

Overview of Computer Security

Fundamental Concepts;
Access Control Models;
Cryptographic
Concepts;
Implementation and
Usability Issues

1. Fundamental Concepts
2. Access Control Models
3. Cryptographic Concepts
4. Implementation and Usability Issues

- 1. Fundamental Concepts**
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Some things in the news

- Nigerian letter (419 Scams) still works:
 - Michigan Treasurer sends 1.2M USD of State Funds (2006) !!!
- Many zero-day attacks
 - Exploiting unknown vulnerabilities in computer systems and application software ...
- Numerous stolen or lost laptops, storage media, containing customer information
 - Second-hand computers (hard drives) pose risk
- It's estimated $\frac{1}{4}$ of PCs on Internet are bots
-

Steal cars with a laptop

- NEW YORK - Security technology created to protect luxury vehicles may now make it easier for **tech-savvy thieves** to drive away with them.
- In April '07, high-tech criminals made international headlines when they used a laptop and transmitter to open the locks and start the ignition of an armor-plated BMW X5 belonging to soccer player David Beckham, the **second X5** stolen from him using this technology within **six months**.
- ... Beckham's BMW X5s were stolen by thieves who hacked into the codes for the vehicles' RFID chips ...



iPhone Flaw Lets Hackers Take Over, Security Firm Says



Kitra Cahana/The New York Times

Charles Miller, shown on his iPhone, said that after finding a hole in security, "you were in complete control."

By JOHN SCHWARTZ
Published: July 23, 2007

A team of computer security consultants say they have found a flaw in [Apple's](#) wildly popular [iPhone](#) that allows them to take control of the device.

SIGN IN TO E-MAIL OR SAVE THIS

PRINT

REPRINTS

Next Article in Technology (4 of 17) »

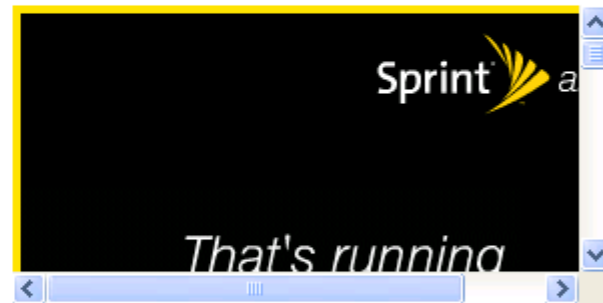
Circuits E-Mail



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MOST POPULAR - TECHNOLOGY

E-MAILED BLOGGED

1. [iPhone Flaw Lets Hackers Take Over, Security Firm Says](#)
2. [Google Pushes for Rules to Aid Wireless Plans](#)
3. [SunRocket Leaves Void for Callers on Internet](#)
4. [iPhone-Free Cellphone News](#)
5. [Swedish Woman Gets Superfast Internet](#)
6. [Computer Support, Can You Rock to This?](#)
7. [Headphones to Shut Out the World](#)
8. [Cute Friends to Collect, and Plug in to the Internet](#)

iPhone attack (summer 2007)

- iPhone Safari downloads malicious web page
 - Arbitrary code is run with administrative privileges
 - Can read SMS log, address book, call history, other data
 - Can perform physical actions on the phone.
 - Play system sound and vibrate the phone for a second
 - Could dial phone numbers, send text messages, or record audio (as a bugging device)
 - Transmit any collected data over network to attacker

See <http://www.securityevaluators.com/iphone/>

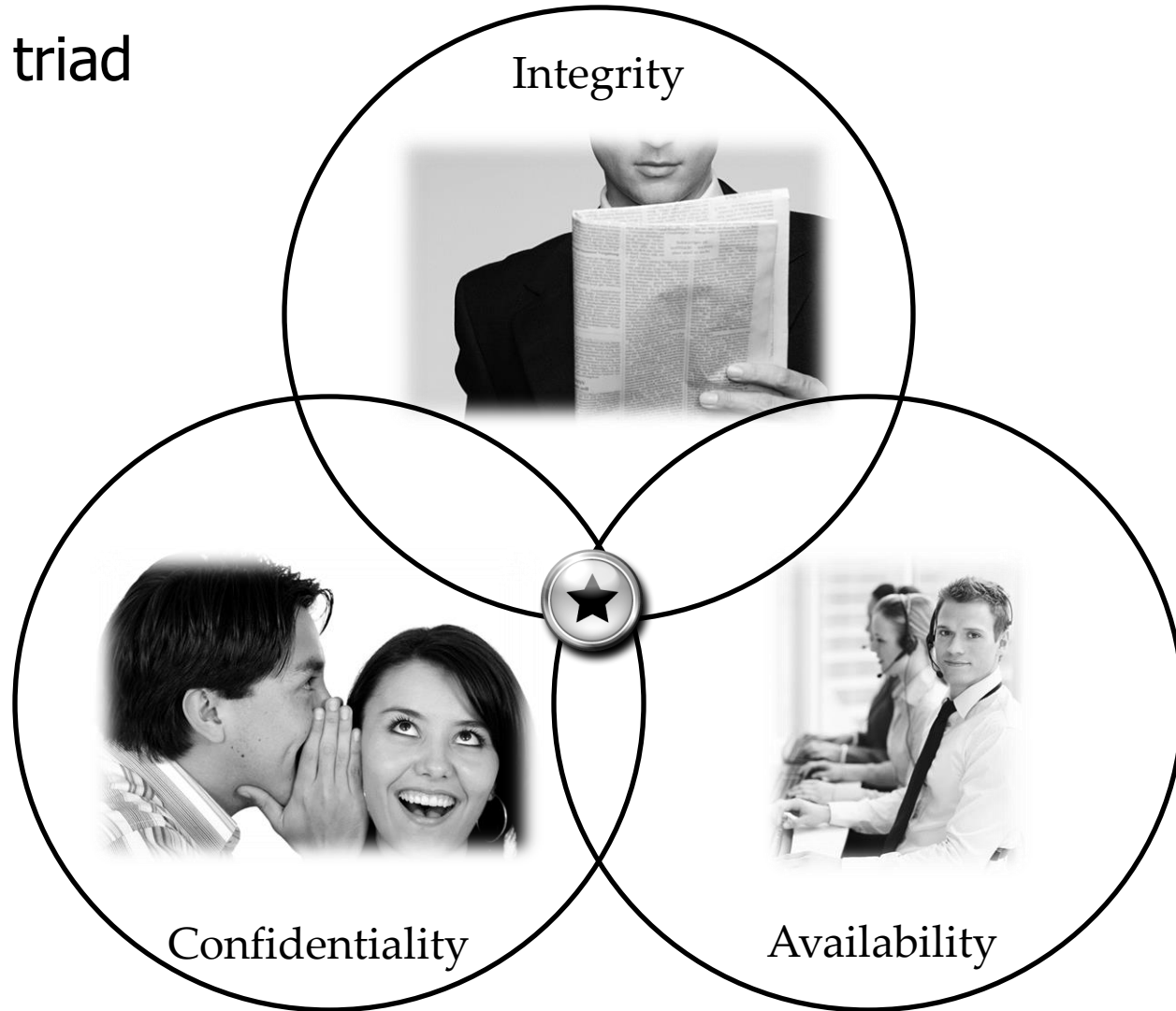
What's security?

Defining Security

- The security of a system, application, or protocol is always relative to
 - A set of desired properties
 - An adversary with specific capabilities
- For example, standard file access permissions in Linux and Windows are not effective against an adversary who can boot from a CD

Security Goals

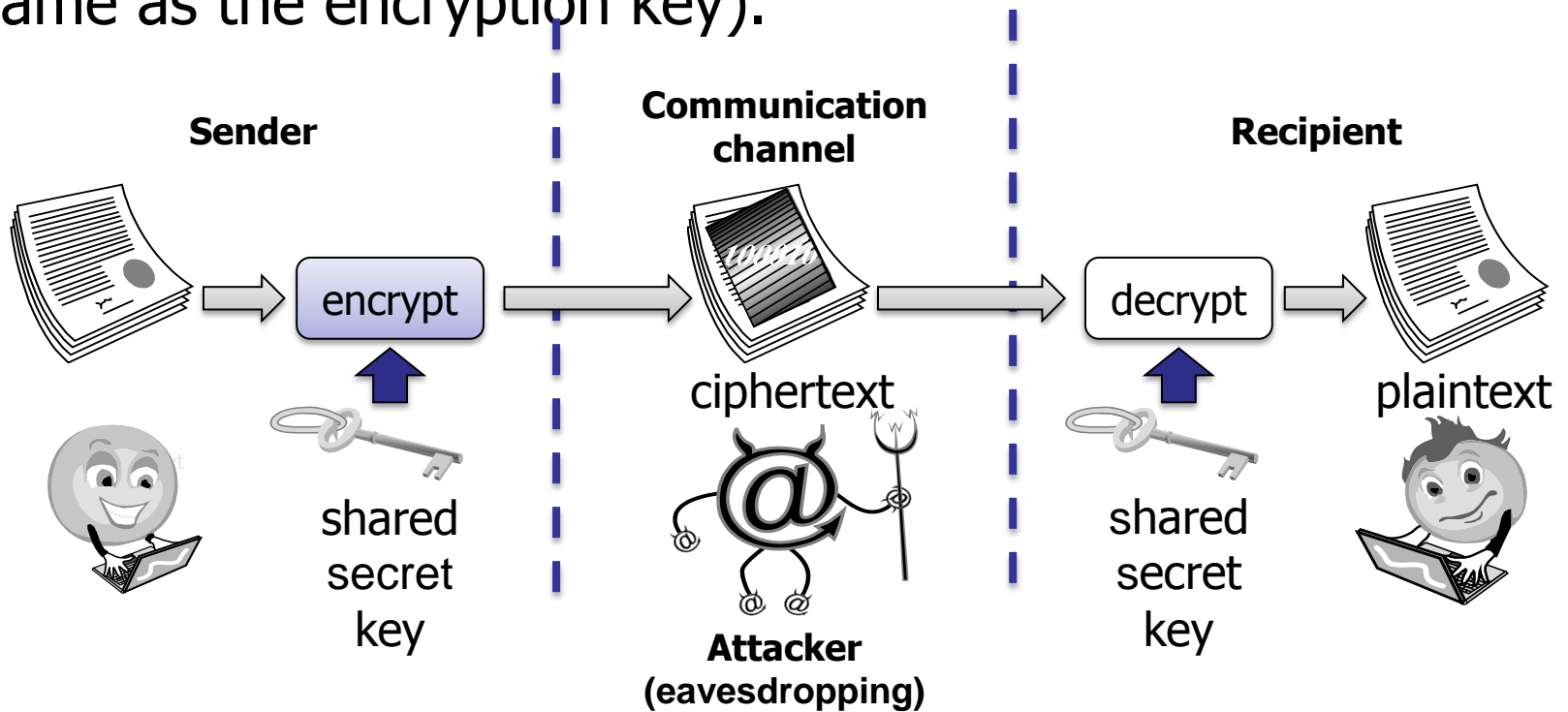
- C.I.A. triad



- **Confidentiality** is the avoidance of the unauthorized disclosure of information.
 - confidentiality involves the protection of data, providing access for those who are allowed to see it while disallowing others from learning anything about its content.

Tools for Confidentiality

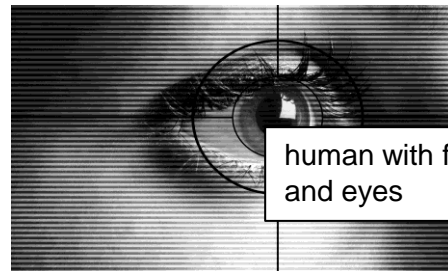
- **Encryption:** the transformation of information using a secret, called an encryption key, so that the transformed information can only be read using another secret, called the decryption key (which may, in some cases, be the same as the encryption key).



- **Access control:** rules and policies that limit access to confidential information to those people and/or systems with a “need to know.”
 - This need to know may be determined by identity, such as a person’s name or a computer’s serial number, or by a role that a person has, such as being a manager or a computer security specialist.

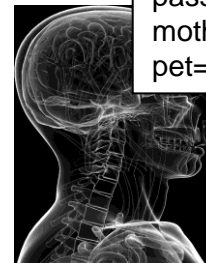
Tools for Confidentiality

- **Authentication:** the determination of the identity or role that someone has. This determination can be done in a number of different ways, but it is usually based on a combination of
 - something the person has (like a smart card or a radio key fob storing secret keys),
 - something the person knows (like a password),
 - something the person is (like a human with a fingerprint).



human with fingers
and eyes

Something you are



password=uclb()w1V
mother=Jones
pet=Caesar

Something you know



radio token with
secret keys

Something you have

Tools for Confidentiality

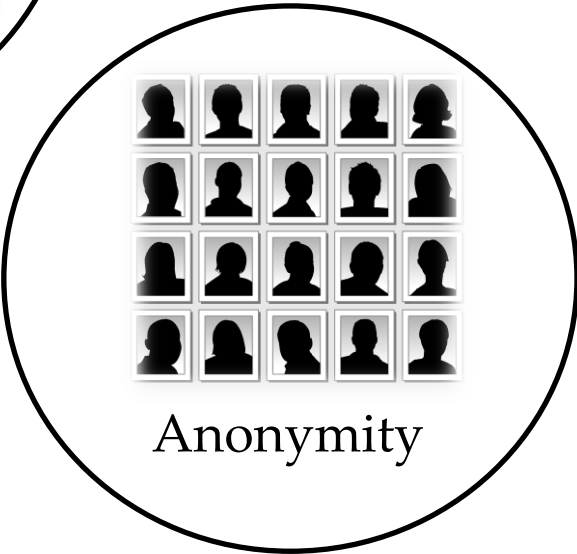
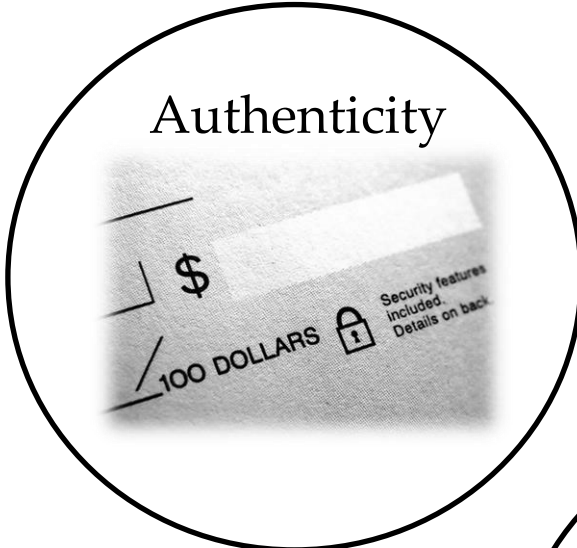
- **Authorization:** the determination if a person or system is allowed access to resources, based on an access control policy.
 - Such authorizations should prevent an attacker from tricking the system into letting him have access to protected resources.
- **Physical security:** the establishment of physical barriers to limit access to protected computational resources.
 - Such barriers include locks on cabinets and doors, the placement of computers in windowless rooms, the use of sound dampening materials, and even the construction of buildings or rooms with walls incorporating copper meshes (called **Faraday cages**) so that electromagnetic signals cannot enter or exit the enclosure.

- **Integrity:** the property that information has not be altered in an unauthorized way.
- **Tools:**
 - **Backups:** the periodic archiving of data.
 - **Checksums:** the computation of a function that maps the contents of a file to a numerical value. A checksum function depends on the entire contents of a file and is designed in a way that even a small change to the input file (such as flipping a single bit) is highly likely to result in a different output value.
 - **Data correcting codes:** methods for storing data in such a way that small changes can be easily detected and automatically corrected.

- **Availability:** the property that information is accessible and modifiable in a timely fashion by those authorized to do so.
- **Tools:**
 - **Physical protections:** infrastructure meant to keep information available even in the event of physical challenges.
 - **Computational redundancies:** computers and storage devices that serve as fallbacks in the case of failures.

Other Security Concepts

- A.A.A.



Assurance

- **Assurance** refers to how trust is provided and managed in computer systems.
- **Trust management** depends on:
 - **Policies**, which specify behavioral expectations that people or systems have for themselves and others.
 - For example, the designers of an online music system may specify policies that describe how users can access and copy songs.
 - **Permissions**, which describe the behaviors that are allowed by the agents that interact with a person or system.
 - For instance, an online music store may provide permissions for limited access and copying to people who have purchased certain songs.
 - **Protections**, which describe mechanisms put in place to enforce permissions and policies.
 - We could imagine that an online music store would build in protections to prevent people from unauthorized access and copying of its songs.

Authenticity

- **Authenticity** is the ability to determine that statements, policies, and permissions issued by persons or systems are genuine.
- **Primary tool:**
 - **digital signatures.** These are cryptographic computations that allow a person or system to commit to the authenticity of their documents in a unique way that achieves **nonrepudiation**, which is the property that authentic statements issued by some person or system cannot be denied.



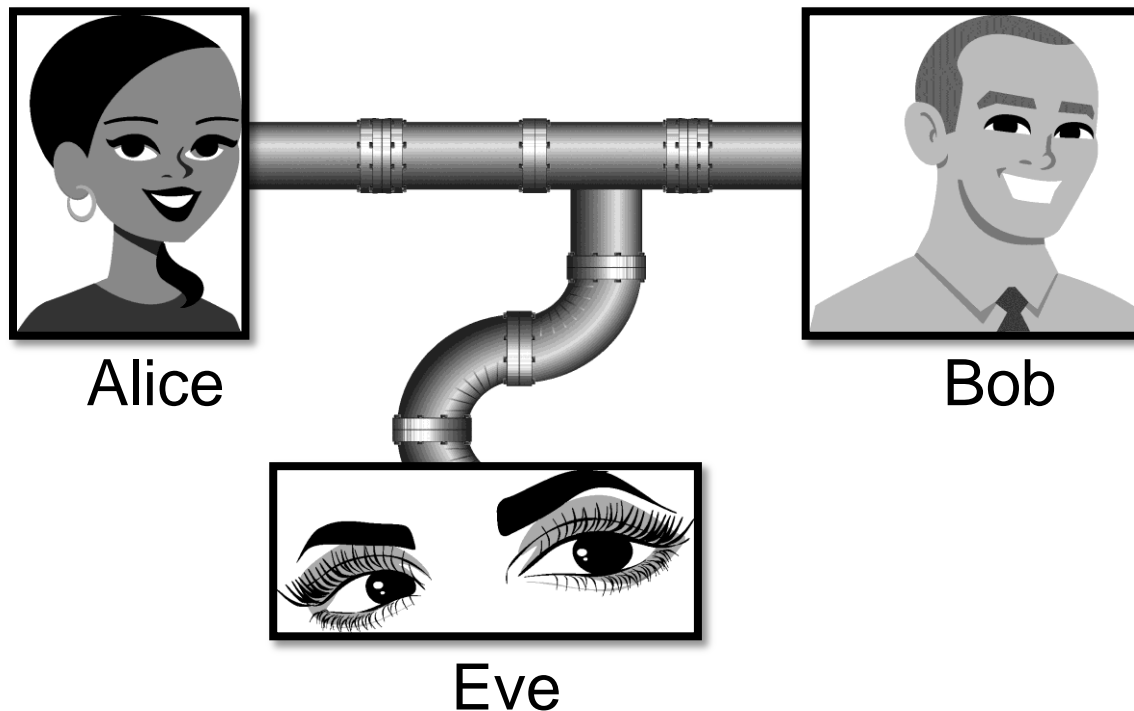
Anonymity

- **Anonymity:** the property that certain records or transactions not to be attributable to any individual.
- **Tools:**
 - **Aggregation:** the combining of data from many individuals so that disclosed sums or averages cannot be tied to any individual.
 - **Mixing:** the intertwining of transactions, information, or communications in a way that cannot be traced to any individual.
 - **Proxies:** trusted agents that are willing to engage in actions for an individual in a way that cannot be traced back to that person.
 - **Pseudonyms:** fictional identities that can fill in for real identities in communications and transactions, but are otherwise known only to a trusted entity.



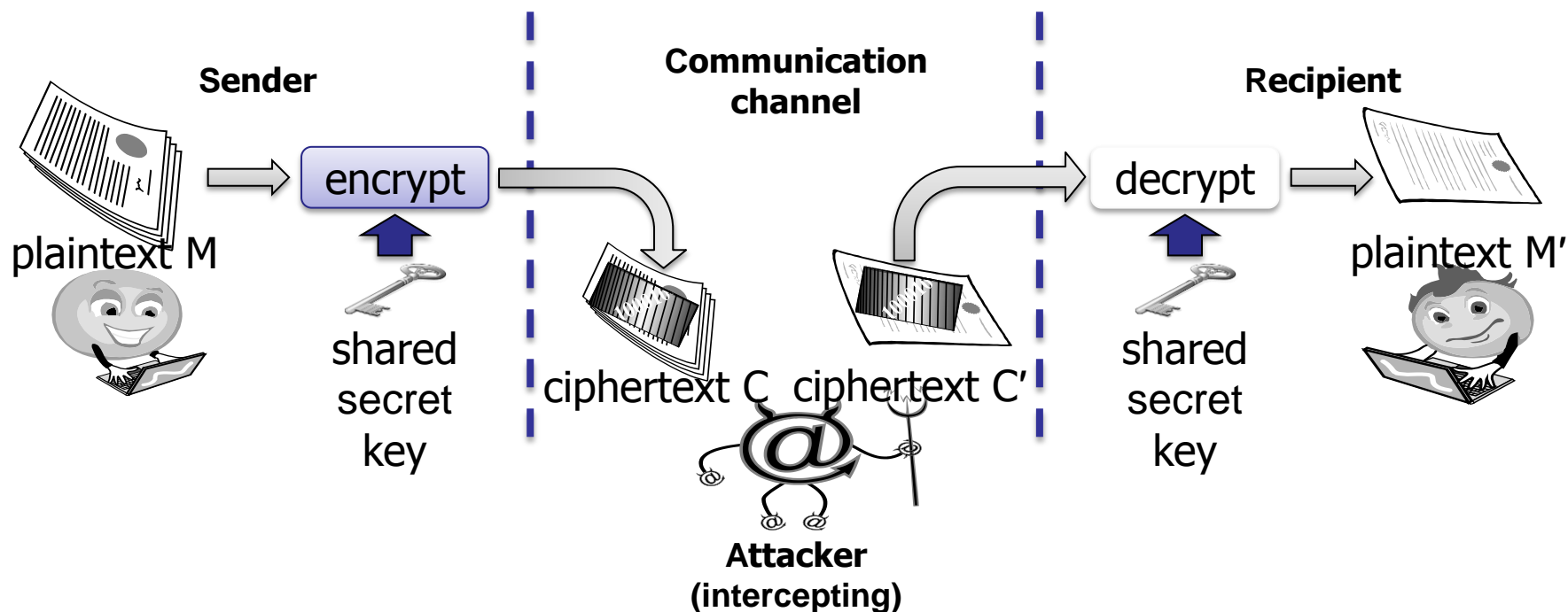
Threats and Attacks

- **Eavesdropping:** the interception of information intended for someone else during its transmission over a communication channel.



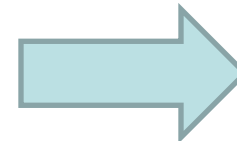
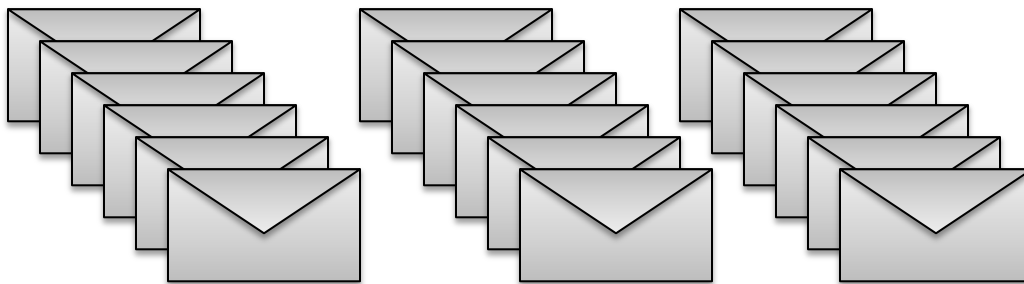
Threats and Attacks

- **Alteration:** unauthorized modification of information.
 - **Example:** the **man-in-the-middle attack**, where a network stream is intercepted, modified, and retransmitted.



Threats and Attacks

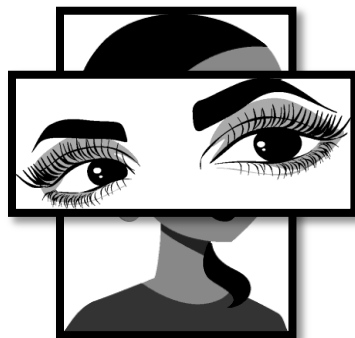
- **Denial-of-service:** the interruption or degradation of a data service or information access.
 - **Example:** email **spam**, to the degree that it is meant to simply fill up a mail queue and slow down an email server.



Alice

Threats and Attacks

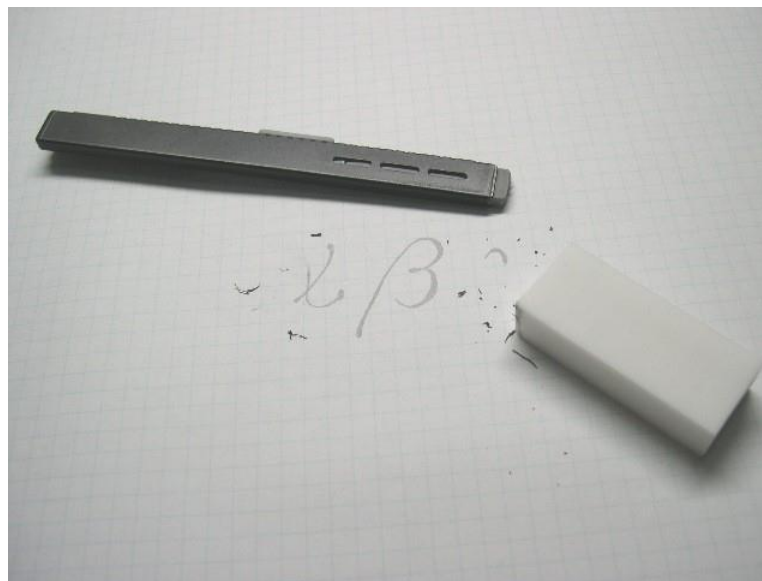
- **Masquerading:** the fabrication of information that is purported to be from someone who is not actually the author.



“From: Alice”
(really is from Eve)

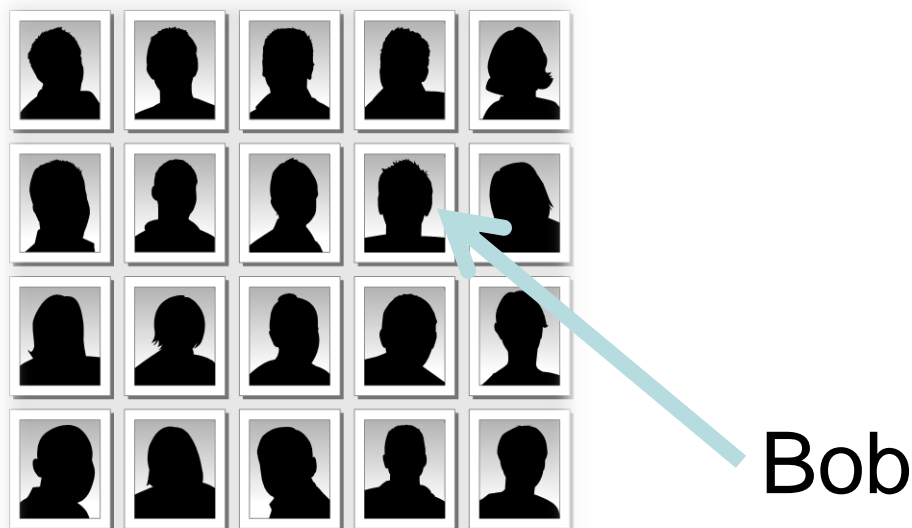
Threats and Attacks

- **Repudiation:** the denial of a commitment or data receipt.
 - This involves an attempt to back out of a contract or a protocol that requires the different parties to provide receipts acknowledging that data has been received.



Threats and Attacks

- **Correlation** and **traceback**: the integration of multiple data sources and information flows to determine the source of a particular data stream or piece of information.



The Ten Security Principles



Economy of mechanism

- This principle stresses **simplicity** in the **design** and **implementation** of security measures.
 - While applicable to most engineering endeavors, the notion of simplicity is especially important in the security domain, since a simple security framework facilitates its understanding by developers and users and enables the efficient development and verification of enforcement methods for it.

Fail-safe defaults

- This principle states that the default configuration of a system should have a **conservative protection scheme**.
 - For example, when adding a new user to an operating system, the default group of the user should have minimal access rights to files and services. Unfortunately, operating systems and applications often have default options that favor usability over security.
 - This has been historically the case for a number of popular applications, such as web browsers that allow the execution of code downloaded from the web server.

Complete mediation

- The idea behind this principle is that every access to a resource must be checked for **compliance with a protection scheme**.
 - As a consequence, one should be wary of performance improvement techniques that save the results of previous authorization checks, since permissions can change over time.
 - For example, an online banking web site should require users to sign on again after a certain amount of time, say, 15 minutes, has elapsed.

Open design

- According to this principle, the security architecture and **design** of a system should be made **publicly available**.
 - Security should rely only on keeping cryptographic keys secret.
 - Open design allows for a system to be scrutinized by multiple parties, which leads to the early discovery and correction of security vulnerabilities caused by design errors.
 - The open design principle is the opposite of the approach known as **security by obscurity**, which tries to achieve security by keeping cryptographic algorithms secret and which has been historically used without success by several organizations.

Separation of privilege

- This principle dictates that **multiple conditions** should be required to achieve access to restricted resources or have a program perform some action.

Least privilege

- Each program and user of a computer system should operate with the bare **minimum privileges necessary** to function properly.
 - If this principle is enforced, abuse of privileges is restricted, and the damage caused by the compromise of a particular application or user account is minimized.
 - The military concept of **need-to-know** information is an example of this principle.

Least common mechanism

- In systems with multiple users, mechanisms allowing resources to be **shared by more than one user should be minimized**.
 - For example, if a file or application needs to be accessed by more than one user, then these users should have separate channels by which to access these resources, to prevent unforeseen consequences that could cause security problems.

Psychological acceptability

- This principle states that user interfaces should be **well designed and intuitive**, and all security-related settings should adhere to what an ordinary user might expect.

- According to this principle, the **cost of circumventing** a security mechanism should be compared with the resources of an attacker when designing a security scheme.
 - A system developed to protect student grades in a university database, which may be attacked by snoopers or students trying to change their grades, probably needs less sophisticated security measures than a system built to protect military secrets, which may be attacked by government intelligence organizations.

Compromise recording

- This principle states that sometimes it is more desirable to **record the details** of an intrusion than to adopt more sophisticated measures to prevent it.
 - Internet-connected surveillance cameras are a typical example of an effective compromise record system that can be deployed to protect a building in lieu of reinforcing doors and windows.
 - The servers in an office network may maintain logs for all accesses to files, all emails sent and received, and all web browsing sessions.

1. Fundamental Concepts
- 2. Access Control Models**
3. Cryptographic Concepts
4. Implementation and Usability Issues

Access Control Models

- Providing a rigorous means of determining who has access to various pieces of information (to prevent attacks)
- Models
 - Access control matrices
 - Access control lists
 - Capabilities
 - Role-based access control
 -

Access Control Matrices

- **A table that defines permissions.**
 - Each row of this table is associated with a **subject**, which is a user, group, or system that can perform actions.
 - Each column of the table is associated with an **object**, which is a file, directory, document, device, resource, or any other entity for which we want to define access rights.

	/etc/passwd	/usr/bin/	/u/roberto/	/admin/
root	read, write	read, write, exec	read, write, exec	read, write, exec
mike	read	read, exec		
roberto	read	read, exec	read, write, exec	
backup	read	read, exec	read, exec	read, exec
...

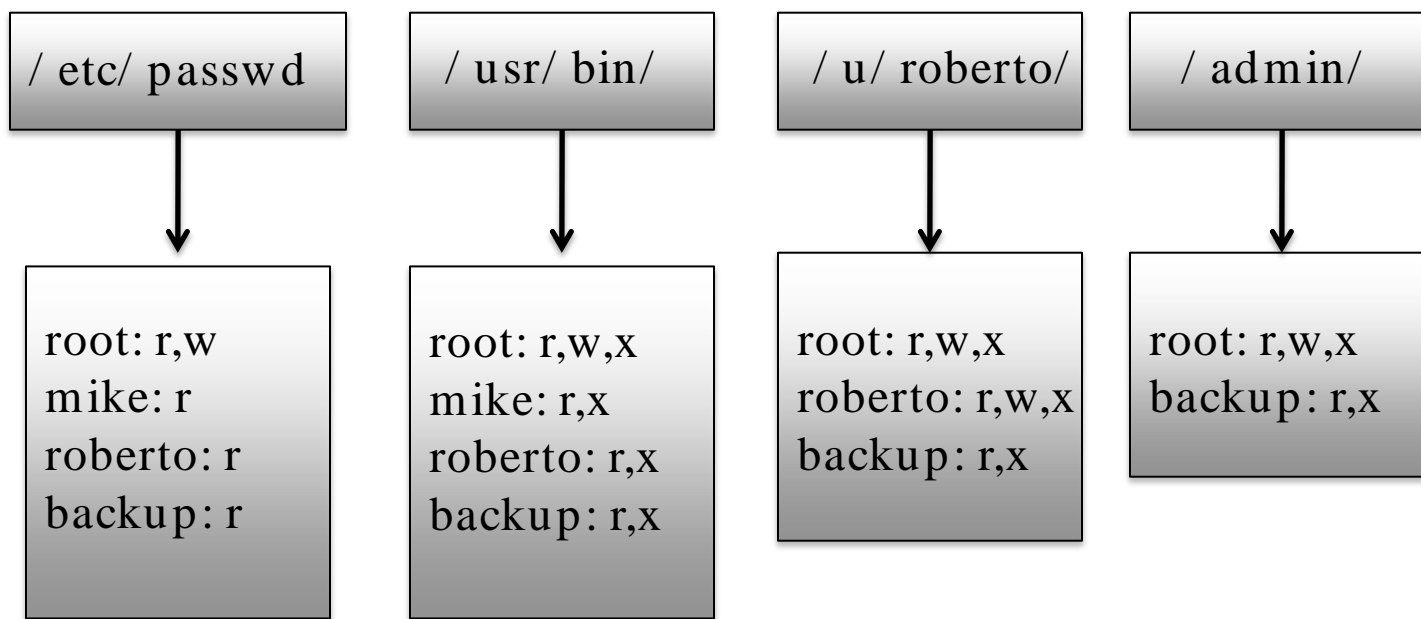
Access Control Matrices (cont.)

- Each cell of the table is then filled with the access rights for the associated combination of subject and object.
- Access rights can include actions such as reading, writing, copying, executing, deleting, and annotating.
- An empty cell means that no access rights are granted.

	/etc/passwd	/usr/bin/	/u/roberto/	/admin/
root	read, write	read, write, exec	read, write, exec	read, write, exec
mike	read	read, exec		
roberto	read	read, exec	read, write, exec	
backup	read	read, exec	read, exec	read, exec
...

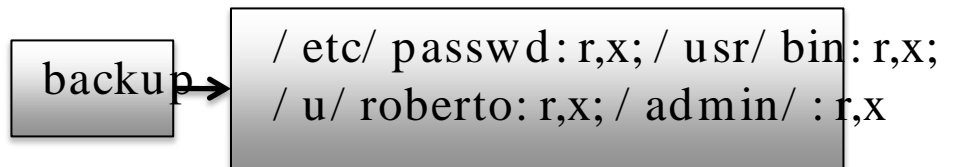
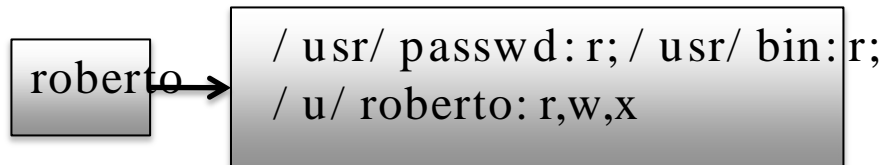
Access Control Lists

- It defines, for each object, **o**, a list, *L*, called **o**'s access control list, which enumerates all the subjects that have access rights for **o** and, for each such subject, **s**, gives the access rights that **s** has for object **o**.



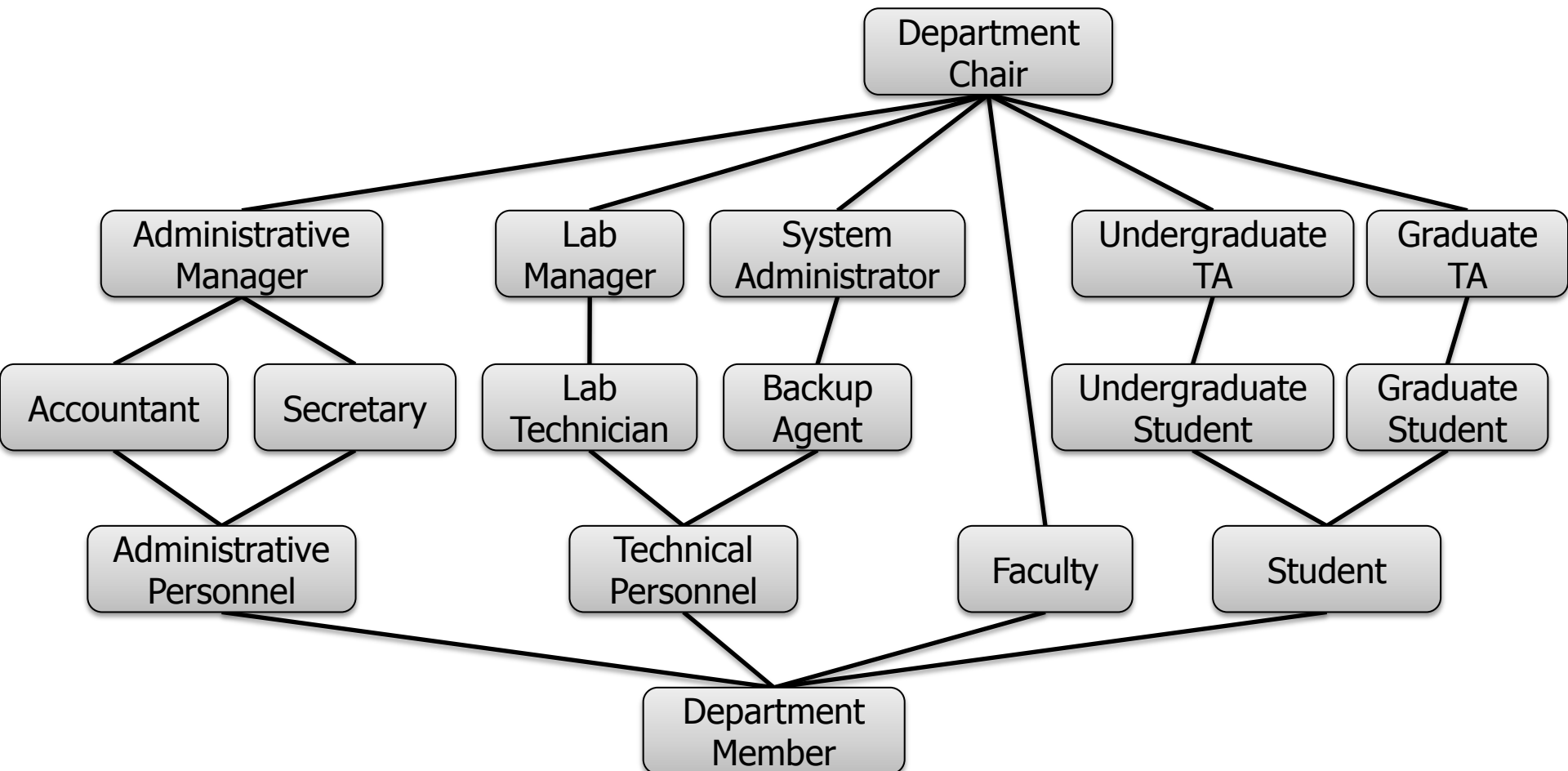
Capabilities

- Takes a subject-centered approach to access control. It defines, for each subject **s**, the list of the objects for which **s** has nonempty access control rights, together with the specific rights for each such object.



Role-based Access Control

- Define **roles** and then specify access control rights for these roles, rather than for subjects directly.

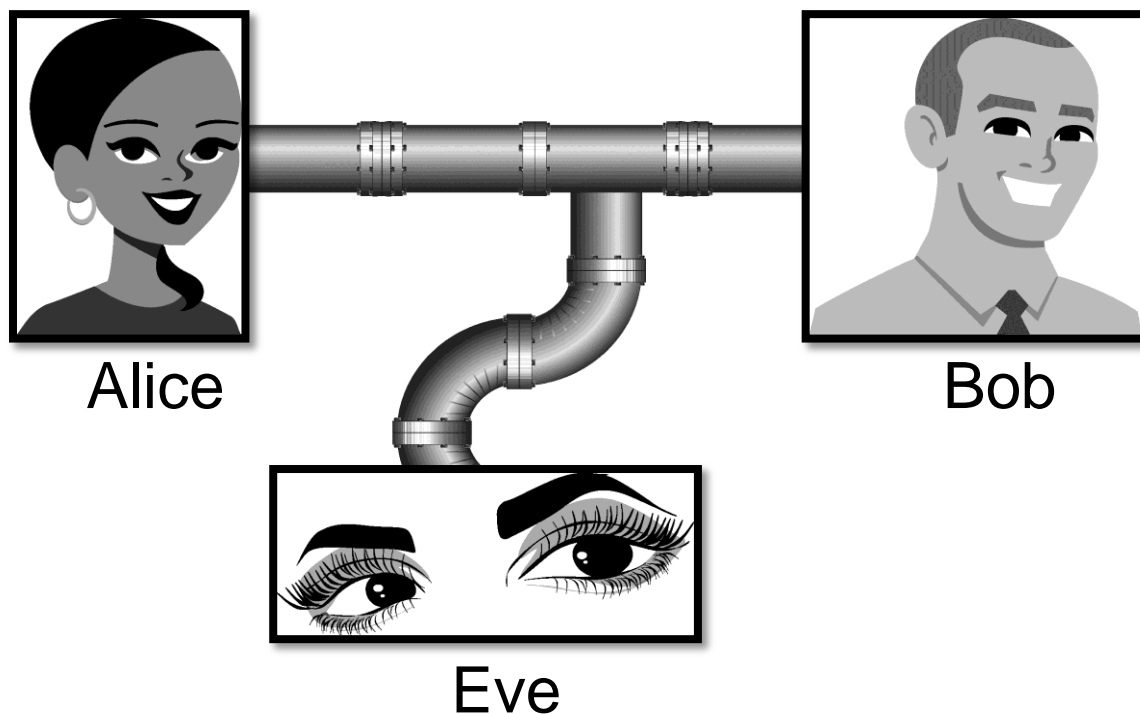


1. Fundamental Concepts
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- 3. Cryptographic Concepts**
4. Implementation and Usability Issues

- Computer security policies are worthless if we don't have ways of enforcing them
- Technological solutions are the primary mechanisms for enforcing security policies and achieving security goals
 - Many are cryptographic-based
- Thus, overview of fundamental cryptographic concepts next

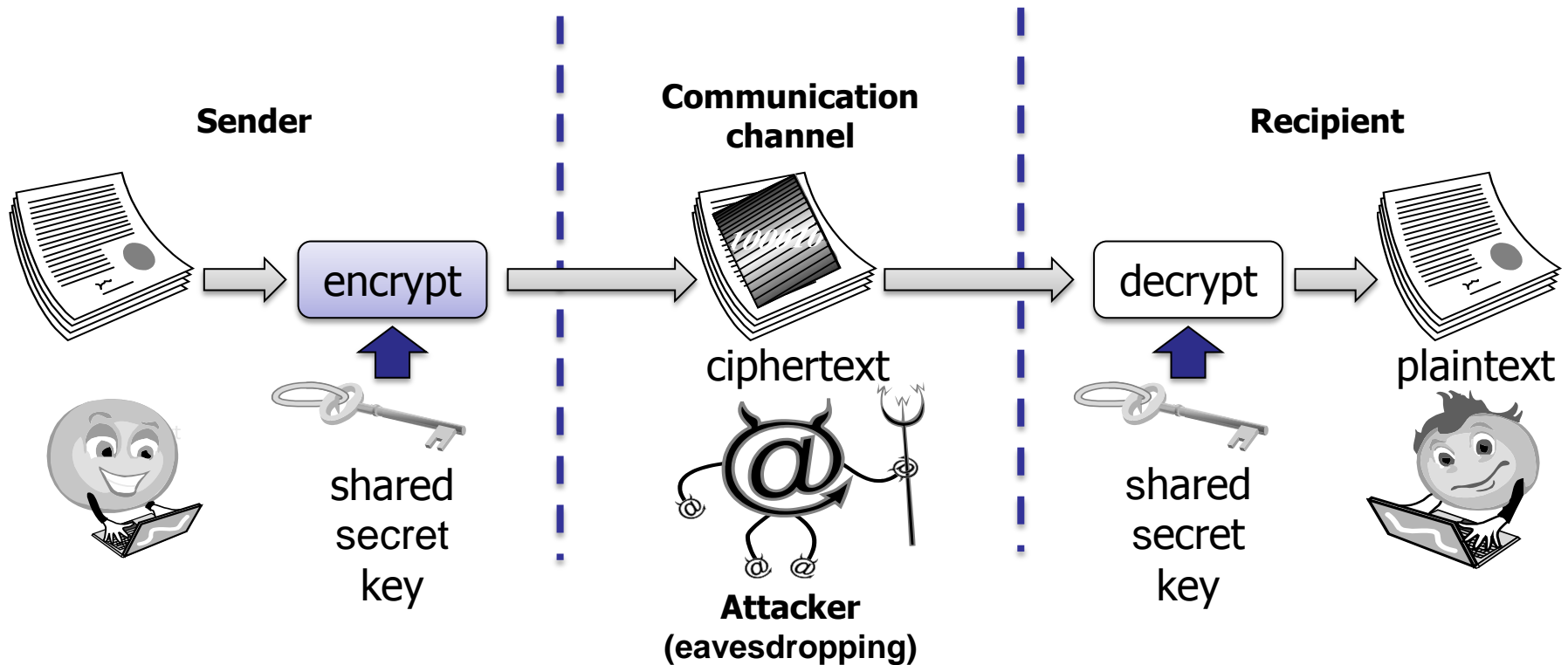
Cryptographic Concepts

- **Encryption:** a means to allow two parties, customarily called Alice and Bob, to establish confidential communication over an insecure channel that is subject to eavesdropping.



Encryption and Decryption

- The message M is called the **plaintext**.
- Alice will convert plaintext M to an encrypted form using an encryption algorithm E that outputs a **ciphertext C for M** .



Encryption and Decryption

- As equations:

$$C = E(M)$$

$$M = D(C)$$

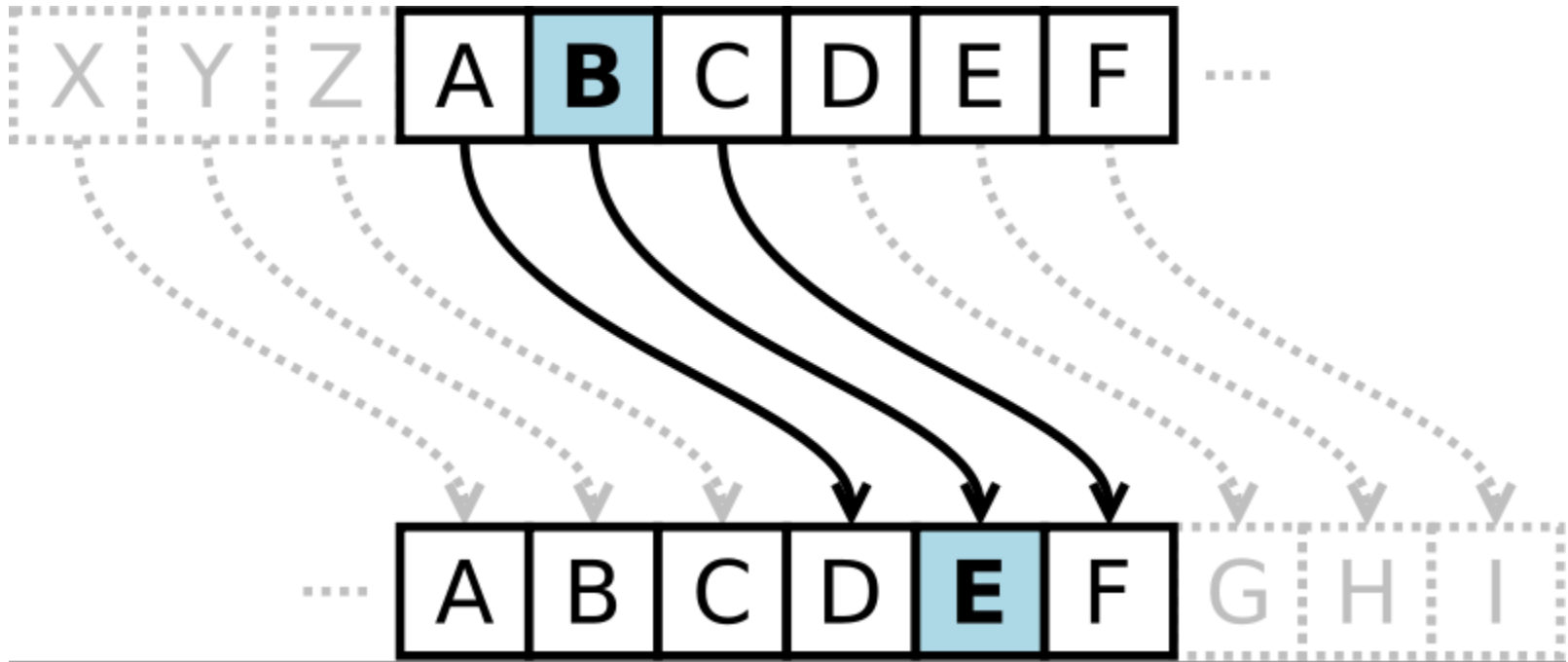
- The encryption and decryption algorithms are chosen so that it is infeasible for someone other than Alice and Bob to determine plaintext M from ciphertext C . Thus, ciphertext C can be transmitted over an insecure channel that can be eavesdropped by an adversary.

Cryptosystem

1. The set of possible plaintexts
2. The set of possible ciphertexts
3. The set of encryption keys
4. The set of decryption keys
5. The correspondence between encryption keys and decryption keys
6. The encryption algorithm to use
7. The decryption algorithm to use

Caesar Cipher

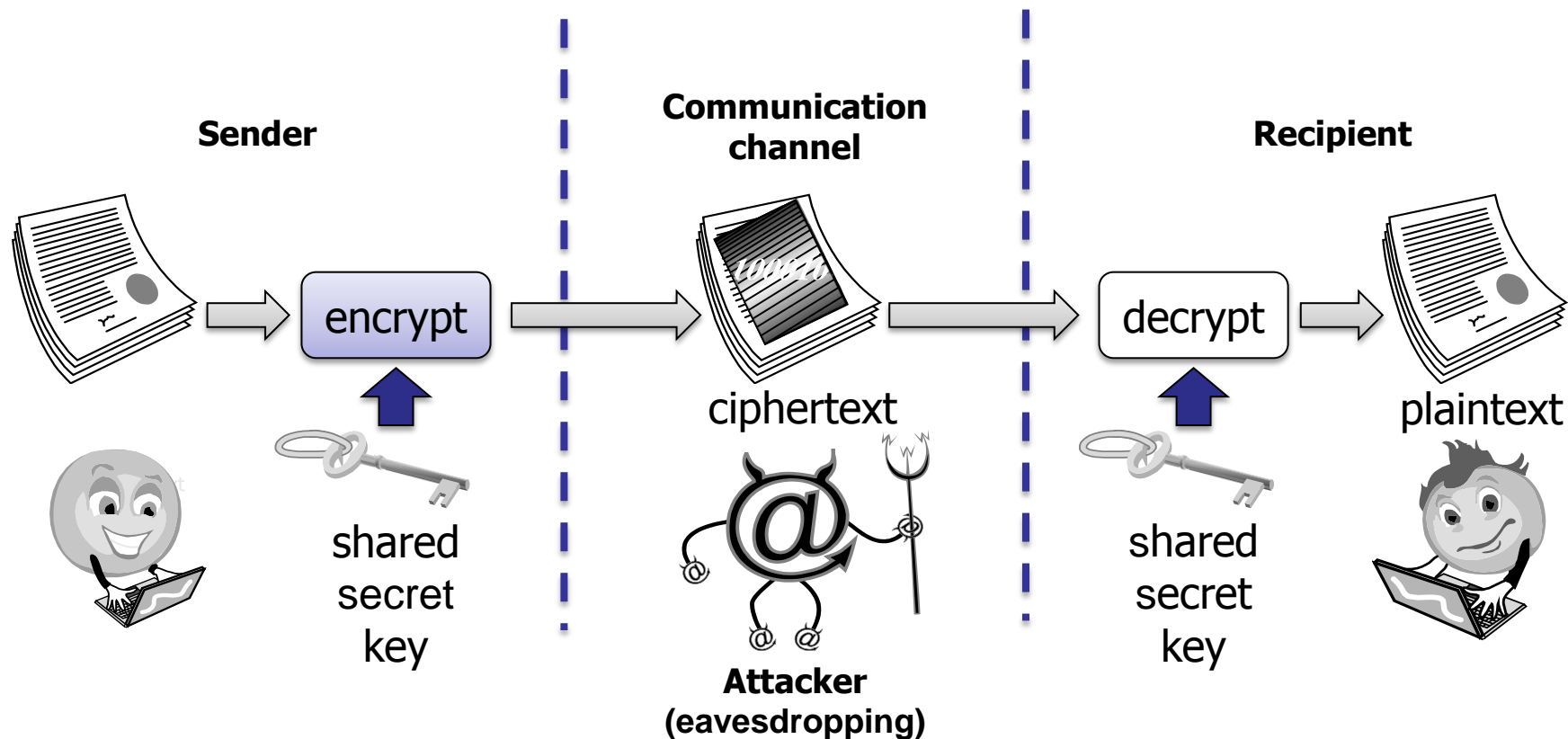
- Replace each letter with the one “three over” in the alphabet.



Public domain image from <http://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Caesar3.svg>

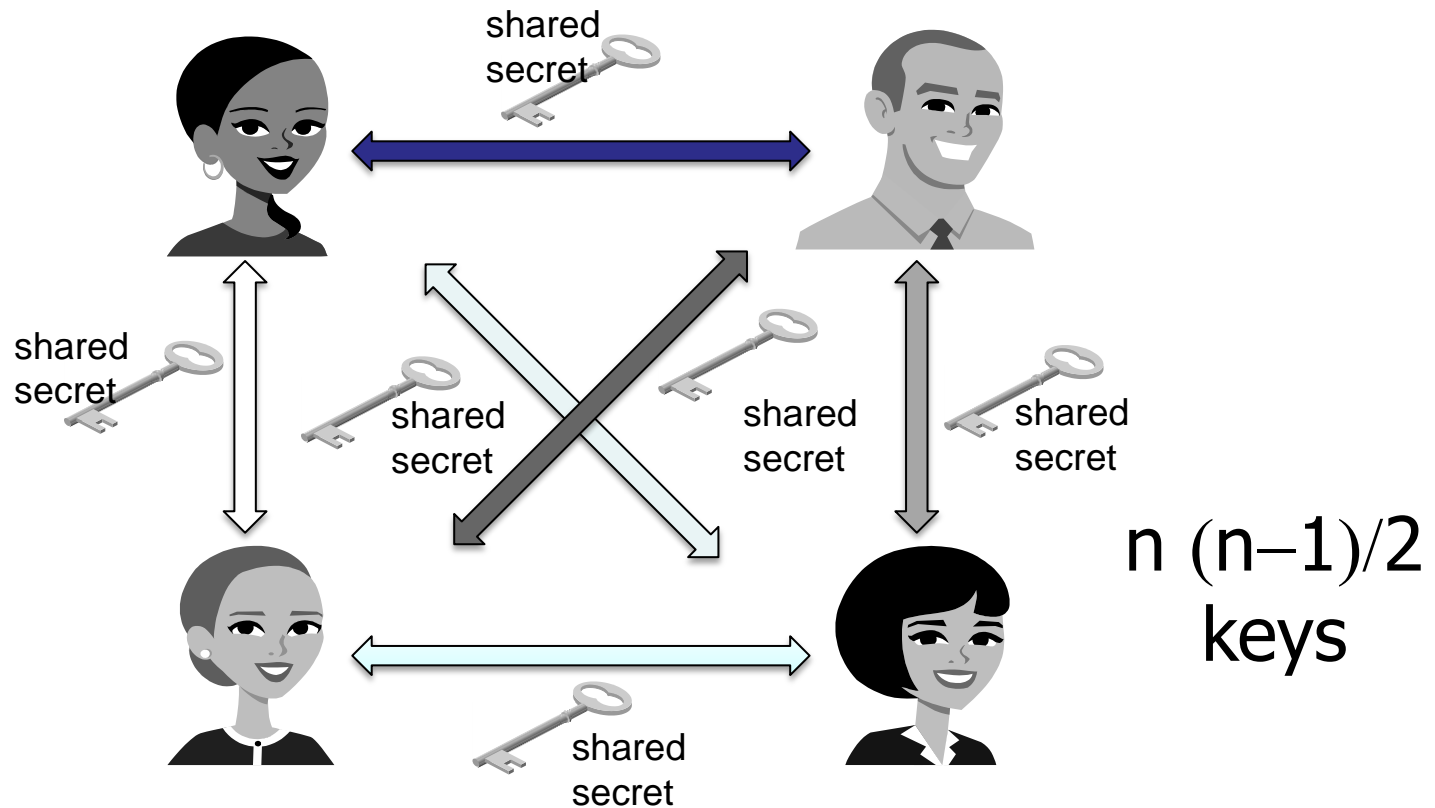
Symmetric Cryptosystems

- Alice and Bob share a secret key, which is used for both encryption and decryption.



Symmetric Key Distribution

- Requires each pair of communicating parties to share a (separate) secret key.

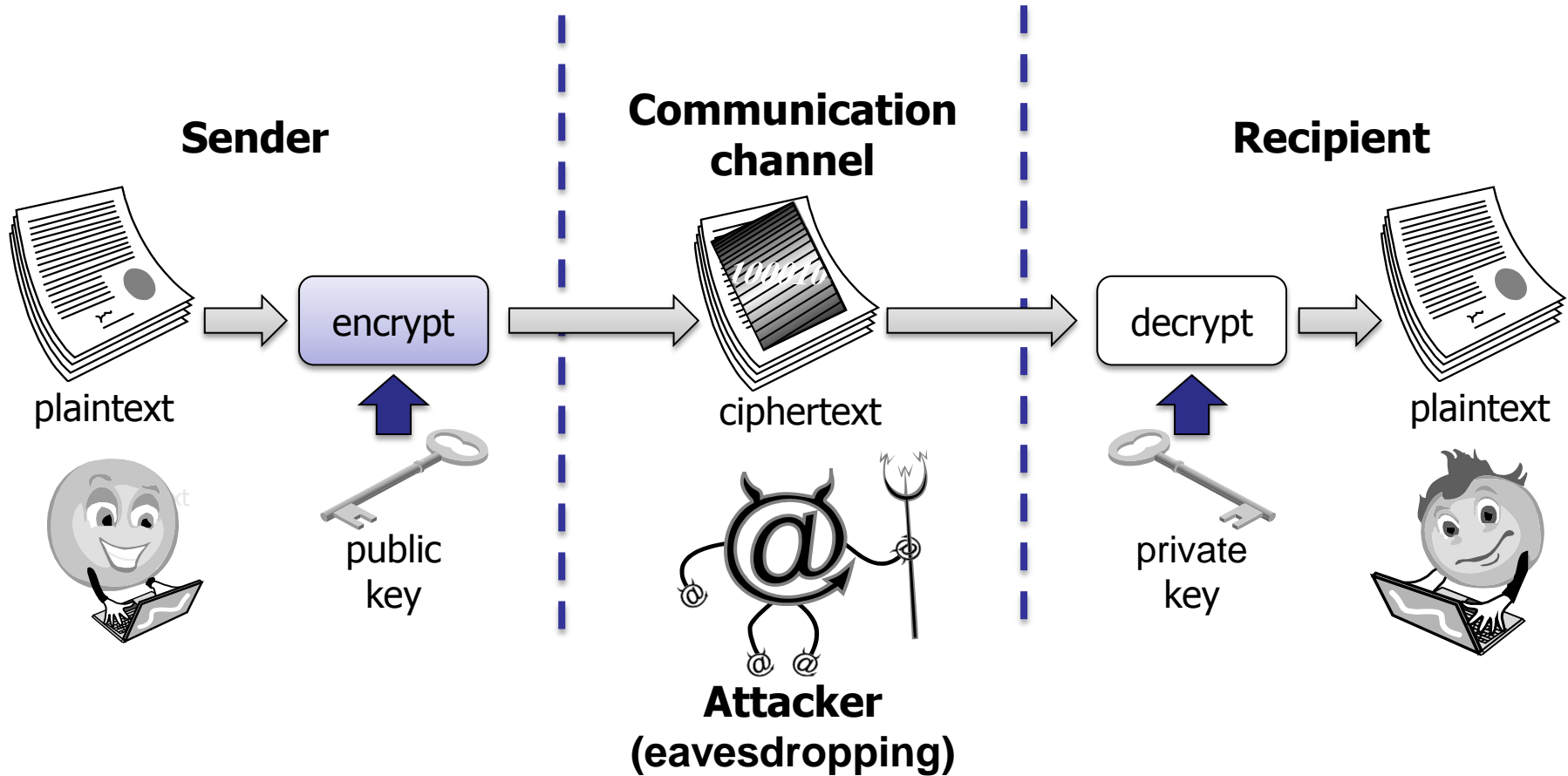


Public-Key Cryptography

- Bob has two keys: a **private key**, S_B , which Bob keeps secret, and a **public key**, P_B , which Bob broadcasts widely.
 - In order for Alice to send an encrypted message to Bob, she need only obtain his public key, P_B , use that to encrypt her message, M , and send the result, $C = E_{P_B}(M)$, to Bob. Bob then uses his secret key to decrypt the message as $M = D_{S_B}(C)$.

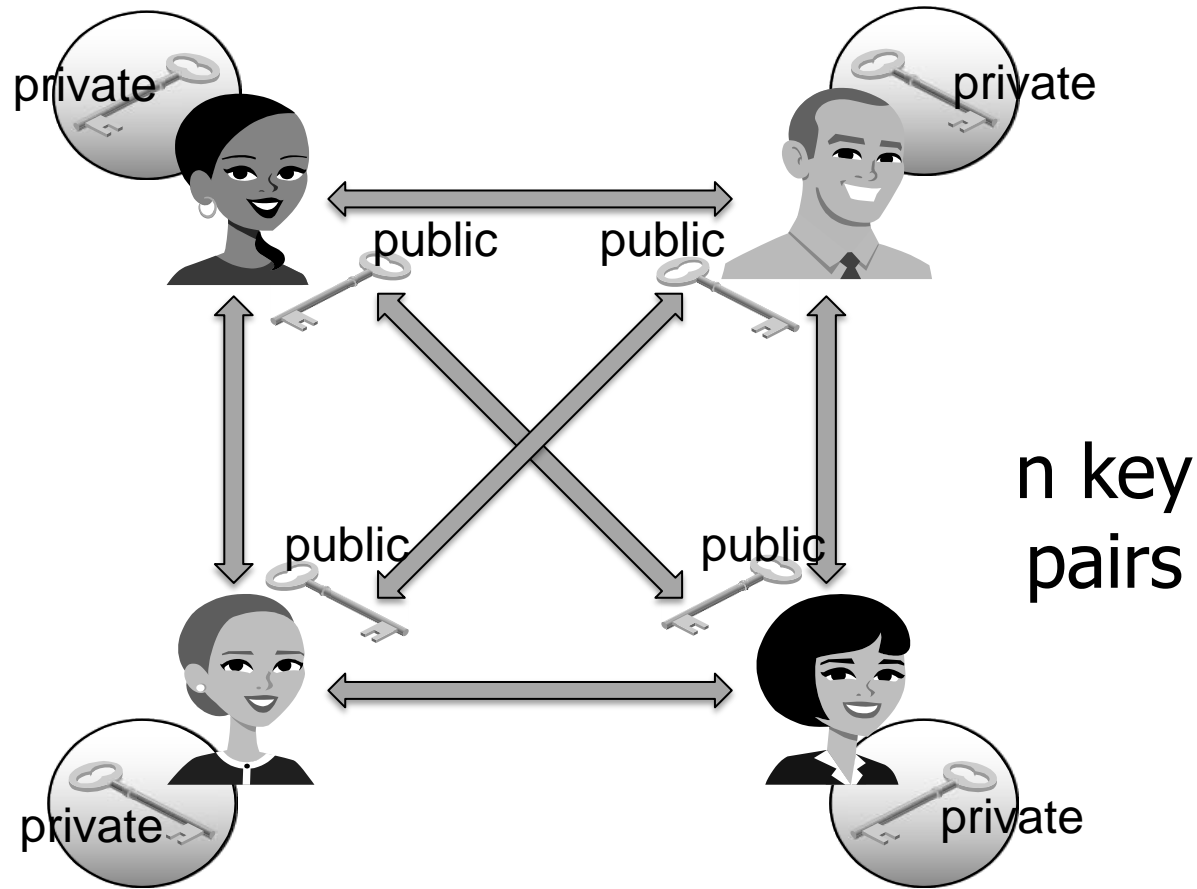
Public-Key Cryptography

- Separate keys are used for encryption and decryption.



Public Key Distribution

- Only one key is needed for each recipient



Digital Signatures

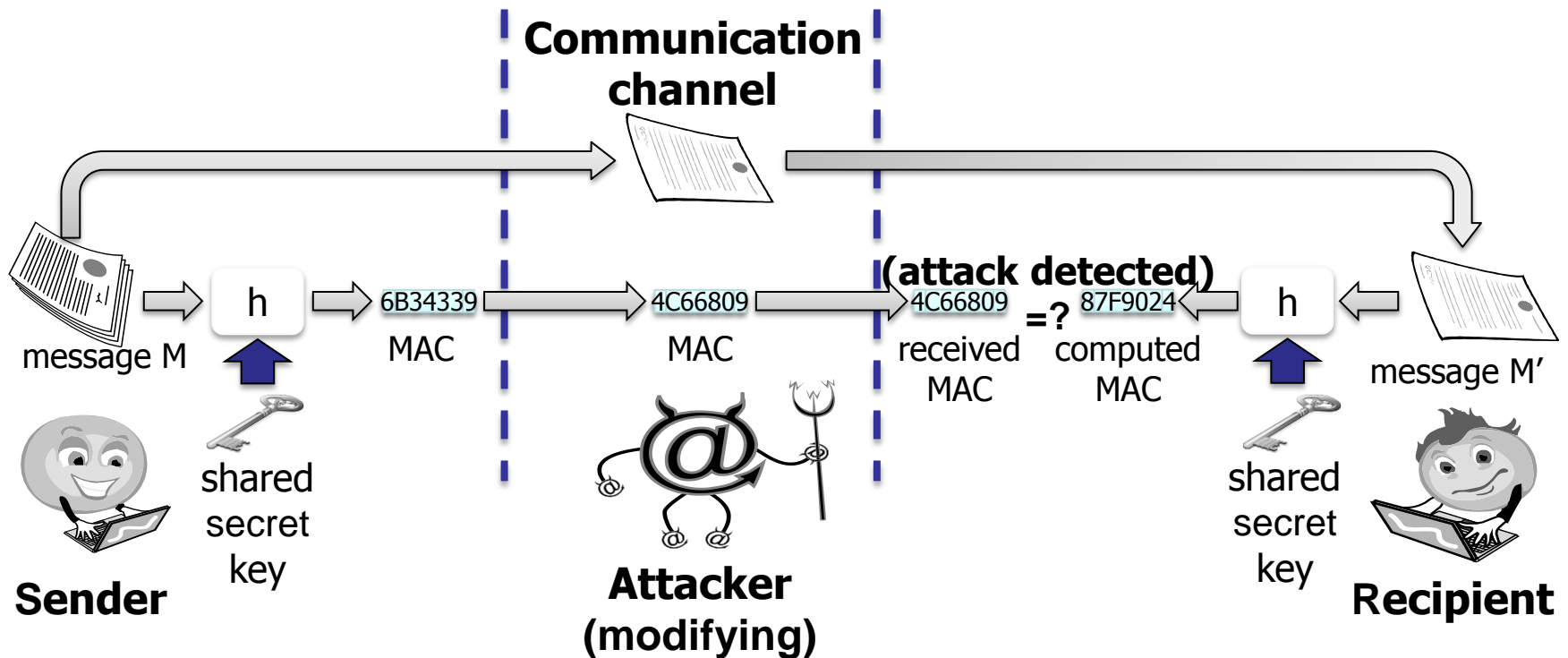
- Public-key encryption provides a method for doing digital signatures
- To sign a message, M , Alice just encrypts it with her private key, SA , creating $C = E_{SA}(M)$.
- Anyone can decrypt this message using Alice's public key, as $M' = D_{PA}(C)$, and compare that to the message M .

Cryptographic Hash Functions

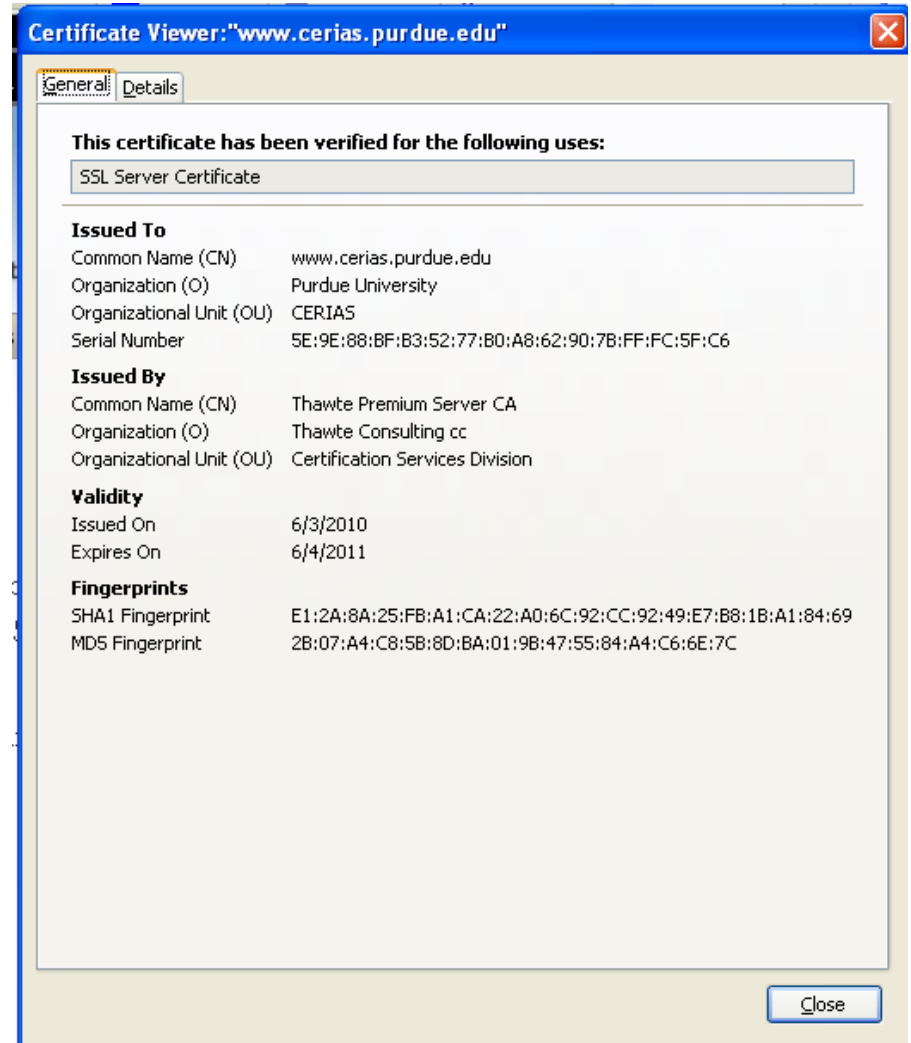
- A checksum on a message, M , that is:
- **One-way**: it should be easy to compute $Y=H(M)$, but hard to find M given only Y
- **Collision-resistant**: it should be hard to find two messages, M and N , such that $H(M)=H(N)$.
- **Examples**: SHA-1, SHA-256.

Message Authentication Codes

- Allows for Alice and Bob to have data integrity, if they share a secret key.
- Given a message M , Alice computes $H(K||M)$ and sends M and this hash to Bob.



- **Certificate authority (CA)** digitally signs a binding between an identity and the public key for that identity.



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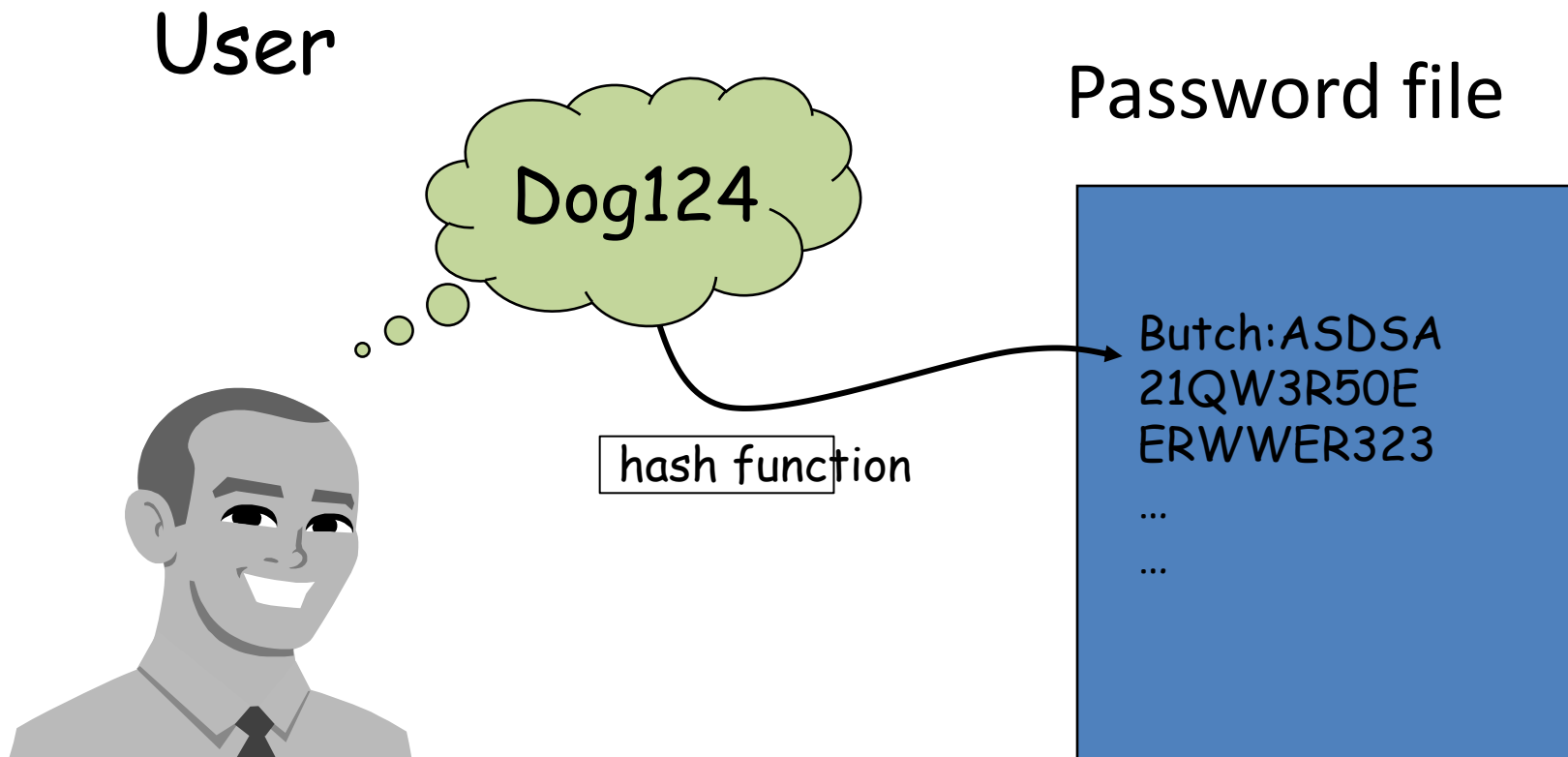
Efficiency and Usability

- Computer security solutions should be efficient
 - E.g. envelope encryption (mix use of both public and symmetric encryption)
 - Especially for resource constrained device
 - Balance between security and efficiency
- Computer security solutions should be user-friendly
 - Minimum user interruption
 - Minimum user involvement
 - High successful rate
 - ...

Security and Usability of Passwords

- Password: A short sequence of characters used as a means to authenticate someone via a secret that they know.
- Userid: _____
- Password: _____

How a password is stored?



Strong Passwords

What is a strong password

UPPER/lower case characters

Special characters

Numbers

When is a password strong?

Seattle1

M1ke03

P@\$w0rd

TD2k5secV

Password Complexity

A fixed 6 symbols password:

Numbers

$$10^6 = 1,000,000$$

UPPER or lower case characters

$$26^6 = 308,915,776$$

UPPER and lower case characters

$$52^6 = 19,770,609,664$$

32 special characters (&, %, \$, £, ", |, ^, §, etc.)

$$32^6 = 1,073,741,824$$

94 practical symbols available

$$94^6 = 689,869,781,056$$

ASCII standard 7 bit $2^7 = 128$ symbols

$$128^6 = 4,398,046,511,104$$

Odd characters make passwords safer

Password Length

26 UPPER/lower case characters = 52 characters

10 numbers

32 special characters

=> 94 characters available

5 characters: $94^5 =$ 7,339,040,224

6 characters: $94^6 =$ 689,869,781,056

7 characters: $94^7 =$ 64,847,759,419,264

8 characters: $94^8 =$ 6,095,689,385,410,816

9 characters: $94^9 =$ 572,994,802,228,616,704

Longer passwords are better

Password Validity: Brute Force Test

Password does not change for 60 days
how many passwords should I try for each
second?

5 characters:	1,415 PW /sec
6 characters:	133,076 PW /sec
7 characters:	12,509,214 PW /sec
8 characters:	1,175,866,008 PW /sec
9 characters:	110,531,404,750 PW /sec

Secure Passwords

A strong password includes characters from at least three of the following groups:

Group	Example
Lowercase letters	a, b, c, ...
Uppercase letters	A, B, C, ...
Numerals	0, 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9
Non-alphanumeric (symbols)	() ` ~ ! @ # \$ % ^ & * - + = \ { } [] : ; " ' < > , . ? /
Unicode characters	€, Γ, f, and λ

Use pass phrases eg. "I re@lly want to buy 11 Dogs!"

Social Engineering

- Techniques involve the use of human insiders to circumvent computer security solutions
 - **Pretexting**: creating a story that convinces an administrator or operator into revealing secret information.
 - **Baiting**: offering a kind of “gift” to get a user or agent to perform an insecure action.
 - **Quid pro quo**: offering an action or service and then expecting something in return.
- Can be very effective
- Keep in mind the way that people will interact with the system and the risks it may have from social engineering attacks

Vulnerabilities from Programming Errors

- A lot of attacks from improper implementation of security solutions:
 - Buffer overflow attack
 - Cross site scripting attack
 - Android SSL implementation error
 - Heartbeat attack
 - ...
- Secure software engineering is important