

Class 16: Anonymous Procedures

Held: Wednesday, 23 September 2009

Summary: We revisit procedures in Scheme. We consider a variety of techniques for writing *anonymous* procedures, procedures without names.

Related Pages:

- EBoard.
- Lab: Anonymous Procedures.
- Reading: Anonymous Procedures.
- Due: Exam 1: Scheme Basics.

Notes:

- The department is sponsoring a talk on “A Historical View of the Early Development of Programming Languages” on Friday, Oct. 2, at noon. Free pizza. We need an approximate head count. Is anyone interested in coming? EC for attending.
- Reading for Friday: Turtle Graphics. Yes, we’re starting yet another perspective on images. We’ll count how many we have so far.
- In the future, please do not hand in the printed copy of your exam until the day it is due.
- We had at least one student lose work because MediaScheme crashed while they were working. Your generation should know to “Save early and often!”
- The next assignment should be ready tomorrow afternoon. Sorry for the delay.
- No introductory lecture today!

Overview:

- What is a procedure?
- Describing procedures.
- Anonymous procedures.
- Anonymous procedures through lambda expressions.
- Other kinds of anonymous procedures.

What is a procedure?

- One of the basic building blocks of programming.
- Essentially, an encapsulated algorithm
 - Takes some inputs
 - Generates some outputs

Describing Procedures

- Traditionally (`define` *name-of-procedure* (`lambda` (*parameters*) *body*))
- When applying one of these, we effectively substitute the arguments we call the procedure on for the parameters in the body, and then evaluate the body.

Anonymous Procedures

- Procedures without names.
- Useful when we just need a procedure once
 - Saves the need to define it (code is more concise)
 - Saves the need to document it
 - Makes code work on its own
- In Scheme, wherever you write a procedure name, you can also write the corresponding lambda expression.
- Very useful with `map`
- Examples
- `((lambda (x y) (* (+ x y) (- x y))) 2 3)`
- `(map (lambda (x) (* 5 (+ 1 x))) (iota 10))`

Other ways to build anonymous procedures

- Sectioning!
- Composition!

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