Static Single Assignment (SSA)

Slides Courtesy: Milind Kulkarni (Purdue University)

Use-def chains

- Structure which shows, for each *use* of a variable, which *definitions* could reach it
  - A use may be reached by multiple definitions
- Example:
  - $a_5 \rightarrow$
  - $b_5 \rightarrow$
  - $a_8 \rightarrow$
- Can also build def-use chains

```
1: a = 7;
2: b = 2;
3: if (c)
4:   b = 8;
5: d = a + b;
6: a = 9;
7: while (...) {
8:   d = a + 1;
9:   a = a + 1;
10:}
```

Calculating use-def chains

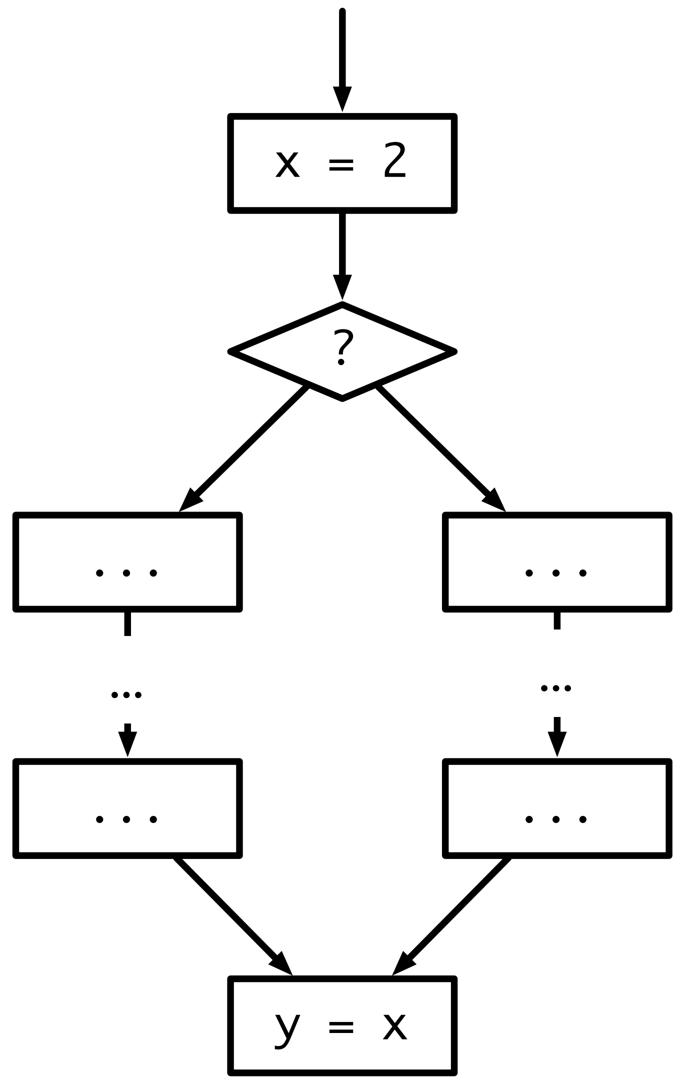
- Easy!
    - Perform a reaching-definitions dataflow analysis
    - At each variable use, look for definitions of that variable that reach the statement
    - Construct use-def chains

Why use-def chains?

- Capture dependence information
  - Use-def chains represent flow of data through program
- Can speed up optimizations
  - Consider constant propagation

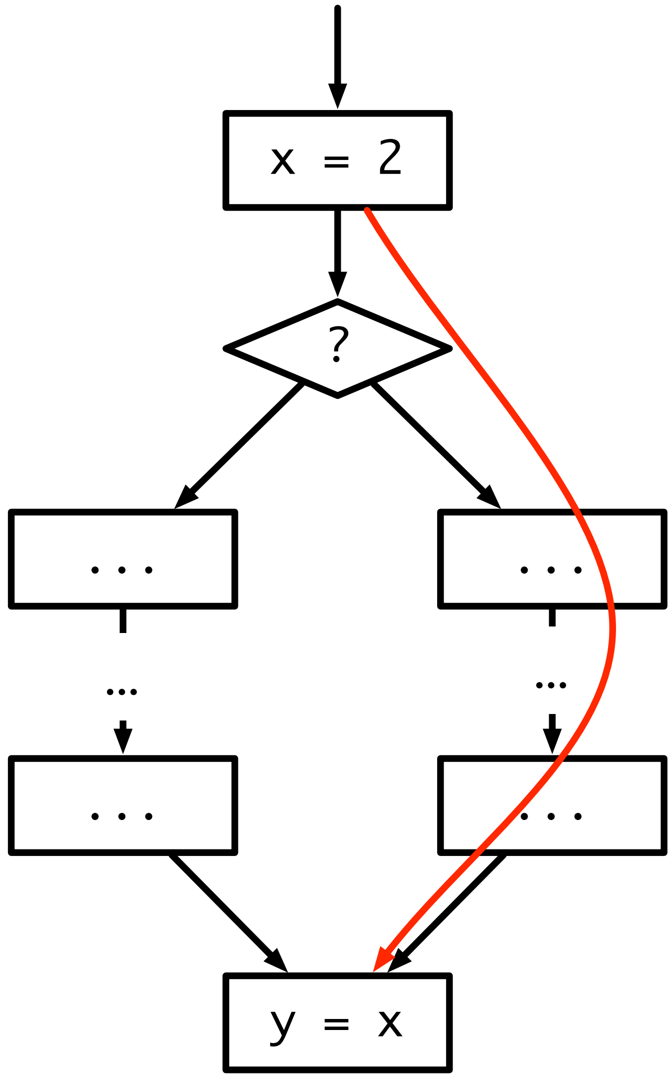
Sparse constant propagation

- Consider what happens when a variable gets updated during constant propagation using worklist algorithm
  - e.g., process x = 2; x moves from $\perp \rightarrow 2$
- Put all successors of CFG node into worklist
- But what if x isn't used in immediate successor nodes?
  - Spend a lot of time propagating data and processing nodes for no reason
  - Update of x only matters at last node



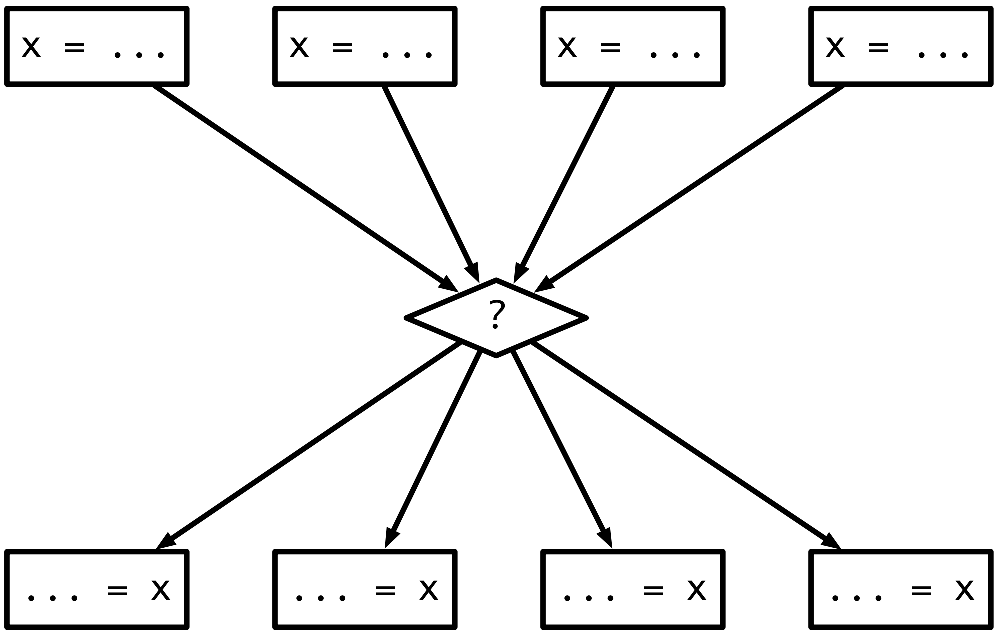
Using use-def chains

- Instead of propagating data along CFG edges, what if we just propagate data along use-def edges?
    - When x is updated, propagate data directly to last node, bypassing all the intermediate nodes!
- Can we run same CP algorithm?
    - Originally initialize with just start node. No uses of definitions → Algorithm terminates early
    - Need to change initialization: Add all statements with constant RHS to initial worklist
- Upshot: original CP algorithm $O(EV^2)$; sparse algorithm $O(N^2V)$
    - N is number of CFG nodes



Problems with u/d chains

- Can be very expensive to represent
  - CFG with N nodes can have N^2 u/d chains
- Each use can have multiple definitions associated with it
  - Can make it difficult to keep u/d information accurate as optimizations are performed and code is transformed
  - Multiple defs can make optimizations harder (will see this when we return to CP)



Solution: SSA

- Static Single Assignment form
- Compact representation of use/def information
- Key feature: No variable is defined more than once (*single* assignment)
    - Eliminates anti/output dependences → more optimizations possible
- SSA enables more efficient versions of optimizations
- Used in many compilers
    - e.g., LLVM

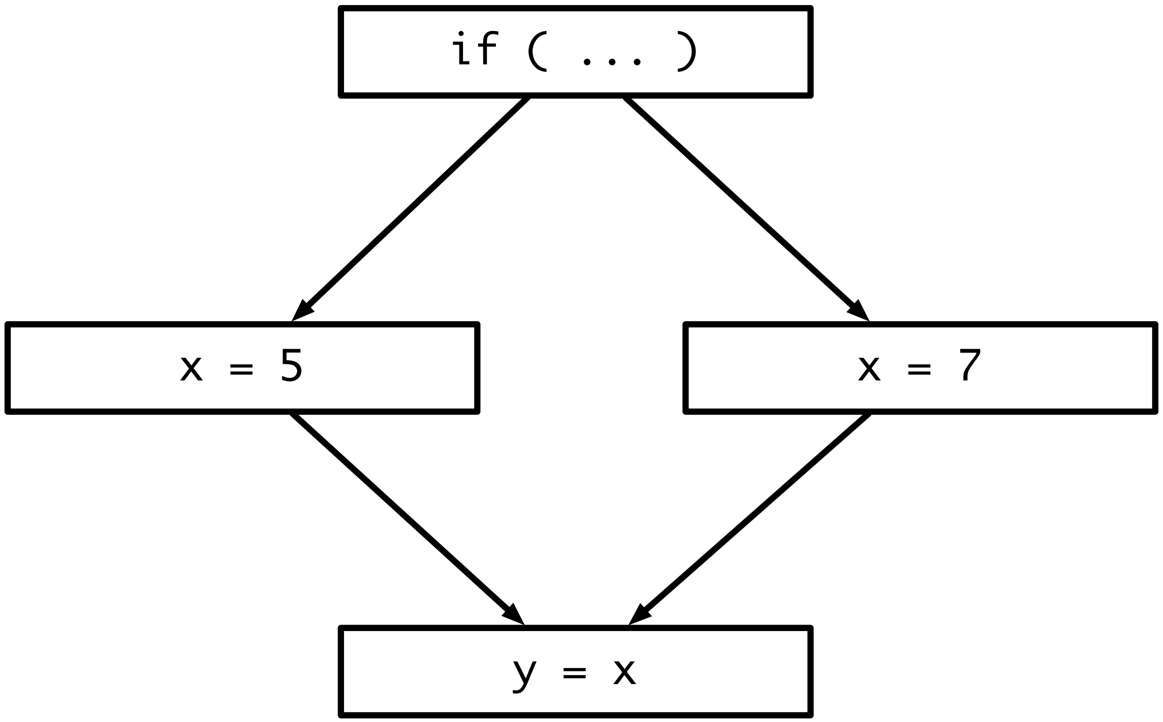
SSA for straight line code

- Each assignment to a variable is given a unique name
- All of the uses reached by that assignment are renamed to match
- Easy for straight line code:

$$\begin{array}{l} a = 4; \\ \ldots = a + 5; \\ a = 7; \\ \ldots = a + 6; \end{array} \longrightarrow \begin{array}{l} a_1 = 4; \\ \ldots = a_1 + 5; \\ a_2 = 7; \\ \ldots = a_2 + 6; \end{array}$$

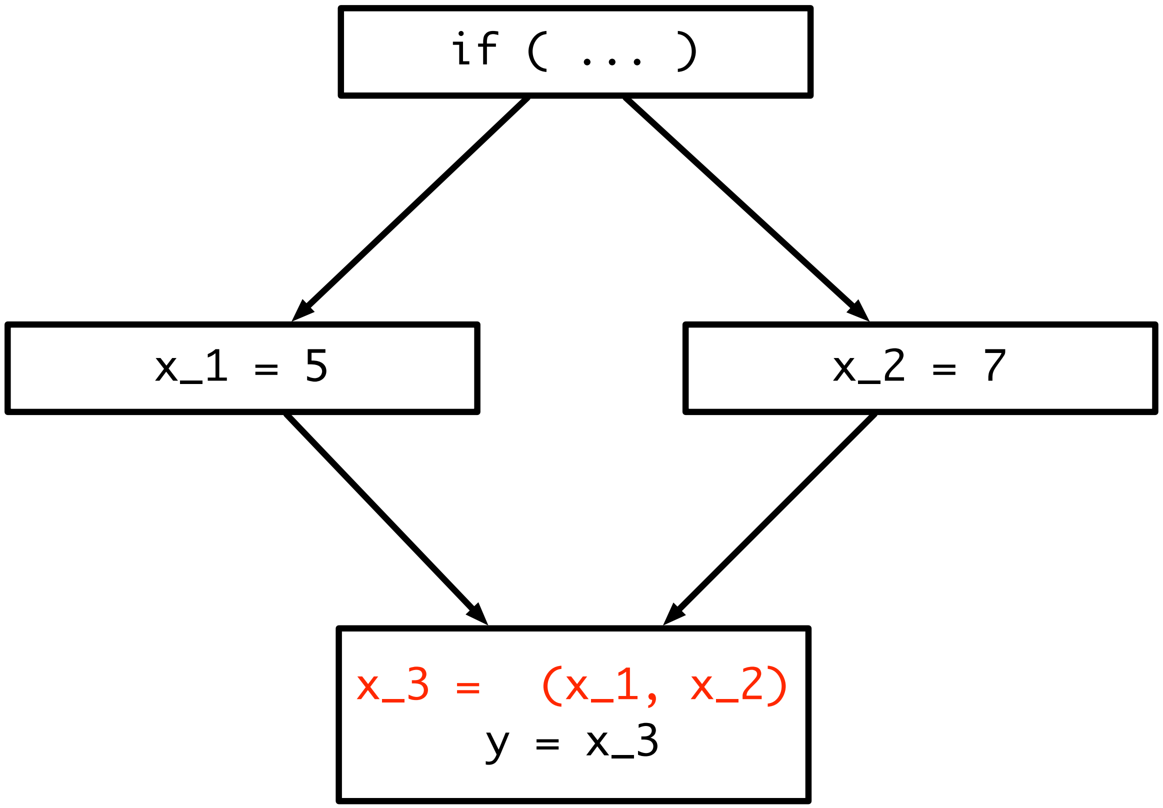
SSA for control flow

- Easy when only one definition reaches a use
- What do we do for code with branches/loops?
  - Multiple definitions reach a single use



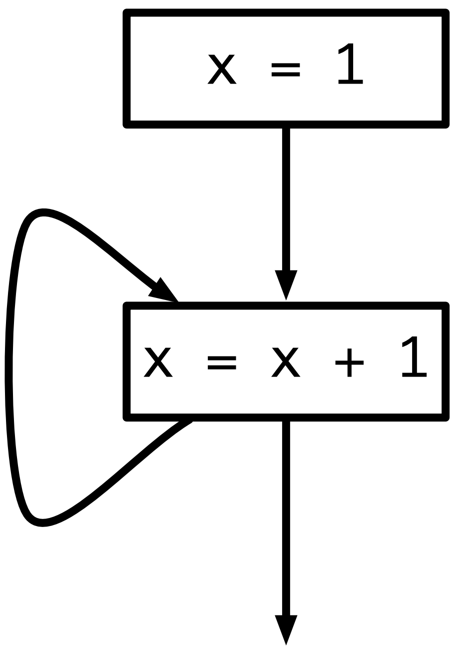
φ functions

- Dummy function that represents merging of two values
    - Part of IR, but not actually emitted as code
- Inserted at merge points to combine two definitions into one



Loops

- How would you put this loop into SSA form?



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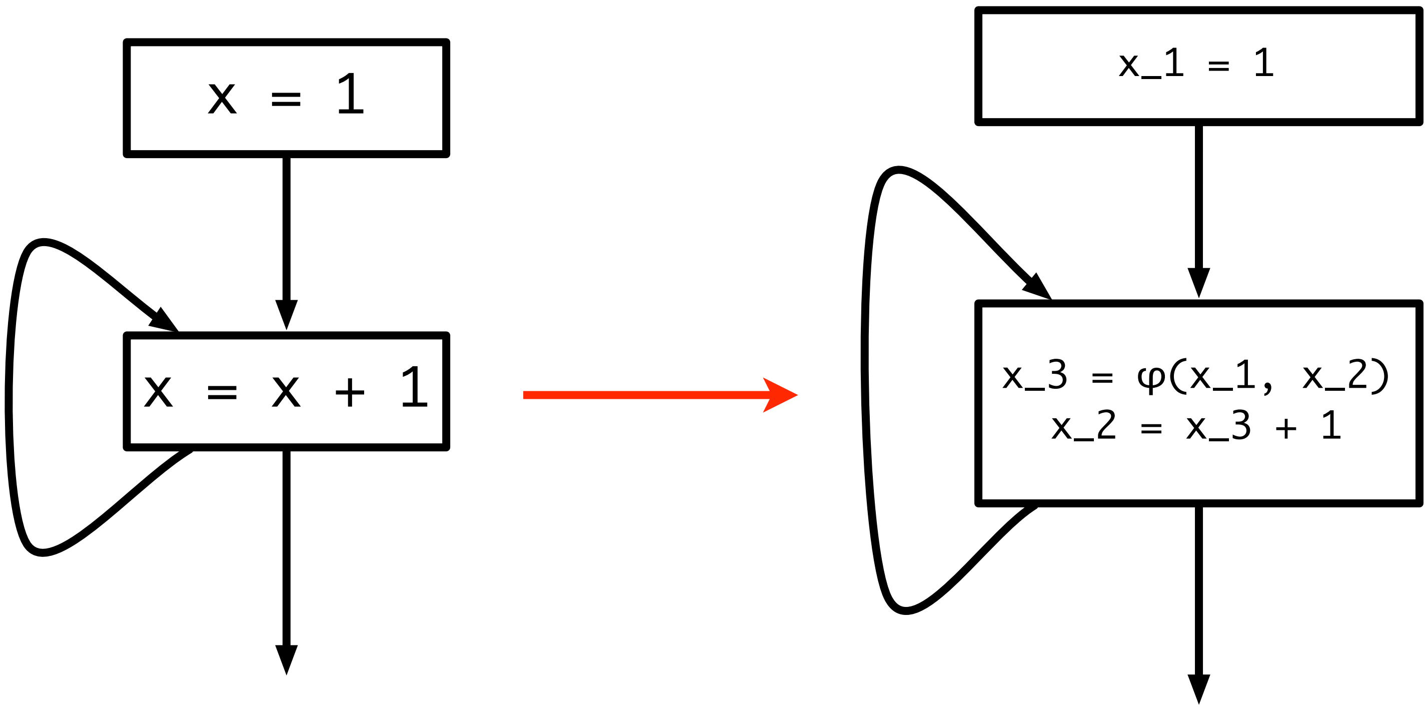
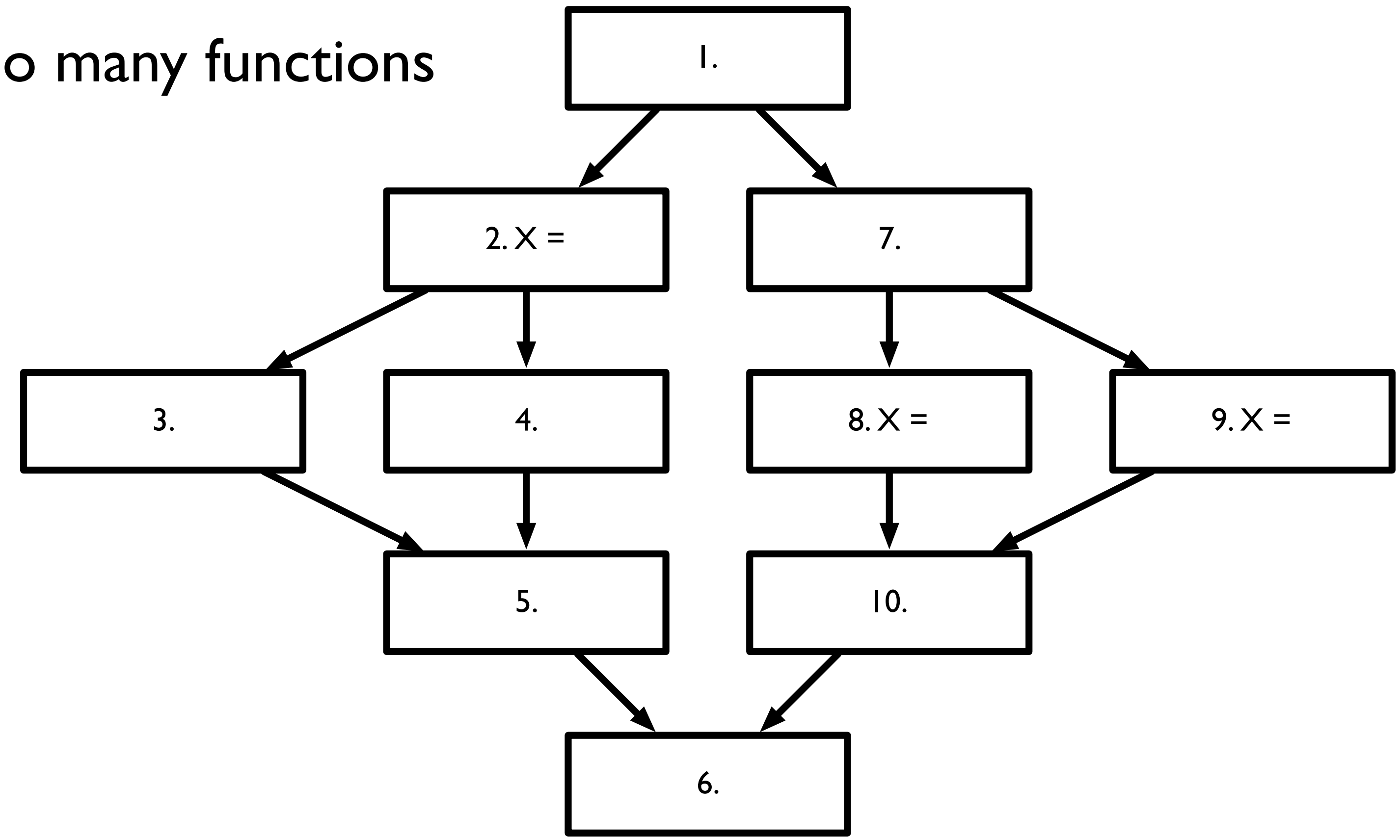


Converting to SSA form

- Two steps to convert a program to SSA form
  - φ function placement
    - Where do we place the φ functions?
  - Variable renaming
    - Rename variable definitions and uses to satisfy single-assignment property

φ function placement

- Need to place φ functions wherever two definitions of a variable might merge
- Safe: place a φ function at every join point in CFG
    - Clearly too many functions



φ function placement

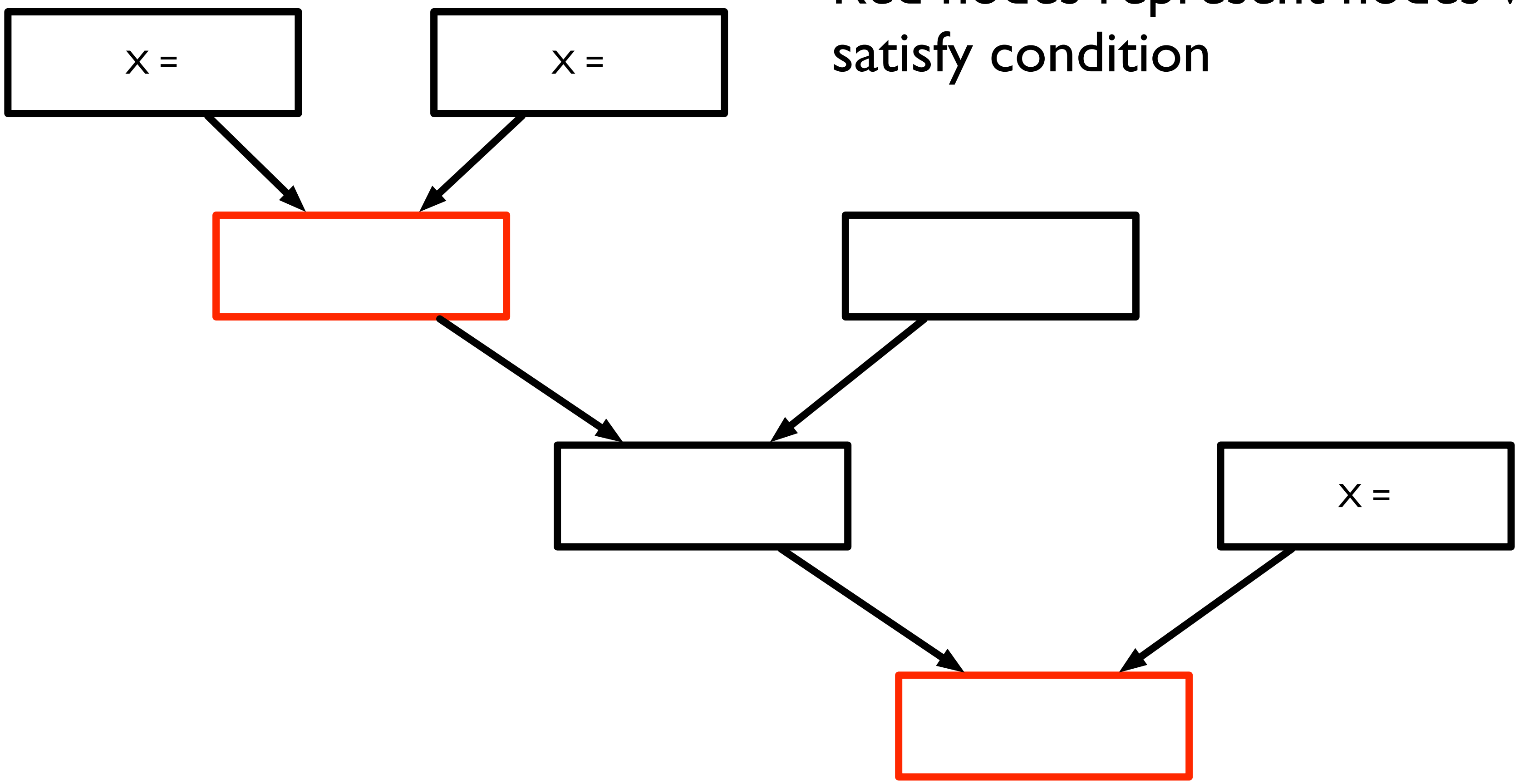
- Condition:
  - If ∃ CFG nodes X, Y, Z such that there are paths $X \rightarrow^+ Z$ and $Y \rightarrow^+ Z$ which *converge* at Z, and X and Y contain assignments to some variable *v* (in the original program), then a φ-node must be inserted in Z (in the new program)
- Options:
  - *minimal:* As few φ-nodes as possible subject to condition
  - *Briggs-minimal*: Do not insert φ-nodes if V is not live across basic blocks
  - *pruned*: Remove "dead" φ-nodes

Minimal placement

- Condition:
  - If ∃ CFG nodes X, Y, Z such that there are paths $X \rightarrow^+ Z$ and $Y \rightarrow^+ Z$ which *converge* at Z, and X and Y contain assignments to some variable *v* (in the original program), then a φ-node must be inserted in Z (in the new program)
- Only want to place φ-nodes wherever the placement condition is true
  - Will be at join points, but not all points
- Want to trace paths from definitions and find *earliest* place those paths merge.

Example

Red nodes represent nodes which satisfy condition

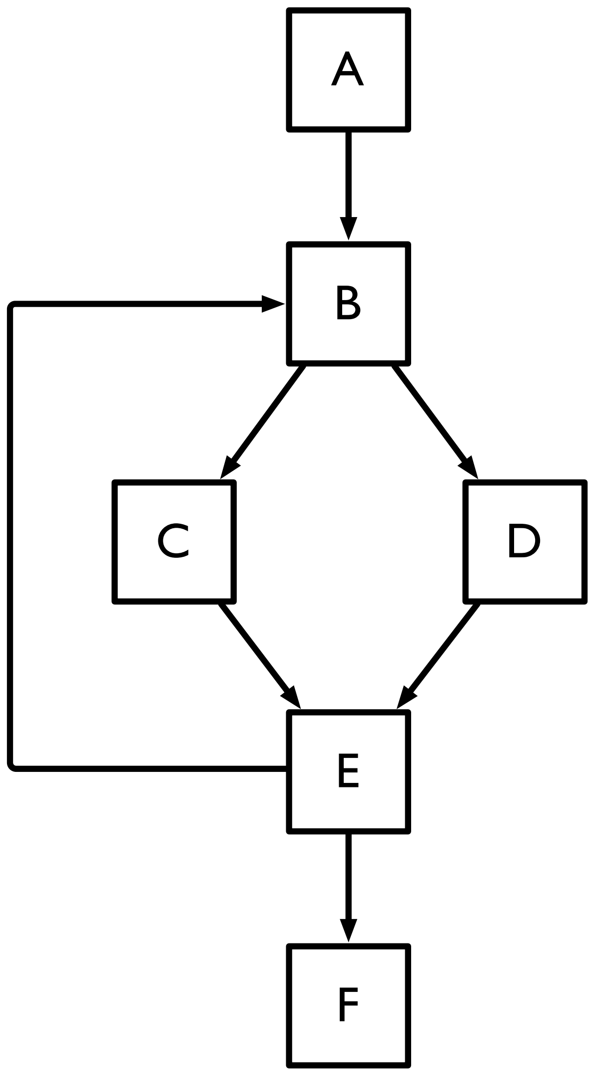


Finding minimal placement

- Could trace every path from assignments to find convergence points
  - This is *expensive*!
- Intuition: what if, for each assignment, we can find the set of nodes which *could* result in a convergence of definitions?
  - Then only need to place φ-nodes there!

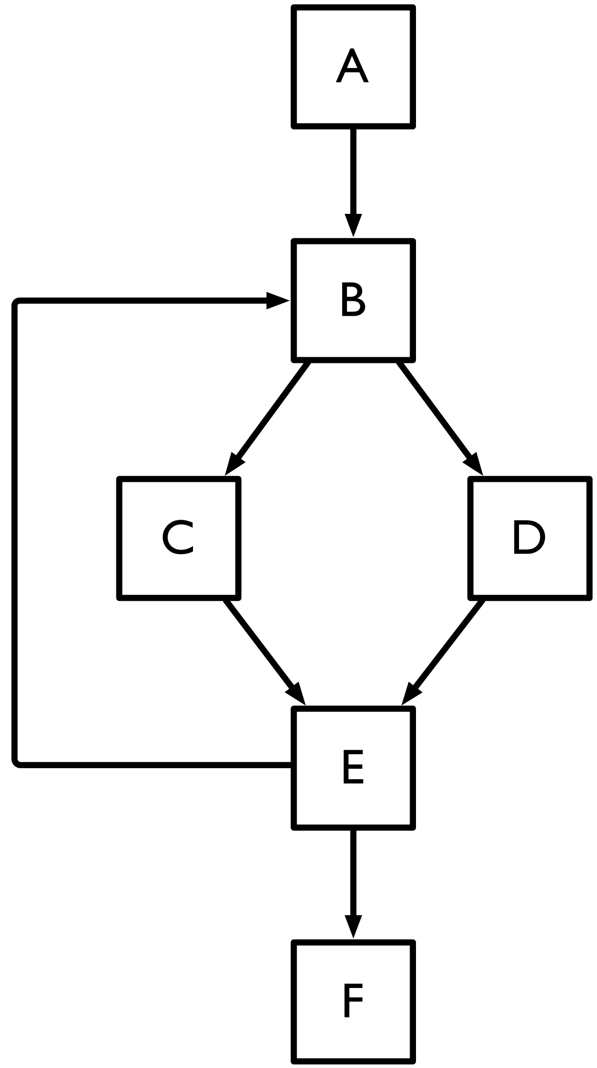
Detour: dominance

- Recall some terms from CFG analysis
- A node X *dominates* a node Y if X appears on all paths from entry to Y
  - $X \in$ DOM(Y)
- A node X *strictly dominates* Y if X DOM Y and $X \neq Y$
  - $X \in$ DOM!(Y)
- A node X is the *immediate dominator* of Y if X is the *closest* dominator of Y
  - X = IDOM(Y)
  - Note: X = IDOM(Y) $\Rightarrow \forall$ X' $\in$ DOM(Y), X' $\in$ DOM(X)



Dominance trees

- *Dominance tree* induced by IDOM
  - If X = IDOM(Y), X is Y's parent in dominance tree



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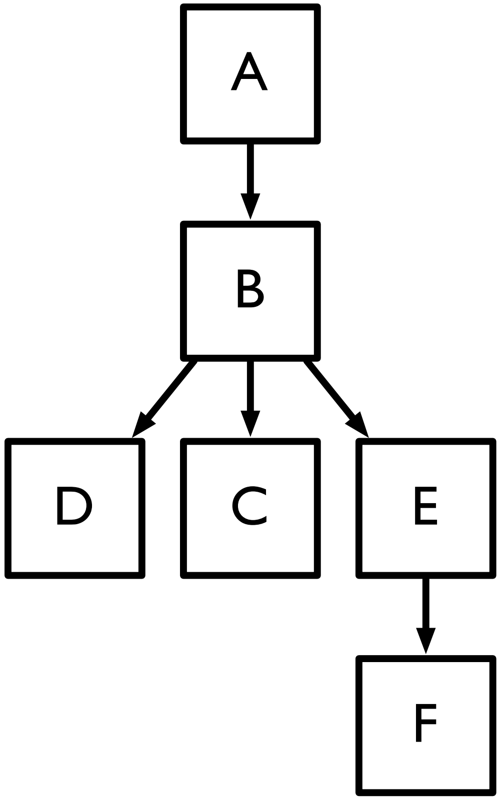
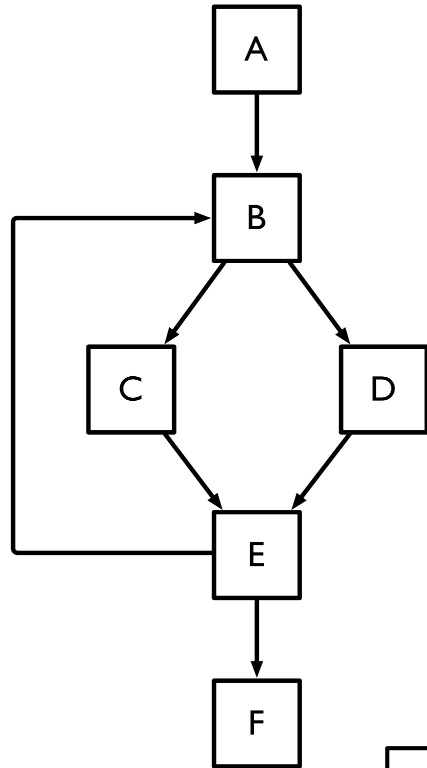
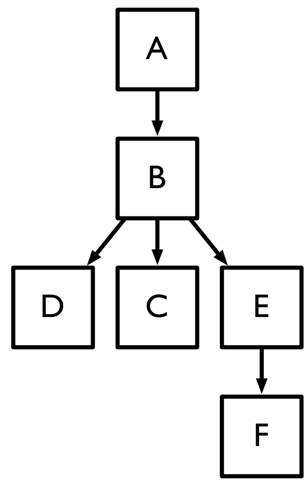


Dominance frontier

- The *dominance frontier* of a node X is the set of nodes DF(X) such that for all Y ∈ DF(X), X dominates a *predecessor* of Y, but does not *strictly* dominate Y
- What are the dominance frontiers for the nodes in this CFG?





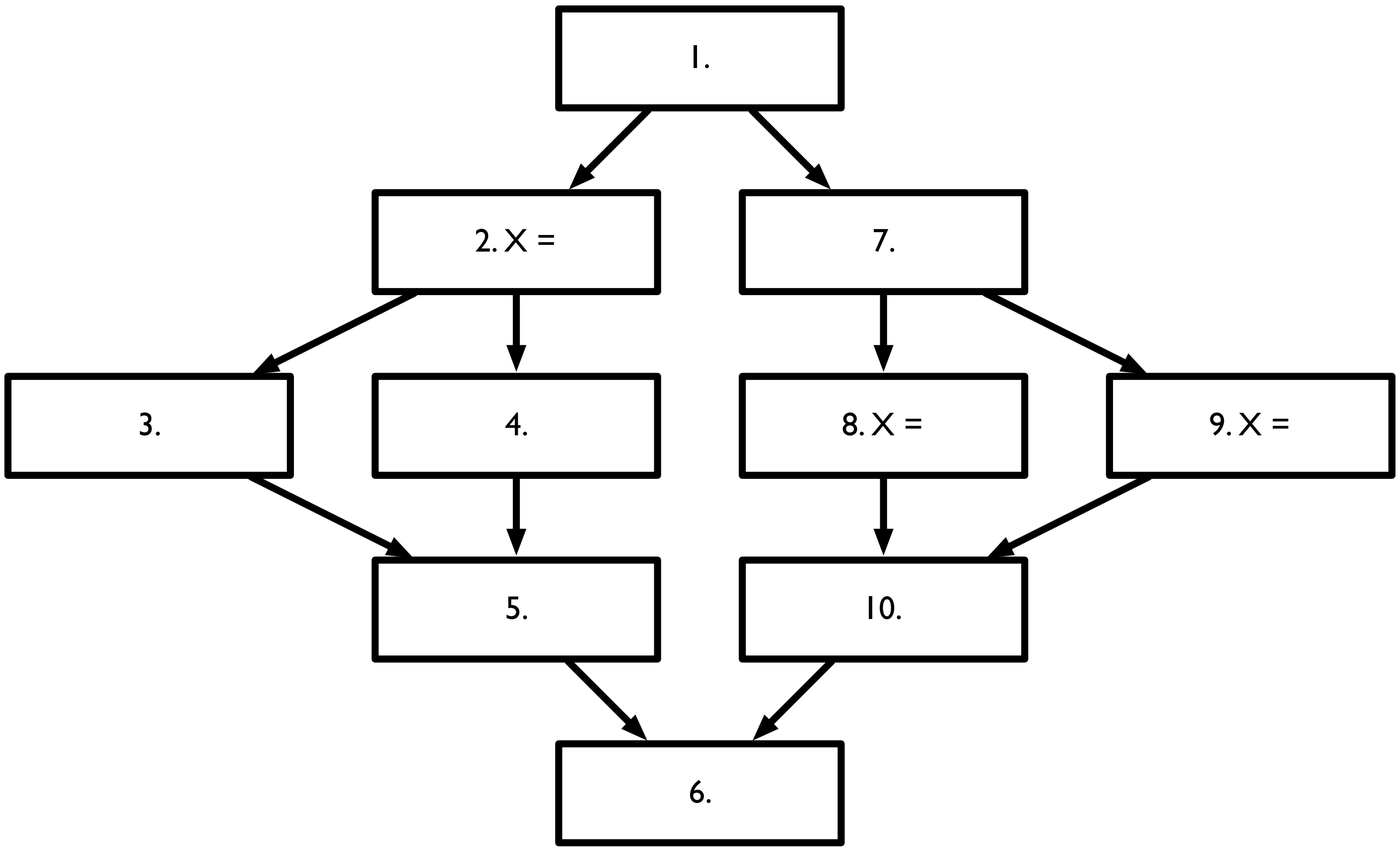
Finding dominance frontiers

- Start by building dominance tree (see algorithm in Cooper *et al.*), then run algorithm:

  forall *v*
      if (number of predecessors of v $\geq$ 2) **then**
          forall predecessors *p* of *v*
              runner = *p*
              while (runner $\neq$ IDOM(*v*))
                  add *v* to DF(runner)
                  runner = IDOM(runner)

- Intuition:
  - *v* can only be in a DF if it has 2 or more preds
  - Predecessors must have *v* in DF, unless they dominate *v* (by definition).
  - Dominators of predecessors must have *v* in DF, unless they dominate *v*

Example



Iterated dominance frontier

$$DF(\mathcal{L}) = \bigcup_{X \in \mathcal{L}} DF(X)$$

$$\begin{aligned} DF^{+}(\mathcal{L}) &= \text{limit of sequence} \\ DF_1 &= DF(\mathcal{L}) \\ DF_{i+1} &= DF(\mathcal{L} \cup DF_i) \end{aligned}$$

Theorem:

The set of nodes that need φ-nodes for a variable *v* is the iterated dominance frontier $DF^{+}(L)$ where L is the set of nodes with assignments to *v*

Inserting φ-nodes

```
foreach variable v
    HasAlready = { }
    EverOnWorklist = { }
    Worklist = { }
    foreach node X containing assignment to v
        EverOnWorklist = EverOnWorklist ∪ {X}
        Worklist = Worklist ∪ {X}
    while Worklist not empty
        remove X from Worklist
        foreach Y ∈ DF(X)
            if Y ∉ HasAlready
                insert φ-node for v at {Y}
                HasAlready = HasAlready ∪ {Y}
                if Y ∉ EverOnWorklist
                    Worklist = Worklist ∪ {Y}
                    EverOnWorklist = EverOnWorklist ∪ {Y}
```

Converting to SSA form

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Variable renaming

- At this point, φ-nodes are of the form $v = \varphi(v, v)$
  - Need to rename each variable to satisfy SSA criteria
- High level idea:
  - At every φ-node, rename "target" of φ, then replace all names in the block with new name
  - Change names in successor blocks to match new name, unless successor block has a φ-node
    - In which case, generate new name for target, and continue

Algorithms

Stacks: an array of stacks, one for each variable
Counters: an array of counters, one for each variable

Procedure **Rename**(Block X)
  if X visited, **return**
  foreach φ-node *P* in X
    GenName(LHS(P))
  foreach statement A in X
    foreach Variable $v \in$ RHS(A)
      replace v with v_i where i = Top(Stacks[v])
    foreach Variable $v \in$ LHS(A) **GenName**(v)
  foreach Y $\in$ successors(X)
    foreach φ-node *P* in Y
      replace operands of *P* according to vars in X
  foreach Y $\in$ successors(X) **Rename**(Y)
  foreach φ-node or statement A in X
    foreach $v_i \in$ LHS(A)
      Pop(Stacks[v])

Procedure **GenName**(Variable v)
  i = Counters[v]++
  replace v with v_i
  Push i onto Stacks[v]

Start by calling **Rename**(Entry)

Pruning φ-nodes

- Can eliminate φ-nodes that occur because of variables that are not live across basic blocks
  - These "block local" variables won't be used later, so do not need to be merged
- Can eliminate φ-nodes that are dead
  - Merged variable isn't used again

Translating out of SSA form

- Cannot just remove φ-nodes and restore variables to original names
- Can mess up optimizations that assume variables use separate storage

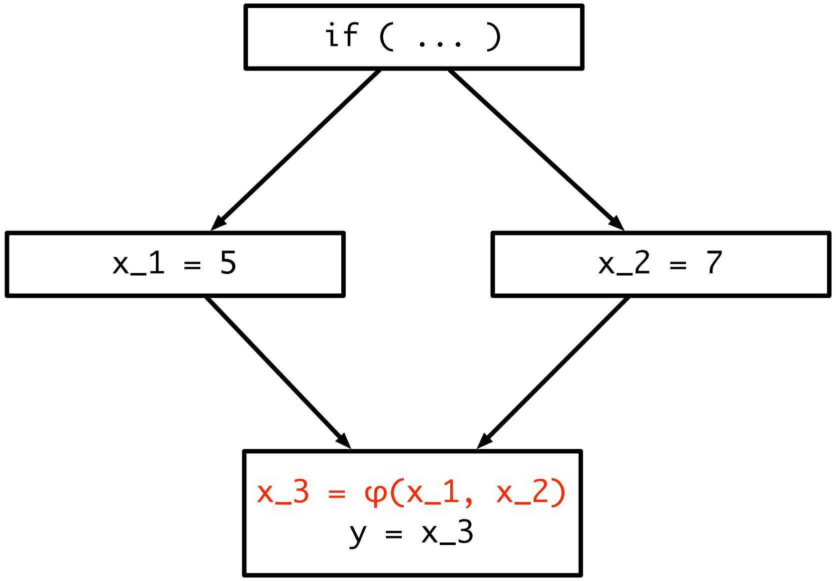
```
while (...) do
   read v
   w = v + w
   v = 6
   w = v + w
end
```

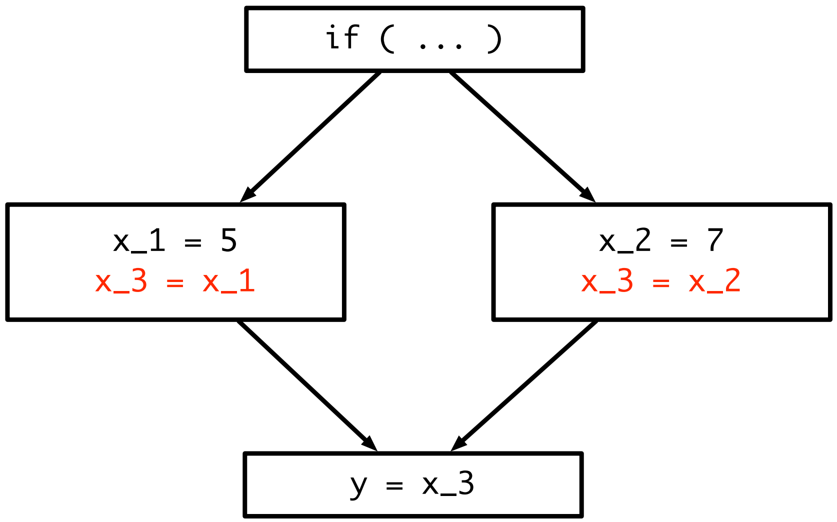
while (...) do
$w_3 = \varphi(w_0, w_2)$
$v_3 = \varphi(v_0, v_2)$
read v_1
$w_1 = v_1 + w_3$
$v_2 = 6$
$w_2 = v_2 + w_1$

$v_2 = 6$
while (...) do
$w_3 = \varphi(w_0, w_2)$
$v_3 = \varphi(v_0, v_2)$
read v_1
$w_1 = v_1 + w_3$
$w_2 = v_2 + w_1$

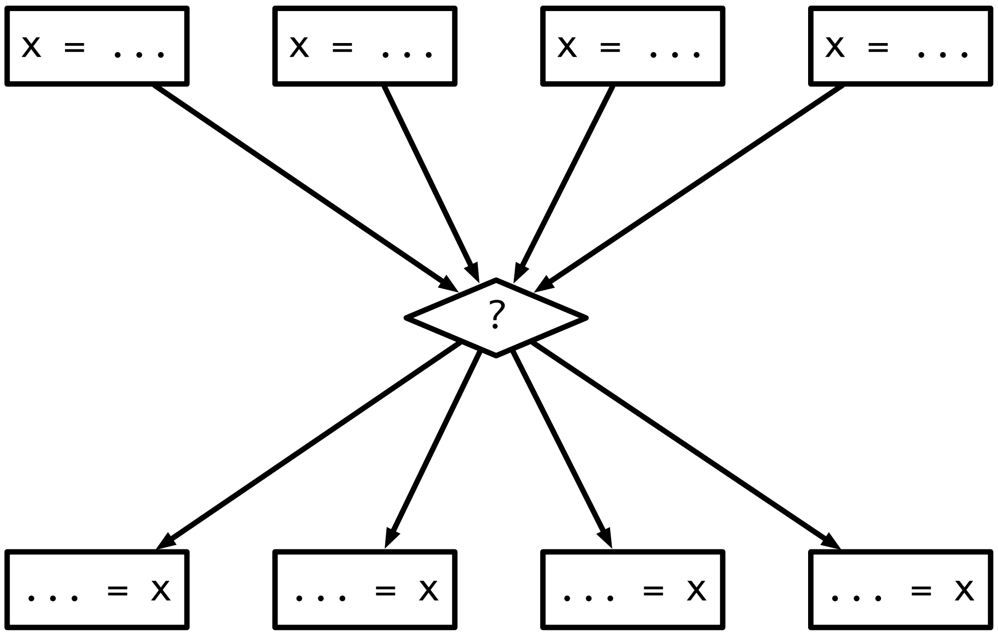
Translating out of SSA form

- Eliminate φ-nodes
- Replace with copies in predecessor nodes
- But doesn't this add a lot of extra copies?
- Solution:
    - Graph coloring with copy/move coalescing!
    - Allows most renamed variables to revert to original name by coalescing with each other
    - If not legal, graph coloring will prevent coalescing



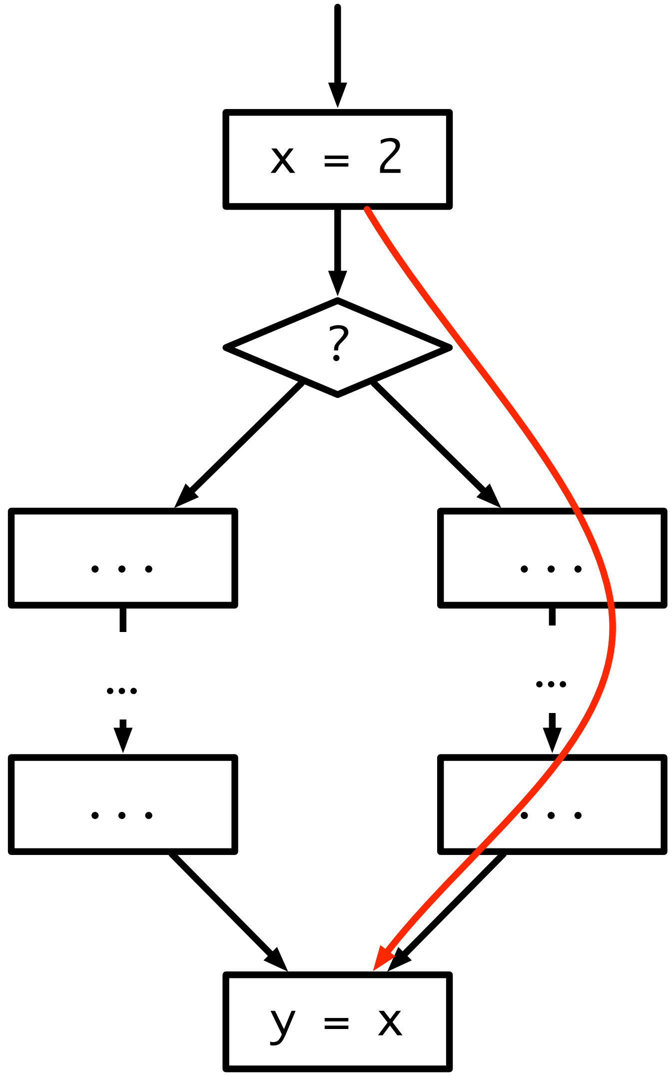


Returning to CP



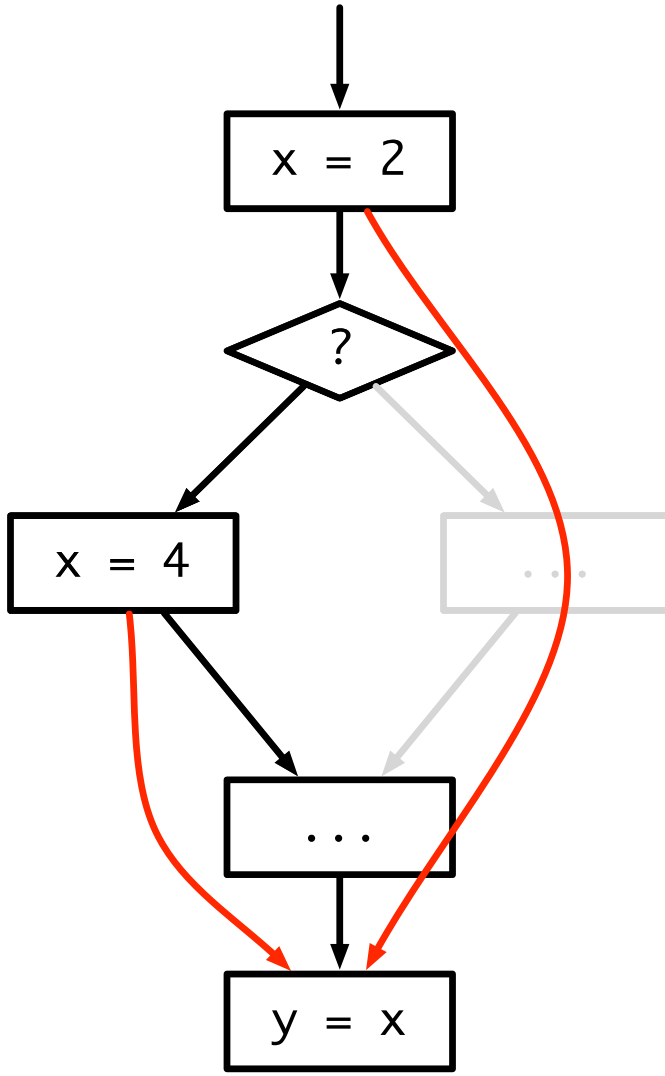
Use-def chains: 16

In SSA form: place φ node in middle



Problems with u/d CP

- What happens if we know which way a branch will resolve?
  - Do not need to propagate information from that branch
  - Easy to do with CFGs
- What does this mean when we're using u/d chains?
  - Can be very hard to tell which definitions to ignore!



Use/def CP with SSA

- SSA form shortens u/d chains
- Chains terminate at merge points, rather than crossing them
- Can simply ignore information merged from un-taken branches
- Much easier to account for irrelevant information
- Complexity: O(EV)