

15-410

“...#ifndef DSFLK_FSFDDS_FSDFDS...”

#include
Feb. 2, 2007

Dave Eckhardt

Bruce Maggs

Outline

#ifndef DSFLK_FSFDDS_FSDFDS

What's `_STDIO_H_` anyway?

```
#ifndef _STDIO_H_
#define _STDIO_H_

typedef struct FILE {
    ...
} ...;

#endif /* _STDIO_H_ */
```

Archaeology

C is old

C doesn't have modules

C has *compilation units*

- “Compilation unit” is the secret ANSI code word for “file”
- Compilers sort of know some file types: .c, .s
- Compilers *don't* really know about .h
 - Auxiliary “pre-processor” brain (/lib/cpp) hides them

People use *conventions* to get module-like C

- These conventions evolved slowly

The “.h Responsibility” Dilemma

Assume: “stdio module”

Assume: “network stack module”

- (Trust us, it's modular!)

Both need to know

- What's a `size_t` on this machine, anyway?
- `#include <sys/types.h>`

Nested Responsibility

Program 1:

- `#include <stdio.h>`

Program 2:

- `#include <netinet/tcp_var.h>`

Assume

- Program 1, 2 don't need `sys/types.h` themselves

Solution 1

- `stdio.h` and `netinet/tcp_var.h` each include `sys/types.h`

Too Much

Program 3:

- `#include <stdio.h>`
- `#include <netinet/tcp_var.h>`

Problem

- Now we get *two* copies `sys/types.h`
- Lots of whining about redefinitions
- Maybe compilation fails

Passing the Buck

Blame the user!

Solution 2

- Require *main program* to #include <sys/types.h>
- Then the other .h files don't have to

Problem

- Annoying for user
- Modules' needs *change over time*
 - Didn't you know? Since last night xxx needs yyy...

Solution: Idempotent .h files

.h responsibility

- Activate only once
- No matter how many times included
- Choose string “unlikely to be used elsewhere”

```
#ifndef _STDIO_H_  
#define _STDIO_H_  
  
...  
#endif /* _STDIO_H_ */
```

What *Belongs* In a .h?

Types (C: *declarations*, not *definitions*)

Exported interface routines (“public methods”)

Constants (#define or enum)

Macros (when *appropriate*)

Data items exported by module

- Try to avoid this
- Same reason as other languages: data != semantics

No code!

But What About...?

Real modules have multiple .c files

- Who declares *internal* data structures?
 - To be shared by multiple files
 - this is legitimate: internally, we agree on semantics
- Who declares *internal* functions?

Not “the” .h file

- We *don't want* to publish internal details

Maybe a “.i” file?

- Help?

Use the *Other* .h File!

stdio.h

- Included by module clients
- Included by module parts
- Available in /usr/include when stdio is installed

stdio_private.h

- Included only by module parts
- Not made available in a public location (ideally)

***_private.h should be idempotent, too**

Summary

#ifndef DSFLK_FSFDDS_FSDFDS

- Well, use a better string
- Used to make .h files idempotent

What *should* go here, anyway?

- There are two “here”s here
 - foo.h: public interface, available to public
 - foo_private.h: internal communication, maybe unpublished