15-410
“...1969 > 1999?...”

Protection
Nov. 4, 2019

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Synchronization

Upcoming opportunities
- 15-418/618 (Parallel)
- 15-712 (Advanced OS/DS)
- 15-719 (Advanced Cloud Computing)
- 15-721 (Advanced DB)
- 15-744 ([Ph.D.] Computer Networks)

Further out
- 15-412/612 (OS Practicum)
- 15-445/645 (Database Systems)
- 15-821 (Mobile & Pervasive Computing)
Outline

Protection (OSC: Chapter 14)
- Protection vs. Security
- Domains (Unix, Multics)
- Access Matrix
  - Concept, Implementation
  - Revocation – not really covered today (see text)

Mentioning EROS

[Later lectures: techniques and cracks]
Protection vs. Security

Textbook's distinction

- Protection happens inside a computer
  - Which parts may access which other parts (how)?
- Security considers *external threats*
  - Is the system's model intact or compromised?
Protection

Goals
- Prevent intentional attacks
- “Prove” *access policies* are always obeyed
- Detect bugs
  - “Wild pointer” example

Policy specifications
- System administrators
- Users - May want to add new privileges to system
Objects

**Hardware**
- Exclusive-use: printer, serial port, CD writer, ...
- Fluid aggregates: CPU, memory, disks, screen

**Logical objects**
- Files
- Processes
- TCP port 25
- Database tables
Operations

**Depend on object!**

- Disk: `read_sector()`, `write_sector()`
- CD-ROM: `read_sector(...)`
- TCP port: `advertise(...)`
- CPU
  - Conceptually: `context_switch(...)`, `<interrupt>`
  - More sensibly: `realtime_schedule(..., ...)"
Access Control

**Basic access control**

- Your processes should access only “your stuff”
- Implemented by many systems
Access Control

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- Implemented by many systems

**Principle of least privilege**
- (text: “need-to-know”)
- `cc -c foo.c`
  - should read foo.c, stdio.h, ...
  - should write foo.o
Access Control

**Basic access control**
- Your processes should access only “your stuff”
- Implemented by many systems

**Principle of least privilege**
- (text: “need-to-know”)
- `cc -c foo.c`
  - should read foo.c, stdio.h, ...
  - should write foo.o
  - *should not write ~/.cshrc*
- This is harder
Who Can Do What?

access right = (object, operations)
  - /etc/passwd, r
  - /etc/passwd, r/w

process → protection domain
  - P0 → de0u, P1 → bpr, ...

protection domain → list of access rights
  - de0u → (/etc/passwd, r), (/afs/andrew/usr/de0u/.cshrc, w)
Protection Domain Example

Domain 1
- /dev/null, read/write
- /usr/de0u/.cshrc, read/write
- /usr/bpr/.bashrc, read
- ...

Domain 2
- /dev/null, read/write
- /usr/bpr/.bashrc, read/write
- /usr/de0u/.cshrc, read
- ...

Using Protection Domains

Least privilege requires domain changes
  - Doing different jobs requires different privileges
  - One printer daemon, N users
    - “Print each user's file with minimum necessary privileges...”
Using Protection Domains

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- Doing different jobs requires different privileges
- One printer daemon, N users
  - “Print each user's file with minimum necessary privileges...”

Two general approaches
- Hold constant the “process → domain” mapping
  - Requires domains to add and drop privileges
  - User “printer” gets & releases permission to read your file
Using Protection Domains

**Least privilege requires domain changes**
- Doing different jobs requires different privileges
- One printer daemon, N users
  - “Print each user's file with minimum necessary privileges...”

**Two general approaches**
- Hold constant the “process → domain” mapping
  - Requires domains to add and drop privileges
  - User “printer” gets & releases permission to read your file
- Hold constant the privileges of a domain
  - Processes `domain-switch` between high-privilege, low-privilege domains
  - Printer `process` opens file as you, opens printer as “printer”
Protection Domain Models

Three sample models

- Domain = user
- Domain = process
- Domain = procedure
- (other models are possible)
Domain = User

Object permissions depend on **who you are**

All processes you are running share privileges

Privilege adjustment?

- Log off, log on (i.e., domain switch)
Domain = Process

**Resources managed by special processes**
- Printer daemon, file server process, ...

**Privilege adjustment?**
- Objects cross domain boundaries via IPC
- “Please send these bytes to the printer”

/* concept only; pieces missing */
s = socket(AF_UNIX, SOCK_STREAM, 0);
connect(s, pserver, sizeof pserver);
mh->cmsg_type = SCM_RIGHTS;
mh->cmsg_len[0] = open("/my/file", 0, 0);
sendmsg(s, &mh, 0);
Domain = Procedure

Processor limits access at fine grain
- Hardware protection on a per-variable basis!

Domain switch – Inter-domain procedure call
- nr = print(strlen(buf), buf);
- What is the “correct domain” for print()?
  - Access to OS's data structures
  - Permission to call OS's internal putbytes()
  - Permission to read user's buf
Domain = Procedure

Processor limits access at fine grain
- Hardware protection on a per-variable basis!

Domain switch – Inter-domain procedure call
- nr = print(strlen(buf), buf);
- What is the “correct domain” for print()?
  - Access to OS's data structures
  - Permission to call OS's internal putbytes()
  - Permission to read user's buf
- Ideally, correct domain automatically created by hardware
  - Common case: “user mode” vs. “kernel mode”
    » Only a rough approximation of the right domain
    » But simple for hardware to implement
Unix “setuid” concept

Assume Unix protection domain ≡ numeric user id

- Not the whole story! This overlooks:
  - Group id, group vector
  - Process group, controlling terminal
  - Superuser
- But let's pretend for today

Domain switch via setuid executable

- Special permission bit set with chmod u+s file
  - Meaning: exec() sets uid to executable file's owner
- Gatekeeper programs
  - “lpr” run by anybody can access printer's queue files
Access Matrix Concept

**Concept**
- Formalization of “who can do what”

**Basic idea**
- Store all permissions in a matrix
  - One dimension is protection domains
  - Other dimension is objects
  - Entries are access rights
## Access Matrix Concept

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>File1</th>
<th>File2</th>
<th>File3</th>
<th>Printer</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>D1</strong></td>
<td>rwxd</td>
<td>r</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>D2</strong></td>
<td>r</td>
<td>r</td>
<td>rwxd</td>
<td>w</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>D3</strong></td>
<td>rwxd</td>
<td>rwxd</td>
<td>rwxd</td>
<td>w</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>D4</strong></td>
<td>r</td>
<td>r</td>
<td>r</td>
<td>r</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Access Matrix Details

**OS must still define process → domain mapping**

**OS must define, enforce domain-switching rules**
- Ad-hoc approach
  - Special domain-switch rules (e.g., log off/on)
- Can encode domain-switch in access matrix!
  - Switching domains is a privilege like any other...
  - Add domain *columns* (domains are objects)
  - Add switch-to rights to domain objects
    - “D2 processes can switch to D1 at will”
- Subtle (dangerous)
## Adding “Switch-Domain” Rights

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</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>D1</td>
<td></td>
<td>rwxdr</td>
<td>r</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D2</td>
<td>r</td>
<td></td>
<td>rwxd</td>
<td>s</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D3</td>
<td>rwxd</td>
<td>rwxd</td>
<td>rwxd</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D4</td>
<td>r</td>
<td>r</td>
<td>r</td>
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</table>
Updating the Matrix

Ad-hoc approach
- “System administrator” can update matrix

Matrix approach
- Add *copy rights* to objects
  - “Domain D1 may copy read rights for File2”
  - So D1 can give D2 the right to read File2
# Adding Copy Rights

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Adding Copy Rights

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<td>r</td>
<td>r</td>
<td>rwxd</td>
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Updating the Matrix

**Add owner rights to objects**
- D1 has owner rights for O47
- D1 can modify the O47 column at will
  - Can add, delete rights to O47 from all other domains

**Add control rights to domain objects**
- D1 has control rights for D2
- D1 can modify D2's rights to any object
  - D1 may be teacher, parent, ...
Access Matrix Implementation

Implement matrix via matrix?
- Huge, messy, slow

Very clumsy for...
- “world readable file”
  - Need one entry per domain
  - Must fill rights in when creating new domain
- “private file”
  - Lots of blank squares
    » Can Alice read the file? - No
    » Can Bob read the file? - No
    » ...

Two typical approaches – “ACL”, “capabilities”
## Access Control List

<p>| | | | | |</p>
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1. File1
2. D1: Read
3. D2: Read
4. D3: Read, Write, Execute, Delete
5. D4: Read
Access Control List (ACL)

List per matrix column (object)
- de0u, read; bpr, read+write

Naively, domain = user

AFS ACLs
- domain = user, user:group, system:anyuser, machine list (system:campushost)
- positive rights, negative rights
  - de0u:staff rlid
  - zsnow -rlid

Cool!
Access Control List (ACL)

**List per matrix column (object)**
- de0u, read; bpr, read+write

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  - de0u:staff rlid
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**Doesn't really do least privilege**
- Adding and deleting users is a heavy-weight operation
- System stores *many* privileges per user, permanently...
## Capability List

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Capability Lists

**Capability Lists**
- List per matrix row (domain)
- Naively, domain = user
  - More typically, domain = process

**Permit least privilege**
- Domains can transfer & forget capabilities
  - Possible to create “just right” domains
    » cc which can't write to .cshrc
- Bootstrapping problem
  - Who gets which rights at boot?
  - Who gets which rights at login?
  - Typical solution: store capability lists in files somehow
Mixed Approach

Permanently store ACL for each file
- Must fetch ACL from disk to access file
- ACL fetch & evaluation may be long, complicated

open() checks ACL, creates capability
- “Process 33 has read-only access to vnode #5894”
- Records access rights for this process
- Quick verification on each read(), write()
- Result: per-process fd table “caches” results of ACL checks
Internal Protection?

Understood so far:

- Which user process should be allowed to access what?
  - Job performed by OS
- How to protect OS code, data from user processes
  - Hardware user/kernel boundary

Can we do better?

- Can we protect *parts* of the OS from other parts?
Traditional OS Layers

- User Program
- Print Queue
- File System
- Page System
- Disk Device Driver
Traditional OS Layers

Smaller  Simpler  More Critical

Disk Device Driver
Page System
File System
Print Queue
User Program
Traditional OS Layers

Equally Trusted!!
Traditional OS Layers

User Program
Print Queue
File System
Page System
Disk Device Driver

Wild Pointer Access
Multics

Multics =
- Multiplexed Information and Computing Service
- Plan: “information utility”
  - Mainframe per city

Designed to scale
- Many users, many programmers
- Protection seen as a key ingredient of reliability
Multics Approach

Trust hierarchy

Small “simple” very-trusted kernel
- Main job: access control
- Goal: “prove” it correct

Privilege layers (nested “rings”)
- Ring 0 = kernel, “inside” every other ring
- Ring 1 = operating system core
- Ring 2 = operating system services
- ...
- Ring 7 = user programs
Multics Ring Architecture

**Segmented virtual address space**
- “Print module” may contain
  - Entry points in a code segment
    - `list_printers()`, `list_queue()`, `enqueue()`, ...
  - Data segment
    - List of printers, accounting data, queues
- Segment ≡ file (segments persist across reboots)
- VM permissions focus on segments, not pages

**Access checked by hardware**
- Which procedures can you call?
- Is access to that segment's data legal?
Multics Rings

Kernel

Disk

Page Store

File System
Multics Rings
Multics Rings

Fault

Wild Pointer
Access

Disk

Page Store

File System

Kernel
Multics Domain Switching

CPU has **current ring number** register

- Current privilege level, [0..7]

Segment descriptors include

- “Traditional stuff”
  - Segment's limit (size)
  - Segment's base in physical memory
  - Access bits (read, write, execute)
- Ring number
- Access bracket [min, max]
  - Segment “appears in” ring min...ring max
- Entry limit - “you must be this tall to access this segment”
- List of gates (procedure entry points)
Multics Domain Switching

Every procedure call is a potential domain switch

Calling a procedure at current privilege level?
  - Just call it

Calling a more-privileged procedure?
  - Call mechanism checks entry point is legal
  - We enter more-privileged mode
  - Called procedure can read & write all of our data

Calling a less-privileged procedure?
  - We want to show it some of our data (procedure params)
  - We don't want it to modify our data
Multics Domain Switching

\[ \text{min} \leq \text{current-ring} \leq \text{max} \]
- We are executing in ring 3
- Procedure is “part of” rings 2..4
- Standard procedure call
Multics Domain Switching

**current-ring > max**
- Calling a more-privileged procedure
- It can do whatever it wants to us

**Implementation**
- Hardware traps to ring 0 permission-management kernel
- Ring 0 checks current-ring < entry-limit
  - User code might be forbidden to call ring 1 directly
- Ring 0 checks call address is a legal entry point
  - Less-privileged code can't jump into middle of a procedure
- Ring 0 sets current-ring to segment-ring
  - Privilege elevation – ok after consulting callee's rules
- Runs procedure call
Multics Domain Switching

**current-ring < min**
- Calling a less-privileged procedure

**Implementation**
- Trap to ring 0 permission-management kernel
- Ring 0 copies “privileged” procedure call parameters
  - Must be in low-privilege segment for callee to access
- Ring 0 sets current-ring to segment-ring
  - Privilege lowering – callee gets r/o access to carefully chosen privileged state
- Runs procedure call
Multics Ring Architecture

Does this look familiar?
- It should really remind you of something...

Benefits
- Core security policy small, centralized
- Damage limited vs. Unix “superuser” model

Concerns
- Hierarchy $\neq$ least privilege
- Requires specific hardware
- Performance (maybe)
More About Multics

Back to the future
- Symmetric multiprocessing
- Hierarchical file system (access control lists)
- Memory-mapped files
- Hot-pluggable CPUs, memory, disks
- 1969!!!

Significant influence on Unix
- Ken Thompson was a Multics contributor

The One True OS
- In use 1968-2000
- www.multicians.org
Mentioning EROS

Text mentions Hydra, CAP
- Late 70's, early 80's
- Dead

EROS ("Extremely Reliable Operating System")
- UPenn, Johns Hopkins
- Based on commercial GNOSIS/KeyKOS OS
- www.eros-os.org
- "Arguably less dead" (see below)
EROS Overview

“Pure capability” system
  - “ACLs considered harmful”

“Pure principle system”
  - Don't compromise principle for performance

Aggressive performance goal
  - Domain switch ~100X procedure call

Unusual approach to capability-bootstrap problem
  - Persistent processes!
Persistent Processes??

No such thing as reboot

Processes last “forever” (until exit)

OS kernel checkpoints system state to disk
  - Memory & registers defined as cache of disk state

Restart restores system state into hardware

“Login” reconnects you to your processes
EROS Revocation Stance

**Really revoking access is hard**
- The user could have copied the file

**Don't give out real capabilities**
- Give out proxy capabilities
- Then revoke however you wish

**Verdict**
- Not really satisfying
- Unclear there is a better answer
  - Palladium/“trusted computing” isn't clearly better
EROS Quick Start

http://www.eros-os.org/

- essays/
  - reliability/paper.html
  - capintro.html
  - wherefrom.html
  - ACLSvCaps.html

Current status

- EROS code base transitioned to CapROS.org
- Follow-on research project at Coyotos.org
Concept Summary

Object
- Operations

Domain
- Switching

Capabilities
- Revoking is hard, see text

“Protection” vs. “security”
- Protection is what our sysadmin hopes is happening...

Further reading?
- PLASH - “principle of least authority” shell for Linux