

Privacy, mass-surveillance, and cryptography

The Guardian view Columnists Cartoons

Glenn Greenwald on security and liberty

This article is more than 7 years old

The crux of the NSA story in one phrase: 'collect it all'
Glenn Greenwald

The actual story that matters is not hard to see: the NSA is attempting to collect, monitor and store all forms of human communication

Mon 15 Jul 2013 11.40 BST

<https://youtu.be/kV2HDM86Xgl?t=1026>



IFIP International Summer School on Privacy and Identity Management

Privacy and Identity 2015: [Privacy and Identity Management. Time for a Revolution?](#) pp 296-311 | [Cite as](#)

Can Courts Provide Effective Remedies Against Violations of Fundamental Rights by Mass Surveillance? The Case of the United Kingdom

which expands the GCHQ's competences even further. It concludes that neither the Tribunal's jurisprudence nor the current reform process alleviate concerns regarding the mass surveillance's compatibility with human rights.

Michael Hayden: "We Kill People Based on Metadata"

by David Cole

May 10, 2014



Cryptography:

- Attempts to give everyone the option of privacy
- How? Secure communication over an insecure channel

Viewers of the insecure channel: **Adversaries**



Not all adversaries are made equal!

Large-scale adversaries



Examples:

- Powerful governments.
- Large data collection companies (like Google or Facebook).

Some abilities:

- Ability to store and/or access large amounts of (meta)data long-term.
- Access to much higher computing power than users.
- Influence over encryption standards (c.f. backdoors).
- Influence over potential 'Trusted Third Parties'.

Small-scale adversaries

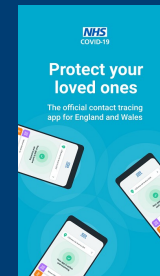


Limitations:

- Cannot store large amounts of (meta)data long-term.
- No option for 'legal' acquisition of data stored by others.
- Weaker assumptions on computing power.
- 'Trusted Third Parties' can be reasonably used to aid against small-scale adversaries.

Use-cases for secure communication

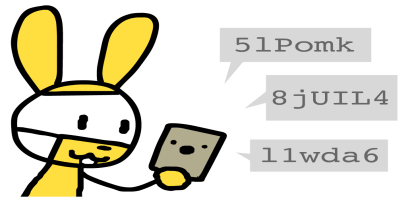
- Encrypted messaging.
- Authentication of your identity (e.g. so people can't impersonate you).
- Preserving anonymity online.
- Preserving anonymity with contact tracing.
- (etc.)



HOW PRIVACY-FIRST CONTACT TRACING WORKS

Image due to Nicky Case.

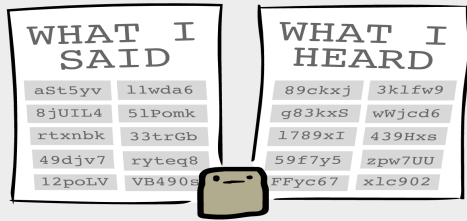
Describes DP-3T.



Alice's phone broadcasts a random message every few minutes.



Alice sits next to Bob. Their phones exchange messages.



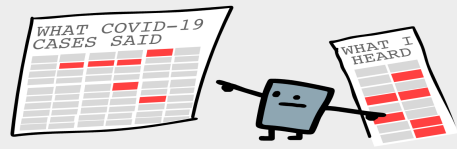
Both phones remember what they said & heard in the past 14 days.



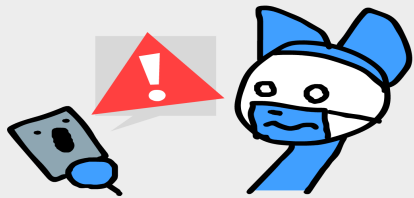
If Alice gets Covid-19, she sends *her* messages to a hospital.



Because the messages are random, no info's revealed to the hospital...



...but Bob's phone can find out if it "heard" any messages from Covid-19 cases!



If it "heard" enough messages, meaning Bob was exposed for a long enough time, he'll be alerted.

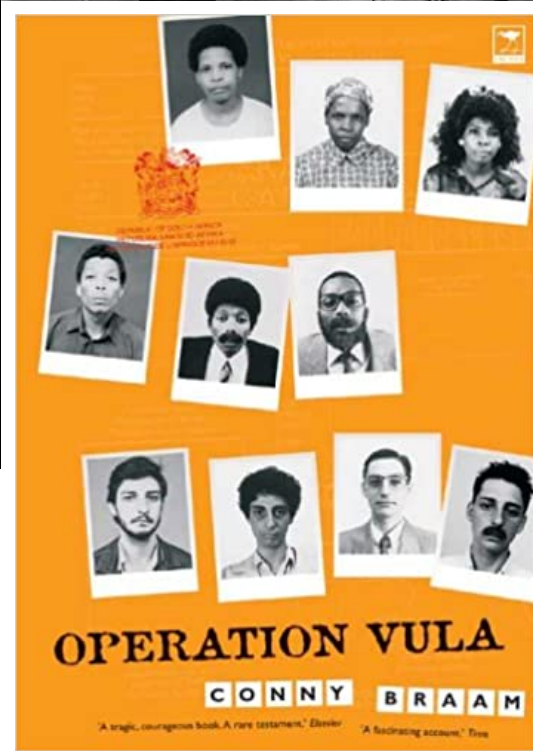
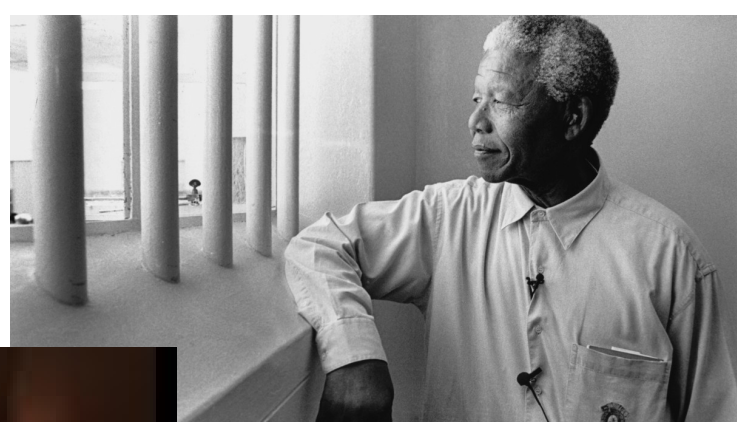


And *that's* how contact tracing can protect our health *and* privacy!

Encrypted messages: One Time Pads

- Message: a bit string (e.g. $m = 1001100$)
- OTP: also a bit string (e.g. $k = 0111000$)
- Encrypted message: line up m and k , and flip the bit of m if corresponding bit in k is 1.

```
1 0 0 1 1 0 0
0 1 1 1 0 0 0
      ↓
1 1 1 0 1 0 0
```



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Public Key Encryption (PKE)

User



I need people to be able to
send me encrypted messages

Public Key Encryption (PKE)

User



I need people to be able to send me encrypted messages

1. KeyGen

Chloe's
secret key



Chloe's
public key



Public Key Encryption (PKE)

User



1. KeyGen



Public database



Public Key Encryption (PKE)

User



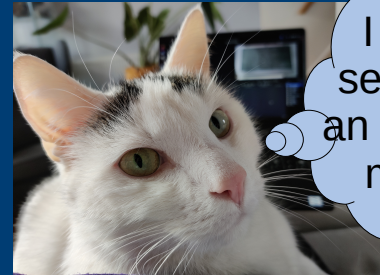
1. KeyGen



Public database



Second party



I need to send Chloe an encrypted message

Public Key Encryption (PKE)

User



1. KeyGen



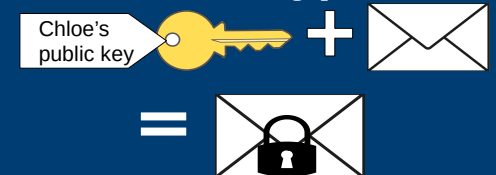
Public database



Second party



2. Encrypt



Public Key Encryption (PKE)

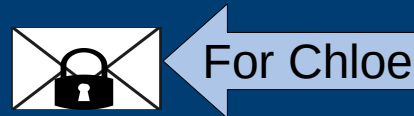
User



1. KeyGen



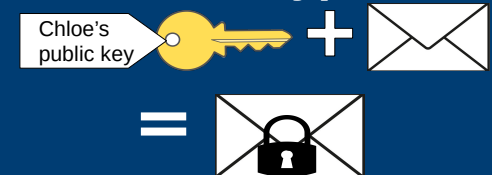
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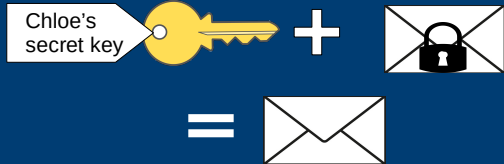
User



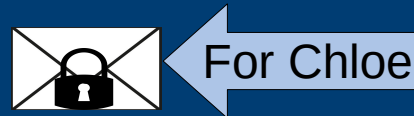
1. KeyGen



3. Decrypt



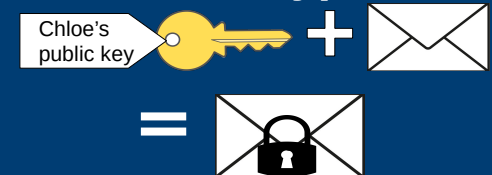
Public database



Second party



2. Encrypt



- WhatsApp, Signal, Google etc. use PKE
- Medical and criminal records are secured with PKE

- New method of computing uses quantum physics
- This will break (almost) all PKE currently in use

- Large-scale adversaries store data long-term
- With a quantum computer, can decrypt all private data

QUANTUM COMPUTING

~~RALPH~~
BREAKS THE
INTERNET



- My research: creating PKE resistant to quantum computers
- All current ideas are slow or big and mostly untested
- Big challenge: convince companies to make the switch
- Other challenges: humans, side-channels...