From practice to theory and back again

_In theory there is no difference between theory and practice, but not in practice_

- **We’ve studied binary search: requires a sorted vector**
  - Much faster than sequential search (how much)
  - Add elements in sorted order or sort vector after adding
- **Many sorting algorithms have been well-studied**
  - Slower ones are often “good enough” simple to implement
  - Some fast algorithms are better than others
    - Always fast, fast most-of-the-time
    - Good in practice even if flawed theoretically?
- **New algorithms still discovered**
  - Quick sort in 1960, revised and updated in 1997
Tools for algorithms and programs

- We can time different methods, but how to compare timings?
  - Different on different machines, what about “workload”?
  - Mathematical tools can help analyze/discuss algorithms

- We often want to sort by different criteria
  - Sort list of stocks by price, shares traded, volume traded
  - Sort directories/files by size, alphabetically, or by date
  - Object-oriented concepts can help in implementing sorts

- We often want to sort different kinds of vectors: string and int
  - Don’t want to duplicate the code, that leads to errors
  - Generic programming helps, in C++ we use templates
To code or not to code, that is the …

- Should you call an existing sorting routine or write your own?
  - If you can, don’t rewrite code written and accessible
  - Sometimes you don’t know what to call
  - Sometimes you can’t call the existing library routine

- In C++ there are standard sort functions that can be used with built-in arrays and with both vectors and tvectors
  - These are accessible via `#include <algorithm>`
  - These are robust and fast, call `sort(…)` or `stable_sort(…)`
    - Can’t study the code, it’s not legible

- We’ll use sorts in `#include “sortall.h”`
  - Work only with tvector, as efficient as standard sorts, but code is legible
On to sorting: Selection Sort

- Find smallest element, move into first array location
  - Find next smallest element, move into second location
  - Generalize and repeat

```cpp
void SelectSort(tvector<int> & a)
// precondition: a contains a.size() elements
// postcondition: elements of a are sorted
{
    int k, index, numElts = a.size();
    // invariant: a[0]..a[k-1] in final position
    for(k=0; k < numElts - 1; k+=1) {
        index = MinIndex(a,k,numElts - 1); // find min element
        Swap(a[k],a[index]);
    }
}
```

- How many elements compared? Swapped?
  - Total number of elements examined? $N + (N-1) + \ldots + 1$
  - How many elements swapped?
  - This sort is easy to code, works fine for “small” vectors
Selection Sort: The Code (selectsort2.cpp)

```cpp
void SelectSort(tv<>& a)
// pre: a contains a.size() elements
// post: elements of a are sorted in non-decreasing order
{
    int j, k, temp, minIndex, numElts = a.size();
    // invariant: a[0]..a[k-1] in final position
    for (k = 0; k < numElts - 1; k++)
    {
        minIndex = k;   // minimal element index
        for (j = k + 1; j < numElts; j++)
        {
            if (a[j] < a[minIndex])
            {
                minIndex = j;   // new min, store index
            }
        }
        temp = a[k];    // swap min and k-th elements
        a[k] = a[minIndex];
        a[minIndex] = temp;
    }
}
```
What changes if we sort strings?

- The parameter changes, the definition of `temp` changes
  - Nothing else changes, code independent of type
    - We must be able to write `a[j] < a[k]` for vector `a`
  - We can use features of language to capture independence

- We can have different versions of function for different array types, with same name but different parameter lists
  - Overloaded function: parameters different so compiler can determine which function to call
  - Still problems, duplicated code, new algorithm means …?

- With function templates we replace duplicated code maintained by programmer with compiler generated code
When the user calls this code, different versions are compiled
Some template details

- Function templates permit us to write once, use several times for several different types of vector
  - Template function “stamps out” real function
  - Maintenance is saved, code still large (why?)

- What properties must hold for vector elements?
  - Comparable using < operator
  - Elements can be assigned to each other

- Template functions capture property requirements in code
  - Part of generic programming
  - Some languages support this better than others
From practical to theoretical

- We want a notation for discussing differences between algorithms, avoid empirical details at first
  - Empirical studies needed in addition to theoretical studies
  - As we’ll see, theory hides some details, but still works

- Binary search: roughly 10 entries in a 1,000 element vector
  - What is exact relationship? How to capture “roughly”?
  - Compared to sequential/linear search?

- We use O-notation, big-Oh, to capture properties but avoid details
  - \( N^2 \) is the same as \( 13N^2 \) is the same as \( 13N^2 + 23N \)
  - \( O(N^2) \), in the limit everything is the same
## Running times @ $10^6$ instructions/sec

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>N</th>
<th>$O(\log N)$</th>
<th>$O(N)$</th>
<th>$O(N \log N)$</th>
<th>$O(N^2)$</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>0.000003</td>
<td>0.00001</td>
<td>0.000033</td>
<td>0.0001</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>100</td>
<td>0.000007</td>
<td>0.00010</td>
<td>0.000664</td>
<td>0.1000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1,000</td>
<td>0.000010</td>
<td>0.00100</td>
<td>0.010000</td>
<td>1.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10,000</td>
<td>0.000013</td>
<td>0.01000</td>
<td>0.132900</td>
<td>1.7 min</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>100,000</td>
<td>0.000017</td>
<td>0.10000</td>
<td>1.661000</td>
<td>2.78 hr</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1,000,000</td>
<td>0.000020</td>
<td>1.0</td>
<td>19.9</td>
<td>11.6 day</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1,000,000,000</td>
<td>0.000030</td>
<td>16.7 min</td>
<td>18.3 hr</td>
<td>318 centuries</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
What does table show? Hide?

- Can we sort a million element vector with selection sort?
  - How can we do this, what’s missing in the table?
  - What are hidden constants, low-order terms?

- Can we sort a billion-element vector? Are there other sorts?
  - We’ll see quicksort, an efficient (most of the time) method
  - $O(N \log N)$, what does this mean?

- Sorting code for different algorithms in sortall.h/sortall.cpp
  - Template functions, prototypes in .h file, implementations in .cpp file, must have both (template isn’t code!!)
Templates and function objects

- In a templated sort function, vector elements must have certain properties (as noted previously)
  - Comparable using `operator <`
  - Assignable using `operator =`
  - Ok for `int`, `string`, what about `Date? ClockTime`?
- What if we want to sort by a different criteria
  - Sort strings by length instead of lexicographically
  - Sort students by age, grade, name, …
  - Sort stocks by price, shares traded, profit, …
- We can’t change how `operator <` works
  - Alternative: write sort function that does NOT use `<`
  - Alternative: encapsulate comparison in parameter, pass it
Function object concept

- To encapsulate comparison (like operator <) in a parameter
  - Need convention for parameter: name and behavior
  - Other issues needed in the sort function, concentrate on being clients of the sort function rather than implementors

- Name convention: class/object has a method named compare
  - Two parameters, the vector elements being compared (might not be just vector elements, any two parameters)

- Behavior convention: compare returns an int
  - zero if elements equal
  - +1 (positive) if first > second
  - -1 (negative) if first < second
Function object example

class StrLenComp
{
  public:
    int compare(const string& a, const string& b) const
    // post: return -1/+1/0 as a.length() < b.length()
    {
      if (a.length() < b.length()) return -1;
      if (a.length() > b.length()) return 1;
      return 0;
    }
};

// to use this:
StrLenComp scomp;
if (scomp.compare(“hello”, “goodbye”) < 0) …

● We can use this to sort, see strlensort.cpp
  ➢ Call of sort: InsertSort(vec, vec.size(), scomp);
From smarter code to algorithm

- We’ve seen selection sort, other $\mathcal{O}(N^2)$ sorts include
  - Insertion sort: better on nearly sorted data, fewer comparisons, potentially more data movements (selection)
  - Bubble sort: slow, don’t use it, but simple to describe

- Efficient sorts are trickier to code, but not too complicated
  - Often recursive as we’ll see, use *divide and conquer*
  - Quicksort and Mergesort are two standard examples

- **Mergesort divide and conquer**
  - Divide vector in two, sort both halves, merge together
  - Merging is easier because subvectors sorted, why?
Quicksort, an efficient sorting algorithm

- Step one, partition the vector, moving smaller elements left, larger elements right
  - Formally: choose a pivot element, all elements less than pivot moved to the left (of pivot), greater moved right
  - After partition/pivot, sort left half and sort right half

original | partition on 14 | partition on 10

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>14</th>
<th>12</th>
<th>15</th>
<th>6</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>10</th>
<th>17</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Quicksort details

```c
void Quick(tvector<string> & a, int first, int last) {
    int piv;
    if (first < last) {
        piv = Pivot(a, first, last);
        Quick(a, first, piv-1);
        Quick(a, piv+1, last);
    }
}
```

// original call is Quick(a, 0, a.size()-1);

- How do we make progress towards basecase? What’s a good pivot versus a bad pivot? What changes?
  - What about the code for Pivot?
  - What about type of element in vector?
How is Pivot similar to Dutch Flag?

```c
int Pivot(tvector<string> & a, int first, int last)
// post: returns piv so: k in [first..piv], a[k] <= a[piv]
//       k in (piv,last] piv, a[piv] < a[k]
{
    int k, p = first;
    string piv = a[first];
    for (k = first + 1; k <= last; k++)
    {
        if (a[k] <= piv)
            p++;
        Swap(a[k], a[p]);
    }
    Swap(a[p], a[first]);
    return p;
}

Partition around a[first], can change this later, why is p initially first?
  - What is invariant?
```

A Computer Science Tapestry 11.18
What is complexity?

- We’ve used O-notation, (big-Oh) to describe algorithms
  - Binary search is $O(\log n)$
  - Sequential search is $O(n)$
  - Selection sort is $O(n^2)$
  - Quicksort is $O(n \log n)$

- What do these measures tell us about “real” performance?
  - When is selection sort better than quicksort?
  - What are the advantages of sequential search?

- Describing the complexity of algorithms rather than implementations is important and essential
  - Empirical validation of theory is important too
Do it fast, do it slow, can we do it at all?

- Some problems can be solved quickly using a computer
  - Searching a sorted list
- Some problems can be solved, but it takes a long time
  - Towers of Hanoi
- Some problems can be solved, we don’t know how quickly
  - Traveling salesperson, optimal class scheduling
- Some problems can’t be solved at all using a computer
  - The halting problem, first shown by Alan Turing

- The halting problem: can we write one program used to determine if an arbitrary program (any program) stops?
  - One program that reads other programs, must work for every program being checked, *computability*