

# The History of Concurrency & Parallelism Support in Java

**Douglas C. Schmidt**

**[d.schmidt@vanderbilt.edu](mailto:d.schmidt@vanderbilt.edu)**

**[www.dre.vanderbilt.edu/~schmidt](http://www.dre.vanderbilt.edu/~schmidt)**

**Professor of Computer Science**

**Institute for Software  
Integrated Systems**

**Vanderbilt University  
Nashville, Tennessee, USA**



# Learning Objectives in this Part of the Lesson

- Be aware of the history of Java concurrency & parallelism



Java/JNI

**Applications**

**Additional Frameworks & Languages**

**Threading & Synchronization Packages**

C++/C

**Java Execution Environment (e.g., JVM)**

**System Libraries**

C

**Operating System Kernel**

# Learning Objectives in this Part of the Lesson

- Be aware of the history of Java concurrency & parallelism

~~UNKNOWN~~



Java/JNI

C++/C

C

**Applications**

**Additional Frameworks & Languages**

**Threading & Synchronization Packages**

**Java Execution Environment (e.g., JVM)**

**System Libraries**

**Operating System Kernel**

Hopefully, you'll already know some of this!!!

---

# A Brief History of Concurrency in Java

# A Brief History of Concurrency in Java

- Foundational concurrency support

*e.g., Java threads & built-in monitor objects were available in Java 1*

Java/JNI

C++/C

C

**Applications**

**Additional Frameworks & Languages**

**Threading & Synchronization Packages**

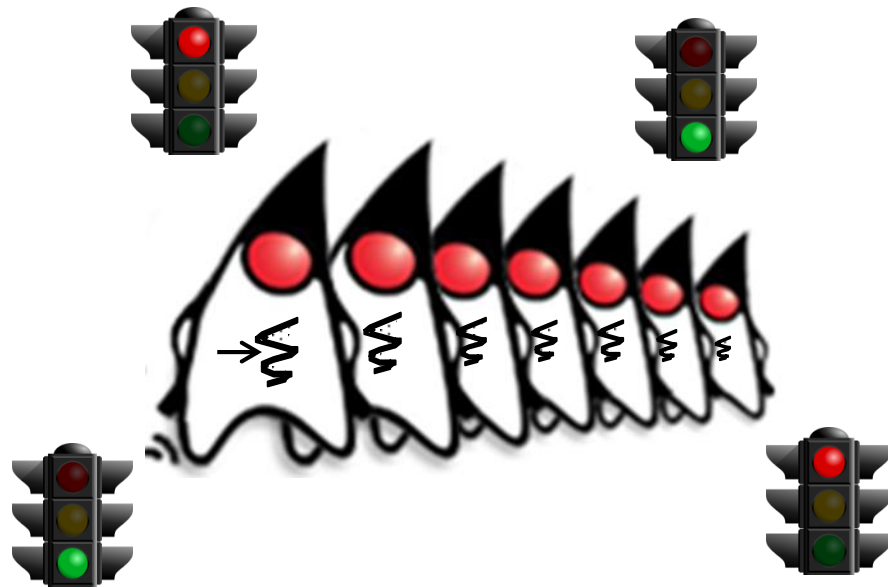
**Java Execution Environment (e.g., JVM)**

**System Libraries**

**Operating System Kernel**

# A Brief History of Concurrency in Java

- Foundational concurrency support
  - Focus on basic multi-threading & synchronization primitives



See [docs.oracle.com/javase/tutorial/essential/concurrency](https://docs.oracle.com/javase/tutorial/essential/concurrency)

# A Brief History of Concurrency in Java

- Foundational concurrency support
  - Focus on basic multi-threading & synchronization primitives

*Allow multiple threads  
to communicate via a  
bounded buffer*

```
SimpleBlockingBoundedQueue<Integer>  
simpleQueue = new  
SimpleBlockingBoundedQueue<>();
```

```
Thread[] threads = new Thread[] {  
    new Thread(new Producer<>  
                (simpleQueue)),  
    new Thread(new Consumer<>  
                (simpleQueue))  
};
```

```
for (Thread thread : threads)  
    thread.start();
```

```
for (Thread thread : threads)  
    thread.join();
```


# A Brief History of Concurrency in Java

- Foundational concurrency support
  - Focus on basic multi-threading & synchronization primitives

```
SimpleBlockingBoundedQueue<Integer>  
simpleQueue = new  
SimpleBlockingBoundedQueue<>();
```

```
Thread[] threads = new Thread[] {  
    new Thread(new Producer<>  
                (simpleQueue)),  
    new Thread(new Consumer<>  
                (simpleQueue))  
};
```

*Start & join these  
multiple threads*



```
for (Thread thread : threads)  
    thread.start();
```

```
for (Thread thread : threads)  
    thread.join();
```



# A Brief History of Concurrency in Java

- Foundational concurrency support
- Focus on basic multi-threading & synchronization primitives

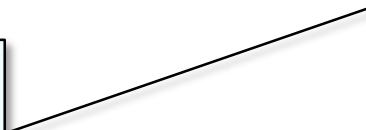
```
class SimpleBlockingBoundedQueue
    <E> {

    public E take() ...{
        synchronized(this) {
            while (mList.isEmpty())
                wait();

            notifyAll();

            return mList.poll();
        }
    }
}
```

*Built-in monitor object  
mutual exclusion &  
coordination primitives*



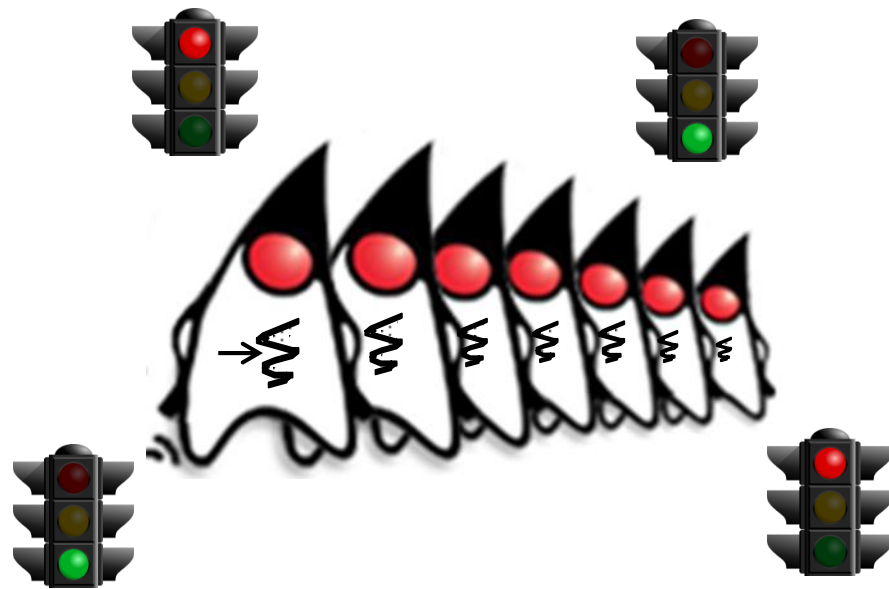
# A Brief History of Concurrency in Java

- Foundational concurrency support
  - Focus on basic multi-threading & synchronization primitives
  - Efficient, but low-level & very limited in capabilities



# A Brief History of Concurrency in Java

- Foundational concurrency support
  - Focus on basic multi-threading & synchronization primitives
  - Efficient, but low-level & very limited in capabilities
  - Many accidental complexities



*Accidental complexities arise from limitations with software techniques, tools, & methods*

See [en.wikipedia.org/wiki/No\\_Silver\\_Bullet](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/No_Silver_Bullet)

# A Brief History of Concurrency in Java

- Advanced concurrency support

*e.g., Java executor framework, synchronizers, blocking queues, atomics, & concurrent collections available in Java 5+*

Java/JNI

C++/C

C

**Applications**

**Additional Frameworks & Languages**

**Threading & Synchronization Packages**

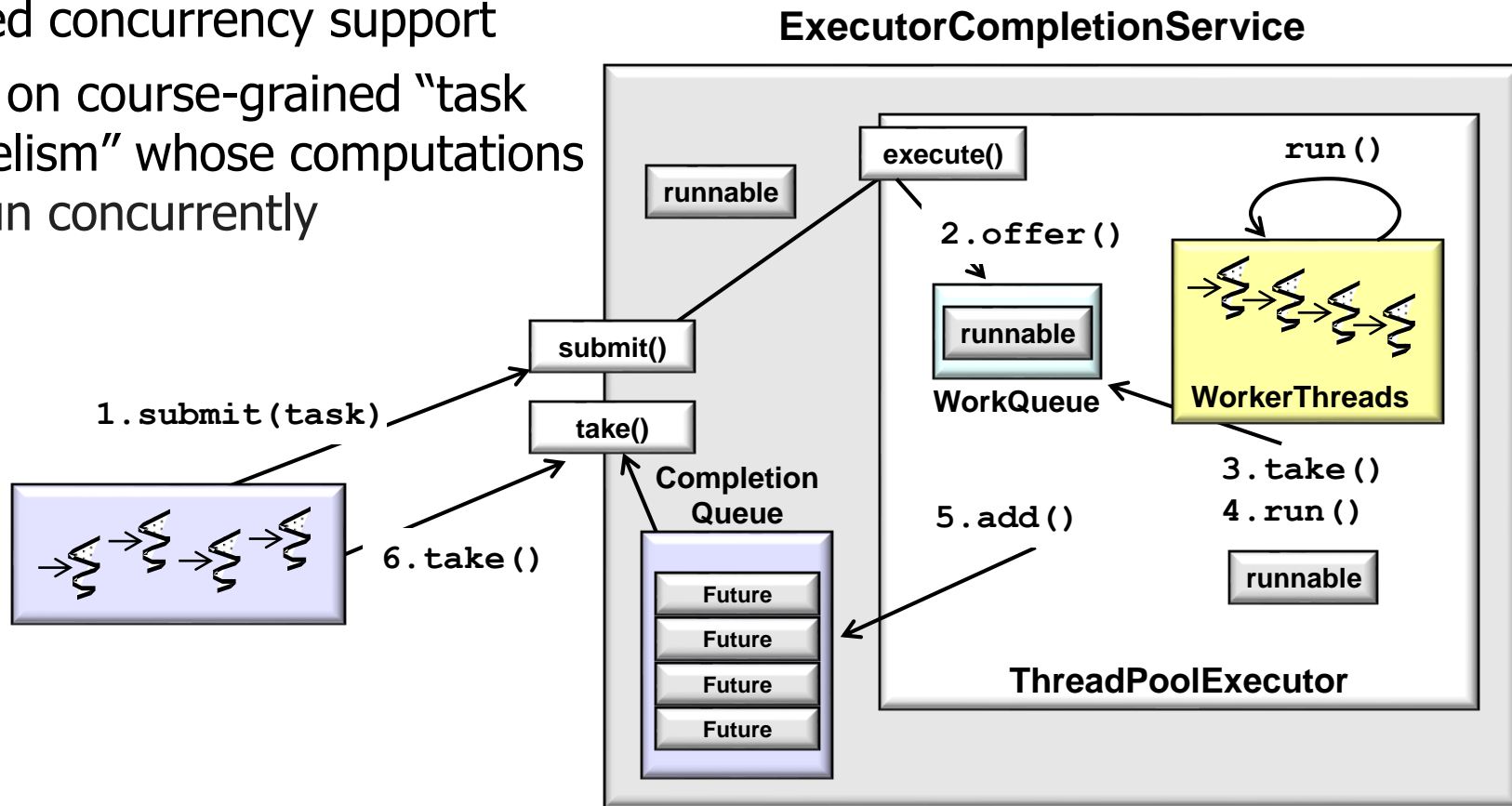
**Java Execution Environment (e.g., JVM)**

**System Libraries**

**Operating System Kernel**

# A Brief History of Concurrency in Java

- Advanced concurrency support
- Focus on course-grained “task parallelism” whose computations can run concurrently



See [en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Task\\_parallelism](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Task_parallelism)

# A Brief History of Concurrency in Java

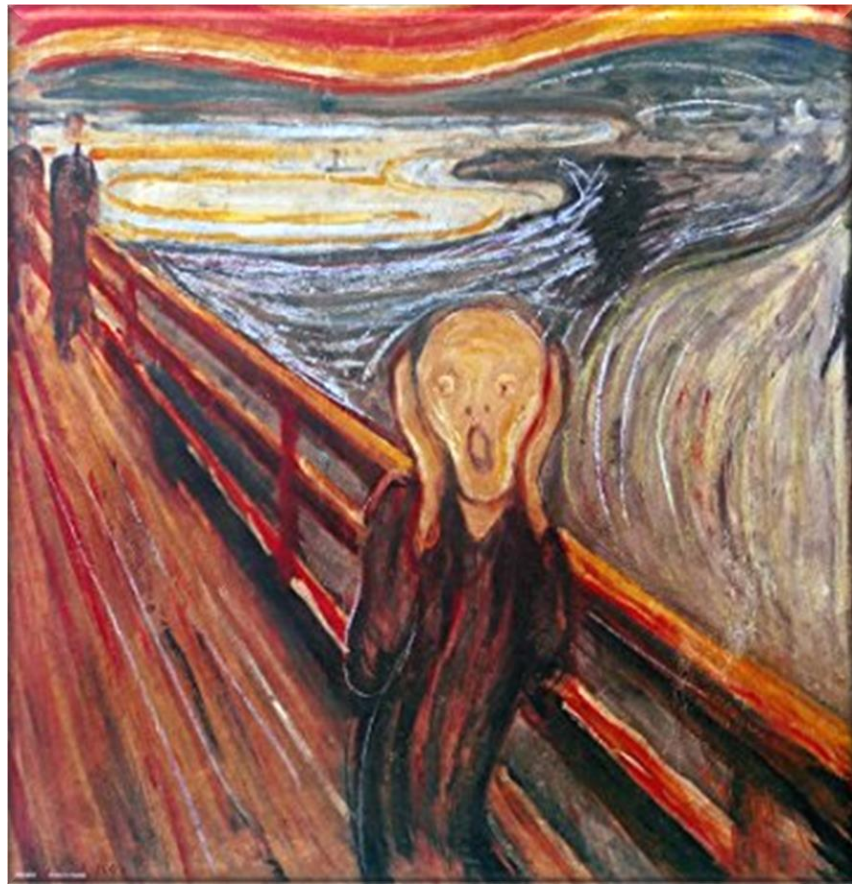
- Advanced concurrency support
  - Focus on course-grained “task parallelism” whose computations can run concurrently

*Create a fixed-sized thread pool  
& also coordinate the starting &  
stopping of multiple tasks that  
acquire/release shared resources*

```
ExecutorService executor =  
    Executors.newFixedThreadPool  
        (numOfBeings,  
         mThreadFactory) ;  
...  
CyclicBarrier entryBarrier =  
    new CyclicBarrier(numOfBeings+1) ;  
  
CountDownLatch exitBarrier =  
    new CountDownLatch(numOfBeings) ;  
  
for (int i=0; i < beingCount; ++i)  
    executor.execute  
        (makeBeingRunnable(i,  
                             entryBarrier,  
                             exitBarrier)) ;
```

# A Brief History of Concurrency in Java

- Advanced concurrency support
  - Focus on course-grained “task parallelism” whose computations can run concurrently
  - Feature-rich & optimized, but also tedious & error-prone to program



---

# A Brief History of Parallelism in Java



# A Brief History of Parallelism in Java

- Foundational parallelism support

*e.g., Java fork-join pool  
made available in Java 7*

Java/JNI

C++/C

C

**Applications**

**Additional Frameworks & Languages**

**Threading & Synchronization Packages**

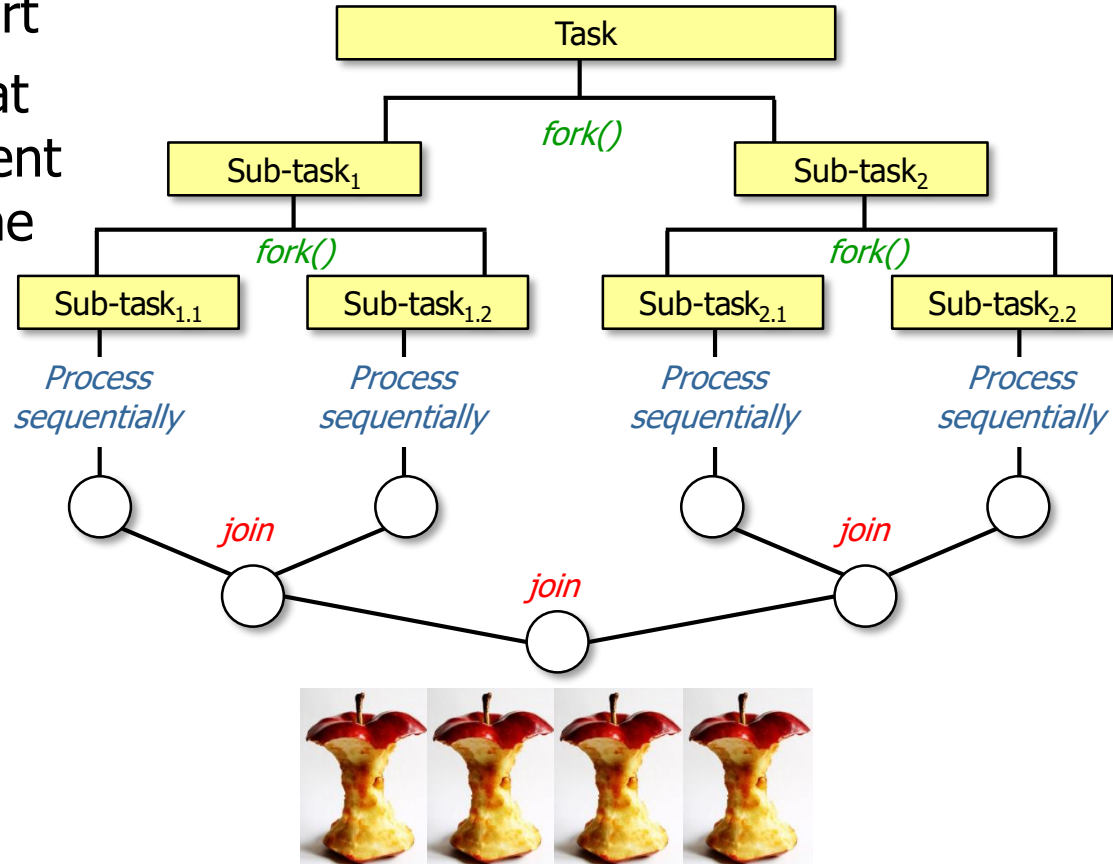
**Java Execution Environment (e.g., JVM)**

**System Libraries**

**Operating System Kernel**

# A Brief History of Parallelism in Java

- Foundational parallelism support
  - Focus on data parallelism that runs the same task on different data elements by applying the split-apply-combine model



See [en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Data\\_parallelism](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Data_parallelism)

# A Brief History of Parallelism in Java

- Foundational parallelism support
  - Focus on data parallelism that runs the same task on different data elements by applying the split-apply-combine model

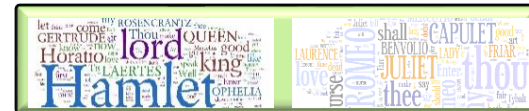
```
List<List<SearchResults>>  
listOfListOfSearchResults =  
    ForkJoinPool  
        .commonPool()  
        .invoke(new  
            SearchWithForkJoinTask  
                (inputList,  
                 mPhrasesToFind, ...));
```

*Use a common fork-join pool  
to search input strings to  
locate phrases that match*

Input Strings to Search

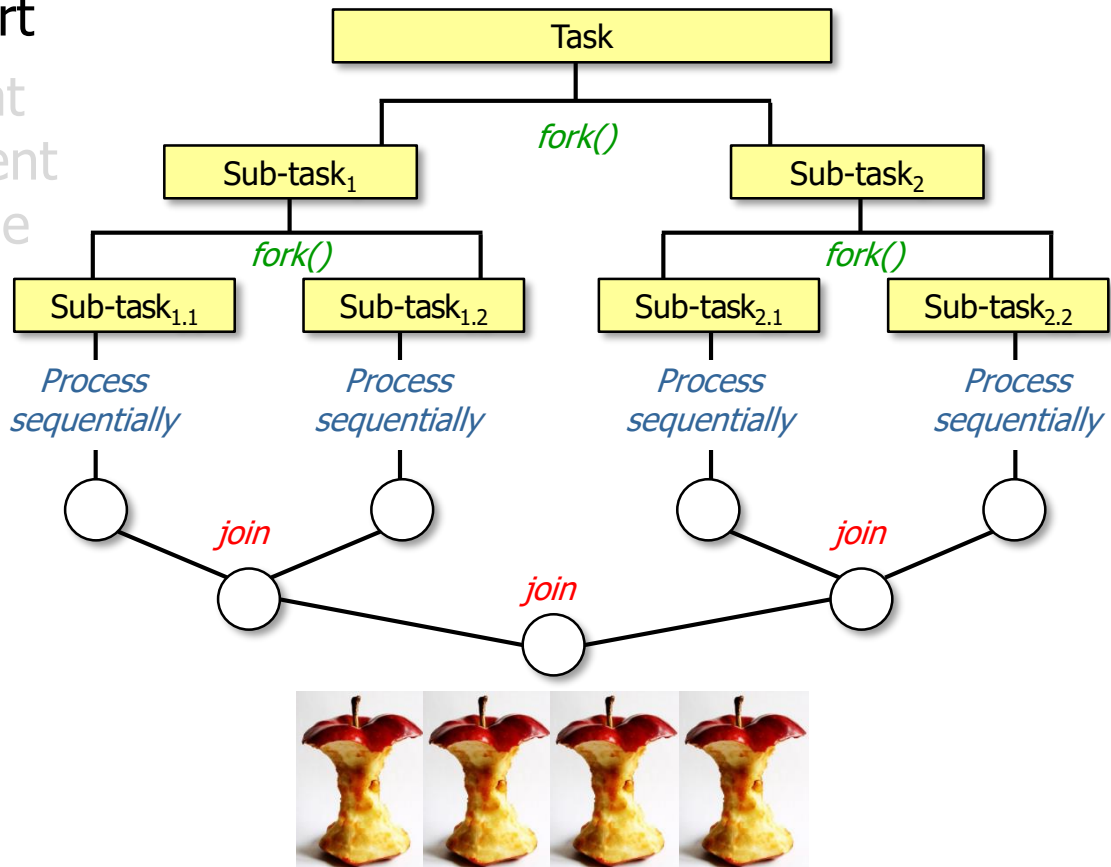
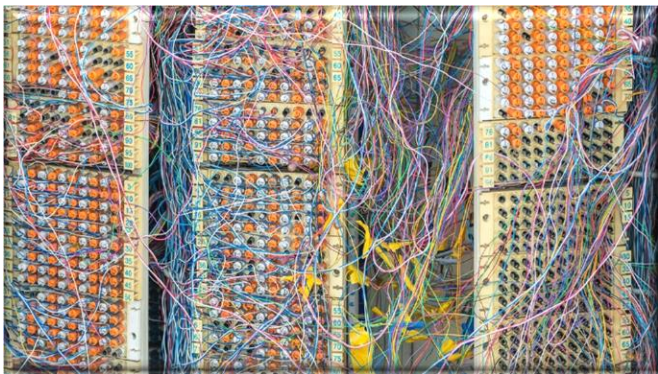


Search Phrases



# A Brief History of Parallelism in Java

- Foundational parallelism support
  - Focus on data parallelism that runs the same task on different data elements by applying the split-apply-combine model
- Powerful & scalable, but tedious to program directly



# A Brief History of Parallelism in Java

- Advanced parallelism support

*e.g., Java parallel streams  
& completable futures  
made available in Java 8*

Java/JNI

C++/C

C

**Applications**

**Additional Frameworks & Languages**

**Threading & Synchronization Packages**

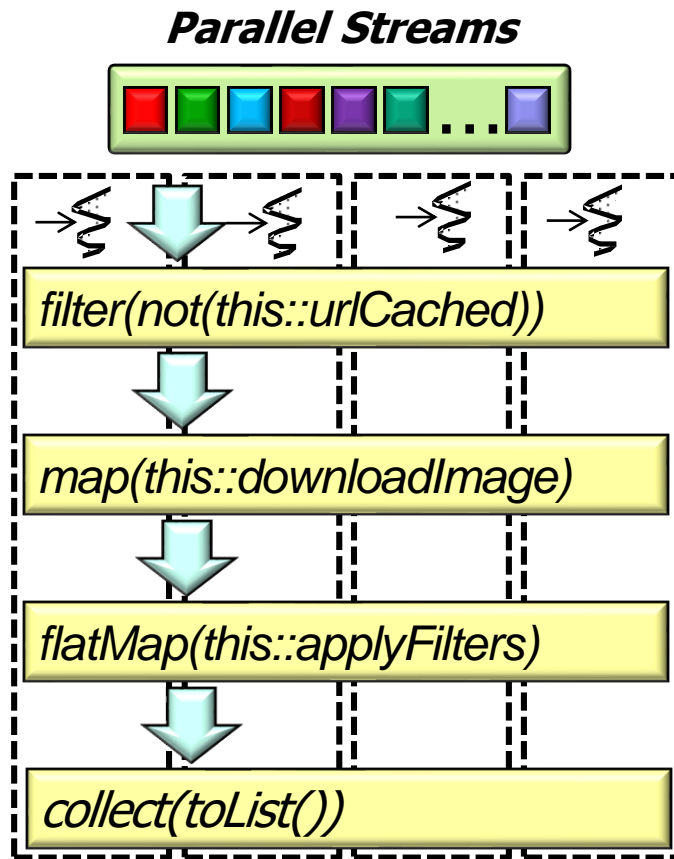
**Java Execution Environment (e.g., JVM)**

**System Libraries**

**Operating System Kernel**

# A Brief History of Parallelism in Java

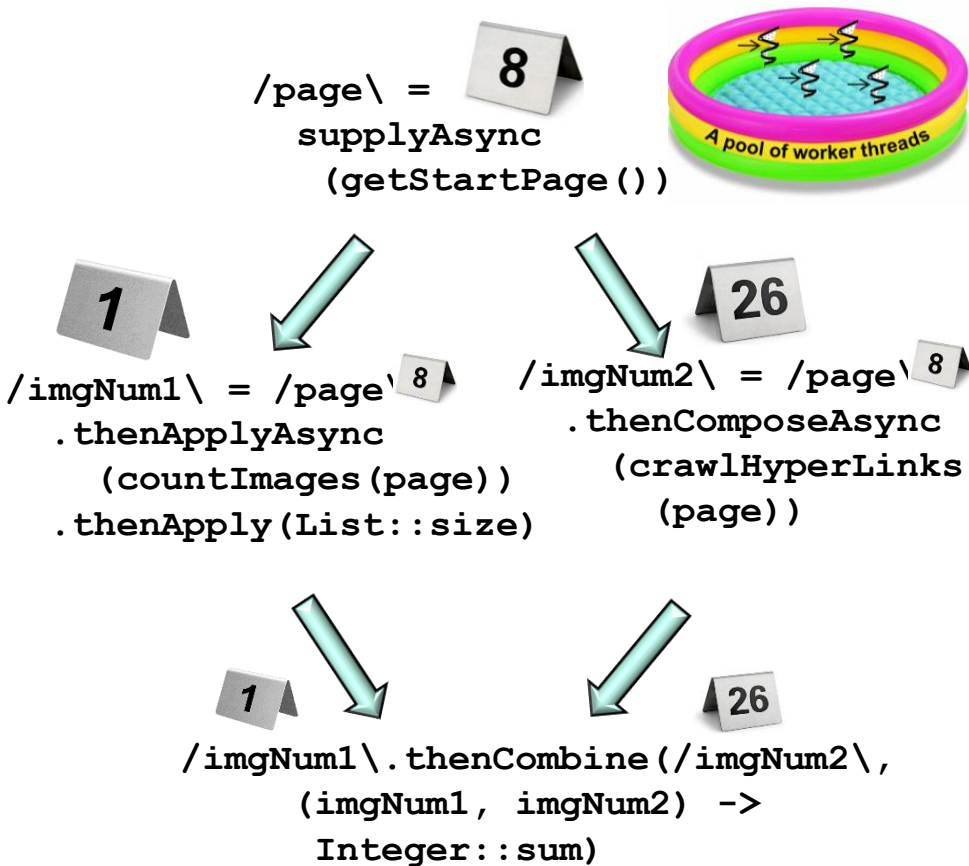
- Advanced parallelism support
  - Focus on functional programming for **data parallelism**



See [en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Data\\_parallelism](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Data_parallelism)

# A Brief History of Parallelism in Java

- Advanced parallelism support
  - Focus on functional programming for data parallelism & **reactive asynchrony**



See [gist.github.com/staltz/868e7e9bc2a7b8c1f754](https://gist.github.com/staltz/868e7e9bc2a7b8c1f754)

# A Brief History of Parallelism in Java

- Advanced parallelism support
- Focus on functional programming for **data parallelism** & reactive asynchrony

```
List<Image> images =  
    urls  
        .parallelStream()  
        .filter(not(this::urlCached))  
        .map(this::downloadImage)  
        .flatMap(this::applyFilters)  
        .collect(toList());
```

*Synchronously download images that aren't already cached from a list of URLs & process/store the images in parallel*



# A Brief History of Parallelism in Java

- Advanced parallelism support
  - Focus on functional programming for data parallelism & **reactive asynchrony**

*Asynchronously download images that aren't already cached from a list of URLs & process/store the images in parallel*

```
CompletableFuture<Stream<Image>>  
resultsFuture = urls  
    .stream()  
    .map(this::checkUrlCachedAsync)  
    .map(this::downloadImageAsync)  
    .flatMap(this::applyFiltersAsync)  
    .collect(toFuture())  
    .thenApply(stream ->  
        log(stream.flatMap  
            (Optional::stream) ,  
            urls.size()))  
    .join();
```

# A Brief History of Parallelism in Java

---

- Advanced parallelism support
  - Focus on functional programming for data parallelism & reactive asynchrony
- Strikes an effective balance between productivity & performance



# A Brief History of Parallelism in Java

- Advanced parallelism support
  - Focus on functional programming for data parallelism & reactive asynchrony
  - Strikes an effective balance between productivity & performance
- However, may be overly prescriptive

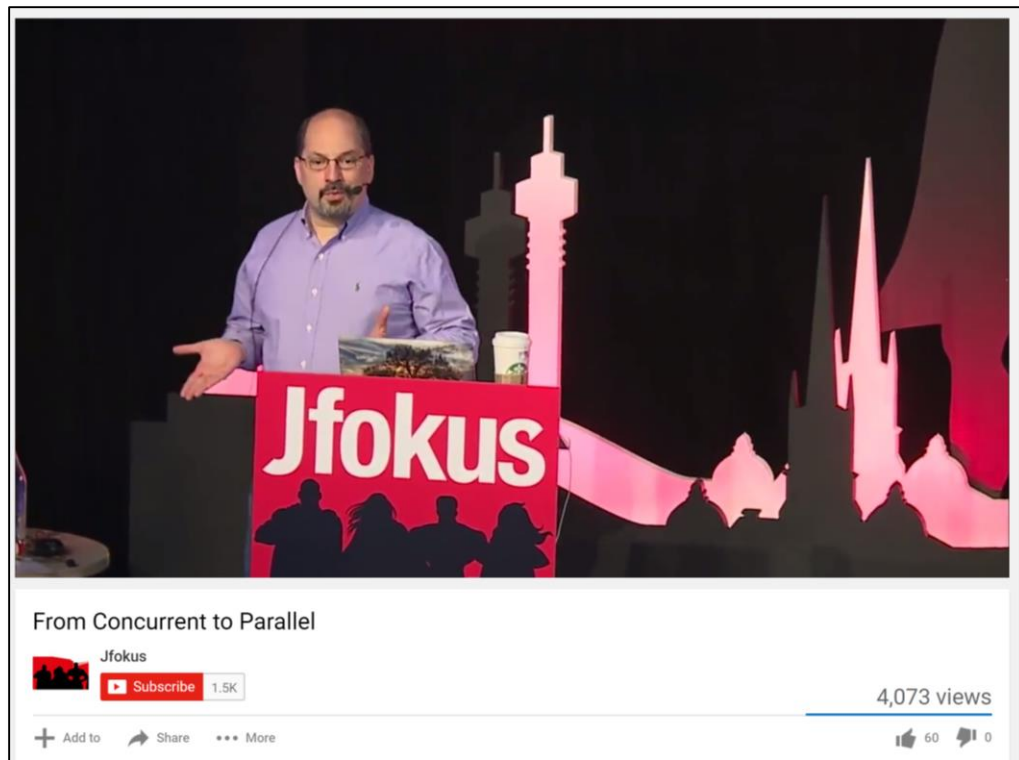


---

# The Evolution of Java from Concurrency to Parallelism

# The Evolution of Java from Concurrency to Parallelism

- Brian Goetz has an excellent talk about the evolution of Java from concurrent to parallel computing



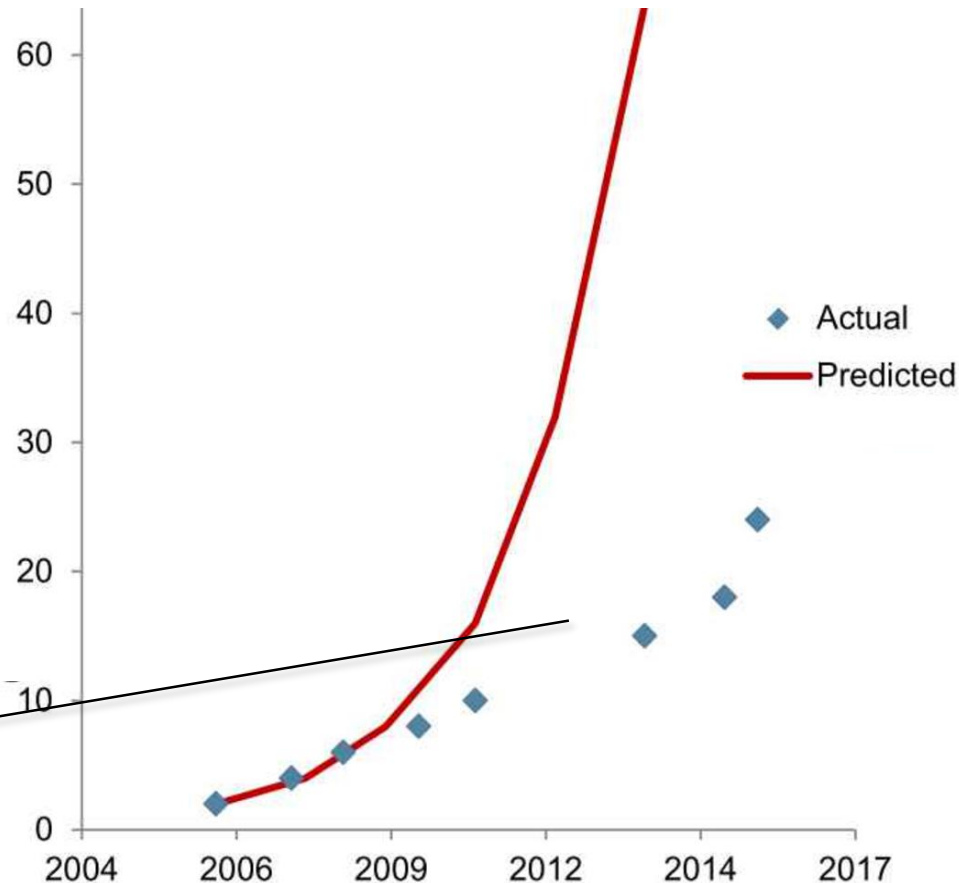
See [www.youtube.com/watch?v=NsDE7E8sIdQ](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NsDE7E8sIdQ)

# The Evolution of Java from Concurrency to Parallelism

- Brian Goetz has an excellent talk about the evolution of Java from concurrent to parallel computing



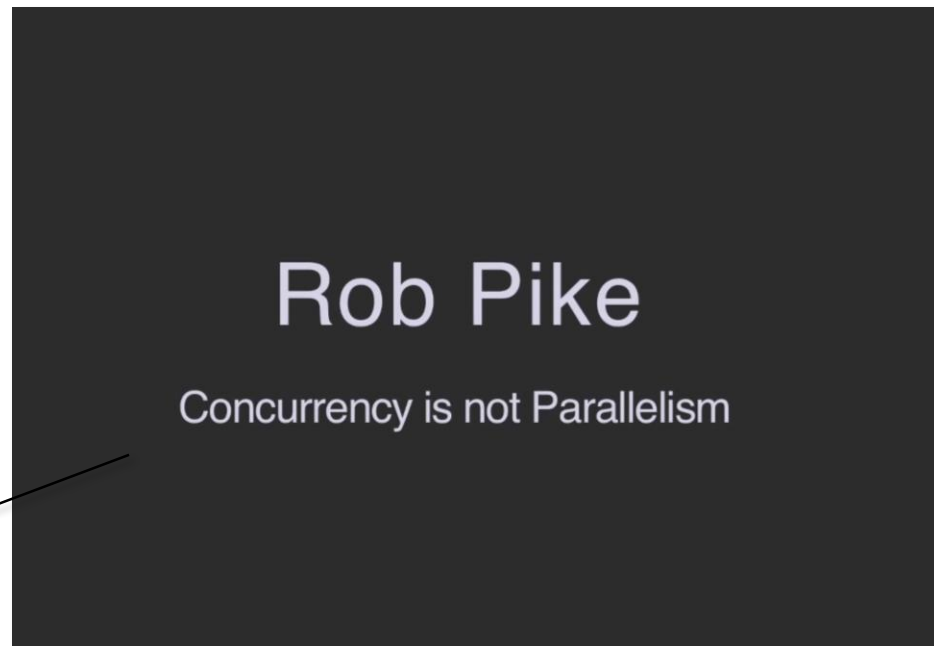
*His talk emphasizes that Java 8 combines functional programming with fine-grained data parallelism to leverage many-core processors*



See [www.infoq.com/presentations/parallel-java-se-8](http://www.infoq.com/presentations/parallel-java-se-8)

# The Evolution of Java from Concurrency to Parallelism

- Rob Pike also has a good talk that explains the differences between concurrency & parallelism



*His talk emphasizes that concurrency is about dealing with lots of things at once, whereas parallelism is about doing lots of things at once*

See [www.youtube.com/watch?v=cN\\_DpYBzKso](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cN_DpYBzKso)

---

# End of History of Concurrency & Parallelism in Java