



CMSC 131

Object-Oriented Programming I

Mutability, StringBuffer

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This material is based on material provided by Ben Bederson, Bonnie Dorr,
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Overview

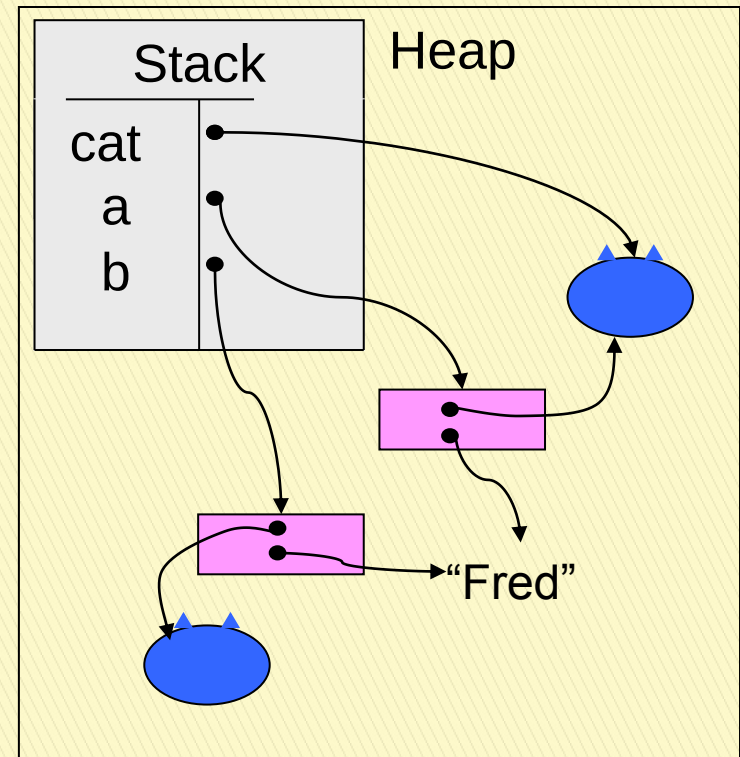
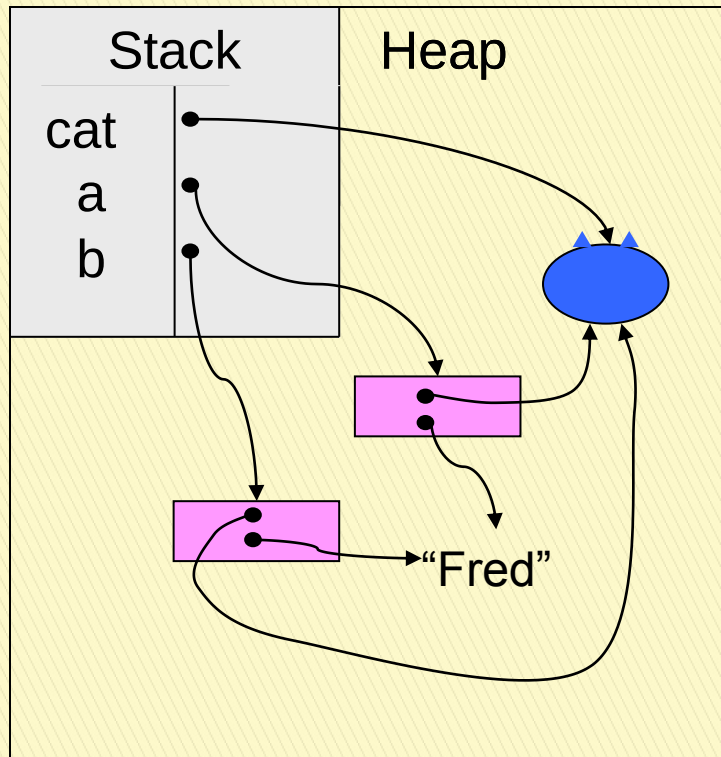
- ▶ Mutability
- ▶ StringBuffer
- ▶ Password Example

Immutable

- ▶ Immutable object
 - State is initialized when it is constructed but it will never change
 - Instance variables (state) cannot be changed
- ▶ Mutable object
 - Instance variables (state) can be changed
- ▶ There is no language construct that guarantees immutability
 - You have to design the class to enforce it
- ▶ Keep classes immutable (if possible)
 - If aliasing occurs it will not matter (no problem with sharing object if it cannot change)
- ▶ With mutable classes we need to make “defensive copies”
 - Changes made in one are not seen in another
- ▶ It is good practice to document whether a class is immutable
- ▶ How to define a class as immutable
 - Make all the instance variables private
 - Do not provide set methods
 - Only the constructor will initialize the instance variables

Immutable

- ▶ Using the Cat and CatOwner example, which map represents the assignments we have in main?
- ▶ Is `pet = otherGuy.pet` something you want?



Immutable

- ▶ Anytime you are passing an object to a method or returning an object from a method you should ask whether a copy should be made
- ▶ Strings are immutable
 - Great! → Not need to make copies when we pass them to methods
 - Bad! → Inefficient to modify one
 - Example: loop that reads characters one at a time and makes a string out of it (creates a lot of objects!)

StringBuffer

- ▶ A mutable String class
 - Good → very efficient to modify them
 - Bad → we have to worry about aliasing
- ▶ Main methods
 - **append** → add characters to end
 - **insert** → add characters in middle
 - **delete** → remove characters
- ▶ Note
 - **append, insert** → return object of type StringBuffer
 - This is alias to object that the methods belong to
- ▶ API:
 - <http://download.oracle.com/javase/6/docs/api/java/lang/StringBuffer.html>
- ▶ **Example:** StringBufferExample.java

Examples

- ▶ Password Example
 - Let's write a Password class, along with some JUnit tests. This will allow us to review several of the concepts discussed so far.
 - Specifications
 - Instance variable → value (String)
 - Methods
 - Constructor (value as parameter)
 - Copy Constructor
 - equals method
 - toString method
 - toString method
 - stringChecker → verifies no characters are duplicated
- ▶ We will also try refactoring our code
 - Changing variable names
- ▶ While defining a Junit test case we will need to catch an exception