

# Back to the Future

Deterministic Debugging with rr



What the  
programmer  
knows

symptom:  
SEGFALT

??

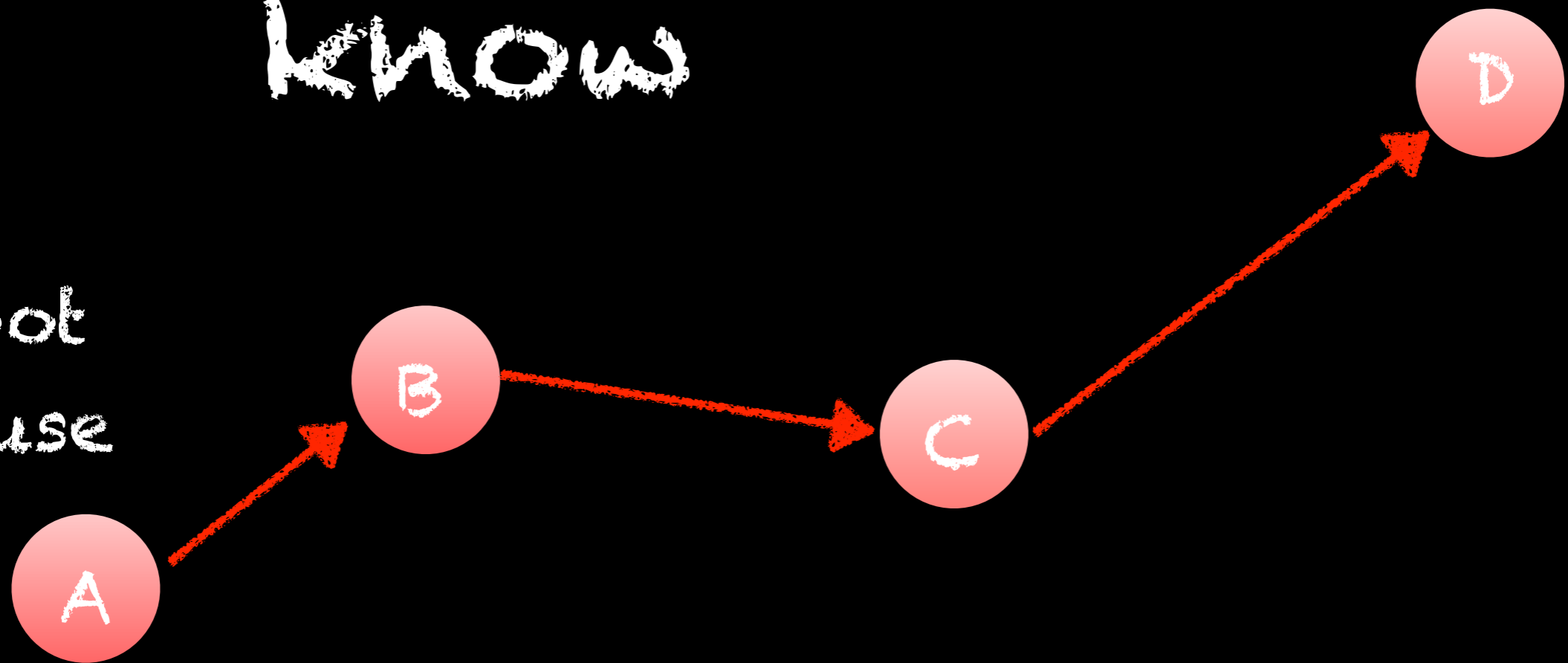
:(



What the  
programmer  
wants to  
know

symptom:  
SEGFault  
:(

root  
cause



# Traditional Debuggers

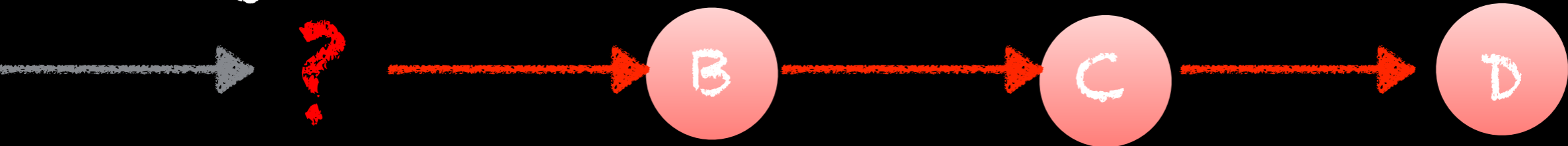
run



re-run



run again...



...

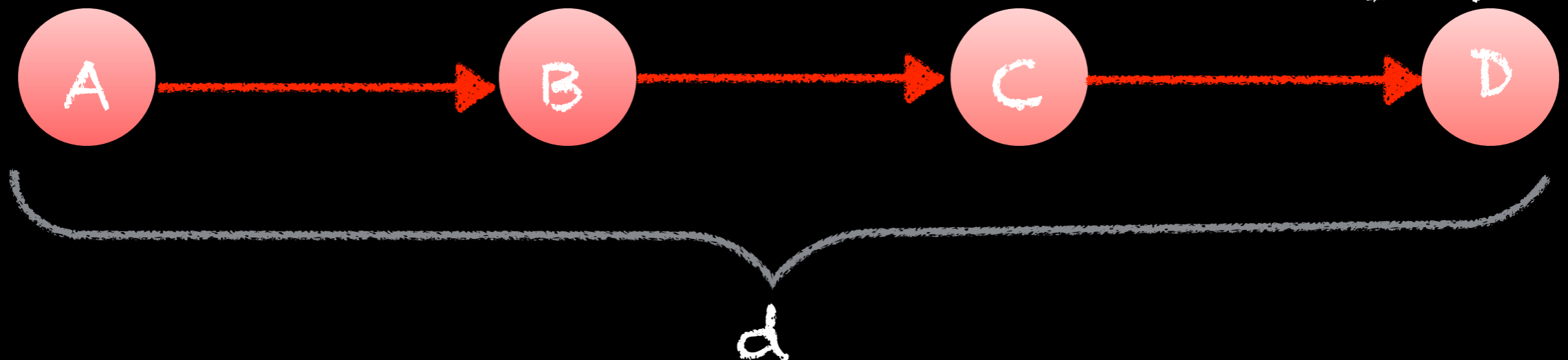
$$O(d * r)$$

$d$  = distance between cause and symptom

$r$  = inverse reproducibility, ie repro's  $1/r$  executions

root cause

symptom



Enter rr





<https://flic.kr/p/mYvfNr>



<https://flic.kr/p/7zrdKz>



<https://flic.kr/p/7JH3T3>

$O(n+d)$



Tips and Tricks

# Going Backwards

(rr) reverse-step

(rr) reverse-next

(rr) reverse-finish

```
1991 JSObject*
1992 JSStructuredCloneReader::readSavedFrame(uint32_t principalsTag)
1993 {
1994     RootedSavedFrame savedFrame(context(), SavedFrame::create(context()));
1995     if (!savedFrame)
1996         return nullptr;
1997
1998     JSPrincipals* principals;
1999     if (principalsTag == SCTAG_JSPRINCIPALS) {
2000         if (!context()->runtime()->readPrincipals) {
2001             JS_ReportErrorNumber(context(), GetErrorMessage, nullptr,
2002                                 JSMMSG_SC_UNSUPPORTED_TYPE);
2003             return nullptr;
2004         }
2005
2006         if (!context()->runtime()->readPrincipals(context(), this, &principals))
2007             return nullptr;
2008     } else if (principalsTag == SCTAG_RECONSTRUCTED_SAVED_FRAME_PRINCIPALS_IS_SYSTEM) {
2009         principals = &ReconstructedSavedFramePrincipals::IsSystem;
2010         principals->refcount++;
2011     } else if (principalsTag == SCTAG_RECONSTRUCTED_SAVED_FRAME_PRINCIPALS_IS_NOT_SYSTEM) {
2012         principals = &ReconstructedSavedFramePrincipals::IsNotSystem;
2013         principals->refcount++;
2014     } else if (principalsTag == SCTAG_NULL_JSPRINCIPALS) {
2015         principals = nullptr;
2016     } else {
2017         JS_ReportErrorNumber(context(), GetErrorMessage, nullptr,
2018                             JSMMSG_SC_BAD_SERIALIZED_DATA, "bad SavedFrame principals");
2019         return nullptr;
2020     }
2021     savedFrame->initPrincipalsAlreadyHeld(principals);
2022
2023     RootedValue source(context());
2024     if (!startRead(&source) || !source.isString())
2025         return nullptr;
2026     auto atomSource = AtomizeString(context(), source.toString());
2027     if (!atomSource)
2028         return nullptr;
2029     savedFrame->initSource(atomSource);
2030
2031     RootedValue lineVal(context());
2032     uint32_t line;
2033     if (!startRead(&lineVal) || !lineVal.isNumber() || !ToUint32(context(), lineVal, &line))
2034         return nullptr;
2035     savedFrame->initLine(line);
2036
2037     RootedValue columnVal(context());
2038     uint32_t column;
2039     if (!startRead(&columnVal) || !columnVal.isNumber() || !ToUint32(context(), columnVal, &column))
2040         return nullptr;
2041     savedFrame->initColumn(column);
2042
2043     RootedValue name(context());
2044     if (!startRead(&name) || !(name.isString() || name.isNull()))
2045         return nullptr;
2046     JSAtom* atomName = nullptr;
2047     if (name.isString()) {
2048         atomName = AtomizeString(context(), name.toString());
2049         if (!atomName)
2050             return nullptr;
2051     }
2052     savedFrame->initFunctionDisplayName(atomName);
2053
2054     RootedValue cause(context());
2055     if (!startRead(&cause) || !(cause.isString() || cause.isNull()))
2056         return nullptr;
2057     JSAtom* atomCause = nullptr;
2058     if (cause.isString()) {
2059         atomCause = AtomizeString(context(), cause.toString());
2060         if (!atomCause)
2061             return nullptr;
2062     }
2063     savedFrame->initAsyncCause(atomCause);
2064
2065     return savedFrame;
2066 }
```

How did **this** get **here??**

```
(rr) watch *(void**) &thing->member
```

```
(rr) reverse-continue
```



FIN.

<http://rr-project.org/>

 @fitzgen