overriding**

Often a class expects all subclasses to override some method(s)
- The purpose of the superclass is to abstract common functionality, but some non-common parts have no default

A Ruby approach:
- Do not define must-override methods in superclass
- Subclasses can add it
- Creating instance of superclass can cause method-missing errors

```
# do not use A.new
# all subclasses should define m2
class A
  def m1 v
    ... self.m2 e ...
  end
end
```

```
abstract class A {
  T1 m1(T2 x) { ... m2(e); ... }
  abstract T3 m2(T4 x);
}
class B extends A {
  T3 m2(T4 x) { ... }
}
```

**Static typing**

- In Java/CH/C++, prior approach fails type-checking
  - No method m2 defined in superclass
  - One solution: provide error-causing implementation

```
class A
  def m1 v
    ... self.m2 e ...
  end
  def m2 v
    raise "must be overridden"
  end
end
```

- Better: Use static checking to prevent this error...

```
abstract class A {
  T1 m1(T2 x) { ... m2(e); ... }
  abstract T3 m2(T4 x);
} 
class B extends A {
  T3 m2(T4 x) { ... }
}
```

**Abstract methods**

- Java/CH/C++ let superclass give signature (type) of method subclasses should provide
  - Called **abstract methods** or **pure virtual methods**
  - Cannot creates instances of classes with such methods
    - Catches error at compile-time
    - Indicates intent to code-reader
    - Does not make language more powerful

```
abstract class A {
  T1 m1(T2 x) { ... m2(e); ... }
  abstract T3 m2(T4 x);
}
class B extends A {
  T3 m2(T4 x) { ... }
}
```

**Passing code to other code**

- Abstract methods and dynamic dispatch: An OOP way to have subclass “pass code” to other code in superclass

```
fun f (g,x) = ... g e ...
fun h x = ... f((fn y => ...),...) 
```

**No interfaces in C++**

- If you have multiple inheritance and abstract methods, you do not also need interfaces
- Replace each interface with a class with all abstract methods
- Replace each “implements interface” with another superclass

So: Expect to see interfaces only in statically typed OOP without multiple inheritance
- Not Ruby
- Not C++