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copyable_function

Abstract

This paper proposes a replacement for `function` in the form of a copyable variant of `move_only_function`.

Tony Table

Before	Proposed

`auto lambda{[&]() /*const*/ { … }};`
 	
`function<void(void)> func{lambda};` ✓
`const auto & ref{func};`
 	
`func();` ✓
`ref();` ✓
	`auto lambda{[&]() /*const*/ { … }};`
	
	`copyable_function<void(void)> func0{lambda};` ✓
	`const auto & ref0{func0};`
	
	`func0();` ✓
	`ref0(); //operator() is NOT const!` ✗
	
	`copyable_function<void(void) const> func1{lambda};` ✓
	`const auto & ref1{func1};`
	
	`func1();` ✓
	`ref1(); //operator() is const!` ✓

`auto lambda{[&]() mutable { … }};`
 	
`function<void(void)> func{lambda};` ✓
`const auto & ref{func};`
 	
`func();` ✓
`ref(); //operator() is const!` ⁉✓
`       //this is the infamous constness-bug`
	`auto lambda{[&]() mutable { … }};`
	
	`copyable_function<void(void)> func{lambda};` ✓
	`const auto & ref{func};`
	
	`func();` ✓
	`ref(); //operator() is NOT const!` ✗
	
	`copyable_function<void(void) const> tmp{lambda};` ✗

Revisions

R0: Initial version

R1:

- Incorporated the changes proposed for `move_only_function` in [P2511R2].
- Added wording for conversions from `copyable_function` to `move_only_function`.

R2:

- Removed changes adopted from [P2511R2] as that proposal didn't reach consensus in the 2022-10 LEWG electronic polling.

R3: Updates after LEWG Review on 2022-11-08:

- Fixed requirements on callables in the design section – copy-construct-ability is sufficient.

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- Removed open question on the deprecation of `function`.
- Replaced previously proposed conversion operators to `move_only_function`.
- Added section on conversions between standard library polymorphic function wrappers.
- Added section on potential allocator support.

R4: Updates after LEWG Review on 2022-11-11:

- Removed mandatory optimization for conversion to `move_only_function`.

R5: Updates after LEWG Review on 2023-03-07:

- Added section on naming of this class.
- Extended wording with recommended practice to avoid double wrapping of type-erased function wrappers.
- Fixed some wording bugs.

Motivation

C++11 added `function`, a type-erased function wrapper that can represent any *copyable* callable matching the function signature `R(Args...)`. Since its introduction, there have been identified several issues – including the infamous constness-bug – with its design (see [N4159]).

[P0288R9] introduced `move_only_function`, a *move-only* type-erased callable wrapper. In addition to dropping the *copyable* requirement, `move_only_function` extends the supported signature to `R(Args...) const`$_{op}$ `(&|&&)`$_{op}$ `noexcept`$_{op}$ and forwards all qualifiers to its call operator, introduces a strong non-empty precondition for invocation instead of throwing `bad_function_call` and drops the dependency to `typeid`/RTTI (there is no equivalent to `function`'s `target_type()` or `target()`).

Concurrently, [P0792R10] introduced `function_ref`, a type-erased non-owning reference to any callable matching a function signature in the form of `R(Args...) const`$_{op}$ `noexcept`$_{op}$. Like `move_only_function`, it forwards the `noexcept`-qualifier to its call operator. As `function_ref` acts like a reference, it does not support ref-qualifiers and does not forward the `const`-qualifier to its call operator.

As a result, `function` is now the only type-erased function wrapper not supporting any form of qualifiers in its signature. Whilst amending `function` with support for ref/`noexcept`-qualifiers would be a straightforward extension, the same is not true for the `const`-qualifier due to the long-standing constness-bug. Without proper support for the `const`-qualifier, `function` would still be inconsistent with its closest relative.

Therefore, this paper proposes to introduce a replacement to `function` in the form of `copyable_function`, a class that closely mirrors the design of `move_only_function` and adds *copyability* as an additional affordance.

Design space

The main goal of this paper is consistency between the *move-only* and *copyable* type-erased function wrappers. Therefore, we follow the design of `move_only_function` very closely and only introduce three extensions:

1. Adding a copy constructor
2. Adding a copy assignment operator
3. Requiring callables to be copy-constructible

Conversions between function wrappers

Given the proliferation of proposals for polymorphic function wrappers, LEWG requested an evaluation of the “conversion story” of these types. Note that conversions from `function_ref` always follow reference semantics for obvious reasons.

		To			
From		`function`	`move_only_function`	`copyable_function`	`function_ref`
	`function`		✓	✓	✓
	`move_only_function`	✗		✗	✓
	`copyable_function`	✓	✓		✓
	`function_ref`	✓	✓	✓	

It is recommended that implementors do not perform additional allocations when converting from a `copyable_function` instantiation to a compatible `move_only_function` instantiation, but this is left as quality-of-implementation.

Concerning allocator support

After having reviewed R2, LEWG requested a statement about potential allocator support. As this proposal aims for feature parity with `move_only_function` (apart from the extensions mentioned above) and considering the somewhat recent removal of allocator support from `function` [P0302], we refrain from adding allocator support to `copyable_function`. We welcome an independent paper introducing said support to both classes.

Naming discussion

During the review of R4, there were questions raised for the rationale for the name `copyable_function`, especially as it was perceived inconsistent with `move_only_function`. Our rationale for the name is as follows: `copyable_function` is a *copyable* function call wrapper that requires the target object to be *copyable*, so the `copyable`-prefix references both aspects. Furthermore, there isn’t actually an inconsistency with `move_only_function`, as the `move_only`-prefix only applies to the wrapper; the wrapper is *move-only*, but there is no reason to require the target object to be as well.

Impact on the Standard

This proposal is a pure library addition.

Implementation Experience

The proposed design has been implemented at https://github.com/MFHava/P2548.

Proposed Wording

Wording is relative to [N4928]. Additions are presented like this, removals like ~~this~~ and drafting notes like **this**.

[version.syn]

```
#define __cpp_lib_copyable_function YYYYMML //also in <functional>
```

[DRAFTING NOTE: Adjust the placeholder value as needed to denote this proposal’s date of adoption.]

[functional.syn]

22.10.2 Header <`functional`> synopsis **[functional.syn]**

```
namespace std {
…
  // [func.wrap.move], move only wrapper
  template<class... S> class move_only_function; // not defined
  template<class R, class... ArgTypes>
    class move_only_function<R(ArgTypes...) cv ref noexcept(noex)>; // see below

  // [func.wrap.copy], copyable wrapper
  template<class... S> class copyable_function; // not defined
  template<class R, class... ArgTypes>
    class copyable_function<R(ArgTypes...) cv ref noexcept(noex)>; // see below

  // [func.search], searchers
  template<class ForwardIterator, class BinaryPredicate = equal_to<>>
  class default_searcher;
…
}
```

[func.wrap.general]

22.10.17.1 General **[func.wrap.general]**

1 Subclause ***[func.wrap]*** describes polymorphic wrapper classes that encapsulate arbitrary callable objects.

2 *Recommended practice:* Implementations should avoid double erasure when constructing polymorphic wrappers from one another.

[DRAFTING NOTE: It's the intended design that moves can be elided, even if they would be observable when double wrapping:

```
move_only_function<void(T)> f{copyable_function<void(T)>{[](T) {}}};
T t;
f(t); //may move t ones (unwrapping case) or twice (wrapping case) – both are acceptable.
]
```

22.10.17.2 Class `bad_function_call` **[func.wrap.badcall]**

[func.wrap.copy]

[DRAFTING NOTE: Add a new section in *[`func.wrap`]*]

22.10.17.?? Copyable wrapper **[func.wrap.copy]**

22.10.17.??.1 General **[func.wrap.copy.general]**

1 The header provides partial specializations of `copyable_function` for each combination of the possible replacements of the placeholders *cv*, *ref*, and *noex* where

(1.1) — *cv* is either const or empty,

(1.2) — *ref* is either &, &&, or empty, and

(1.3) — *noex* is either true or false.

2 For each of the possible combinations of the placeholders mentioned above, there is a placeholder *`inv-quals`* defined as follows:

(2.1) — If *ref* is empty, let *`inv-quals`* be *cv*&,

(2.2) — otherwise, let *`inv-quals`* be *`cv ref`*.

22.10.17.??.2 Class template `copyable_function` **[func.wrap.copy.class]**

```
namespace std {
  template<class... S> class copyable_function; // not defined

  template<class R, class... ArgTypes>
  class copyable_function<R(ArgTypes...) cv ref noexcept(noex)> {
  public:
    using result_type = R;

    // [func.wrap.copy.ctor], constructors, assignments, and destructors
    copyable_function() noexcept;
    copyable_function(nullptr_t) noexcept;
    copyable_function(const copyable_function&);
    copyable_function(copyable_function&&) noexcept;
    template<class F> copyable_function(F&&);
    template<class T, class... Args>
      explicit copyable_function(in_place_type_t<T>, Args&&...);
    template<class T, class U, class... Args>
      explicit copyable_function(in_place_type_t<T>, initializer_list<U>, Args&&...);

    copyable_function& operator=(const copyable_function&);
    copyable_function& operator=(copyable_function&&);
    copyable_function& operator=(nullptr_t) noexcept;
    template<class F> copyable_function& operator=(F&&);

    ~copyable_function();

    // [func.wrap.copy.inv], invocation
    explicit operator bool() const noexcept;
    R operator()(ArgTypes...) cv ref noexcept(noex);
    // [func.wrap.copy.util], utility
    void swap(copyable_function&) noexcept;
    friend void swap(copyable_function&, copyable_function&) noexcept;
    friend bool operator==(const copyable_function&, nullptr_t) noexcept;

  private:
    template<class VT>
      static constexpr bool is-callable-from = see below;        // exposition only
  };
}
```

1 The copyable_function class template provides polymorphic wrappers that generalize the notion of a callable object (***[func.def]***). These wrappers can store, copy, move, and call arbitrary callable objects, given a call signature. Within this subclause, *call-args* is an argument pack with elements that have types ArgTypes&&... respectively.

2 *Recommended practice:* Implementations should avoid the use of dynamically allocated memory for a small contained value. [*Note 1*: Such small-object optimization can only be applied to a type T for which is_nothrow_constructible_v<T> is true. — *end note*]

22.10.17.??.3 Constructors, assignment, and destructor [func.wrap.copy.ctor]

```
template<class VT>
  static constexpr bool is-callable-from = see below;
```

1 If *noex* is true, *is-callable-from*<VT> is equal to:

```
    is_nothrow_invocable_r_v<R, VT cv ref, ArgTypes...> &&
    is_nothrow_invocable_r_v<R, VT inv-quals, ArgTypes...>
```

Otherwise, *is-callable-from*<VT> is equal to:

```
    is_invocable_r_v<R, VT cv ref, ArgTypes...> &&
    is_invocable_r_v<R, VT inv-quals, ArgTypes...>
```

```
copyable_function() noexcept;
copyable_function(nullptr_t) noexcept;
```

2 *Postconditions*: *this has no target object.

```
copyable_function(const copyable_function& f)
```

3 *Postconditions*: *this has no target object if f had no target object. Otherwise, the target object of *this is a copy of the target object of f.

4 *Throws*: Any exception thrown by the initialization of the target object. May throw bad_alloc.

```
copyable_function(copyable_function&& f) noexcept;
```

5 *Postconditions:* The target object of *this is the target object f had before construction, and f is in a valid state with an unspecified value.

```
template<class F> copyable_function(F&& f);
```

6 Let VT be decay_t<F>.

7 *Constraints*:

(7.1) — remove_cvref_t<F> is not the same as copyable_function, and

(7.2) — remove_cvref_t<F> is not a specialization of in_place_type_t, and

(7.3) — *is-callable-from*<VT> is true.

8 *Mandates*:

(8.1) — is_constructible_v<VT, F> is true, and

(8.2) — is_copy_constructible_v<VT> is true.

9 *Preconditions*: VT meets the *Cpp17Destructible* and *Cpp17CopyConstructible* requirements.

10 *Postconditions*: *this has no target object if any of the following hold:

(10.1) — f is a null function pointer value, or

(10.2) — f is a null member function pointer value, or

(10.3) — remove_cvref_t<F> is a specialization of the copyable_function class template, and f has no target object.

Otherwise, *this has a target object of type VT direct-non-list-initialized with std::forward<F>(f).

11 *Throws*: Any exception thrown by the initialization of the target object. May throw bad_alloc unless VT is a function pointer or a specialization of reference_wrapper.

```
template<class T, class... Args>
  explicit copyable_function(in_place_type_t<T>, Args&&... args);
```

12 Let VT be decay_t<T>.

13 *Constraints*:

(13.1) — is_constructible_v<VT, Args...> is true, and

(13.2) — *is-callable-from*<VT> is true.

14 *Mandates*:

(14.1) — VT is the same type as T, and

(14.2) — is_copy_constructible_v<VT> is true.

15 *Preconditions*: VT meets the *Cpp17Destructible* and *Cpp17CopyConstructible* requirements.

16 *Postconditions*: *this has a target object d of type VT direct-non-list-initialized with std::forward<Args>(args)....

17 *Throws*: Any exception thrown by the initialization of the target object. May throw bad_alloc unless VT is a pointer or a specialization of reference_wrapper.

```
template<class T, class U, class... Args>
  explicit copyable_function(in_place_type_t<T>, initializer_list<U> ilist, Args&&... args);
```

18 Let VT be decay_t<T>.

19 *Constraints*:

(19.1) — is_constructible_v<VT, initializer_list<U>&, Args...> is true, and

(19.2) — *is-callable-from*<VT> is true.

20 *Mandates*:

(20.1) — VT is the same type as T, and

(20.2) — is_copy_constructible_v<VT> is true.

21 *Preconditions*: VT meets the *Cpp17Destructible* and *Cpp17CopyConstructible* requirements.

22 *Postconditions*: *this has a target object d of type VT direct-non-list-initialized with ilist, std::forward<Args>(args)....

23 *Throws*: Any exception thrown by the initialization of the target object. May throw bad_alloc unless VT is a pointer or a specialization of reference_wrapper.

copyable_function& operator=(const copyable_function& f);

24 *Effects*: Equivalent to: copyable_function(f).swap(*this);

25 *Returns*: *this.

copyable_function& operator=(copyable_function&& f);

26 *Effects*: Equivalent to: copyable_function(std::move(f)).swap(*this);

27 *Returns*: *this.

copyable_function& operator=(nullptr_t) noexcept;

28 *Effects*: Destroys the target object of *this, if any.

29 *Returns*: *this.

template<class F> copyable_function& operator=(F&& f);

30 *Effects*: Equivalent to: copyable_function(std::forward<F>(f)).swap(*this);

31 *Returns*: *this.

~copyable_function();

32 *Effects*: Destroys the target object of *this, if any.

22.10.17.??.4 Invocation [func.wrap.copy.inv]

explicit operator bool() const noexcept;

1 *Returns*: true if *this has a target object, otherwise false.

R operator()(ArgTypes... args) *cv ref* noexcept(*noex*);

2 *Preconditions*: *this has a target object.

3 *Effects*: Equivalent to:

```
    return INVOKE<R>(static_cast<F inv-quals>(f), std::forward<ArgTypes>(args)...);
```

where f is an lvalue designating the target object of *this and F is the type of f.

22.10.17.??.5 Utility [func.wrap.copy.util]

void swap(copyable_function& other) noexcept;

1 *Effects*: Exchanges the target objects of *this and other.

friend void swap(copyable_function& f1, copyable_function& f2) noexcept;

2 *Effects*: Equivalent to f1.swap(f2).

friend bool operator==(const copyable_function& f, nullptr_t) noexcept;

3 *Returns*: true if f has no target object, otherwise false.

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