



# Happy Birthday, Linux!

Here's your cake, go ahead and compile it yourself.

# Lecture 2: Security Principles Cont

<https://cs161.org>

# Reminder on Chat...

- If you like it, great...
  - But please keep it a bit more professional
  - Especially feel free to ask questions...
- If you don't:
  - Open the chat window and move it off the screen:  
Effectively suppresses notifications
  - I try to repeat questions
- In particular, please flag when I forget to define new terms!
- No need for "F to take attendance":  
we will get that data from Zoom (somehow)

# The Properties We Want in a Safe

- We want the inside to be inaccessible to an attacker
  - But what **sort** of attacker?
  - But **how much time** does the attacker have?
- We want to **measure** how much time & capabilities needed for an attacker
  - For a safe, ratings communicate how much based on experts performing the attack
    - Such security ratings are much harder in the computer security side



# Security Rating: A Real Safe

- TL-15:
  - An expert with common tools will take  $\geq 15$  minutes to break in
- May even have "relockers"
  - EG, a pane of glass which, if shattered when trying to drill for the combo lock, causes the safe to freeze closed!



# Security Rating: A Stronger Safe

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- TL-30:
  - The same expert and tools now takes 30 minutes



# Security Rating: Now We Are Talking

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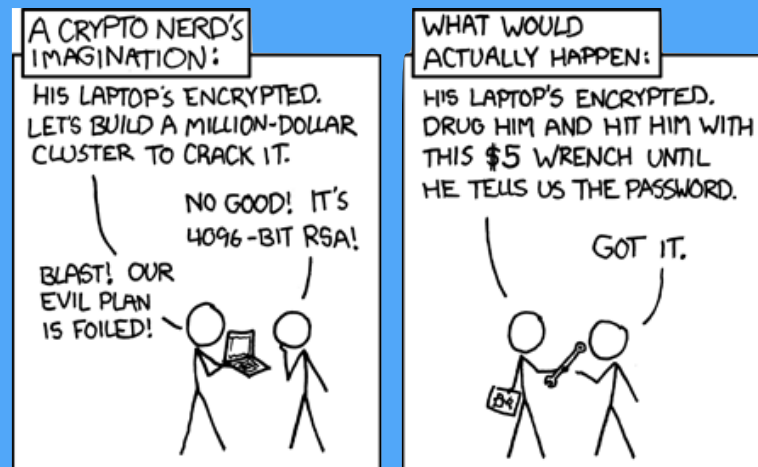
- TRTL-30
  - 30 minute to break with tools and/or a cutting torch



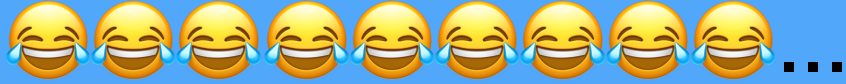
# Security Rating: Maximum Overkill...

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- TXTL-60:
  - 60 minutes with tools, torches, and up to 4 oz of **explosives!**
  - Far easier to use "Rubber Hose Cryptanalysis" on someone who knows the combination



# Security Rating:



- This is legally a "gun safe"
  - Meets the California requirements for "safe" storage of a handgun
- But it is practically ***snake oil***:
  - Cylindrical locks can often be opened with a Bic pen
  - Some safes like this open if you just ***drop them a foot!***
- So why do people buy this?
  - It creates an ***illusion*** of security
  - It meets the ***legal requirement*** for security



# Lesson:

## Security is economics

- More security (**generally**) costs more
  - If it costs the same or less and doesn't impose other costs, you'd always go with "more security"
- Standards often define security
  - The safe standards from Underwriters Laboratories
    - If you are selling a real safe to a customer who knows what they are buying, you have to meet these standards
  - The "gun safe" standards from the California Department of Justice
    - Which are a joke
- The more purchasers makes security cheaper...
  - If you need a safe at home, buy a UL listed Residential Security Container **gun safe!**
    - The gun owners are willing to pay for security, and so have created a market for security!



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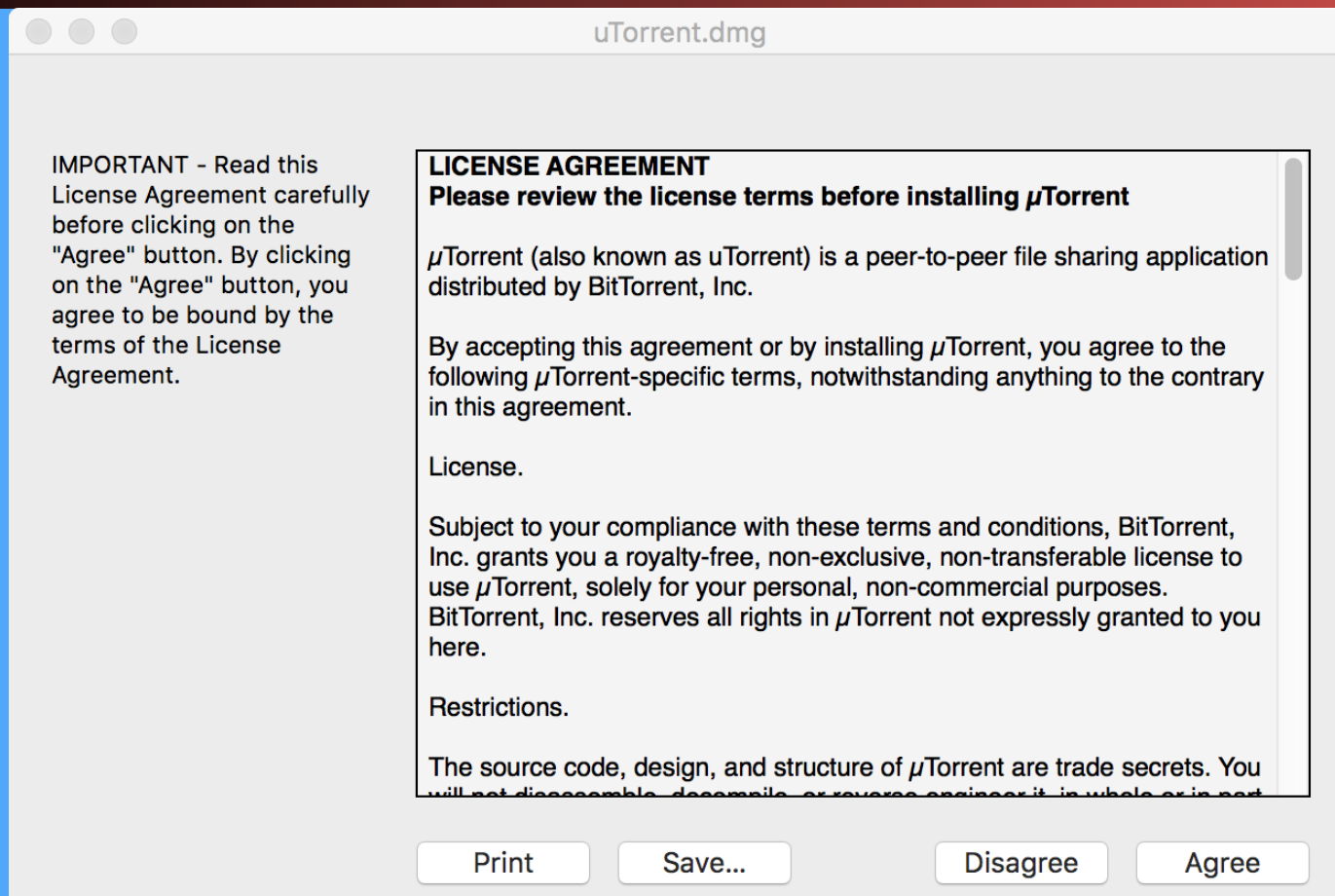
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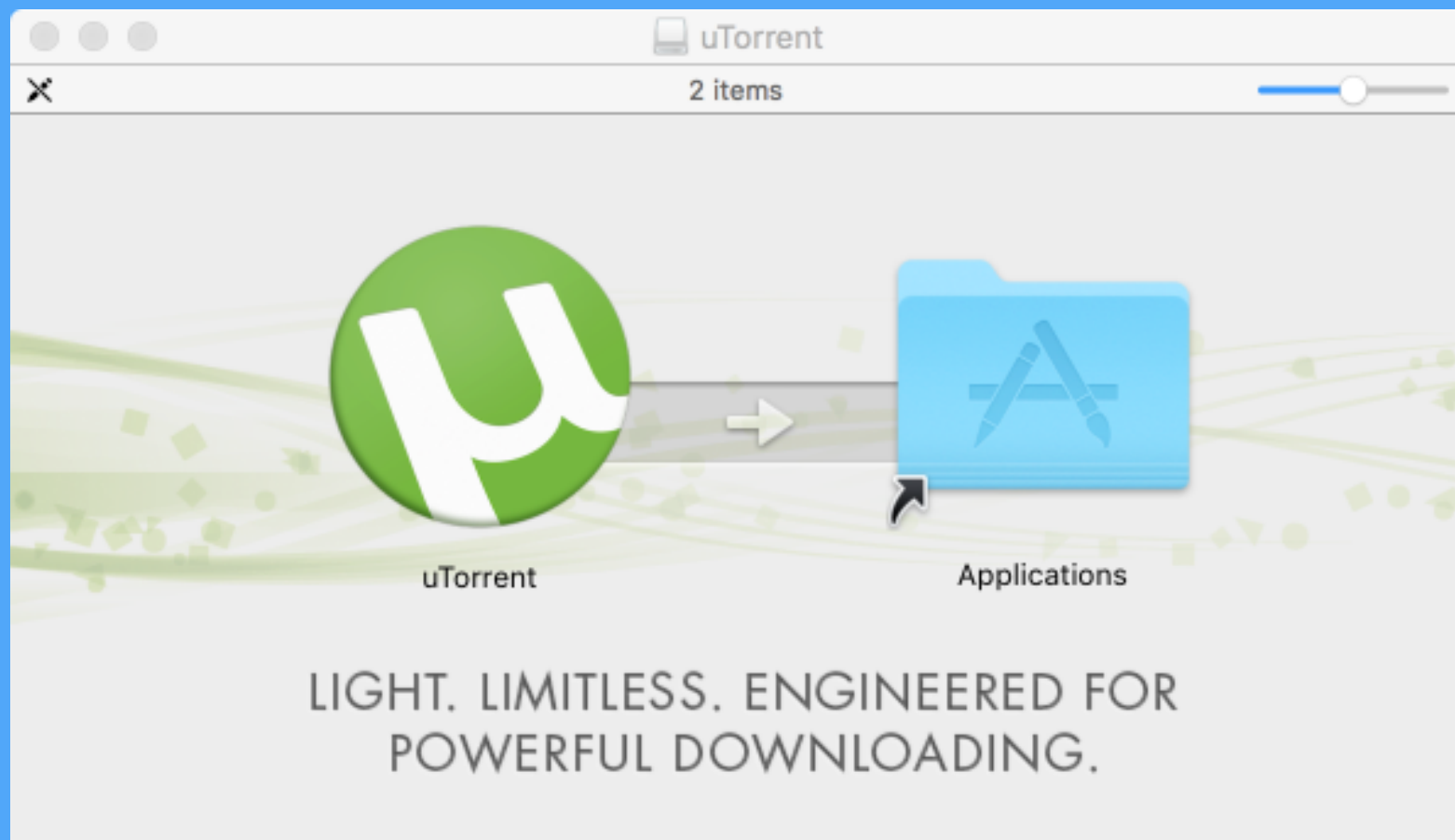
★★★★★ Rating: 3 - 550 votes - Free - Mac OS - Utilities/Tools

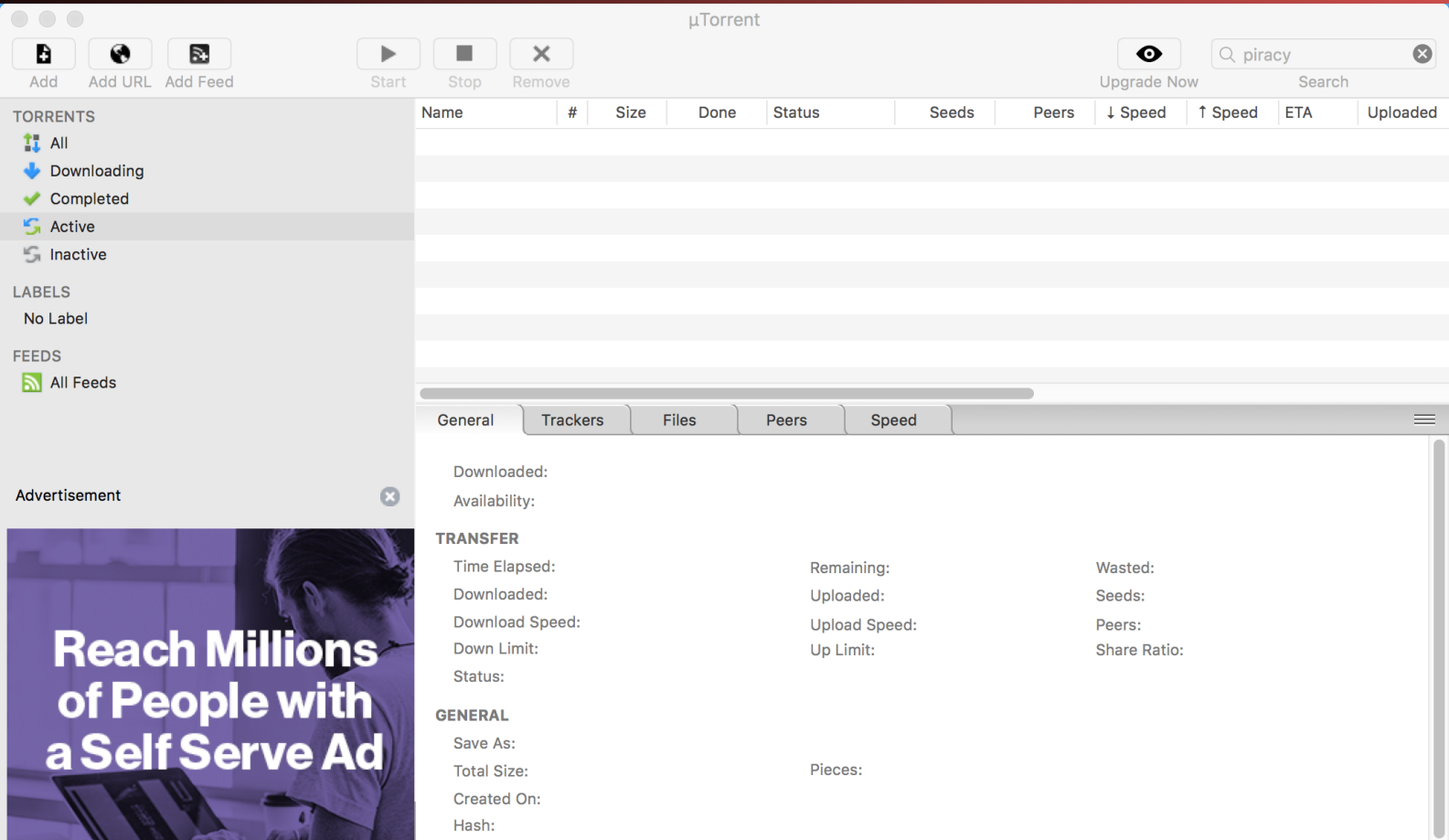
**uTorrent**, free download. **uTorrent** 1.8.6: Super lightweight torrent client for **Mac**. **uTorrent** for **Mac** is a lightweight and efficient BitTorrent client that allows you to ...

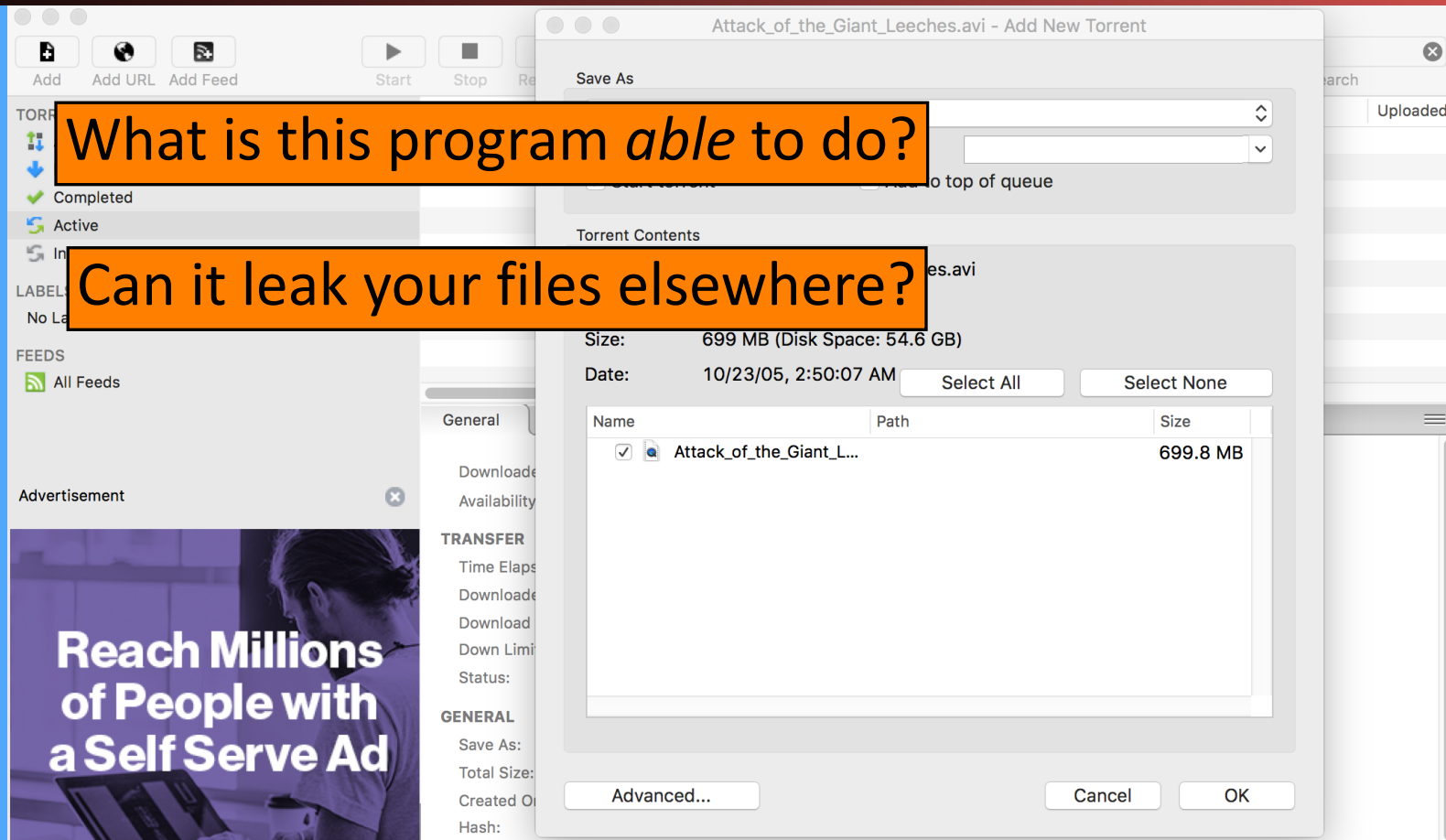


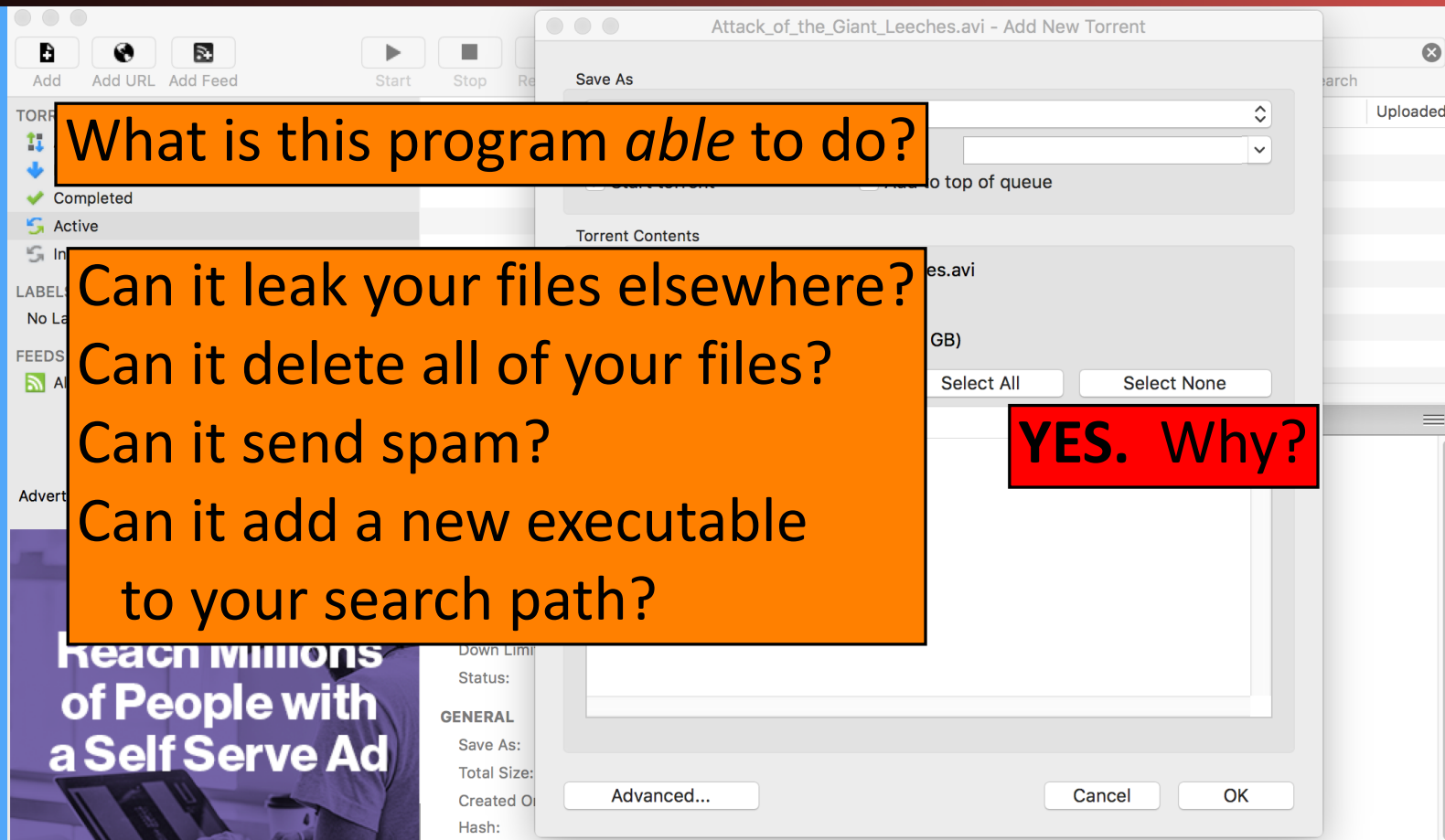


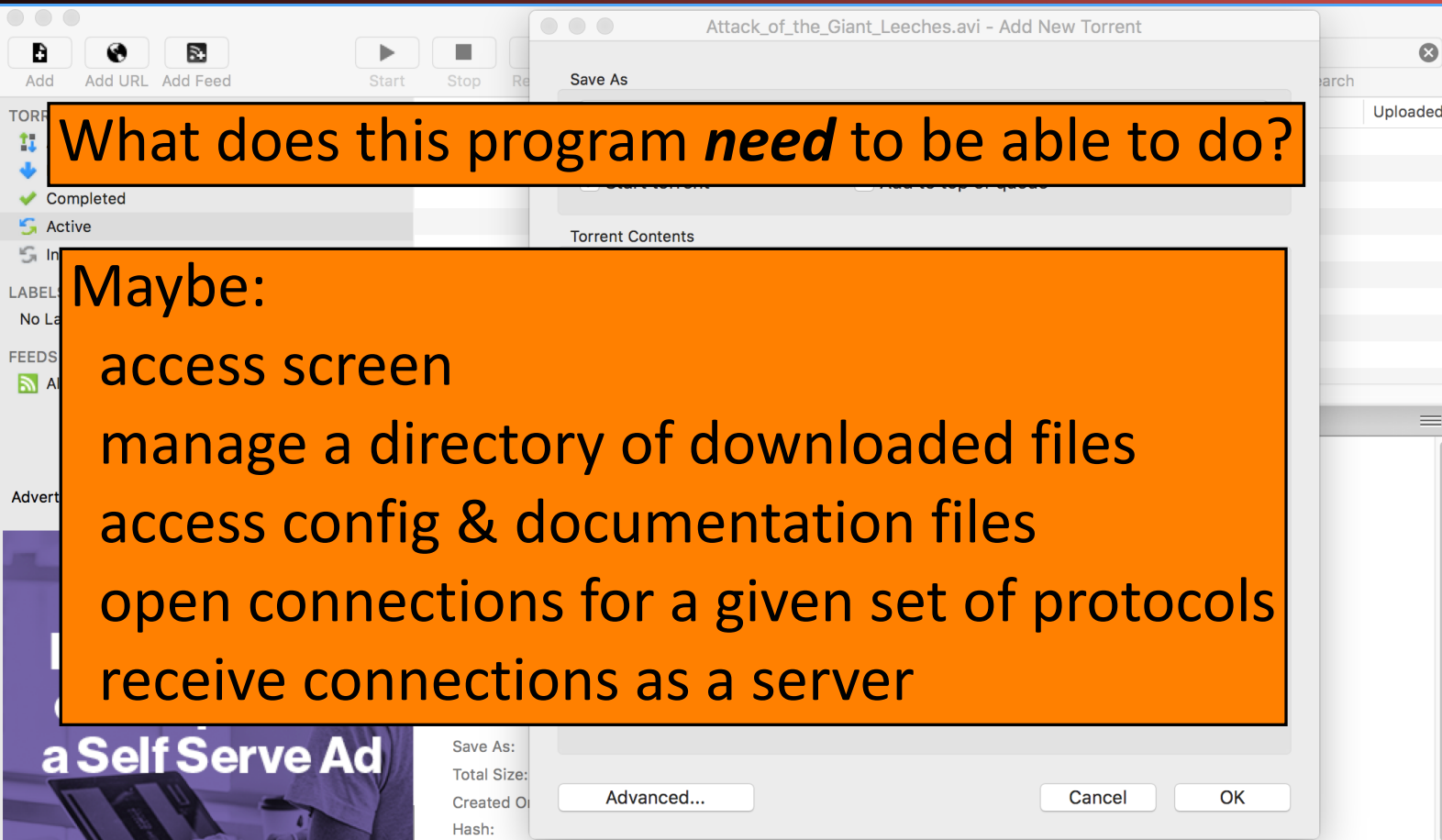












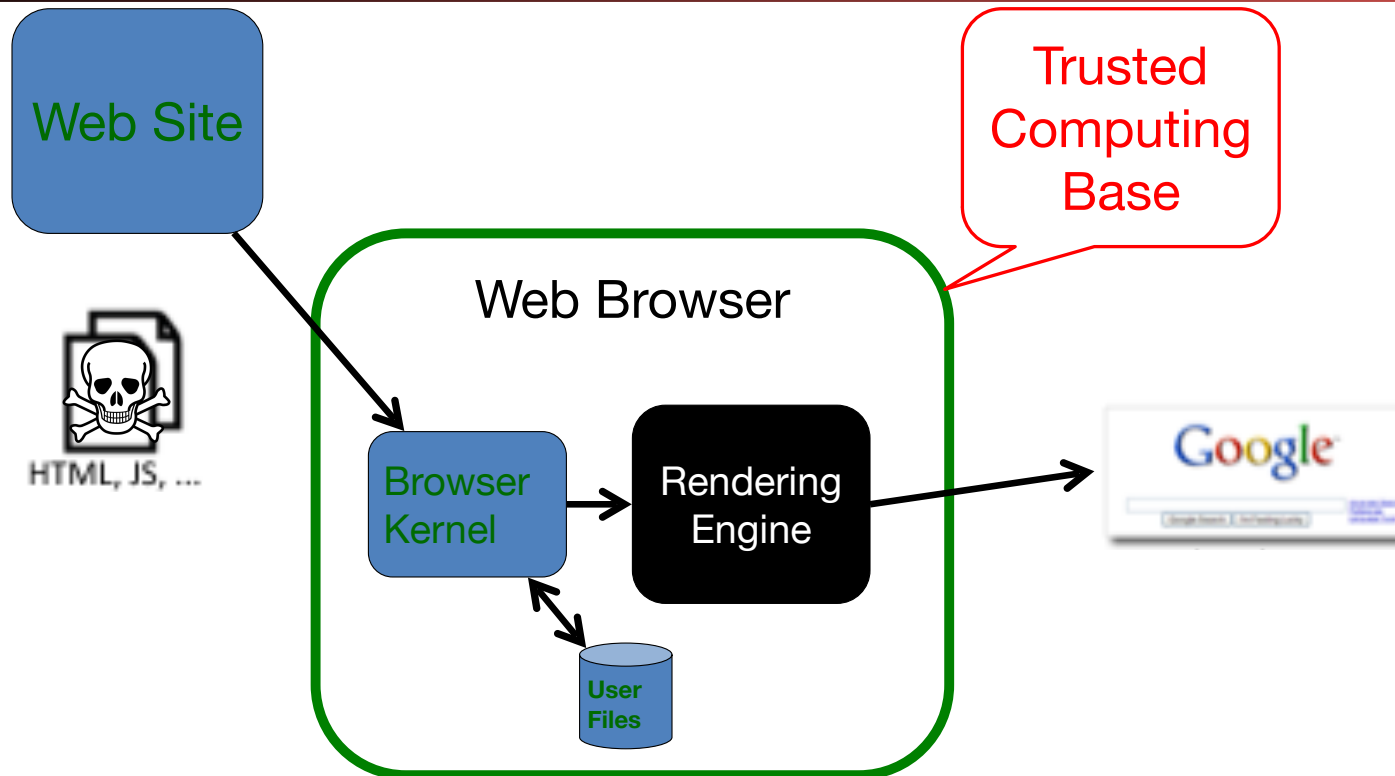
# Thinking About Least Privilege

- When assessing the security of a system's design, identify the Trusted Computing Base (TCB).
  - What components does security *rely upon*?
- Security requires that the TCB:
  - Is correct
  - Is complete (can't be bypassed)
  - Is itself secure (can't be tampered with)
- Best way to be assured of correctness and its security?
  - KISS = Keep It Simple, Stupid!
  - Generally, Simple = Small
- One powerful design approach: privilege separation
  - Isolate privileged operations to as small a component as possible

# The Base for Isolation: The Operating System...

- The operating system **process** provide the following "guarantees" (you hope)
  - Isolation: A process can not access (read OR write) the memory of any other process unless both processes have set up a shared memory region
  - Permissions: A process can only change files etc if it has permission to
    - This **usually** means "Anything that the user can do" in something like Windows or MacOS
      - It can be considerably less in Android or iOS
- But even in Windows, MacOS, & Linux one can say "I don't want any permissions"
  - So if you have a process you can then have it "sandbox itself":  
peremptorily give up all rights

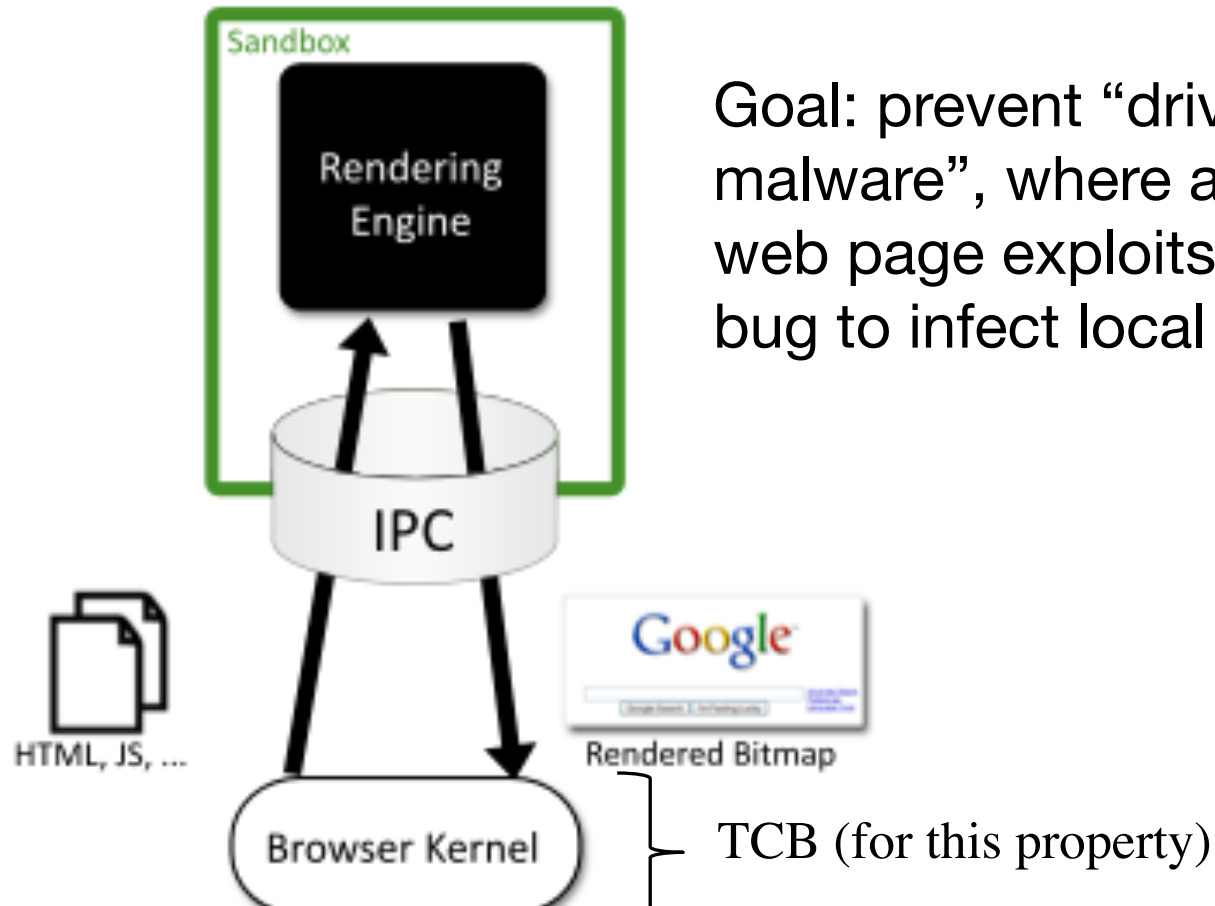
# Web browser



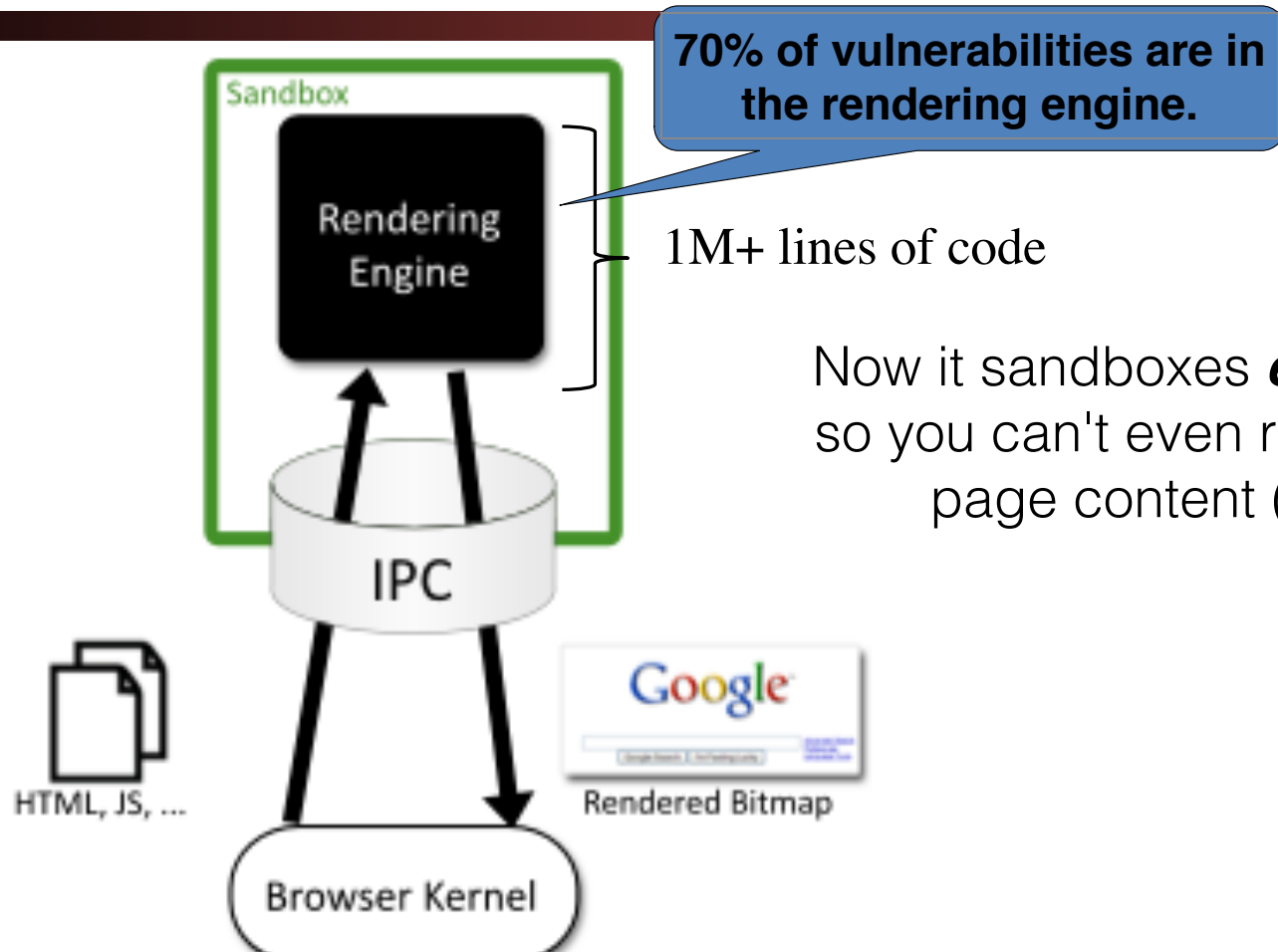
“Drive-by malware”: malicious web page exploits browser bug to infect local files



# The Chrome browser



# The Chrome browser



Now it sandboxes ***each web context*** so you can't even read out other web page content (E.g. spectre)

# Ensuring Complete Mediation

- To secure access to some capability/resource, construct a ***reference monitor***
- Single point through which all access must occur
  - E.g.: a network firewall
- Desired properties:
  - Un-bypassable (“complete mediation”)
  - Tamper-proof (is itself secure)
  - Verifiable (correct)
  - (Note, just restatements of what we want for TCBs)
- One subtle form of reference monitor flaw concerns race conditions ...

# A Failure of Complete Mediation

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**Every required action needs to be checked for authenticity, integrity and authorization**

# Time of Check to Time of Use Vulnerability: Race Condition


```
procedure withdrawal(w)
  // contact central server to get balance
  1. let b := balance

  2. if b < w, abort

  // contact server to set balance
  3. set balance := b - w

  4. dispense $w to user
```

Suppose that *here* an attacker  
arranges to suspend first call,  
and calls `withdrawal` again  
**concurrently**



*TOCTTOU = Time of Check To Time of Use*

# A Hundred Million Dollar TOCTTOU Bug...

- Ethereum is a cryptocurrency which offers "smart" contracts
  - Program your money in a language that makes JavaScript and PHP look beautiful and sane
- The DAO (Distributed Autonomous Organization) was an attempt to make a distributed mutual fund in Ethereum
  - Participants could vote on "investments" that should be made
    - Of course nobody actually had any idea what to do with the "investments" but hey, its the DAO! Gotta get in on the DAO!
- The DAO supported withdrawals as well
  - What is the point of a mutual fund that you couldn't take your money out of?



# A "Feature" In The Smart Contract

- To withdraw, the code was:
  - Check the balance, then send the money, then decrement the balance
- But sending money in Ethereum can send to *another program written by the recipient*
- So someone "invested", then did a withdraw to his program
  - Which would initiate another withdraw...

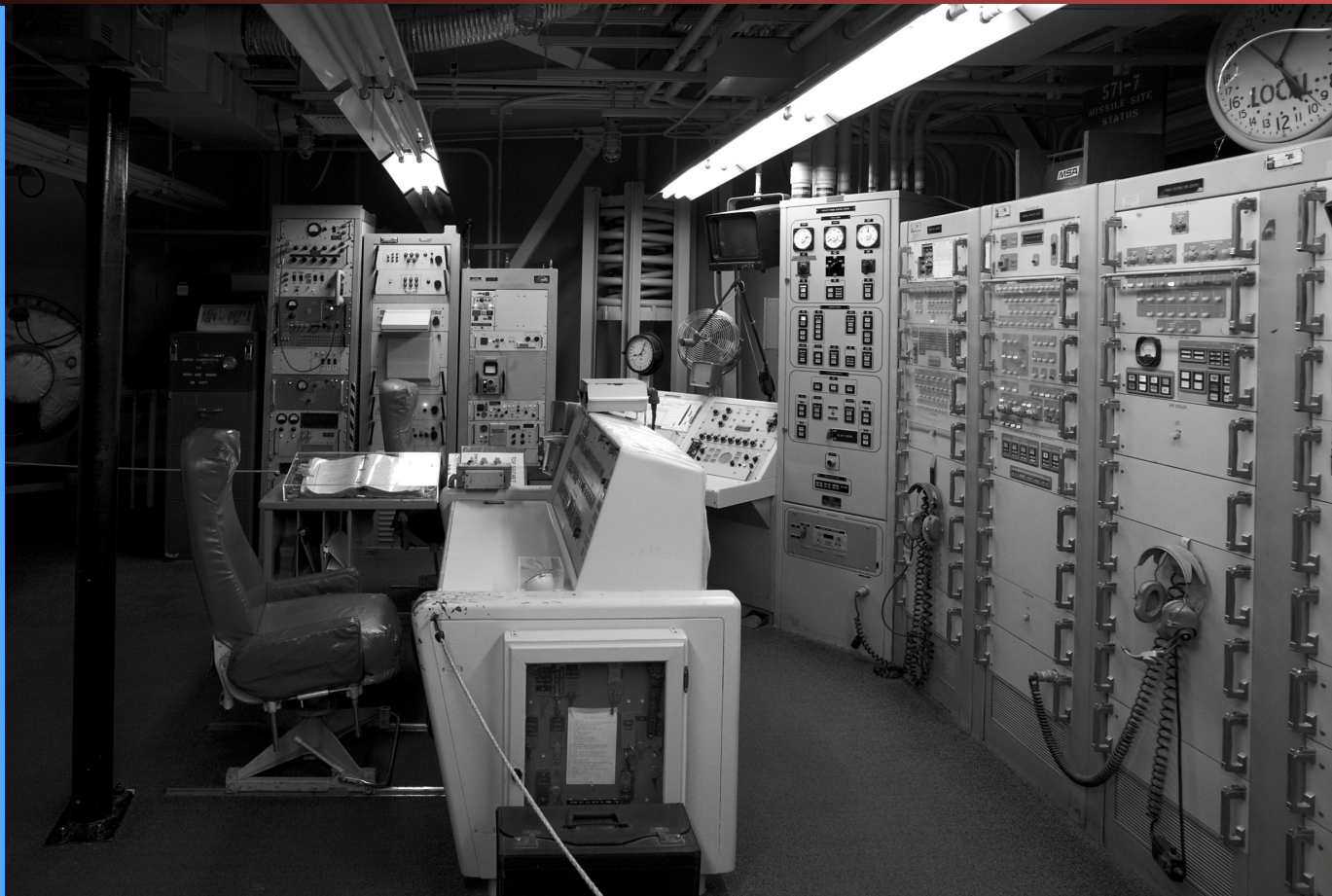




# Welcome to a Nuclear Bunker

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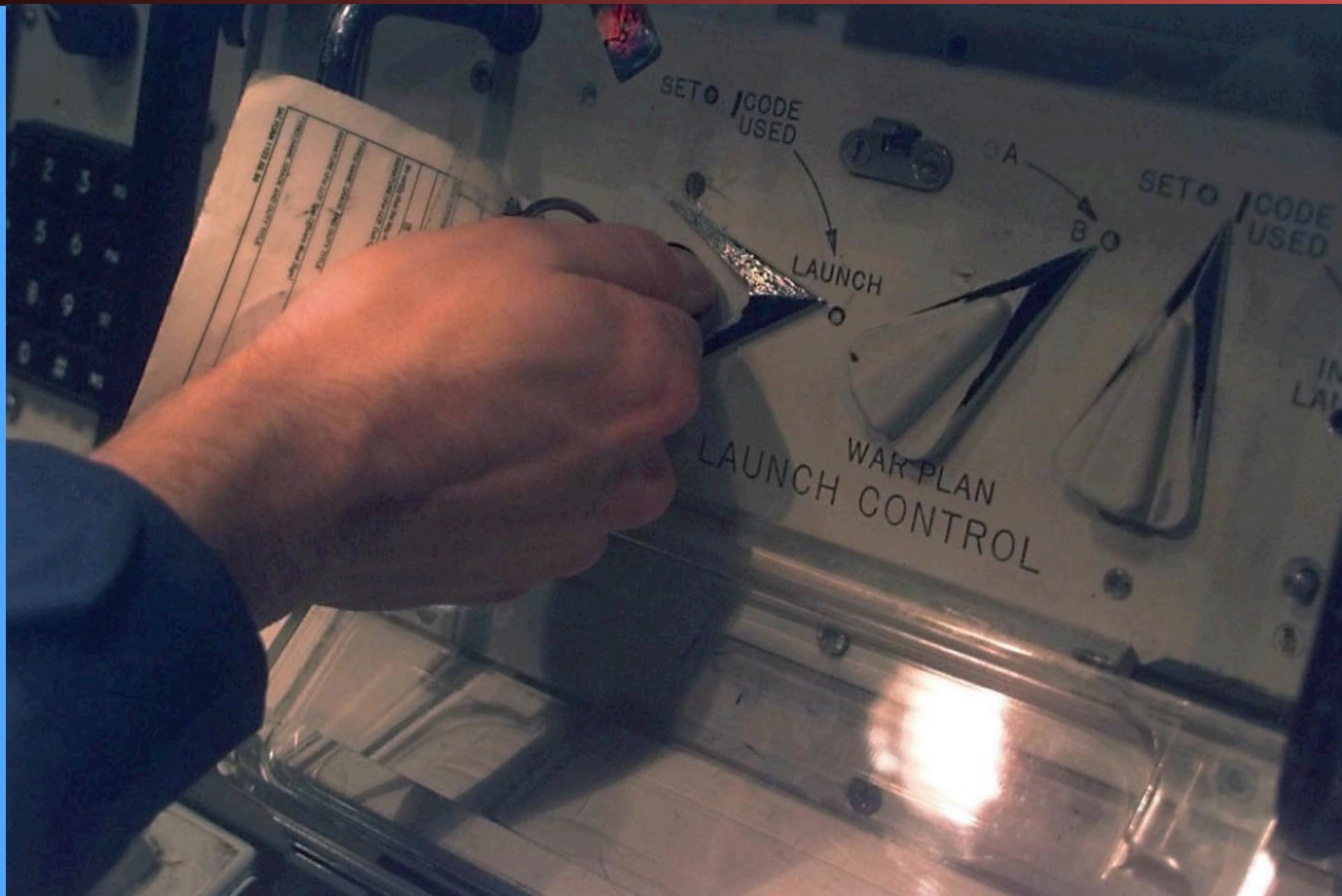




# Two Man Control: Each Needs To Turn the Key

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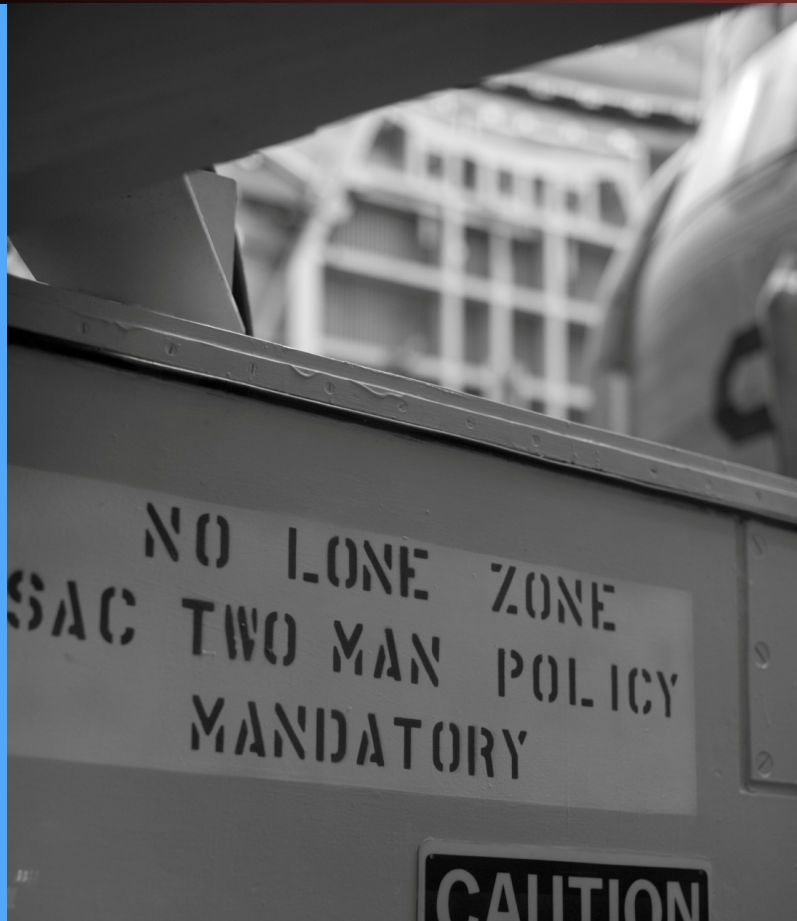
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# Desired Security Property: Only Want To Destroy The World *On Purpose*

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# “Separation of responsibility.”

Independent  
audit

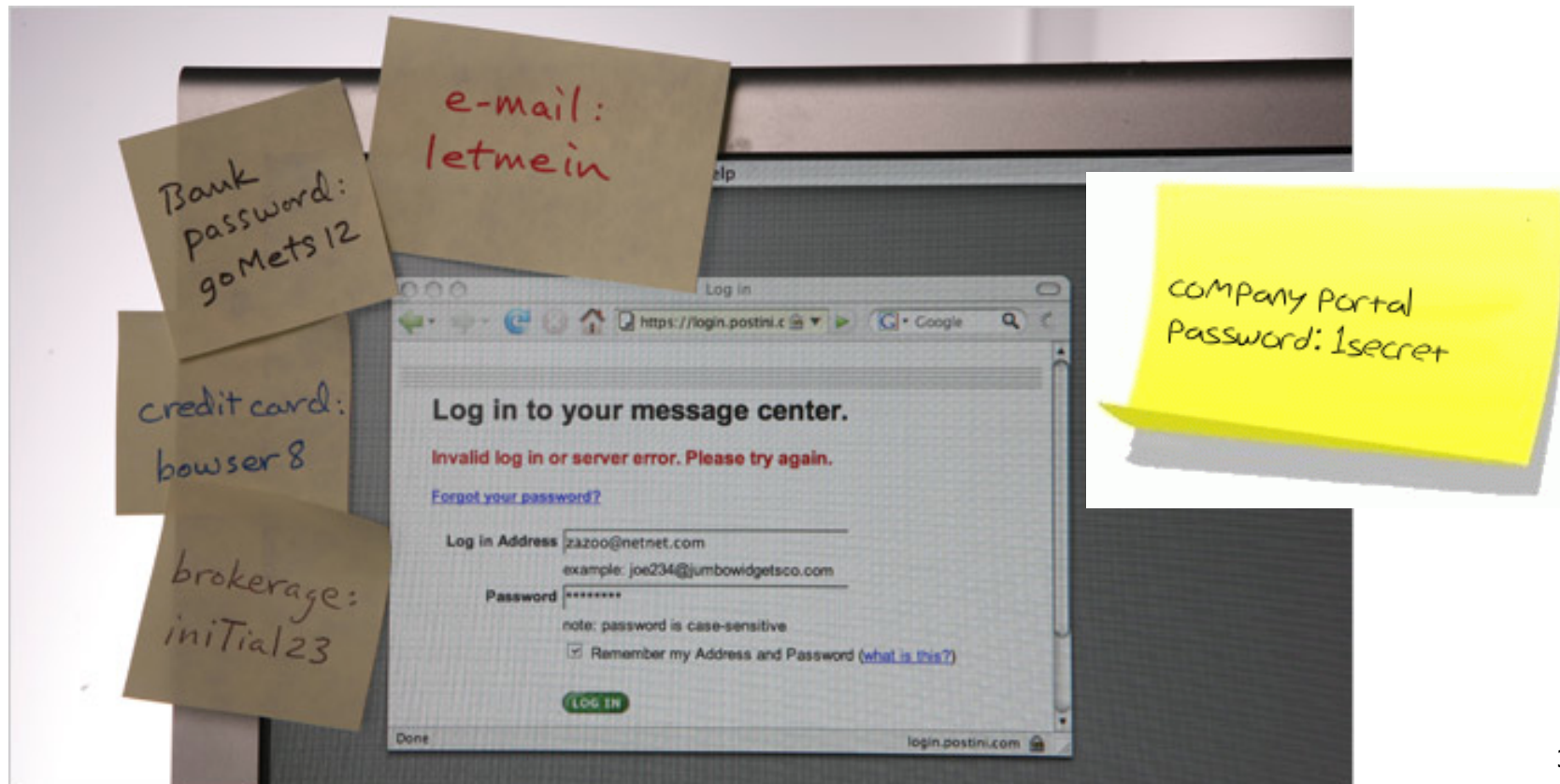


# Summary:

## Notions Regarding Managing Privilege

- Least privilege
  - The notion of avoiding having unnecessary privileges
- Privilege separation
  - A way to achieve least privilege by isolating access to privileges to a small Trusted Computing Base (TCB)
- Separation of responsibility
  - If you need to have a privilege, consider requiring multiple parties to work together (collude) to exercise it

# Impact of a Password Policy



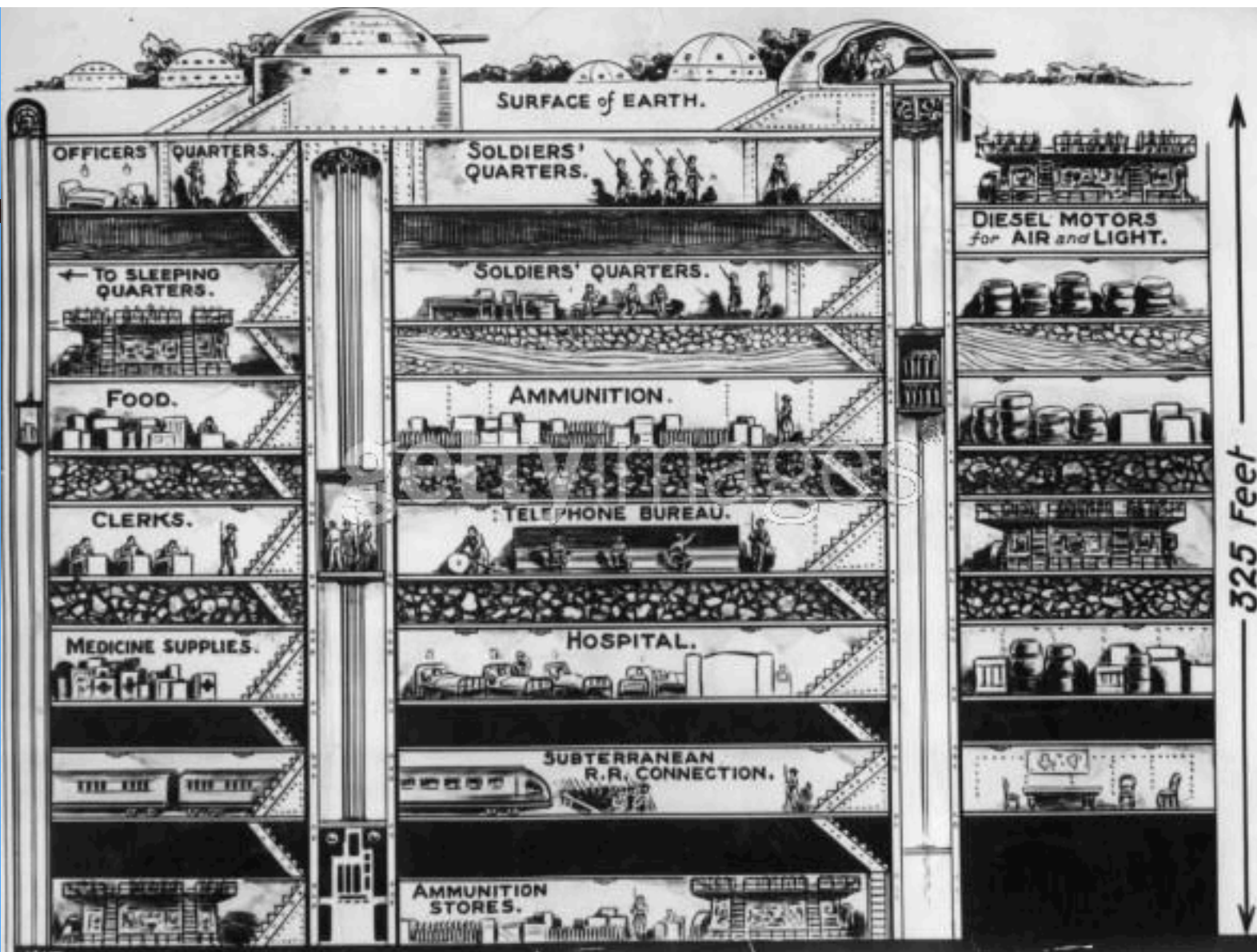
# Summary:

## Dealing with Users

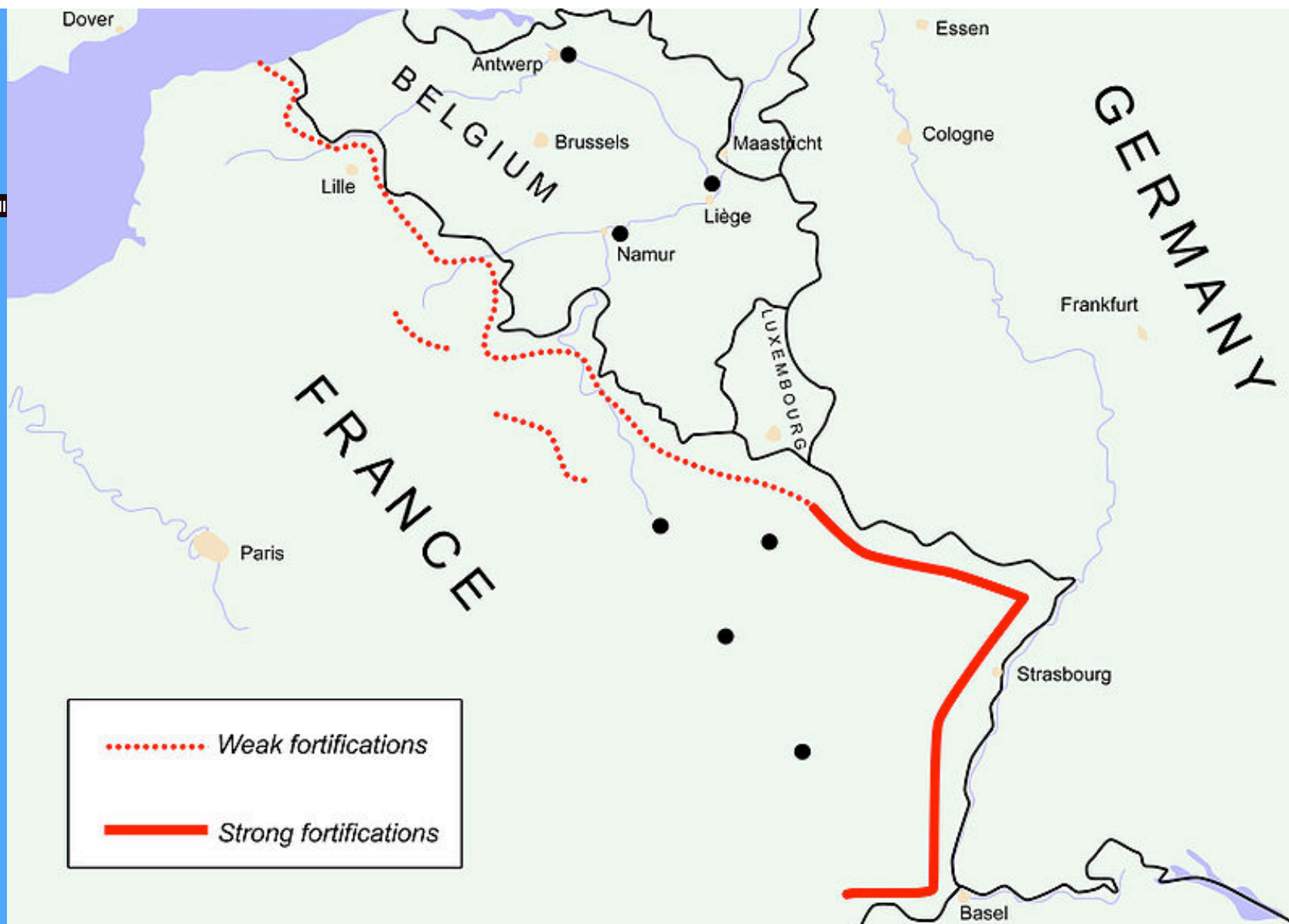
- Psychological acceptability
  - Will users abide a security mechanism, or decide to subvert it?
    - Remember Rule 777...
- Consider human factors
  - Does a security mechanism assume something about human behavior when interacting with the system that might not hold, even in the absence of conscious decisions by the users to subvert
  - Have the computer do computer-y things, and humans do human-y things







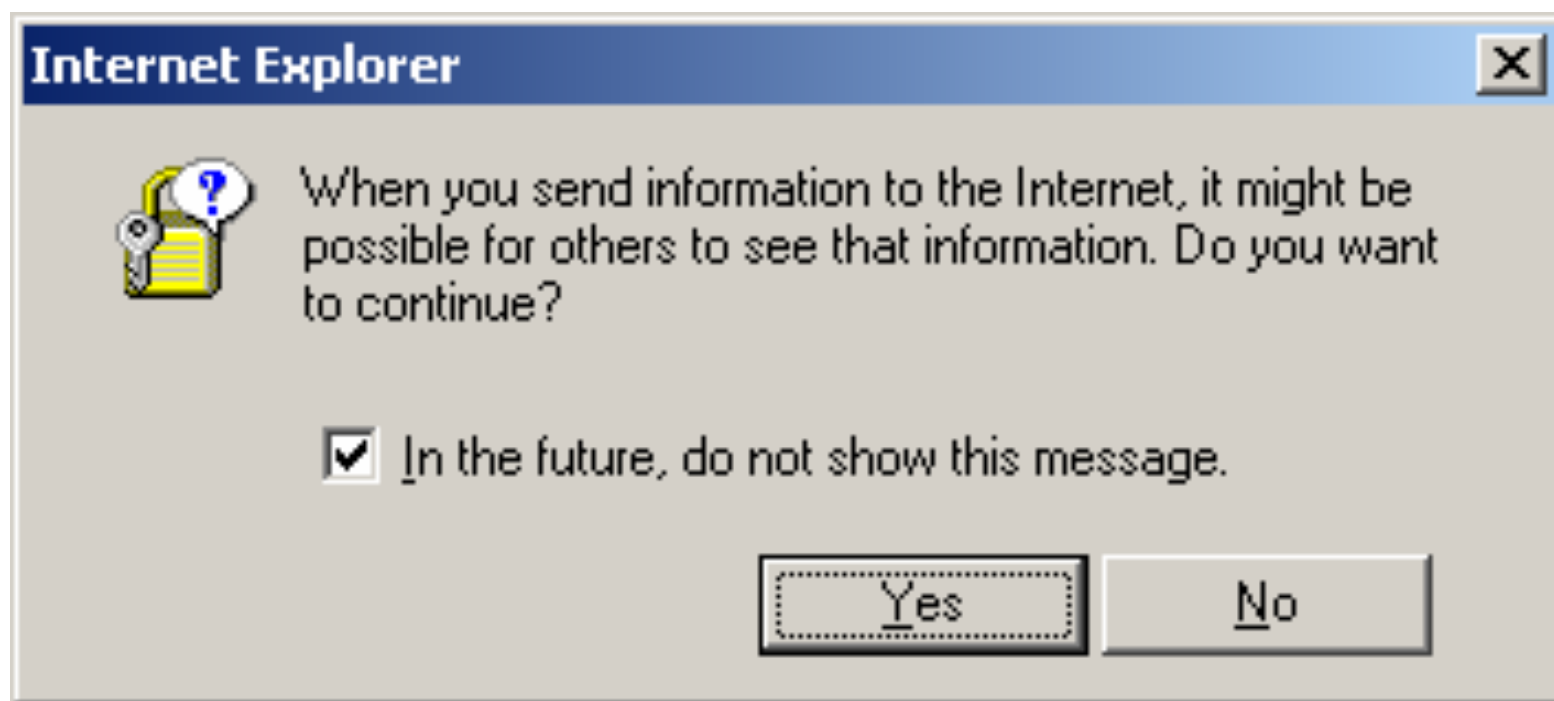


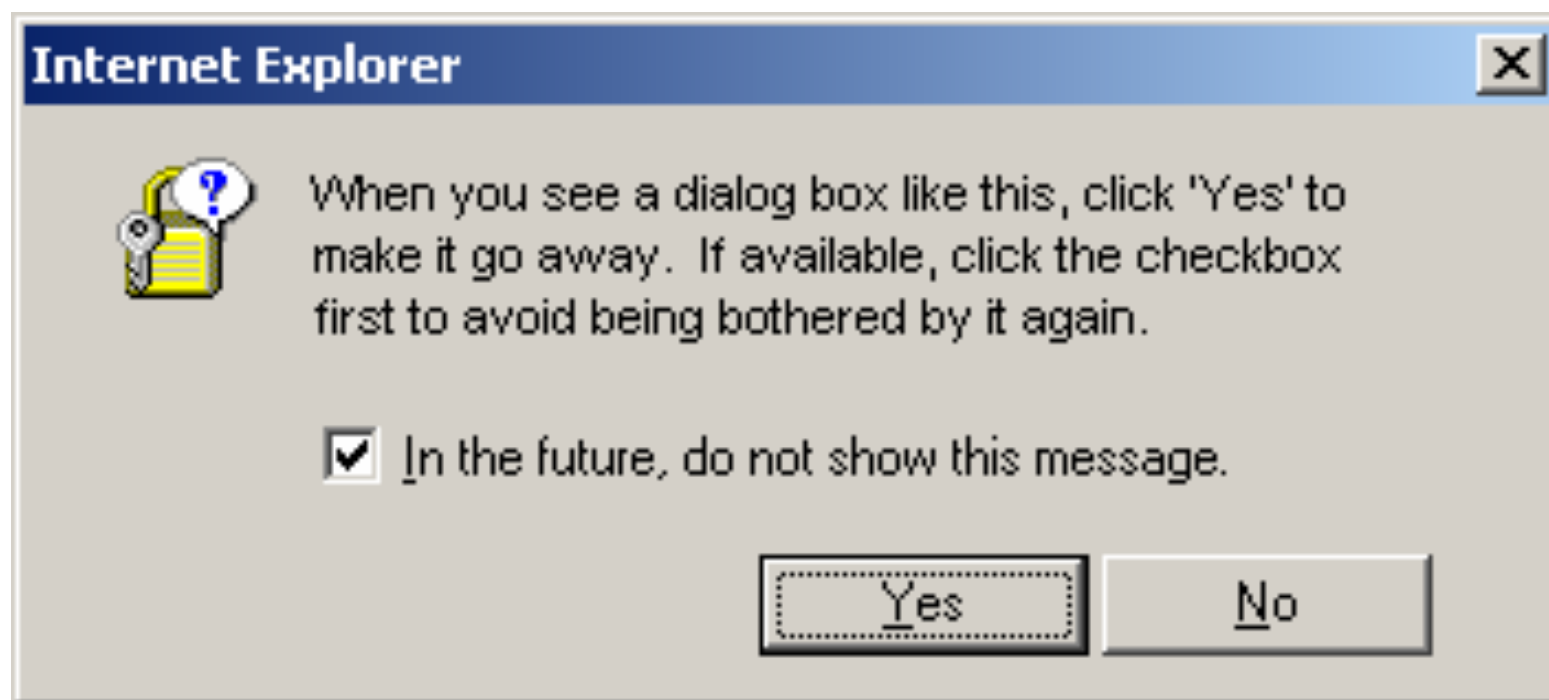


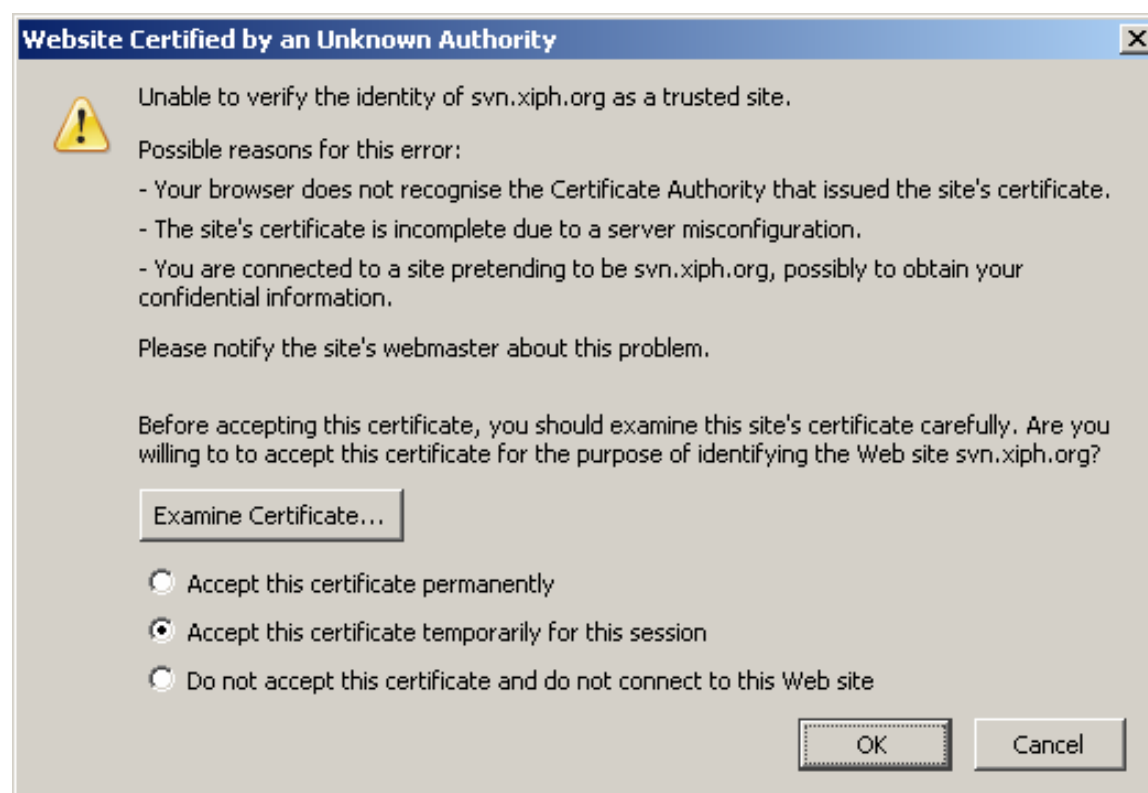


“Only as secure as the weakest link.”

- "A door lock is only as strong as the window"









# Whenever you confront the user like this it is probably "Blame the User" Security

- Given two choices, one catastrophically wrong...
  - Users are going to chose the "wrong" thing  $>50\%$  of the time!



# Security Keys and Human Factors

- This is a security key for storing key material for an encrypted military phone
  - Leverages a lifetime of knowledge in how to protect physical keys
- U2F security keys leverage the same knowledge!
- Product/design idea:  
*A **physical** doorlock that uses a U2F key!*



















# “Don’t rely on security through obscurity.”

- Because otherwise the raptors will get you...
- Obscurity does help but you need to design your system so that it fails...
- Kerckhoffs's Principle:
  - A cryptosystem should be secure even if everything about the system, ***except the key***, is public knowledge.
- Shannon's Maxim:
  - The enemy knows the system
- **AND *FOR FUCKS SAKE DON'T DO THIS YOURSELVES!!!***

















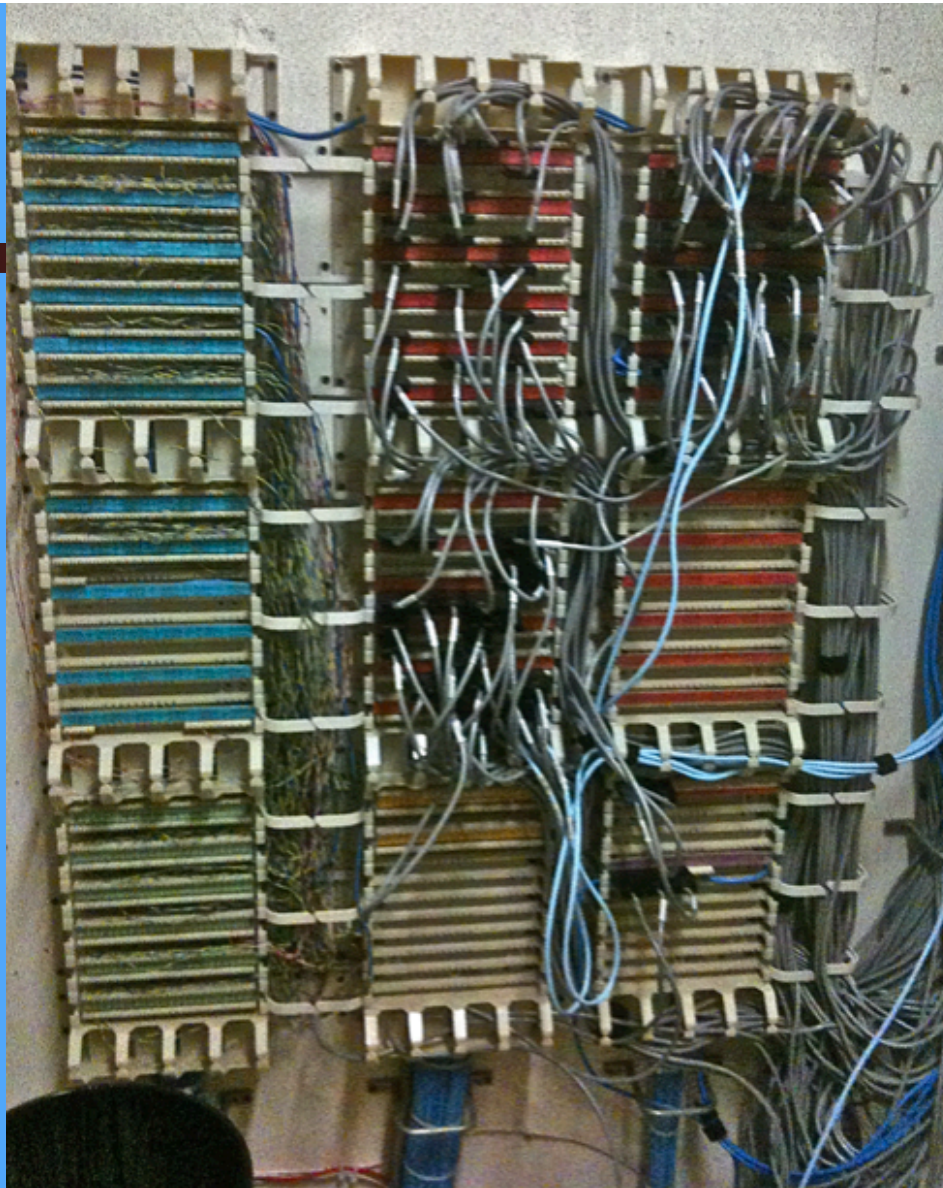
# “Trusted path.”

- Users need to know they are talking with the legit system
- System needs to know its talking with the legit user
- These channels need to be unspoofable and private
  - ATM skimmers are a failure of the trusted path

## Soda Hall wiring closet



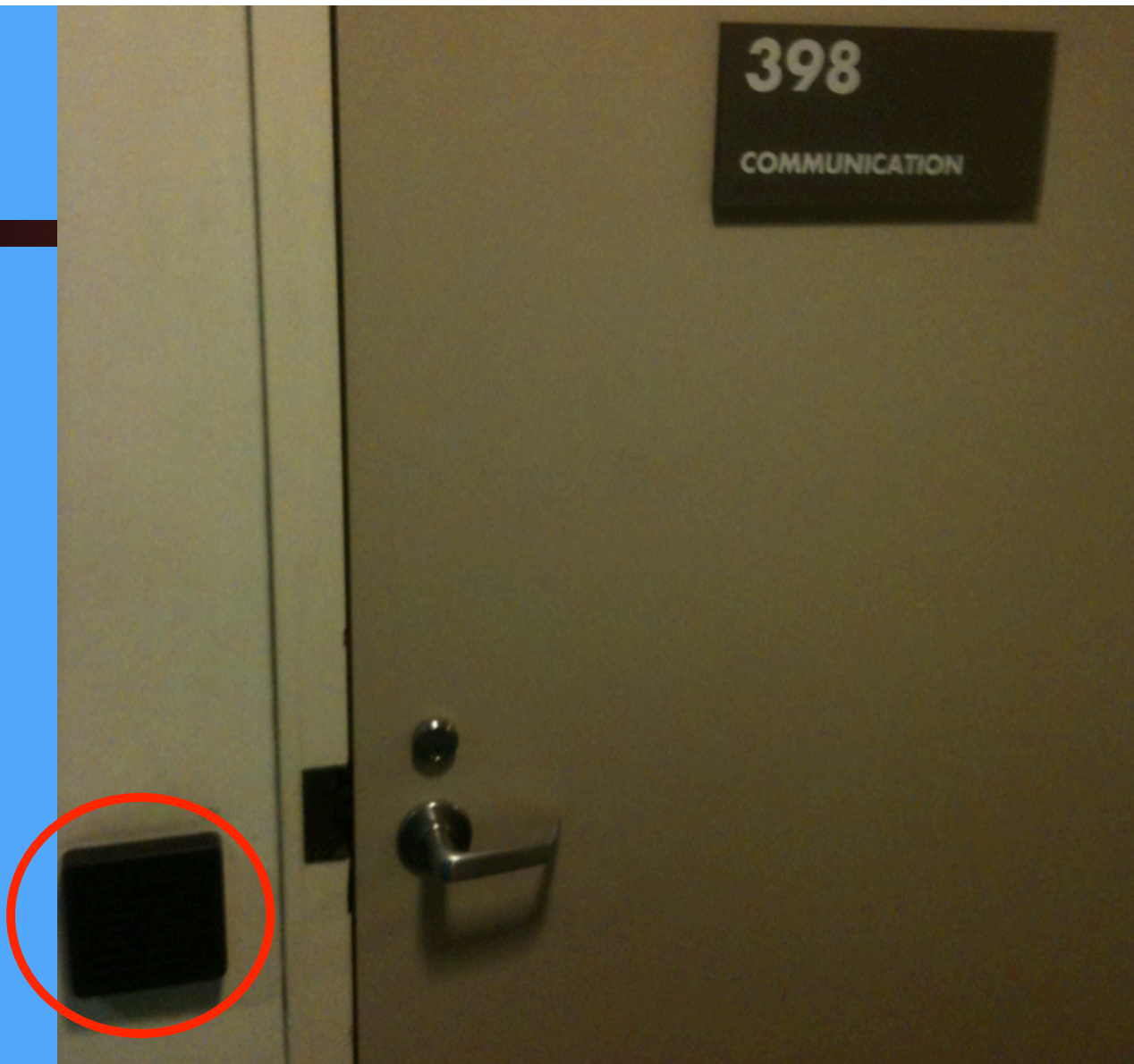




**Protection?**







# “Use fail-safe defaults.”

- But it can often be hard to determine
- Default for access here is reasonable...
  - Deny all except for an allowed user list
- But when the power goes out...
  - Should the lock fail shut?  
Should the lock fail open?

# Common Assumptions When Discussing Attacks

- (Note, these tend to be pessimistic ... but prudent)
- Attackers can interact with our systems ***without particular notice***
  - Probing (poking at systems) may go unnoticed ...
  - ... even if highly repetitive, leading to crashes, and easy to detect
- It's easy for attackers to know general information about their targets
  - OS types, software versions, usernames, server ports, IP addresses, usual patterns of activity, administrative procedures

# Common Assumptions, con't

- Attackers can obtain access to a copy of a given system to measure and/or determine how it works
  - Shannon's Maxim: "The Enemy Knows the System"
- Attackers can make energetic use of automation
  - They can often find clever ways to automate:  
If an attack has a 1 in  $2^{30}$  chance of success, the attacker just tries a ***billion*** times!
- Attackers can pull off complicated coordination across a bunch of different elements/systems
- Attackers can bring large resources to bear if req'd
  - Computation, network capacity
  - But they are not super-powerful (e.g., control entire ISPs)

# Common Assumptions, con't

- If it helps the attacker in some way, ***assume they can obtain privileges***
  - But if the privilege gives everything away (attack becomes trivial), then we care about unprivileged attacks
- The ability to robustly detect that an attack has occurred ***does not replace desirability of preventing***
- Infrastructure machines/systems are well protected (hard to directly take over)
  - So a vulnerability that requires infrastructure compromise is less worrisome than same vulnerability that doesn't



# Common Assumptions, con't

- Network routing is hard to alter ... other than with physical access near clients (e.g., “wifi/coffeeshop”)
  - Such access helps fool clients to send to wrong place
  - Can enable Man-in-the-Middle (MITM) attacks
- We worry about attackers who are lucky
  - Since often automation/repetition can help “make luck”:  
If its 1 in a million, just try a million times!
- Just because a system does not have apparent value,  
***it may still be a target***
  - "Lets break into the Casino network... Through the fishtank"
- Attackers are mostly undaunted by fear of getting caught
  - There are exceptions

# Patches & 0-days

- Systems have vulnerabilities all the time...
  - A **patch** is an update which is designed to remove such vulnerabilities.
- An "0-day" is an exploit where nobody but the attacker knows about
  - So there **is** no patch
- But 0-days are rare: Require independent discovery...
  - But it is straightforward to take a patch and find an exploit
- So patch religiously!
  - Similarly, the "patch" for influenza is the flu-shot. **GET ONE!**
  - Just as the University requires that computers meet basic security standards, they are **finally** requiring that student immune systems meet basic security standards

# And Most Exploits These Days Are Chains...

- EG, to pwn an iPhone...
  - Need an exploit for the browser to start running code within the browser's sandbox
  - And another exploit to break out of the sandbox and take over the OS kernel...
    - And that other exploit may actually be 2-3 exploits themselves chained together
- So e.g. on the massive Chinese campaign a year ago...
  - There was one known 0-day in the chains...
  - But taking over the browser MAY have only been 1-day: Take patch, derive exploit. (We just don't know...)