

SYSTEMATIC DESIGN OF PRIVACY-PRESERVING SYSTEMS



Carmela Troncoso

institute
iMdea
software

MODERN TIMES - DAILY LIFE



MODERN TIMES – DAILY LIFE



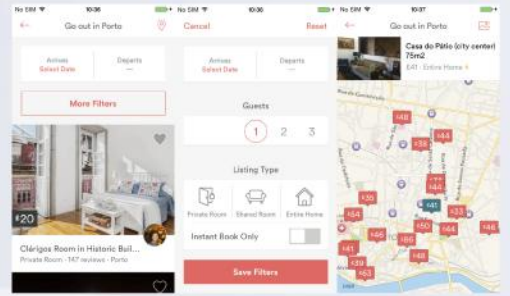
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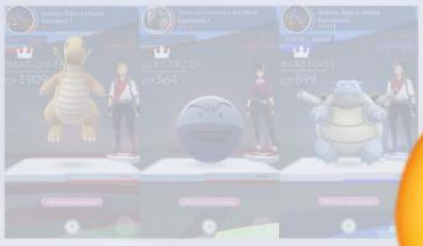
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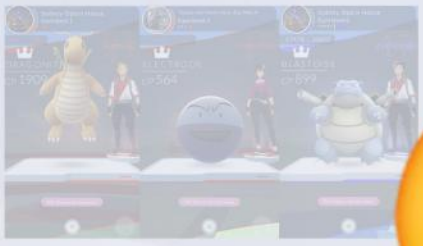
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BUT MY PRIVACY?



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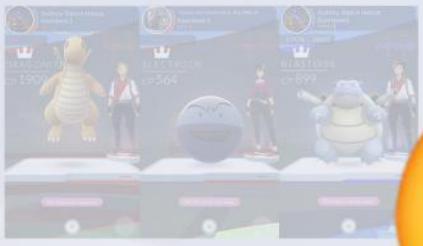
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EUROPEAN CONSUMER COMMISSIONER



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PRIVACY BY DESIGN — LET'S HAVE IT!

INFORMATION AND PRIVACY COMMISSIONER OF ONTARIO



Privacy by Design

Privacy by Design principles

1. Proactive not Reactive; Preventative not Remedial
2. Privacy as the Default Setting
3. **Privacy Embedded into Design**
4. Full Functionality: Positive-Sum, not Zero-Sum
5. End-to-End Security — Full Lifecycle Protection
6. Visibility and Transparency — Keep it Open
7. Respect for User Privacy — Keep it User-Centric

Cavoukian et al. (2010)

<https://www.ipc.on.ca/images/resources/7foundationalprinciples.pdf>

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ARTICLE 25 EUROPEAN GENERAL DATA PROTECTION REGULATION



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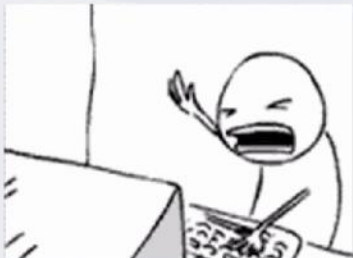
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BUT HOW ??????????????

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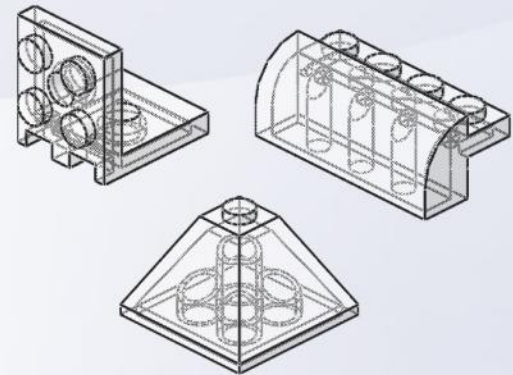
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PART I:
REASONING ABOUT PRIVACY WHEN
DESIGNING SYSTEMS



THIS TALK: ENGINEERING PRIVACY BY DESIGN

PART II:
DESIGNING TECHNOLOGIES TO SUPPORT
PRIVACY-AWARE DESIGNS



PART I:
REASONING ABOUT PRIVACY WHEN
DESIGNING SYSTEMS





PRIVACY





PRIVACY





PRIVACY



WHY?? NOT ONLY MOTIVATION....
IS PRIVACY ENGINEERING A CRAFT?



ENGINEERING PRIVACY BY DESIGN 1.0

Two case studies:

- anonymous e-petitions: no identity attached to petitions
- privacy-preserving road tolling: no fine grained data sent to server

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BUT, it's not "data" that is minimized (in the system as a *whole*)

- kept in user devices
- sent encrypted to a server (only client has the key)
- distributed over multiple servers: only the user, or colluding servers, can recover the data

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“DATA MINIMIZATION” IS A BAD METAPHOR!!!

UNPACKING "DATA MINIMIZATION": PRIVACY BY DESIGN STRATEGIES

**OVERARCHING
GOAL**

**MINIMIZING PRIVACY RISKS AND
TRUST ASSUMPTIONS PLACED ON OTHER ENTITIES**

UNPACKING "DATA MINIMIZATION": PRIVACY BY DESIGN STRATEGIES

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THE ADVERSARY



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Social
Privacy



THE ADVERSARY



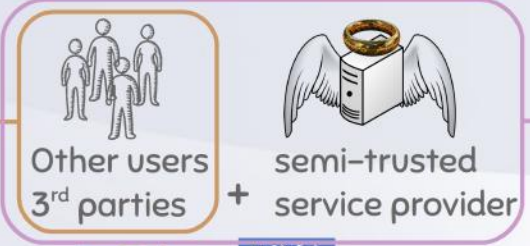
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Anti-surveillance
Privacy
(PETS)



THE ADVERSARY



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STRATEGIES

MINIMIZE
COLLECTION

MINIMIZE
DISCLOSURE

MINIMIZE
LINKABILITY

MINIMIZE
CENTRALIZATION

MINIMIZE
REPLICATION

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GREAT! BUT... HOW DO WE USE THESE STRATEGIES?

We make explicit the activities and reasoning in **PRIVACY ENGINEERING DESIGN** process

CASE STUDY: ELECTRONIC TOLL PRICING

STARTING ASSUMPTIONS

- 1) Well defined functionality
Charge depending on driving

- 2) Security, privacy & service integrity requirements
User location should be private
No cheating clients

- 3) Initial reference system

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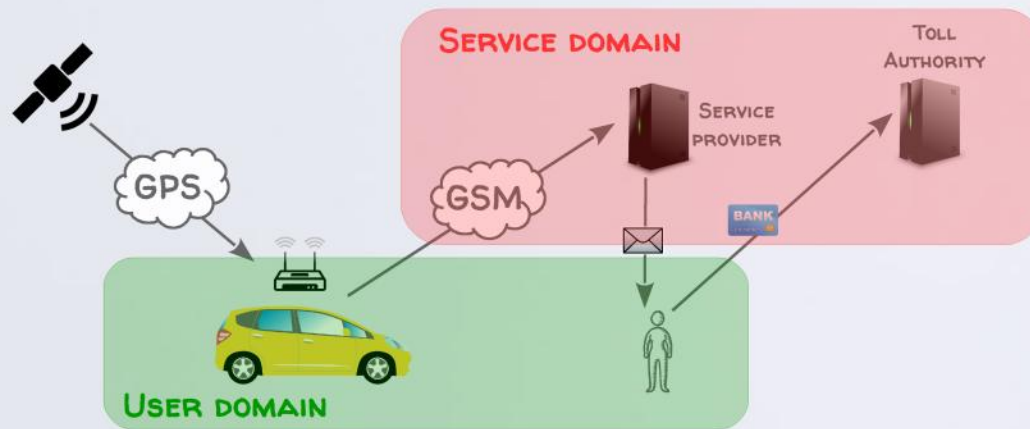


ACTIVITY 1: CLASSIFY ENTITIES IN DOMAINS

USER DOMAIN: components under the control of the user, eg, user devices

SERVICE DOMAIN: components outside the control of the user, eg, backend system at provider

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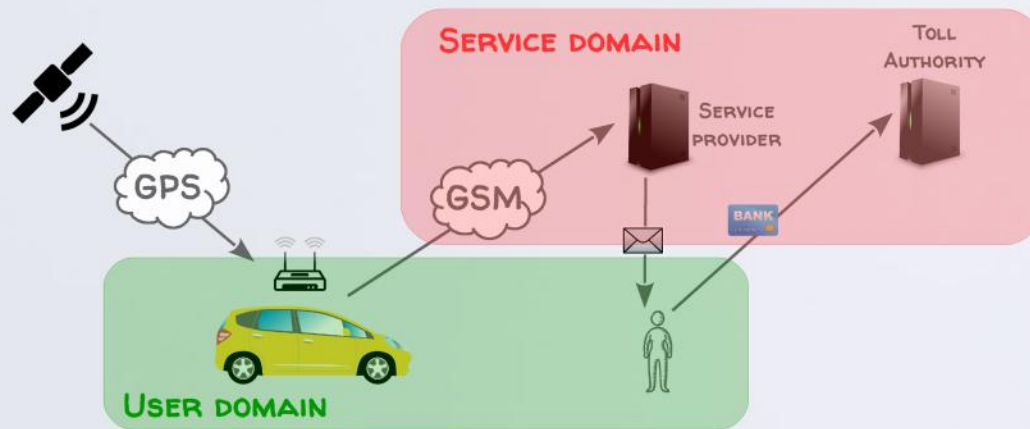


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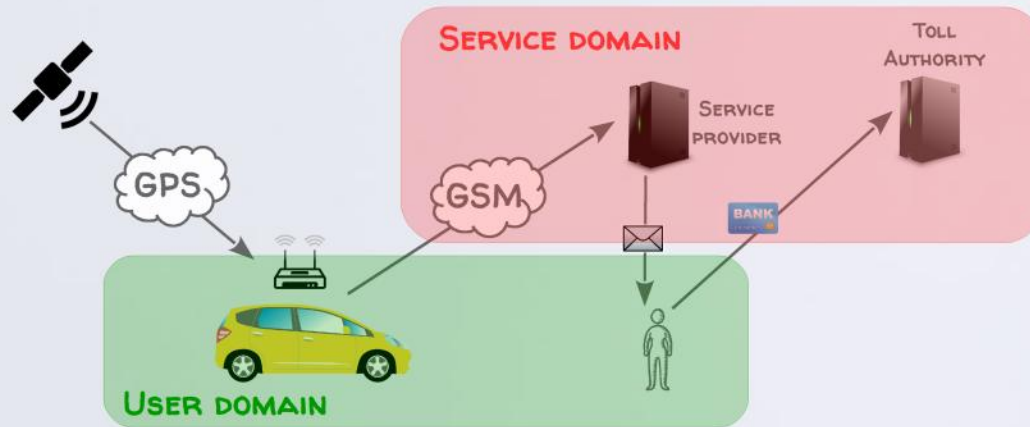
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Billing data – charge user

Personal data – send bill

Payment data – perform payment

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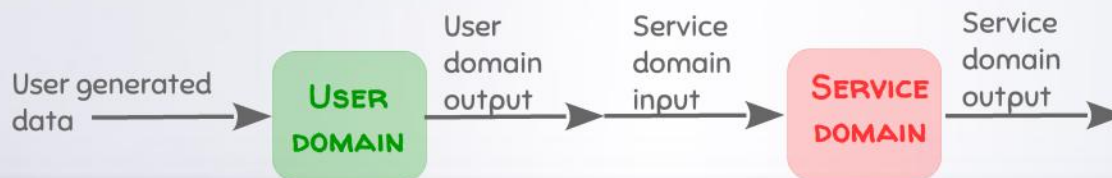
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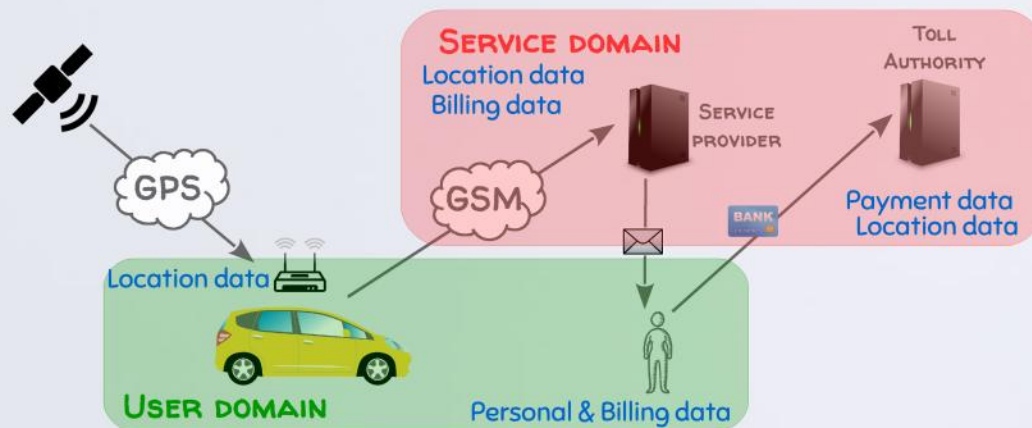
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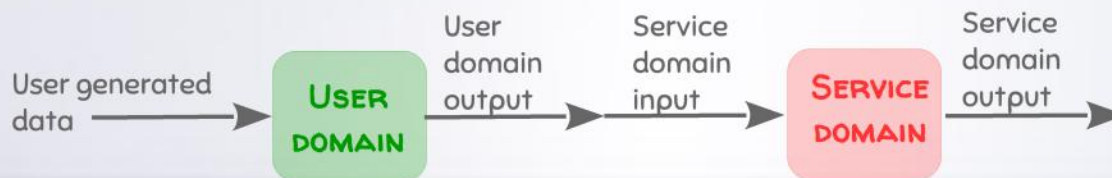
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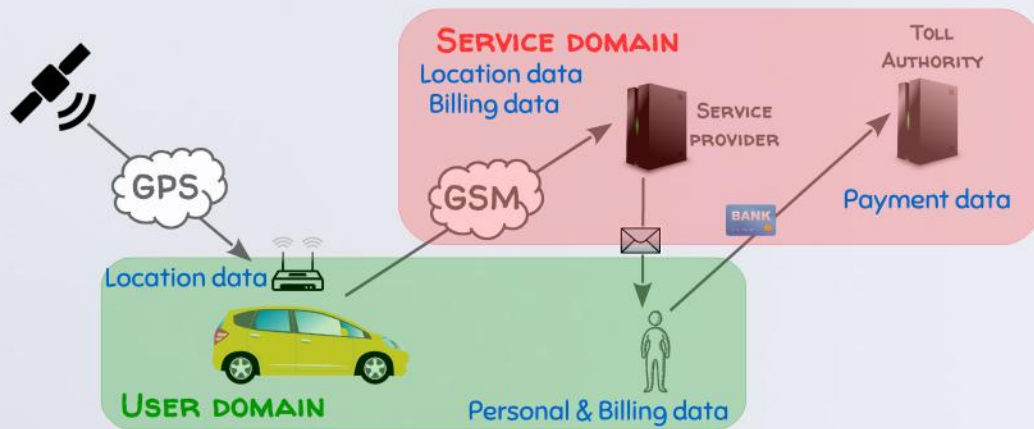
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ACTIVITY 4: SELECT TECHNOLOGICAL SOLUTIONS FOLLOWING →

not sending the data (local computations)
 encrypting the data
 advanced privacy-preserving protocols
 obfuscate the data
 anonymize the data

MINIMIZING PRIVACY RISKS AND
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MINIMIZE
 DISCLOSURE

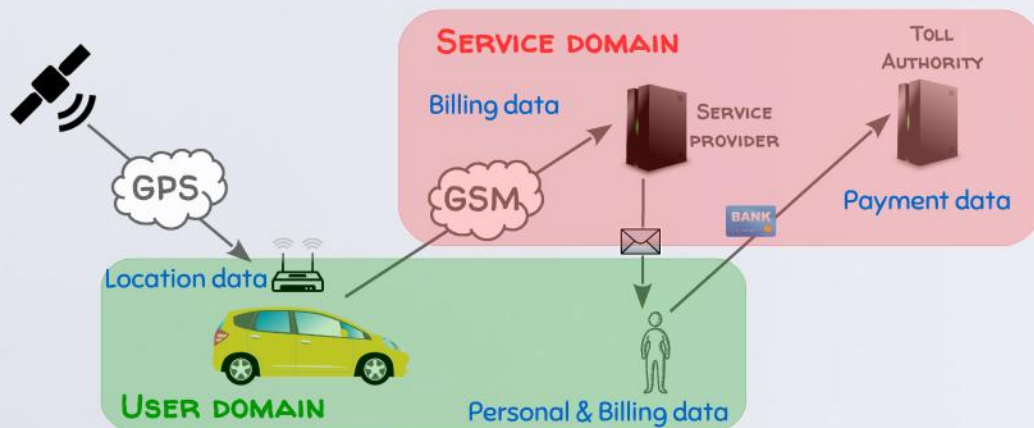
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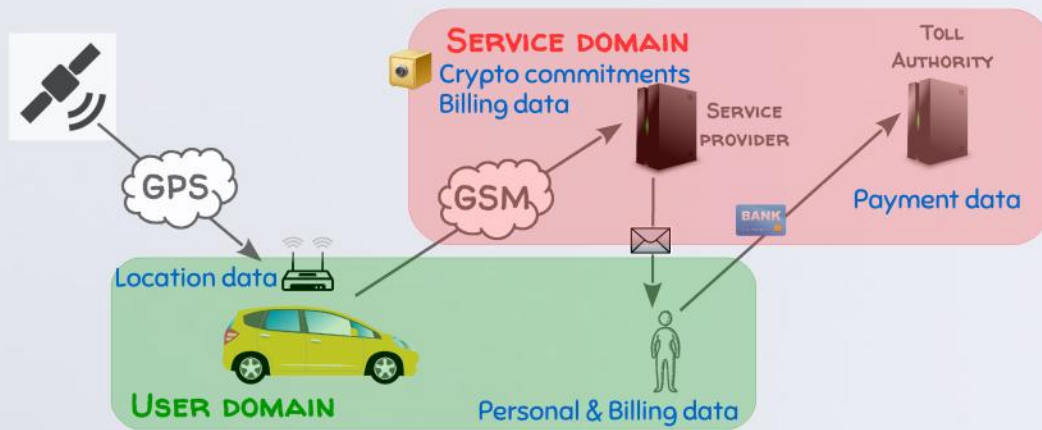
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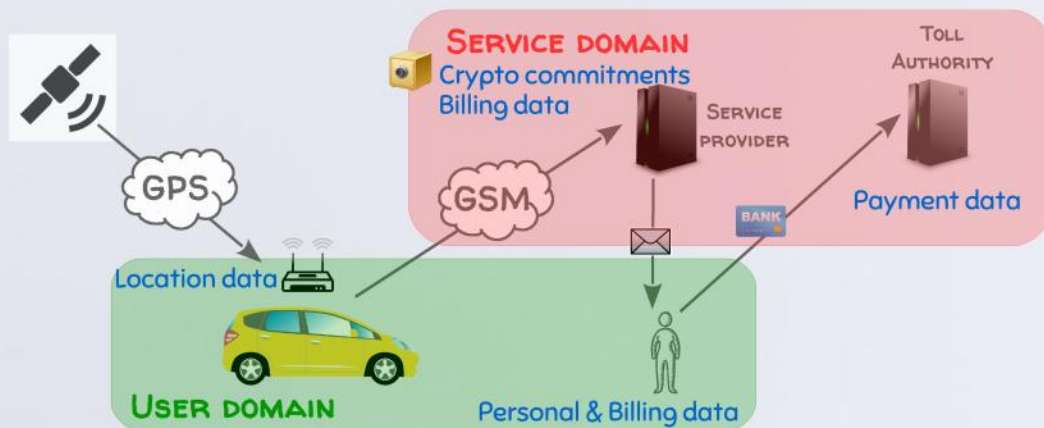
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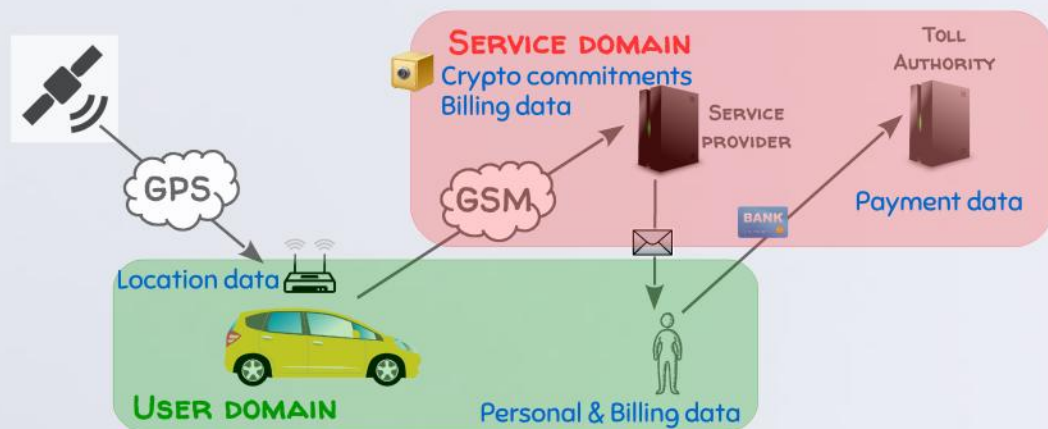
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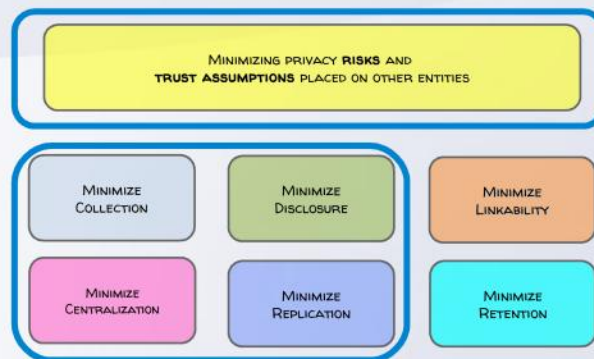
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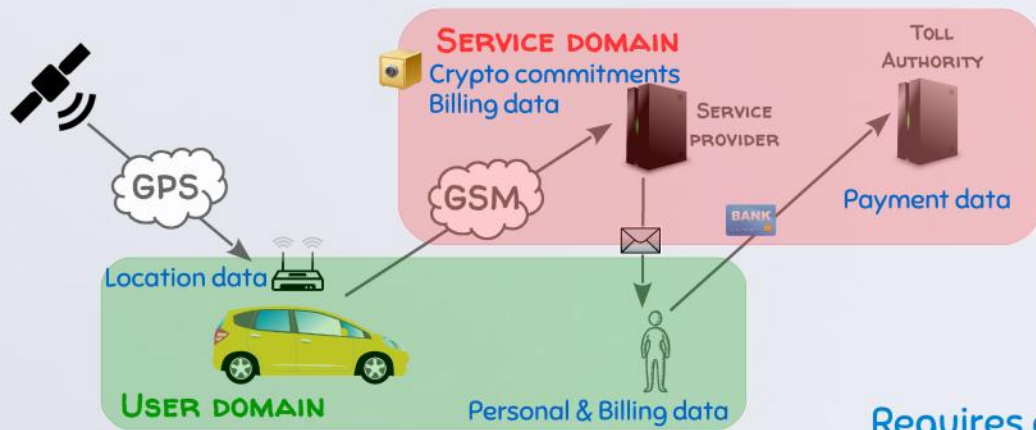
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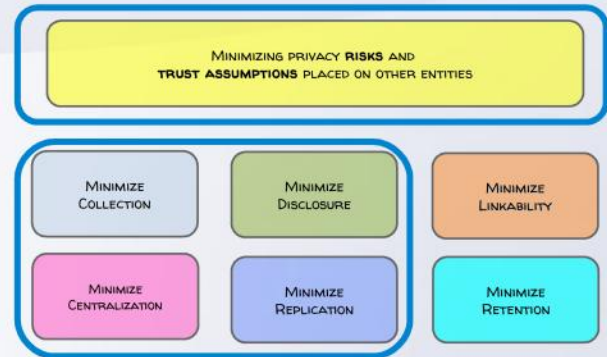
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Requires deep knowledge of PETs

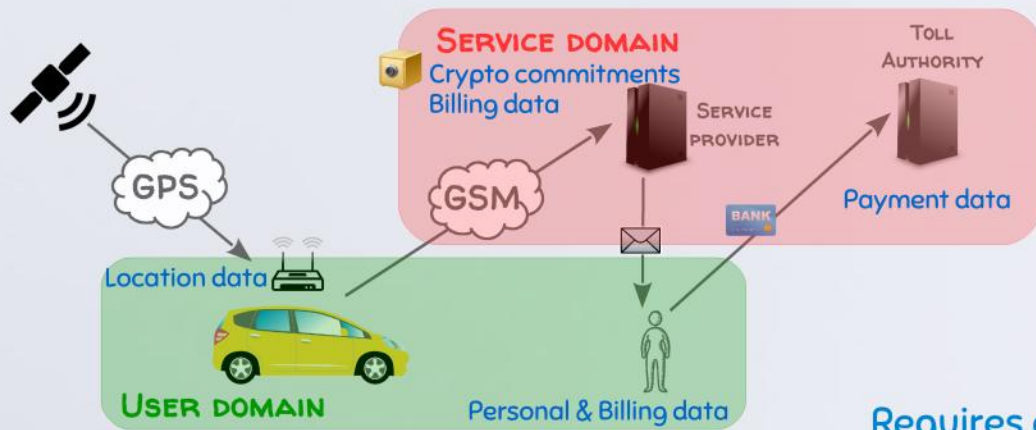
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Privacy ENABLING Technologies

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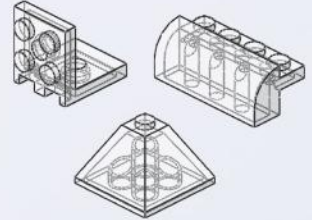
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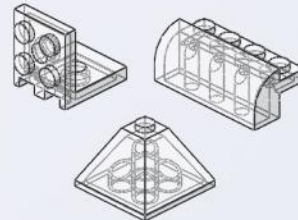
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DESIGNING TECHNOLOGIES
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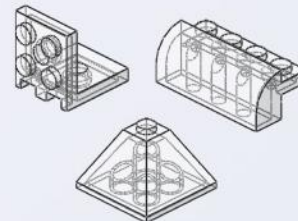
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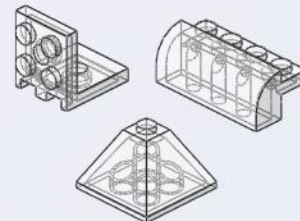
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“EASY” DESIGN but expensive

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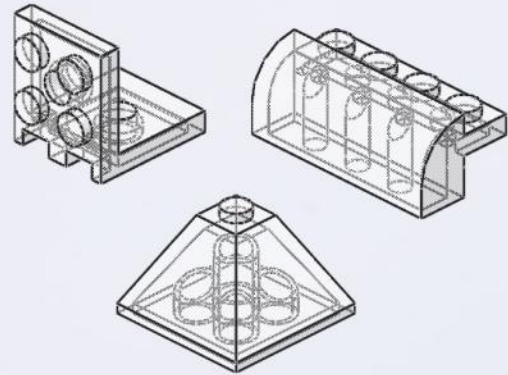
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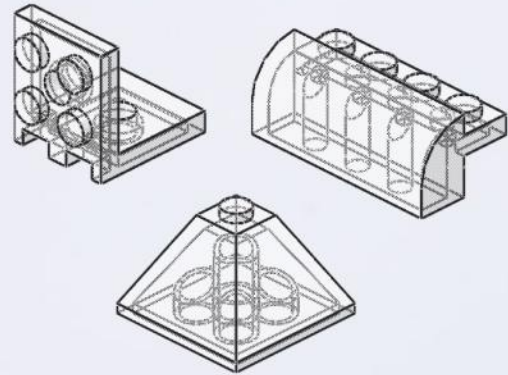
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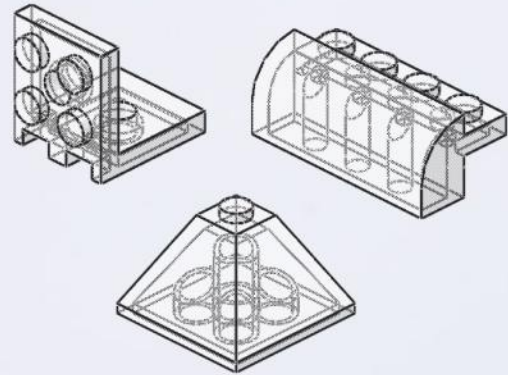
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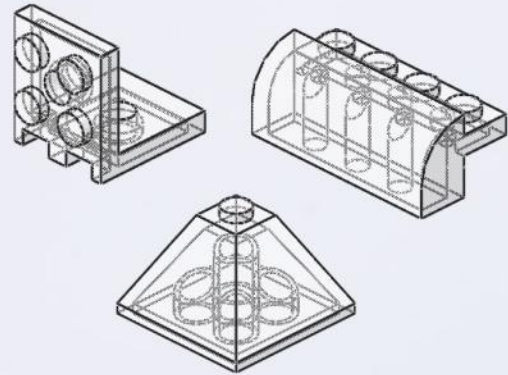
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The adversary knows!

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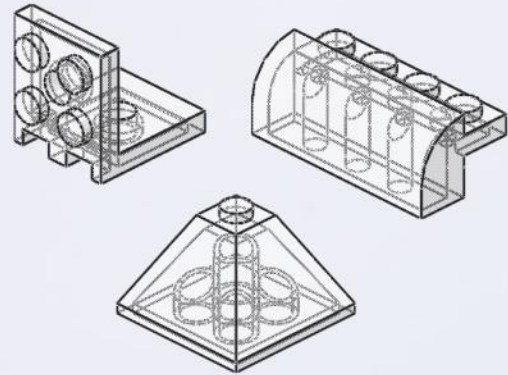
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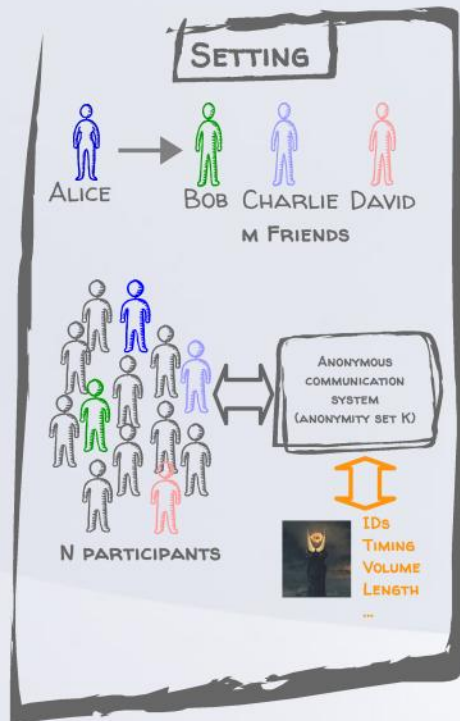
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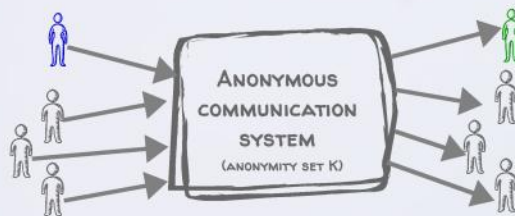
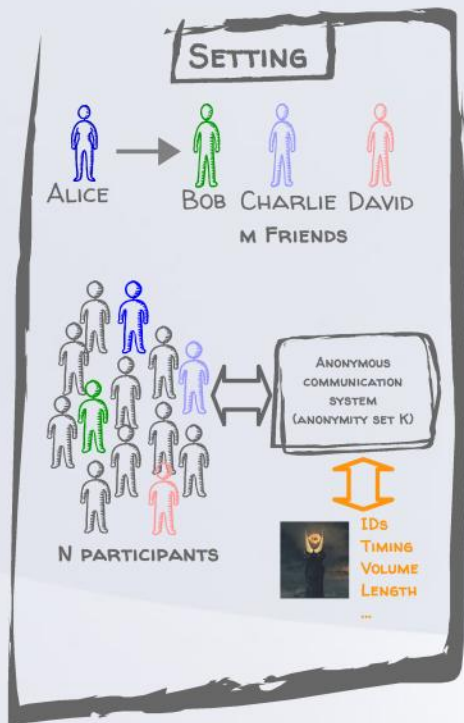
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Can we design good  systematically?

DESIGNING ANONYMOUS COMMUNICATIONS SYSTEMS

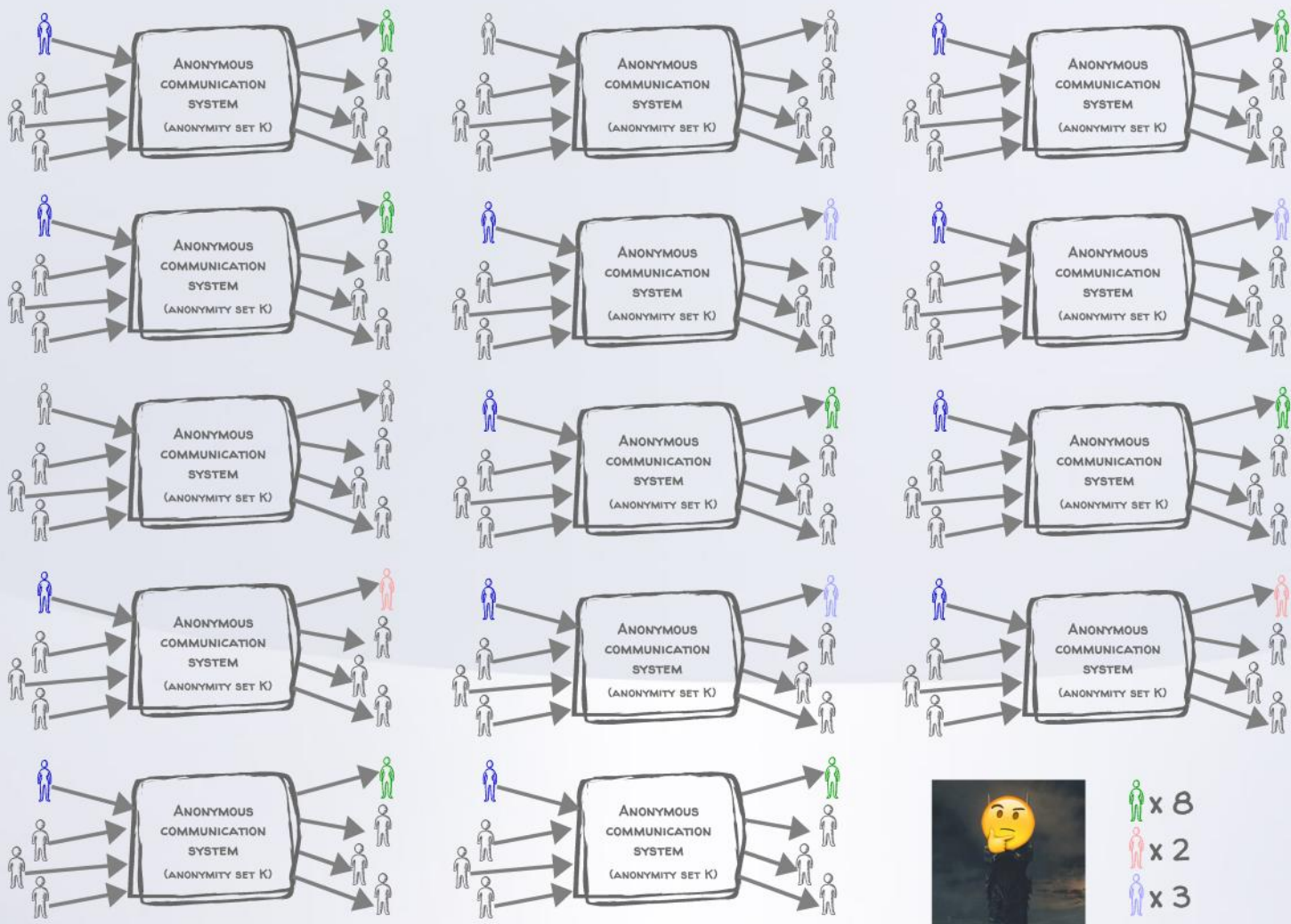


DESIGNING ANONYMOUS COMMUNICATIONS SYSTEMS




- 1-  SEES ALICE SENDING A SINGLE MESSAGE TO THE SYSTEM
- 2- ANONYMITY SET SIZE = K
- 3- PERFECT! 

AS TIME GOES BY AND ALICE SENDS MORE MESSAGES...



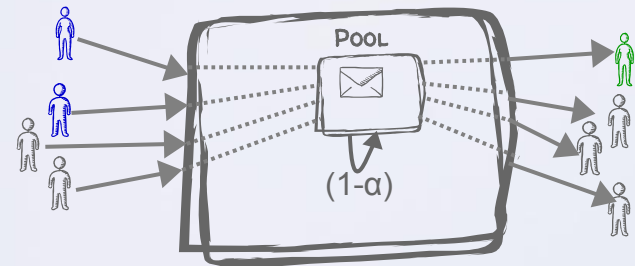
Green x 8
Red x 2
Blue x 3

POOL-BASED ANONYMOUS COMMUNICATIONS

λ =  rate of messages

P_{ij} = probability that  sends a message to 

α = probability of message leaving the pool



Fernando Pérez-González, Carmela Troncoso. "Understanding statistical disclosure: A least squares approach." PETS, 2012.

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POOL-BASED ANONYMOUS COMMUNICATIONS

λ = rate of messages

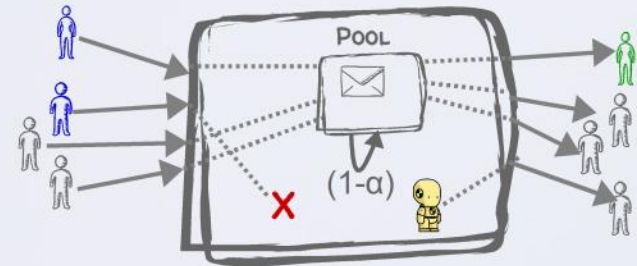
P = probability that sends a message to

α = probability of message leaving the pool

δ = rate of dummy messages

δ = rate of dummy messages

P = probability that sends a dummy message to



POOL-BASED ANONYMOUS COMMUNICATIONS

λ_{blue} = rate of messages

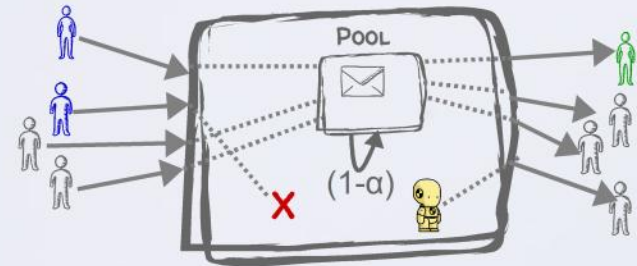
$P_{\text{blue}} = P_{\text{green}}$ = probability that blue sends a message to green

α = probability of message leaving the pool

δ_{blue} = rate of dummy messages

δ_{yellow} = rate of dummy messages

$P_{\text{yellow}} = P_{\text{green}}$ = probability that yellow sends a dummy message to green



LEAST SQUARES DISCLOSURE ATTACK (OPTIMAL FOR MEAN SQUARE ERROR)

x^r = vector of n# of messages sent round r ($x^r = 2$)

y^r = vector of n# of messages received round r ($y^r = 1$)

$H = [x^1, x^2, x^3, \dots]$

$Y = [y^1, y^2, y^3, \dots]^T$

$$\hat{p} = \arg \min_p \|y - Hp\|$$

$$\begin{aligned} p_{i,j} &\leq 1 \\ \sum_i p_{i,j} &= 1 \end{aligned}$$

POOL-BASED ANONYMOUS COMMUNICATIONS

λ = rate of messages

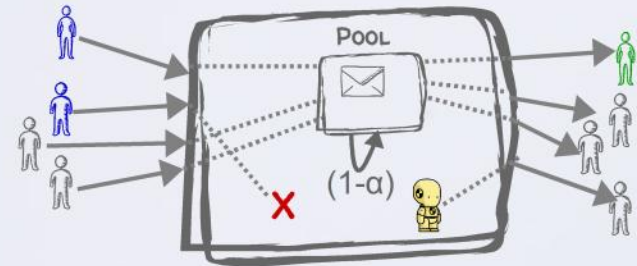
P = probability that sends a message to

α = probability of message leaving the pool

δ = rate of dummy messages

δ = rate of dummy messages

P = probability that sends a dummy message to



LEAST SQUARES DISCLOSURE ATTACK (OPTIMAL FOR MEAN SQUARE ERROR)

$$\hat{p} = \arg \min_p \|y - Hp\|$$

$$\begin{aligned} p_{i,j} &\leq 1 \\ \sum_i p_{i,j} &= 1 \end{aligned}$$

$$\Rightarrow \hat{p} = (H^T H)^{-1} H^T y$$

POOL-BASED ANONYMOUS COMMUNICATIONS

λ_{blue} = rate of messages

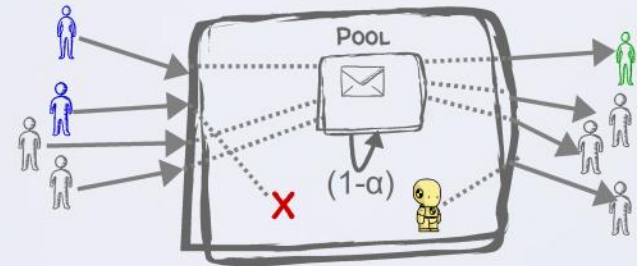
P_{blue} = probability that blue sends a message to green

α = probability of message leaving the pool

δ_{blue} = rate of dummy messages

δ_{yellow} = rate of dummy messages

P_{yellow} = probability that yellow sends a dummy message to green



LEAST SQUARES DISCLOSURE ATTACK
(OPTIMAL FOR MEAN SQUARE ERROR)

$$\hat{p} = \arg \min_p \|y - Hp\|$$

$$\begin{aligned} p_{i,j} &\leq 1 \\ \sum_i p_{i,j} &= 1 \end{aligned}$$

$$\hat{p} = (H^T H)^{-1} H^T y$$

$$MSE_{\text{green}} = \|p_{\text{green}} - \hat{p}_{\text{green}}\| = \frac{1}{t} \cdot \frac{2-\alpha}{\alpha} \cdot \frac{1}{\lambda_{\text{blue}}} \cdot \left(1 + \frac{\delta_{\text{blue}}}{\lambda_{\text{blue}}}\right) \cdot (\lambda_{\text{green}} + \delta_{\text{yellow}} p_{\text{yellow}})$$

POOL-BASED ANONYMOUS COMMUNICATIONS

λ = rate of messages

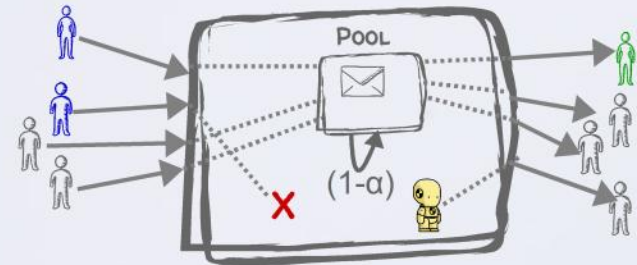
P = probability that λ sends a message to

α = probability of message leaving the pool

δ = rate of dummy messages

δ = rate of dummy messages

P = probability that δ sends a dummy message to



LEAST SQUARES DISCLOSURE ATTACK
(OPTIMAL FOR MEAN SQUARE ERROR)

$$\hat{p} = \arg \min_p \|y - Hp\|$$

$$\begin{aligned} p_{i,j} &\leq 1 \\ \sum_i p_{i,j} &= 1 \end{aligned}$$

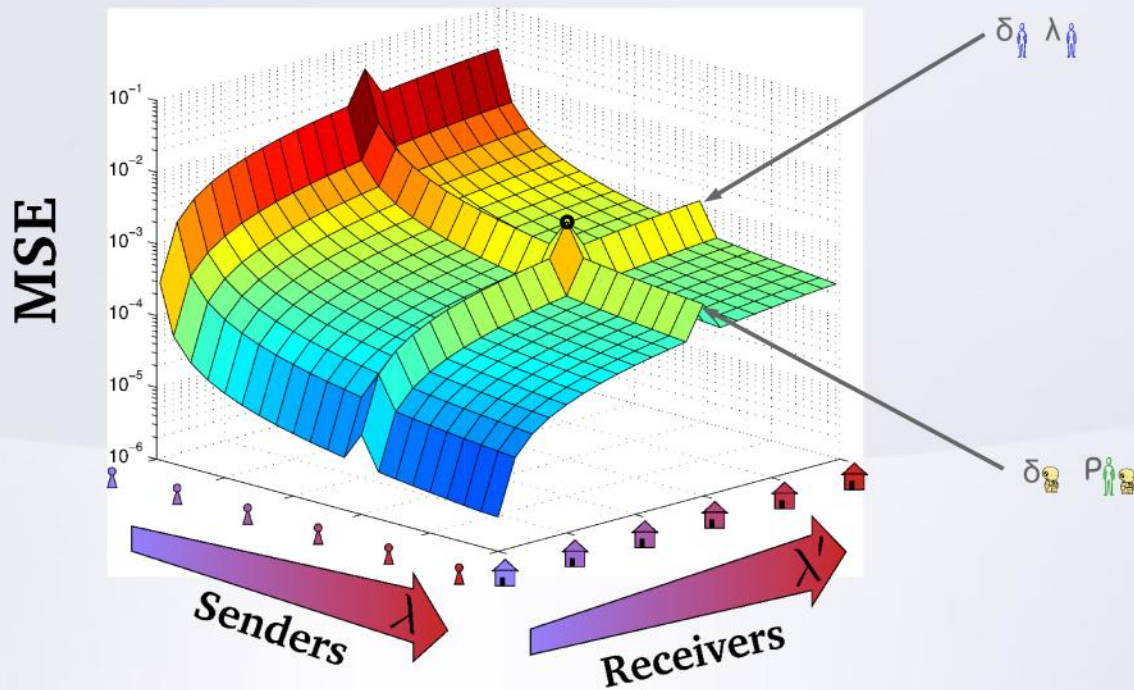
$$\hat{p} = (H^T H)^{-1} H^T y$$

$$MSE_{\lambda} = \|p_{\lambda} - \hat{p}_{\lambda}\| = \frac{1}{t} \cdot \frac{2-\alpha}{\alpha} \cdot \left(\frac{1}{\lambda} \cdot \left(1 + \frac{\delta}{\lambda}\right) \cdot (\lambda' + \delta p) \right)$$

Observations Pool Sender Receiver

SYSTEMATIC DUMMY STRATEGY DESIGN

$$MSE_{\text{}} = \underbrace{\left(\frac{1}{t}\right)}_{\text{Observations}} \cdot \underbrace{\left(\frac{2-\alpha}{\alpha}\right)}_{\text{Sender}} \cdot \underbrace{\left(\frac{1}{\lambda} \cdot \left(1 + \frac{\delta}{\lambda}\right)\right)}_{\text{Sender}} \cdot \underbrace{\left(\lambda' + \delta \cdot p\right)}_{\text{Receiver}}$$



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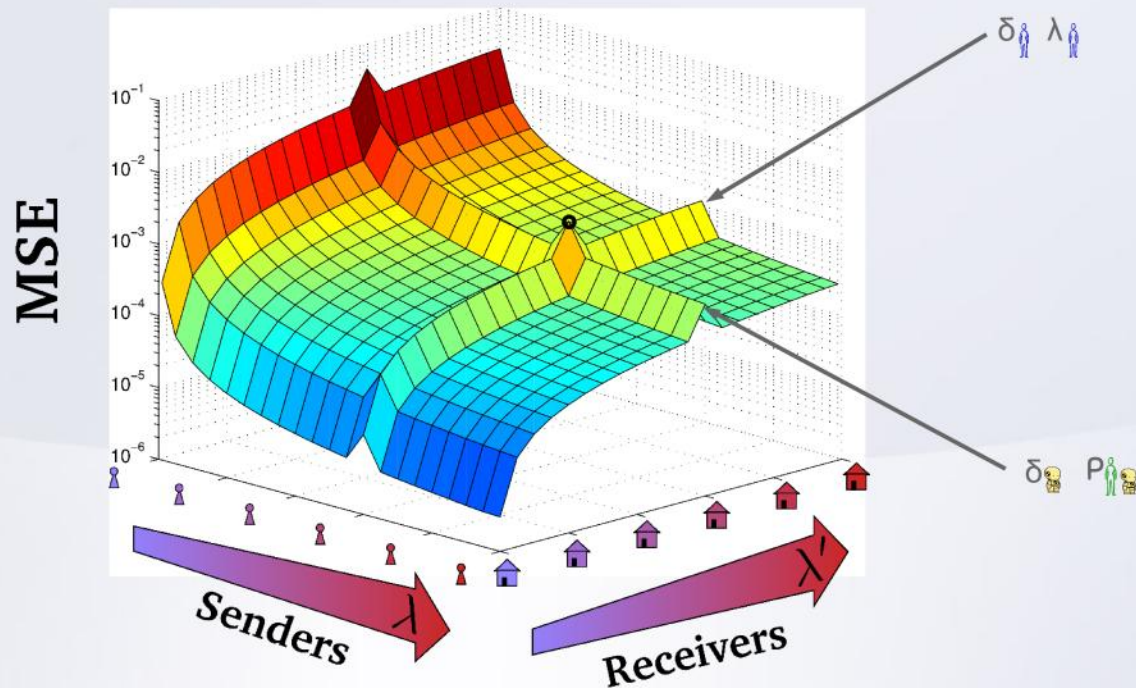
Simon Oya, Carmela Troncoso, Fernando Pérez-González. "Do dummies pay off? limits of dummy traffic protection in anonymous communications." PETS, 2014

SYSTEMATIC DUMMY STRATEGY DESIGN

$$MSE_{\text{}} = \underbrace{\left(\frac{1}{t}\right)}_{\text{Observations}} \cdot \underbrace{\left(\frac{2-\alpha}{\alpha}\right)}_{\text{Sender}} \cdot \underbrace{\left(\frac{1}{\lambda} \cdot \left(1 + \frac{\delta}{\lambda}\right)\right)}_{\text{Receiver}} \cdot (\lambda' + \delta \cdot p)$$

GIVEN A DUMMY BUDGET

PICK YOUR FAVOURITE
PRIVACY OBJECTIVE AND
DESIGN DUMMY STRATEGY!



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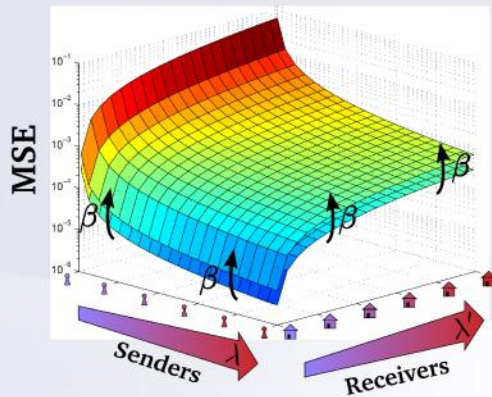
SYSTEMATIC DUMMY STRATEGY DESIGN

$$MSE_{\text{Observers}} = \underbrace{\left(\frac{1}{t}\right)}_{\text{Observations}} \cdot \underbrace{\left(\frac{2-\alpha}{\alpha}\right)}_{\text{Sender}} \cdot \underbrace{\left(\frac{1}{\lambda} \cdot \left(1 + \frac{\delta}{\lambda}\right)\right)}_{\text{Sender}} \cdot \underbrace{\left(\lambda' + \delta \cdot p\right)}_{\text{Receiver}}$$

GIVEN A DUMMY BUDGET

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$$\begin{array}{l} \text{maximize} \\ \delta_1, \delta_2, p \\ \text{s.t.} \end{array} \quad \begin{array}{l} MSE_{\text{Senders}} \\ MSE_{\text{Receivers}} = \beta \cdot MSE_{\text{Senders}} \end{array} \quad \begin{array}{l} \nabla \\ \nabla \end{array}$$



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SYSTEMATIC DUMMY STRATEGY DESIGN

$$MSE_{\text{Observers}} = \left(\frac{1}{t} \right) \cdot \left(\frac{2-\alpha}{\alpha} \right) \cdot \left(\frac{1}{\lambda} \cdot \left(1 + \frac{\delta}{\lambda} \right) \right) \cdot \left(\lambda' + \delta \cdot p \right)$$

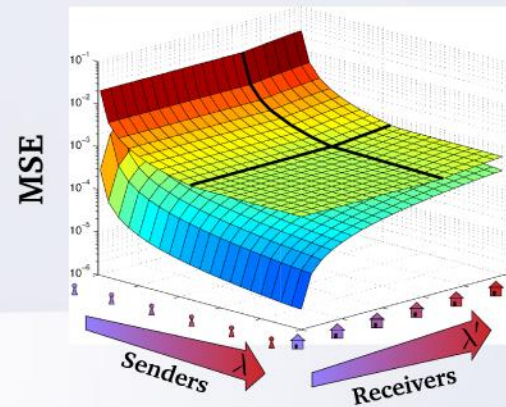
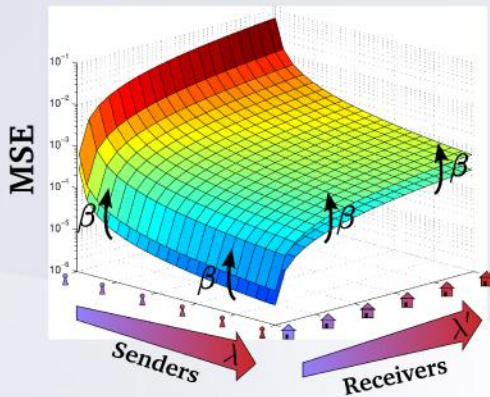
Observations
Sender
Receiver

GIVEN A DUMMY BUDGET

PICK YOUR FAVOURITE
PRIVACY OBJECTIVE AND
DESIGN DUMMY STRATEGY!

maximize $MSE_{\text{Observers}}$ \forall Observers
 δ_1, δ_2, p
s.t. $MSE_{\text{Senders}} = \beta \cdot MSE_{\text{Receivers}}$ \forall $\text{Senders, Receivers}$

maximize $\min MSE_{\text{Observers}}$ \forall Observers
 δ_1, δ_2, p



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SYSTEMATIC DUMMY STRATEGY DESIGN

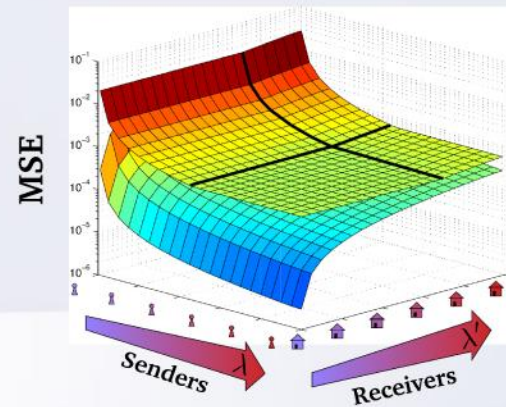
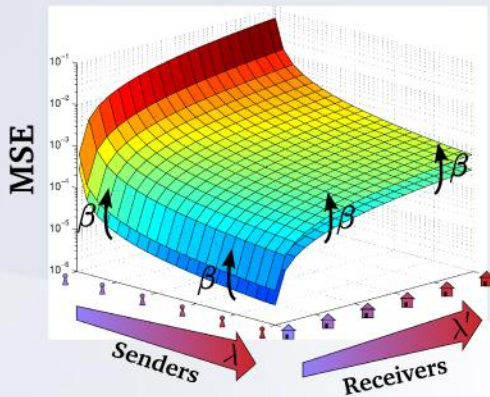
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PRIVACY OBJECTIVE AND
DESIGN DUMMY STRATEGY!

maximize $MSE_{\text{}}$ \forall $\text{}$
 δ_1, δ_2, p
s.t. $MSE_{\text{}} = \beta \cdot MSE_{\text{}}$ \forall $\text{}$

maximize $\min MSE_{\text{}}$ \forall $\text{}$
 δ_1, δ_2, p



WE CAN ALSO USE THE MSE TO DESIGN OPTIMAL POOLS

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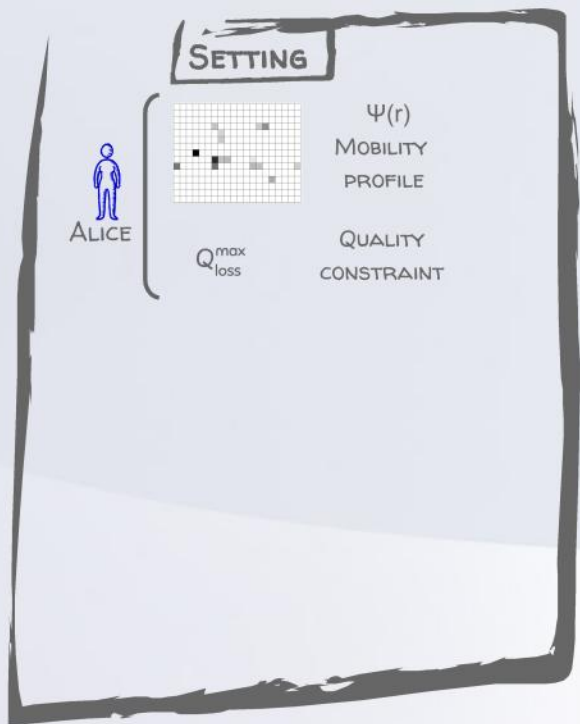
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DESIGNING LOCATION PRIVACY-PRESERVING MECHANISMS

What if the optimal attack is not known? 🤔

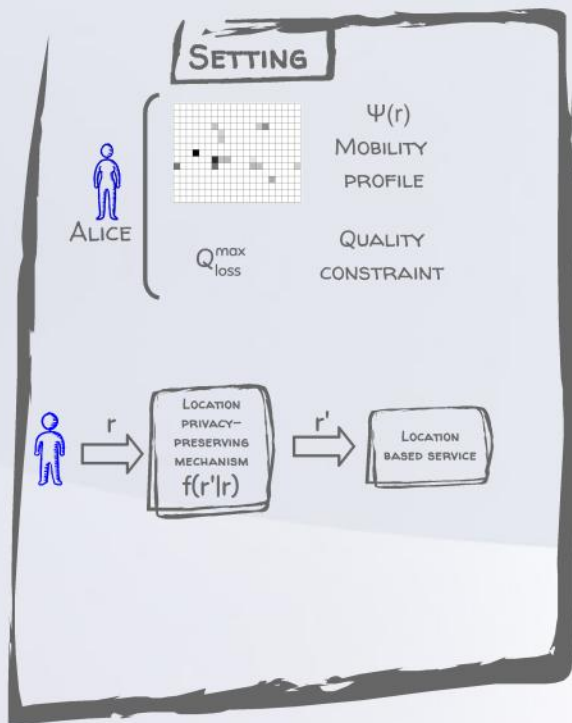
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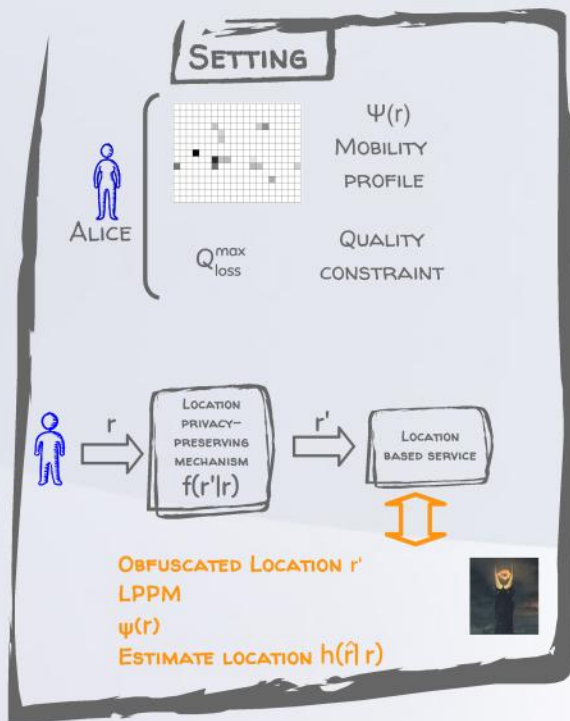
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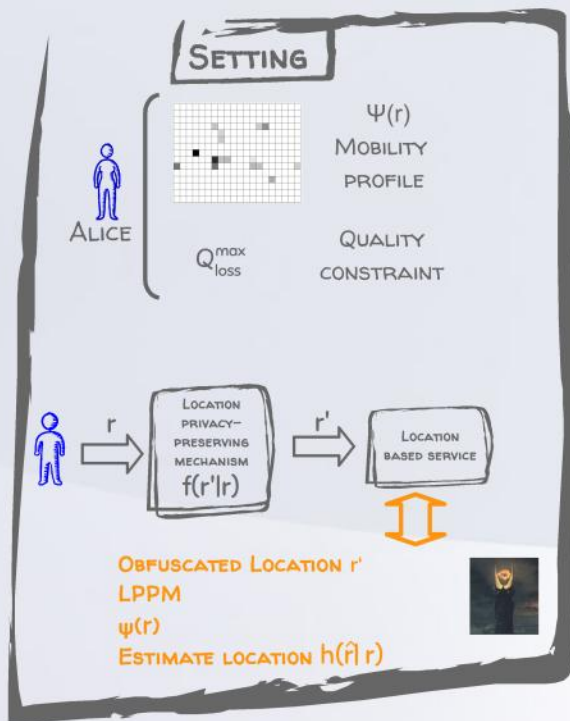
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DESIGNING LOCATION PRIVACY-PRESERVING MECHANISMS

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Design $f(r'|r)$ to maximize privacy

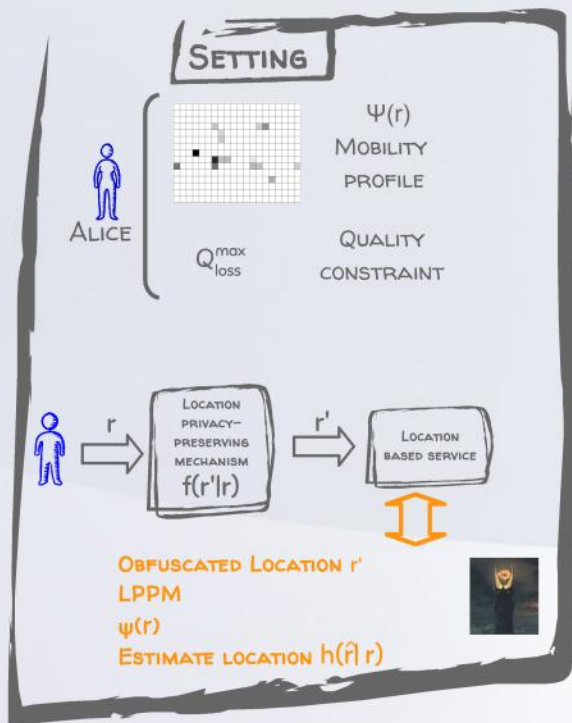
$$Privacy(\psi, f, h, d_p) = \sum_{\hat{r}, r', r} \psi(r) f(r'|r) h(\hat{r}|r') d_p(r', \hat{r})$$

Respecting Q_{loss}^{max}

$$Q_{loss}(\psi, f, d_q) = \sum_{r', r} \psi(r) f(r'|r) d_q(r, r')$$

DESIGNING LOCATION PRIVACY-PRESERVING MECHANISMS

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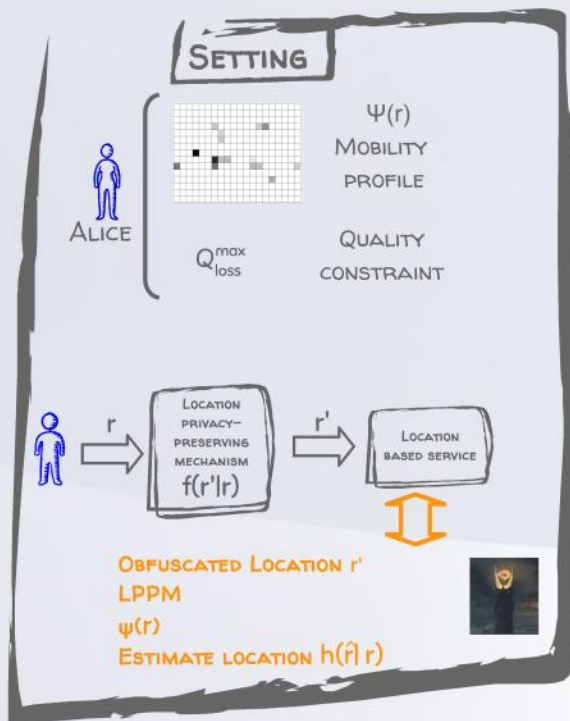
Respecting $Q_{\text{loss}}^{\text{max}}$

$$Q_{\text{loss}}(\psi, f, d_q) = \sum_{r', r} \psi(r) f(r'|r) d_q(r, r')$$

TRADITIONAL: ARMS RACE-BASED DESIGN

DESIGNING LOCATION PRIVACY-PRESERVING MECHANISMS

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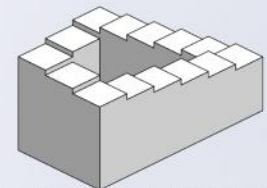
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$$Q_{\text{loss}}(\psi, f, d_q) = \sum_{r', r} \psi(r) f(r'|r) d_q(r, r')$$

TRADITIONAL: ARMS RACE-BASED DESIGN

THE RACE MAY NEVER END...



CUTTING THE RACE SHORT: A GAME THEORETIC APPROACH

Zero-sum Bayesian Stackelberg game



Leader - chooses defense $f()$




Follower - chooses attack $h()$

CUTTING THE RACE SHORT: A GAME THEORETIC APPROACH

Zero-sum Bayesian Stackelberg game

 Leader - chooses defense $f()$


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Bayesian:  incomplete information

Zero-sum:  gain is  loss (and vice versa)

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OPTIMAL STRATEGY FOR THE USER

Choose $f(r'|r)$, $x_r = \min_{\hat{r}} \sum_r \psi(r) f(r'|r) d_p(\hat{r}, r)$

maximize $\sum_r x_r$


s.t. $x_{r'} \leq \sum_r \psi(r) f(r'|r) d_p(\hat{r}, r), \forall \hat{r}, r'$

$\sum_r \psi(r) \sum_{r'} f(r'|r) d_q(r', r) \leq Q_{\text{loss}}^{\text{max}}$

$\sum_{r'} f(r'|r) = 1, f(r'|r) \geq 0, \forall r, r'$

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maximize privacy

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maximize privacy
quality constraint

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$\sum_{r'} f(r'|r) = 1, f(r'|r) \geq 0, \forall r, r'$

maximize privacy

quality constraint

$f()$ is a probability distribution

CUTTING THE RACE SHORT: A GAME THEORETIC APPROACH

Zero-sum Bayesian Stackelberg game



Leader - chooses defense $f()$



Follower - chooses attack $h()$

Bayesian: incomplete information

Zero-sum: gain is loss (and vice versa)

OPTIMAL STRATEGY FOR THE USER

$$\begin{aligned}
 &\text{Choose } f(r'|r), x_r = \min_{\hat{r}} \sum_r \psi(r) f(r'|r) d_p(\hat{r}, r) \\
 &\text{maximize } \sum_r x_r \\
 &\text{s.t. } x_r \leq \sum_r \psi(r) f(r'|r) d_p(\hat{r}, r), \forall \hat{r}, r' \\
 &\quad \sum_r \psi(r) \sum_{r'} f(r'|r) d_q(r', r) \leq Q_{\text{loss}}^{\text{max}} \\
 &\quad \sum_{r'} f(r'|r) = 1, f(r'|r) \geq 0, \forall r, r'
 \end{aligned}$$

OPTIMAL STRATEGY FOR THE ADV

$$\begin{aligned}
 &\text{Choose } h(\hat{r}|r'), y_r = \max_{\hat{r}} \sum_r h(\hat{r}|r) d_p(\hat{r}, r) \\
 &\text{minimize } \sum_r \psi(r) y_r + z Q_{\text{loss}}^{\text{max}} \\
 &\text{s.t. } y_r \geq \sum_{\hat{r}} h(\hat{r}|r') d_p(\hat{r}, r) + z d_q(r', r), \forall r, r' \\
 &\quad \sum_{\hat{r}} h(\hat{r}|r') = 1, h(\hat{r}|r') \geq 0, \forall r', \hat{r} \\
 &\quad z \geq 0
 \end{aligned}$$

CUTTING THE RACE SHORT: A GAME THEORETIC APPROACH

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$\sum_r \psi(r) \sum_{r'} f(r'|r) d_q(r', r) \leq Q_{\text{loss}}^{\text{max}}$

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OPTIMAL STRATEGY FOR THE ADV

Choose $h(\hat{r}|r')$, $y_r = \max \sum_{\hat{r}} h(\hat{r}|r) d_p(\hat{r}, r)$

minimize $\sum_r \psi(r) y_r + z Q_{\text{loss}}^{\text{max}}$

s.t. $y_r \geq \sum_{\hat{r}} h(\hat{r}|r) d_p(\hat{r}, r) - z d_q(r', r), \forall r, r'$

$\sum_r h(\hat{r}|r') = 1, h(\hat{r}|r') \geq 0, \forall r', \hat{r}$

$z \geq 0$

minimize privacy

quality constraint

$h()$ is a probability distribution

CUTTING THE RACE SHORT: A GAME THEORETIC APPROACH

Zero-sum Bayesian Stackelberg game



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Bayesian: incomplete information

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$$\sum_r \psi(r) \sum_{r'} f(r'|r) d_q(r', r) \leq Q_{\text{loss}}^{\text{max}}$$

$$\sum_{r'} f(r'|r) = 1, f(r'|r) \geq 0, \forall r, r'$$

OPTIMAL STRATEGY FOR THE ADV

Choose $h(\hat{r}|r')$, $y_r = \max \sum_{\hat{r}} h(\hat{r}|r) d_p(\hat{r}, r)$

minimize $\sum_r \psi(r) y_r + z Q_{\text{loss}}^{\text{max}}$

s.t. $y_r \geq \sum_{\hat{r}} h(\hat{r}|r) d_p(\hat{r}, r) - z d_q(r', r), \forall r, r'$

$$\sum_{\hat{r}} h(\hat{r}|r') = 1, h(\hat{r}|r') \geq 0, \forall r', \hat{r}$$

$$z \geq 0$$

maximize privacy

quality constraint

shadow price

$h()$ is a probability distribution

ARE WE THERE YET?

PRIVACY BY DESIGN ROCKS!



BUT REALIZING IT IS NON-TRIVIAL

ARE WE THERE YET?

PRIVACY BY DESIGN ROCKS!



BUT REALIZING IT IS NON-TRIVIAL

PART I:
REASONING ABOUT PRIVACY WHEN
DESIGNING SYSTEMS



Explicit privacy engineering activities

PART II:
DESIGNING TECHNOLOGIES TO SUPPORT
PRIVACY-AWARE DESIGNS



Systematic design methods
for obfuscation mechanisms

ARE WE THERE YET?

PRIVACY BY DESIGN ROCKS!



BUT REALIZING IT IS NON-TRIVIAL

PART I:
REASONING ABOUT PRIVACY WHEN
DESIGNING SYSTEMS



Explicit privacy engineering activities



PART II:
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Systematic design methods
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Fully fledged methodology?

Requirements? Evaluation?

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Strong assumption's dependency

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Strong assumption's dependency

High computational cost

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Strong assumption's dependency

High computational cost

Lack of standard metrics

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Universal?

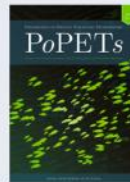
THANKS!

ANY QUESTIONS?

More about privacy:

<https://www.petsymposium.org/>

<http://www.degruyter.com/view/j/popets>



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<https://software.imdea.org/~carmela.troncoso/>

(these slides will be there soon)

Template: <http://www.brainybetty.com/>

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