

# Computer and Network Security

## Lecture 28: Digital Conflict and “The Cyber”

Fall 2024  
COMP-5370/6370





Try to pick which is a security-related term,  
which is a non-security term, and which I  
made up on my own:

- cyber-vector
- cyber-cold-war
- cyber-terrorism
- cyber-space
- cyber-attribution
- cyber-psychology
- cyber-evolution
- cyber-english
- cyber-guerilla
- cyber-security
- cyber-physical
- cyber-company
- cyber-ai
- cyber-stalking
- cyber-sale
- cyber-slam
- cyber-performance
- cyber-espionage
- cyber-ceiling fan
- cyber-mechanics
- cyber-anatomy
- cyber-netics
- cyber-truck
- "the cyber"

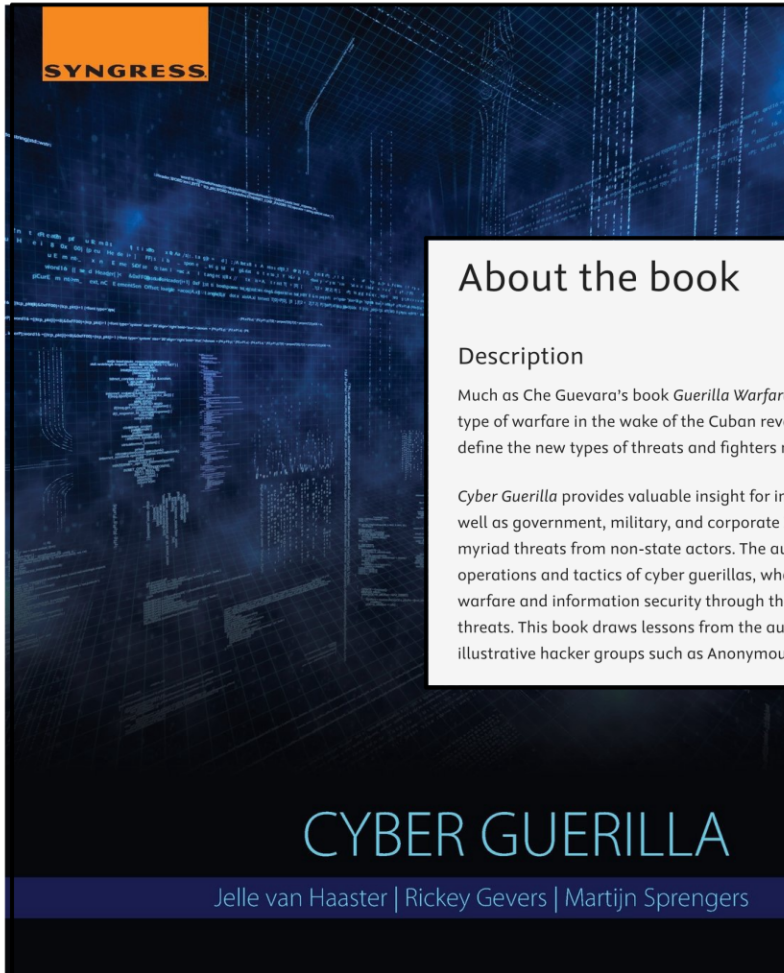




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- |                     |                     |
|---------------------|---------------------|
| ■ cyber-vector      | ■ cyber-stalking    |
| ■ cyber-cold-war    | ■ cyber-sale        |
| ■ cyber-terrorism   | ■ cyber-slam        |
| ■ cyber-space       | ■ cyber-performance |
| ■ cyber-attribution | ■ cyber-espionage   |
| ■ cyber-psychology  | ■ cyber-ceiling fan |
| ■ cyber-evolution   | ■ cyber-mechanics   |
| ■ cyber-english     | ■ cyber-anatomy     |
| ■ cyber-guerilla    | ■ cyber-netics      |
| ■ cyber-security    | ■ cyber-truck       |
| ■ cyber-physical    | ■ "the cyber"       |
| ■ cyber-company     |                     |
| ■ cyber-ai          |                     |

# Yes, Cyber Guerilla is Real



## About the book

### Description

Much as Che Guevara's book *Guerilla Warfare* helped define and delineate a new type of warfare in the wake of the Cuban revolution in 1961, *Cyber Guerilla* will help define the new types of threats and fighters now appearing in the digital landscape.

*Cyber Guerilla* provides valuable insight for infosec professionals and consultants, as well as government, military, and corporate IT strategists who must defend against myriad threats from non-state actors. The authors take readers inside the operations and tactics of cyber guerillas, who are changing the dynamics of cyber warfare and information security through their unconventional strategies and threats. This book draws lessons from the authors' own experiences but also from illustrative hacker groups such as Anonymous, LulzSec and Rebellious Rose.

### Key Features

- Discusses the conceptual and ideological foundation of hackers and hacker groups
- Provides concrete footholds regarding hacker group strategy
- Discusses how cyber guerillas are changing the face of cyber warfare and cyber security through asymmetrical, flexible and stealthy means and methods
- Explains the tactics, techniques, and procedures these hacker groups use in their operations
- Describes how cyber guerrillas and hackers use the media and influence the public
- Serves as a must-have guide for anyone who wants to understand—or is responsible for defending against—cyber warfare attacks



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- "the cyber"

# Yes, Cyber-Anatomy is Real



## What is Cyber-Anatomy?



Cyber-Anatomy is an advanced virtual reality turnkey system for learning medical-level human anatomy. Cyber Anatomy is a software that enables us to study the human Gross, cross-sectional anatomy in three dimensions. Studying anatomy from various books, Atlases, videos is a traditional method. This new digital method helps students to see anatomy easily to visualize, discuss, learn, and memorize. The following system can be studied in Cyber anatomy. We are proud to share that Northwest School of Medicine is the only institution in Pakistan to offer this cutting-edge teaching technology.

[f](#) [i](#) [x](#) /nwsmedu [nws.edu.pk](#) [info@nws.edu.pk](#) [091-5838850](#)

IOWA



Carver College of Medicine

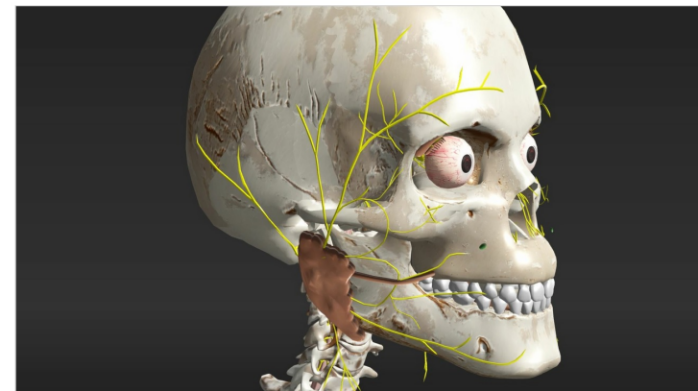
Department of Anatomy and Cell Biology

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≡ MENU

## EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES

≡ SECTION MENU



### Cyber-Anatomy

A series of 125 interactive 3D anatomy sessions that take you through the human body one region or system at a time, authored by [Dr. Darren Hoffmann](#). This resource requires a HawkID login and password and is only accessible by UI Students, Faculty and Staff

# Type: Cyber ?Kneecapping?



**Cyber kneecapping** is a made-up phrase to characterize how some nation-states are intentionally limiting users' protection under the rationale of “protecting from harm”.

## Useful Context

- Four Horsemen of the Information Apocalypse  
Terrorists, drug dealers, pedophiles, organized crime

# Remember This?



## Why Use ECC?



- Keys are significantly smaller
  - 256-bit vs. 3072-bit for 128-bit security
- Outputs are significantly smaller
- Attacks against ECC aren't **as mature** as those against finite-field

Table 3: OpenSSL 1.0.1c Speed Numbers with 64 bit ECC Optimizations

| Certificate type         | xLarge (c1.xlarge) |           |        |          | Medium (c1.medium) |           |        |          |
|--------------------------|--------------------|-----------|--------|----------|--------------------|-----------|--------|----------|
|                          | Sign               | Verify    | Sign/s | Verify/s | Sign               | Verify    | Sign/s | Verify/s |
| NIST 2048 bits           | 0.002860s          | 0.000090s | 349.7  | 11092.7  | 0.002925s          | 0.000092s | 341.9  | 10863.7  |
| 256 bit ECDSA (nistp256) | 0.0002s            | 0.0005s   | 4656.1 | 1848.7   | 0.0002s            | 0.0006s   | 4492.4 | 1773.6   |
| 384 bit ECDSA (nistp384) | 0.0004s            | 0.0020s   | 2341.2 | 487.9    | 0.0004s            | 0.0021s   | 2269.4 | 470.2    |

- Significantly faster than finite-field

## Maybe-Safe ECC Curves



- CNSA approves use-specific curves

| Transition Algorithms                              |  |                 |  |
|--|--|-----------------|--|
| Algorithm  | Function   | Specification   | Parameters                                   |
| Advanced Encryption Standard (AES)                 | Symmetric block cipher used for information protection                 | FIPS Pub 197    | Use 256 bit keys to protect up to TOP SECRET |
| Elliptic Curve Diffie-Hellman (ECDH)               | Asymmetric algorithm used for key establishment                        | NIST SP 800-56A | Use Curve P-384 to protect up to TOP SECRET. |
| Elliptic Curve Digital Signature Algorithm (ECDSA) | Asymmetric algorithm used for digital signatures                       | FIPS Pub 186-4  | Use Curve P-384 to protect up to TOP SECRET. |
| Secure Hash Algorithm (SHA)                        | Algorithm used for computing a condensed representation of information | FIPS Pub 180-4  | Use SHA-384 to protect up to TOP SECRET.     |

## NIST Curves are Sketchy?



### Dual EC: A Standardized Back Door

Daniel J. Bernstein<sup>1,2</sup>, Tanja Lange<sup>1</sup>, and Ruben Niederhagen<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Department of Mathematics and Computer Science  
Technische Universiteit Eindhoven  
P.O. Box 513, 5600 MB Eindhoven, The Netherlands  
tanja@hyperelliptic.org, ruben@polycafe.org

<sup>2</sup> Department of Computer Science  
University of Illinois at Chicago  
Chicago, IL 60607-7045, USA  
djb@uic.edu

### On the Practical Exploitability of Dual EC in TLS Implementations

Stephen Checkoway<sup>1</sup>, Matthew Fredrikson<sup>2</sup>, Ruben Niederhagen<sup>1</sup>, Adam Everquest<sup>2</sup>,  
Matthew Green<sup>1</sup>, Tanja Lange<sup>2</sup>, Thomas Ristenpart<sup>2</sup>,  
Daniel J. Bernstein<sup>1,3</sup>, Jake Maskiewicz<sup>2</sup>, and Howa Shacham<sup>1</sup>  
<sup>1</sup> Johns Hopkins University, <sup>2</sup>University of Wisconsin, <sup>3</sup>Technische Universiteit Eindhoven,  
<sup>4</sup>University of Illinois at Chicago, <sup>5</sup>UC San Diego

## Maybe-Safe ECC Curves



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**DUAL\_EC\_DRBG** was a CSPRING approved by NIST as “safe” even though it was known to be *less-than-ideal* at the time.

- Was extremely slow compared to others
- Theoretical attacks discovered between proposal and standardization (constants)
- Almost everyone agreed to not use

# Very Likely an NSA Operation



- Pushed for its standardization when no one else supported it or even wanted it
- Changed the constants but didn't explain why or admit that they did
- Secretly paid \$10M to make it the default RNG source for many enterprises.
  - RSA Inc's BSAFE library
- Strong-armed companies to adding it to their own software (Juniper NetScreen)



# Juniper + DUAL\_EC



- 2008: Dept. of Defense demanded Juniper implement and use DUAL\_EC
- 2012: APT5 compromised Juniper and altered NSA's constants to own constants
- 2015: Altered constants discovered and patch released to return to NSA constants
- 2018: NSA notifies Sen. Wyden that NSA created a "lessons learned" report
- 2021: NSA tells Sen. Wyden that they "cannot locate this document"

# The Fallacy of NOBUS



Cyber capabilities are often asserted to be  
**“No One But US” (NOBUS)** in terms of:

- No malicious actor has capability to exploit
- No malicious actor will ever be able to exploit
- No harm could ever come from neglecting to patch the underlying vulnerabilities

**NOBUS mentality is not only false, but is also dangerously arrogant.**

# The Fallacy of NOBUS



Cyber capabilities are often claimed in terms of “**No One But US**” (**NOBUS**) but that mentality is not only false, but is also dangerously arrogant.

- Access to OPM data was NOBUS
  - Until it wasn't
- Exploitation of ETERNAL BLUE was NOBUS
  - Until it wasn't
- Crypto defeat via DUAL\_EC was NOBUS
  - Until it wasn't

# Computer and Network Security

## Lecture 28 Surveillance



Fall 2025  
COMP-5370/6370



# Nation-State Actors



- Highly Knowledgeable and Specialized
- Highly Privileged
- Exceptional Access to Resources

# Surveillance



**Surveillance** is the act of monitoring a person, place, or group for explicit purpose of gathering information on their activities.

- HUMINT: Human Intelligence
  - Alice says Bob is at work right now
- GEOINT: Geospatial Intelligence
  - Imagery says Bob is at work right now
- SIGINT: Signals Intelligence
  - ELINT: Bob's phone is at his work right now
  - COMINT: Bob texted his wife that he was at work

# Uses of Surveillance



There are perfectly valid and justified uses of surveillance and intelligence collection.

- Goal is to protect country and citizens
- There are many actors to protect against



- Oversight protects against abuse and protect against tyrannical power



# US Intelligence Abuses



**FOX NEWS** Watch TV

POLITICS • Published September 7

## National security surveillance court finds FBI regularly does not follow rules


The largely secret Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Court identified 'widespread violations' concerning improper searches for information on American citizens

By Julia Musto | Fox News

**The Washington Post**  
Democracy Dies in Darkness

National Security Foreign Policy Justice Military

## FBI and NSA violated surveillance law or privacy rules, a federal judge found




The J. Edgar Hoover FBI Building in Washington. (Astrid Riecken for The Washington Post)

**CNN politics** LIVE TV

## Surveillance court wants FBI to explain new reported shortcomings

By Evan Perez, CNN Justice Correspondent  
Updated 7:10 PM ET, Fri April 3, 2020




(CNN) — The federal surveillance court wants the FBI to explain new reported shortcomings in its handling of surveillance requests.

**POLITICO**

LEGAL

## Court rules NSA phone snooping illegal — after 7-year delay

But the controversial phone metadata program played little role in the terror-fundraising case at issue, the long-awaited ruling says.



The NSA campus | Patrick Semansky, File/AP Photo



# September 11, 2001



- Completely unexpected
- Lots of fear, uncertainty, and doubt for a long time afterwards
- People were scared  
***This can't be allowed to happen again.***

# Oct 2001: USA Patriot Act



PUBLIC LAW 107-56—OCT. 26, 2001

UNITING AND STRENGTHENING AMERICA BY  
PROVIDING APPROPRIATE TOOLS REQUIRED  
TO INTERCEPT AND OBSTRUCT TERRORISM  
(USA PATRIOT ACT) ACT OF 2001

- Major rule changes on Law Enforcement access to information
- Major focus on “Tangible things” and “Business Records”

# Jul 2008: FISA Amendments Act



PUBLIC LAW 110-261—JULY 10, 2008

FOREIGN INTELLIGENCE SURVEILLANCE  
ACT OF 1978 AMENDMENTS ACT OF 2008

- Allows Attorney General and DNI to authorize monitoring
- Is very explicitly not allowed to target "US-Persons"

# 2006 – 2013



ars TECHNICA

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Monday, February 06, 2006

Headlines

Our Readers' Most Forwarded Article of the Week

A 9/11 Conspirator in King Bush's Court?  
by Jeremy Scahill

Printer Friendly Version E-Mail This Article

Published on Friday, December 16, 2005 by the [New York Times](#)

## Bush Lets U.S. Spy on Callers Without Courts

by James Risen and Eric Lichtblau

WASHINGTON - Months after the Sept. 11 attacks, President Bush secretly authorized the National Security Agency to eavesdrop on Americans and others inside the United States to search for evidence of terrorist activity without the court-approved warrants ordinarily required for domestic spying, according to government officials.

WIRED

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JAMES BAMFORD SECURITY 03.15.2012 07:24 PM

# June 6, 2013



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## US national security

Glenn Greenwald on security and liberty

### NSA collecting phone records of millions of Verizon customers daily

**Exclusive:** Top secret court order requiring Verizon to hand over all call data shows scale of domestic surveillance under Obama

- Read the Verizon court order in full here
- Obama administration justifies surveillance

**Glenn Greenwald**

Thursday 6 June 2013 06:05 EDT



Under the terms of the order, the numbers of both parties on a call are handed over, as is location data and the time and duration of all calls. Photograph: Matt Rourke/AP

# June 7, 2013



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## US national security

Glenn Greenwald on security and liberty

## NSA Prism program taps in to user data of Apple, Google and others

- Top-secret Prism program claims direct access to servers of firms including Google, Apple and Facebook
- Companies deny any knowledge of program in operation since 2007
- [Obama orders US to draw up overseas target list for cyber-attacks](#)

Glenn Greenwald and Ewen MacAskill

Friday 7 June 2013 15.23 EDT

PRISM/US-984XN  
Overview  
OR  
The SIGAD Used Most in NSA Reporting  
Overview  
PRISM Collection Manager, S35333  
April 2013  
TOP SECRET//SI//ORCON//NOFORN

A slide depicting the top-secret PRISM program.

# June 8, 2013



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## NSA

Glenn Greenwald on security and liberty

# Boundless Informant: the NSA's secret tool to track global surveillance data

**Revealed:** The NSA's powerful tool for cataloguing global surveillance data - including figures on US collection

- [Boundless Informant: mission outlined in four slides](#)
- [Read the NSA's frequently asked questions document](#)

Glenn Greenwald and Ewen MacAskill

Tuesday 11 June 2013 09:00 EDT

A world map illustrating global surveillance data collection by the NSA. The map uses a color scheme where green indicates the least surveillance, yellow and orange indicate moderate surveillance, and red indicates the most surveillance. The United States is highlighted in orange, with a callout box showing 'United States 2,892,343,446'. Other countries like China and India are also shown in orange, while many European and African countries are in green.

1 The color scheme ranges from green (least subjected to surveillance) through yellow and orange to red (most surveillance). Note the '2007' date in the image relates to the document from which the interactive map derives its top secret classification, not to the map itself.



June 9, 2013



EDWARD SNOWDEN  
NSA Whistleblower



# Global Passive Adversary



A **Global Passive Adversary** is a type of nation-state behavior that is able to monitor nearly-all traffic on the Internet.

- Do not have full control or insight but effectively do
- Think of a “All-Knowing, Ever-Present Eve”

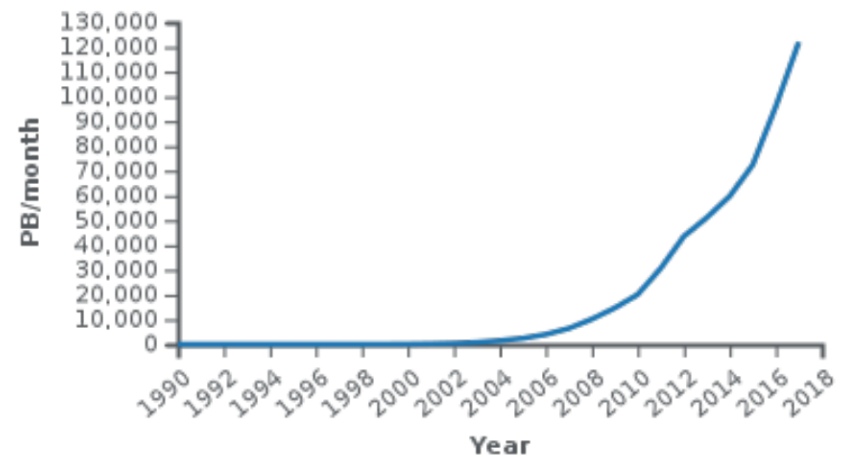
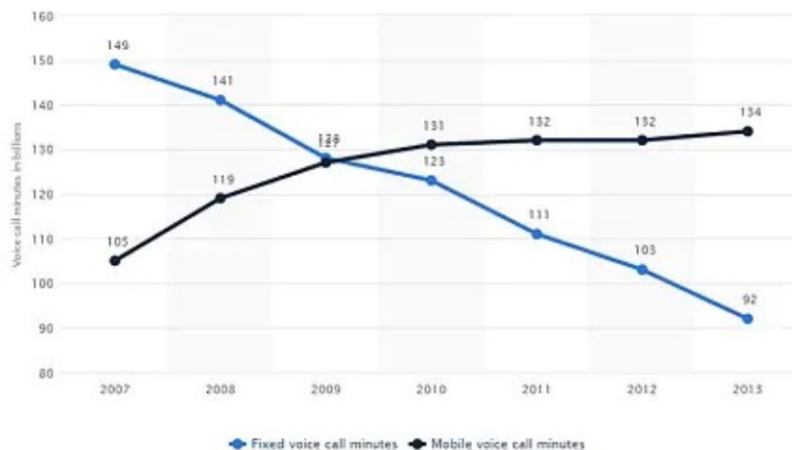


# Rise of the Internet



The Internet slowly but surely took over as the primary way to communicate over long-distances and across continents.

Number of total voice call minutes in the United Kingdom (UK) from 2007 to 2013, by fixed and mobile (in billion minutes)





TOP SECRET//COMINT//REL TO USA, RUSS, CAN, GBR, NZL

# Why are we interested in HTTP?

facebook

YAHOO!

twitter

myspace.com  
a place for friends

**Because nearly everything a typical user does on the Internet uses HTTP**

CNN.com

@mail.ru



Google  
Earth

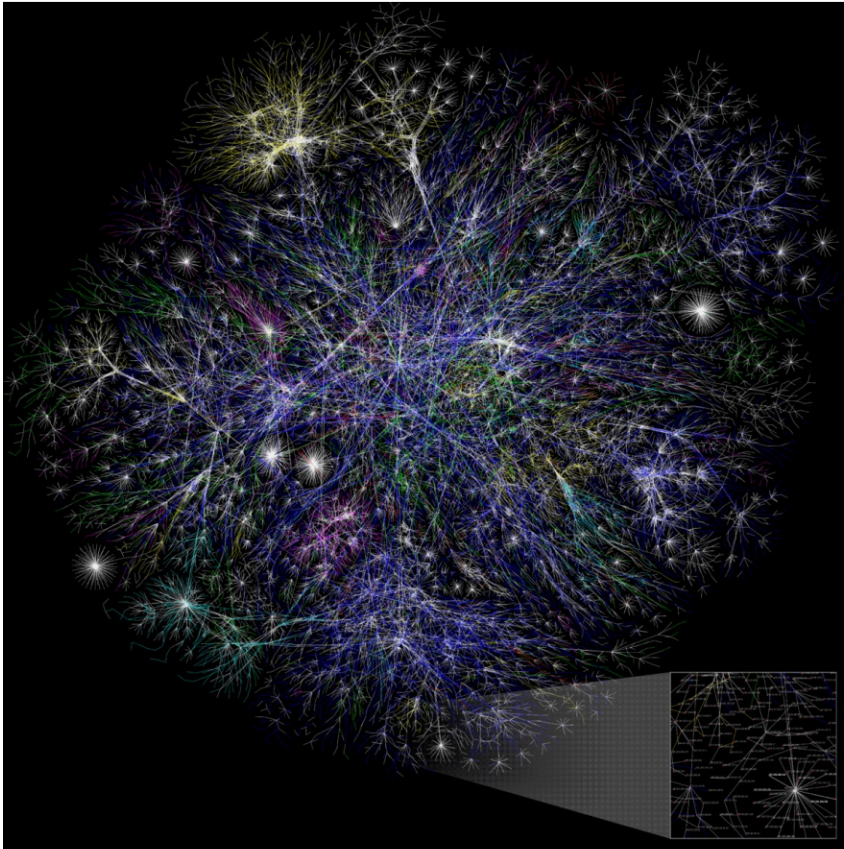
Gmail  
by Google

# Bulk Traffic Collection

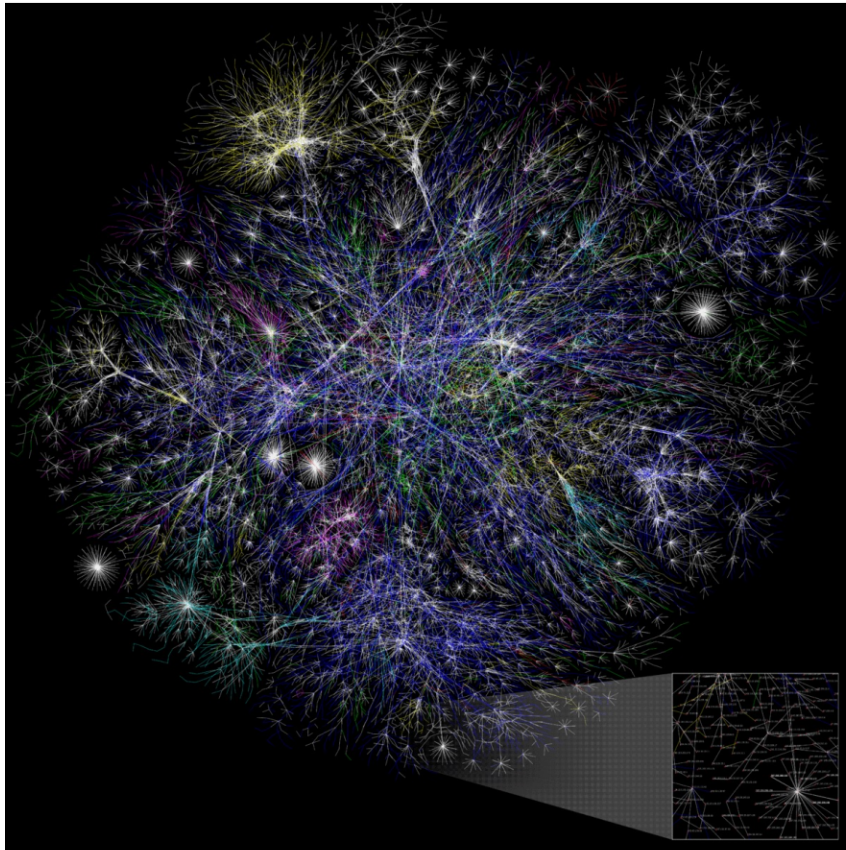




# Internet Structure

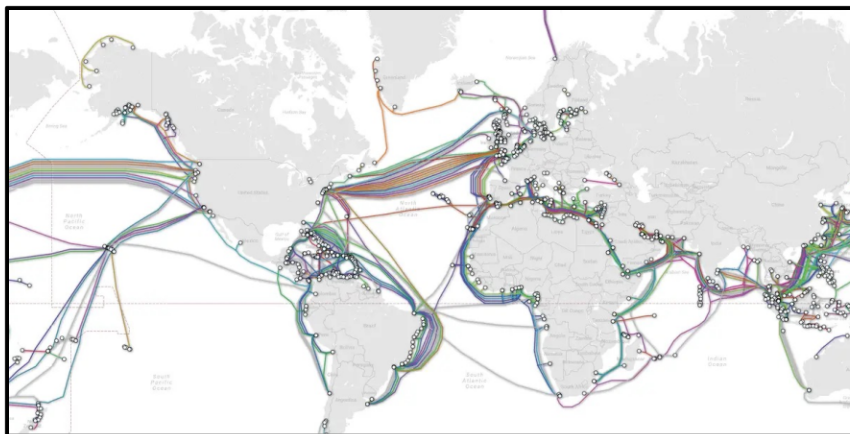
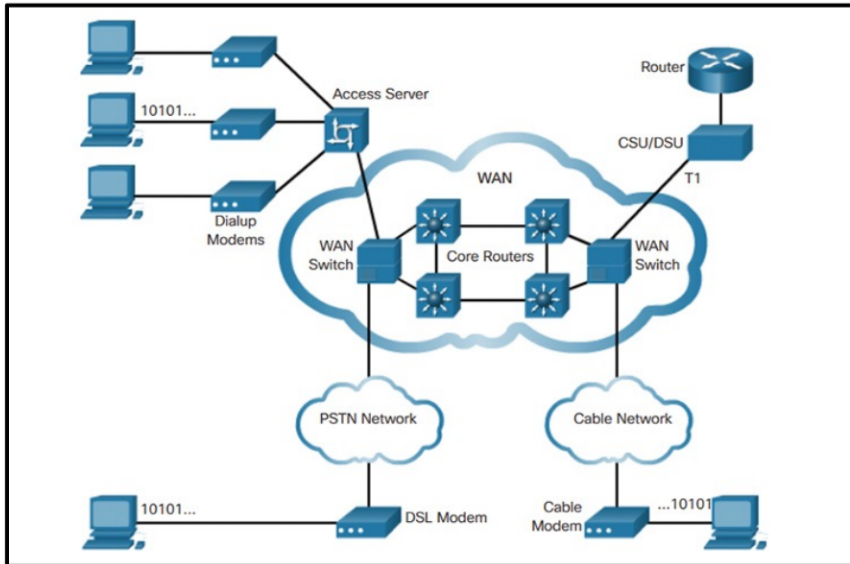


# Internet Structure



- The Internet isn't as structured as the telephony network
  - Devices change location
  - Users change location
  - Decentralized by design

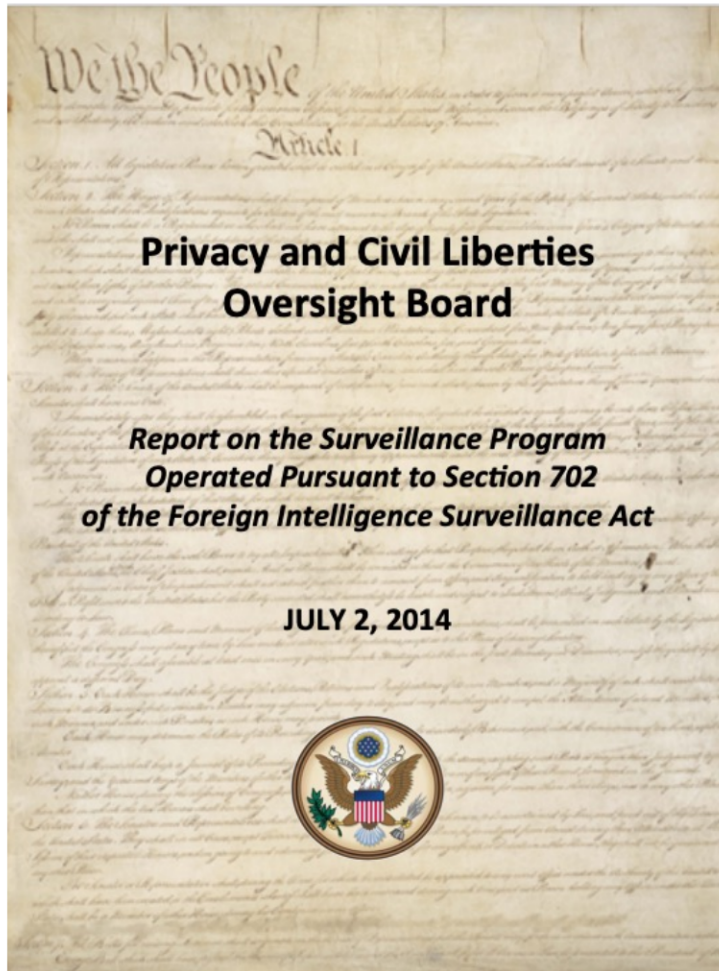
# Internet Structure



- The Internet isn't as structured as the telephony network
  - Devices change location
  - Users change location
  - Decentralized by design
- Internet has structure
- Network choke-points



# 702 Upstream Program



- NSA tapped ISP networks to collect raw network traffic
- “Task” a “selector” to automatically collect
  - Such as email address
- Not allowed to target US persons
  - “incidental” collection OK



# 702 Upstream Program



<https://theintercept.com/2018/06/25/att-internet-nsa-spy-hubs/>  
<https://mynorthwest.com/1029602/seattle-nsa-spy-hub/>

# 702 Upstream Program



<sup>26</sup> NSA acquired more than 13.25 million Internet transactions through its upstream collection between January 1, 2011, and June 30, 2011. See Aug. 16 Submission at 2; see also Sept. 9 Submission at 1-2.

NSA acquires more than two hundred fifty million Internet communications each year pursuant to Section 702, but the vast majority of these communications are obtained from Internet service providers and are not at issue here.<sup>24</sup> Sept. 9 Submission at 1; Aug. 16 Submission at Appendix A. Indeed, NSA's upstream collection constitutes only approximately

..... page break .....

9% of the total Internet communications being acquired by NSA under Section 702. Sept. 9 Submission at 1; Aug. 16 Submission at 2.

# The Storage Problem



## Cisco ASR 9000 400-Gbps IPoDWDM Line Card Data Sheet

Save Translations Download Print

Updated: April 7, 2017 Document ID: 42aa5b2f-68e7-4b31-be1a-74f24b2275b7

[Bias-Free Language](#)

### Product Overview

The Cisco® ASR 9000 Series IP over dense wavelength-division multiplexing (DWDM) collapses network layers by tightly integrating DWDM interfaces with the routing platform, thereby helping customers to increase operational efficiency by simplifying management and accelerating service delivery. This 400-Gbps throughput capable IPoDWDM line card provides customers with a flexible solution supporting multiple combinations of coherent 100G and 10G Ethernet ports, all in a single slot of the Cisco ASR 9000 Series Aggregation Services Routers. This IPoDWDM line-card solution further reduces transport elements, while supporting advanced multilayer features such as proactive protection and control-plane interaction, dramatically reducing operating expenses and capital cost.

The Cisco ASR 9000 400-Gbps IPoDWDM line card can support customer applications including video on demand, Internet Protocol Television (IPTV), point-to-point video, Internet video, and cloud-based computing. These line cards can also be used to deliver economical, scalable, highly available, line-rate Ethernet and IP/Multi-protocol Label Switching (IP/MPLS) edge services. The Cisco ASR 9000 Series line cards and routers are designed to provide the fundamental infrastructure for scalable Carrier Ethernet and IP/MPLS networks, supporting profitable business, residential, and mobile services (Figure 1).

Figure 1. Cisco ASR 9000 Series 400-Gbps IPoDWDM Line Card



### Features and Benefits

The Cisco ASR 9000 400-Gbps IPoDWDM line card has two coherent 100G CFP2-DWDM ports and 20 ports of 10G that can support all high-powered SFP+ optics.

- @100Gbps:
  - 1 min = 750MB
  - 1 hour = 45TB
  - 1 day = 1PB

# The Storage Problem



- @100Gbps:
  - 1 min = 750MB
  - 1 hour = 45TB
  - 1 day = 1PB





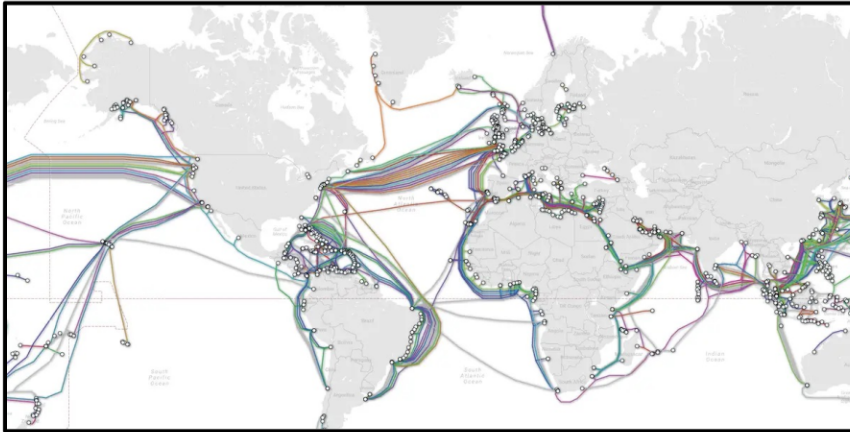
# The Storage Problem



NSA's Utah Data Center  
Google Maps, Dec2025

- @100Gbps:
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  - 1 hour = 45TB
  - 1 day = 1PB

# The Storage Problem



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AWS Acquires a Fiber Pair on MAREA Cable System on IRU Basis

## AWS Acquires a Fiber Pair on MAREA Cable System on IRU Basis

By **Winston Qiu** — Category: [MAREA](#) — 21 January 2019

According to [Telxius](#), Amazon Web Services (AWS) has signed an IRU agreement with Telxius for the use of a fibre pair on MAREA cable system partially owned by Telxius. MAREA provides high capacity, low latency, route diversity. MAREA is the first open subsea cable system in the world, connecting Virginia Beach, USA, and Sopot, Spain, with a system design capacity of 200Tbps, being the the highest capacity submarine cable in the world.

- @100Gbps:
  - 1 min = 750MB
  - 1 hour = 45TB
  - 1 day = 1PB
- Under-sea fiber connections operate on 100s of Tbps



# Metadata



Digital **metadata** is any information *about* a digital artifact/object but is explicitly *not* the artifact/object itself.



# Metadata



Digital **metadata** is any information *about* a digital artifact/object but is explicitly *not* the artifact/object itself.

- File metadata
  - Author, modify-time, program, etc

```
File Name      : 2021-spring-academic-plan-20201106.pdf
File Size     : 1433 kB
File Type      : PDF
MIME Type      : application/pdf
PDF Version    : 1.7
XMP Toolkit     : Adobe XMP Core 6.0-c002 79.164488, 2020/07/10-22:06:53
Create Date    : 2020:11:06 08:36:29-06:00
Modify Date    : 2020:11:06 08:36:34-06:00
Creator Tool    : Adobe InDesign 16.0 (Macintosh)
Original Document ID : xmp.did:fda5065a-249d-4f78-a404-7c4c2f43afc8
Derived From Instance ID : xmp.iid:b1462587-affb-4361-bc20-a115eb56c632
Derived From Document ID : xmp.did:d6471bb4-cbac-4183-bbcf-32060ce68918
Derived From Original Document ID : xmp.did:fda5065a-249d-4f78-a404-7c4c2f43afc8
Derived From Rendition Class : default
History Software Agent : Adobe InDesign 16.0 (Macintosh)
Producer       : Adobe PDF Library 15.0
Page Count     : 26
Creator        : Adobe InDesign 16.0 (Macintosh)
```

# Metadata

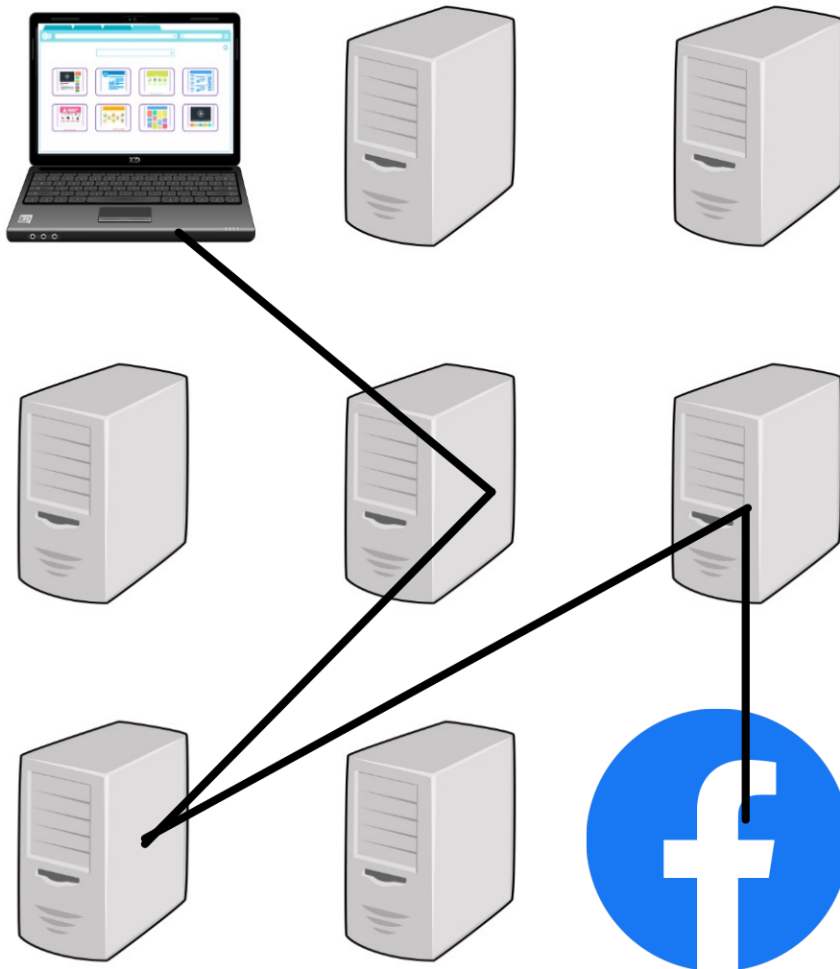


Digital **metadata** is any information *about* a digital artifact/object but is explicitly *not* the artifact/object itself.

- File metadata
  - Author, modify-time, pro
- Network metadata
  - TCP/IP headers, location, size, etc

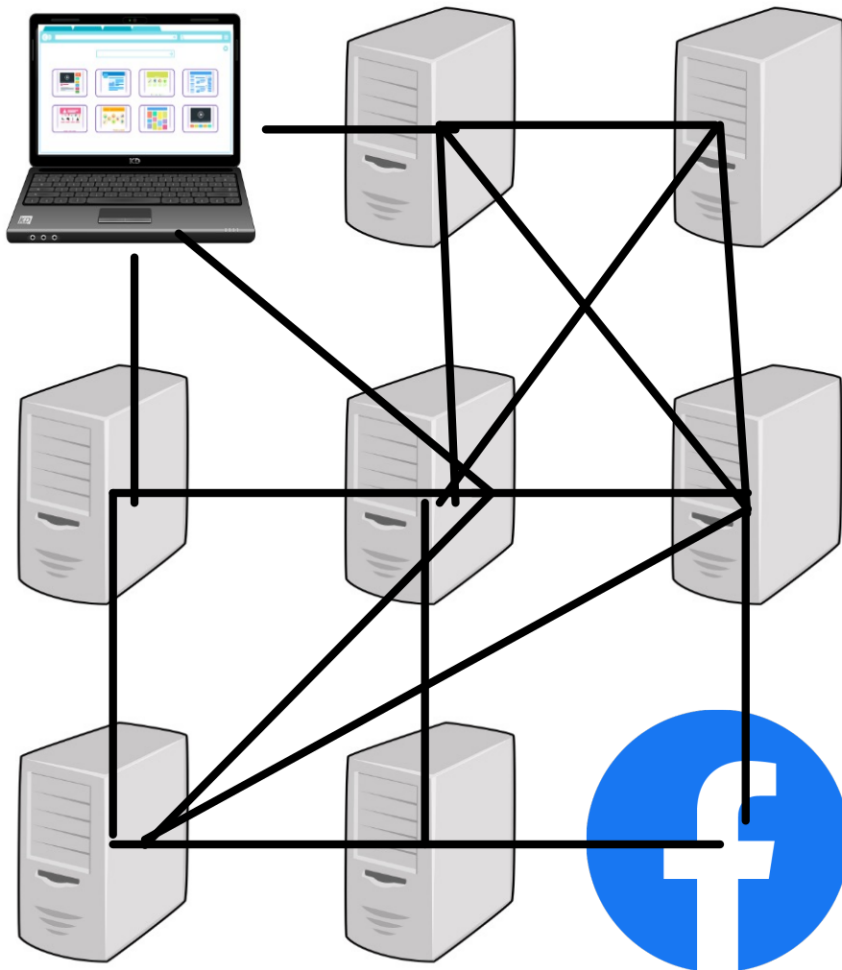
```
Internet Protocol Version 4, Src: [redacted] Dst: 8.8.8.8
  0100 .... = Version: 4
  .... 0101 = Header Length: 20 bytes (5)
  > Differentiated Services Field: 0x00 (DSCP: CS0, ECN: Not-ECT)
  Total Length: 67
  Identification: 0x8393 (33683)
  > Flags: 0x00
  Fragment Offset: 0
  Time to Live: 64
  Protocol: UDP (17)
  Header Checksum: [redacted] [validation disabled]
  [Header checksum status: Unverified]
  Source Address: [redacted]
  Destination Address: 8.8.8.8
User Datagram Protocol, Src Port: [redacted] Dst Port: 53
  Source Port: [redacted]
  Destination Port: 53
  Length: 47
  Checksum: [redacted] [unverified]
  [Checksum Status: Unverified]
  [Stream index: 0]
  > [Timestamps]
```

# Metadata Correlation Attacks



A **Correlation Attack** is a type of side-channel that uses metadata to deanonymize traffic.

# Metadata Correlation Attacks



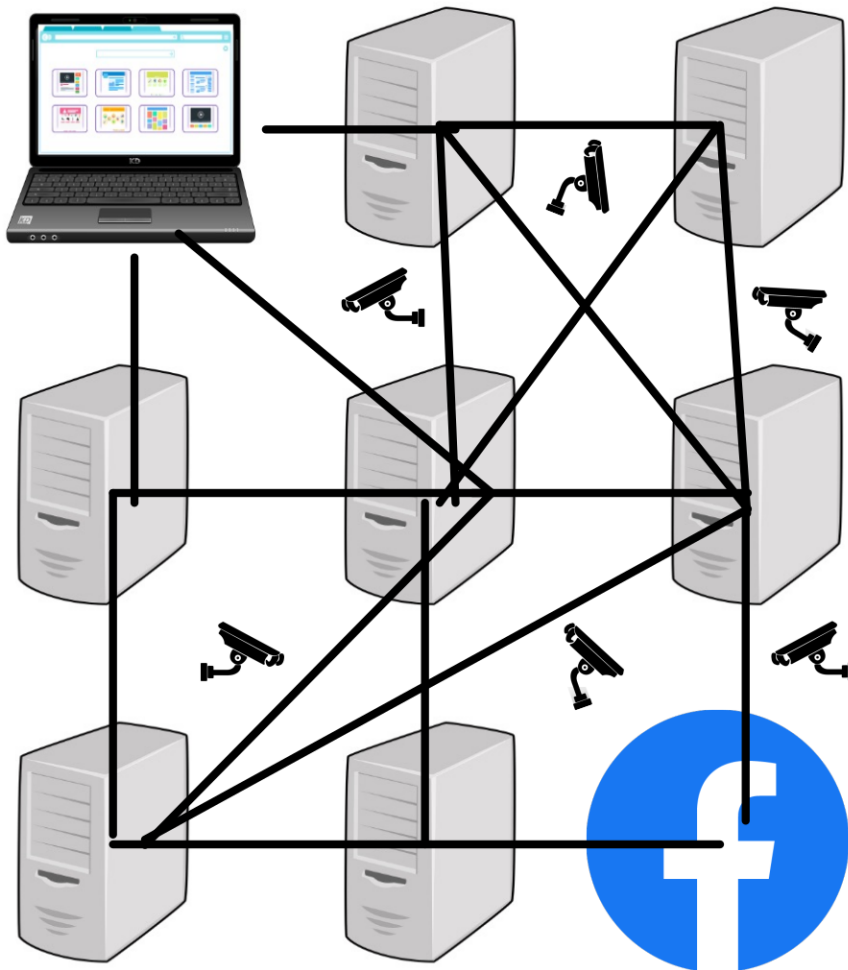
A **Correlation Attack** is a type of side-channel that uses metadata to deanonymize traffic.

- Only needs 1 identifiable aspect
  - Packet size
  - Packet count
  - Packet timing





# Metadata Correlation Attacks

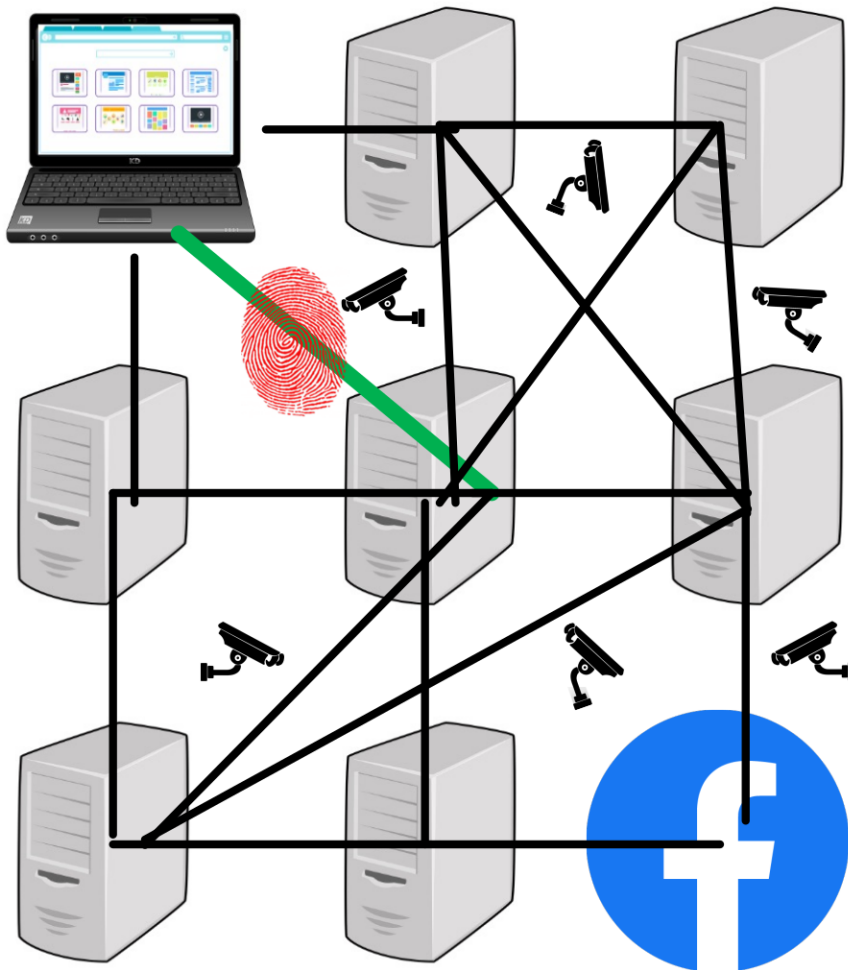


A **Correlation Attack** is a type of side-channel that uses metadata to deanonymize traffic.

- Only  
id



# Metadata Correlation Attacks

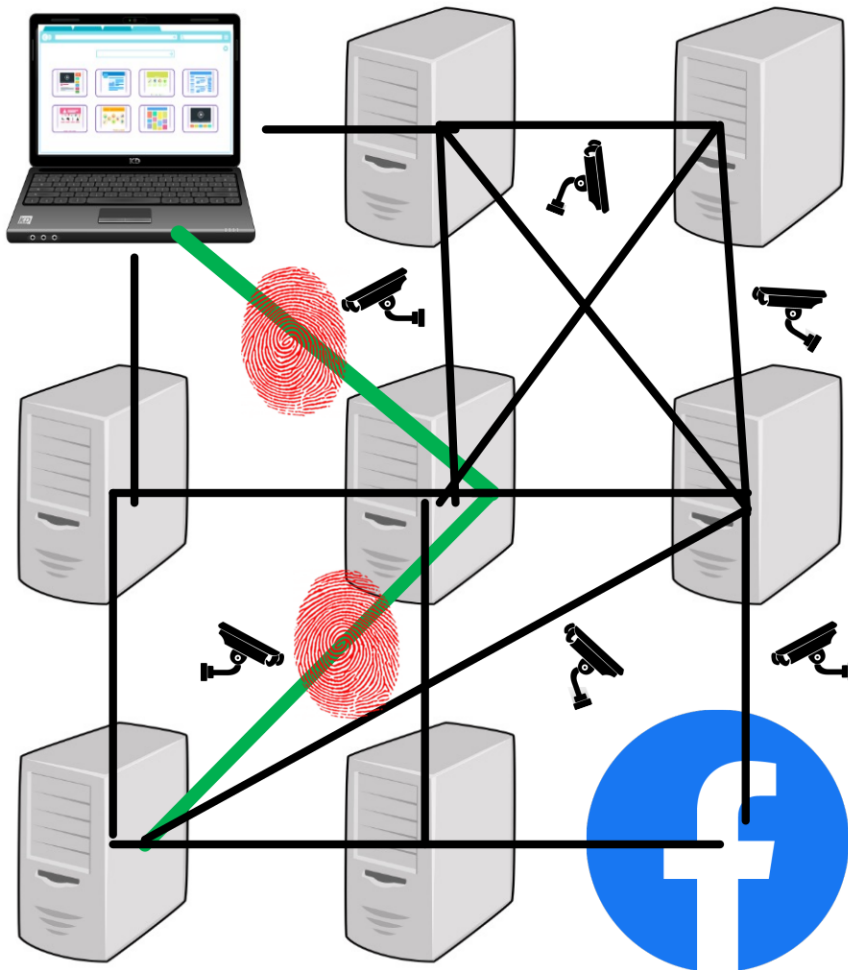


A **Correlation Attack** is a type of side-channel that uses metadata to deanonymize traffic.

- Only needs 1 identifiable aspect
  - Packet size
  - Packet count
  - Packet timing



# Metadata Correlation Attacks

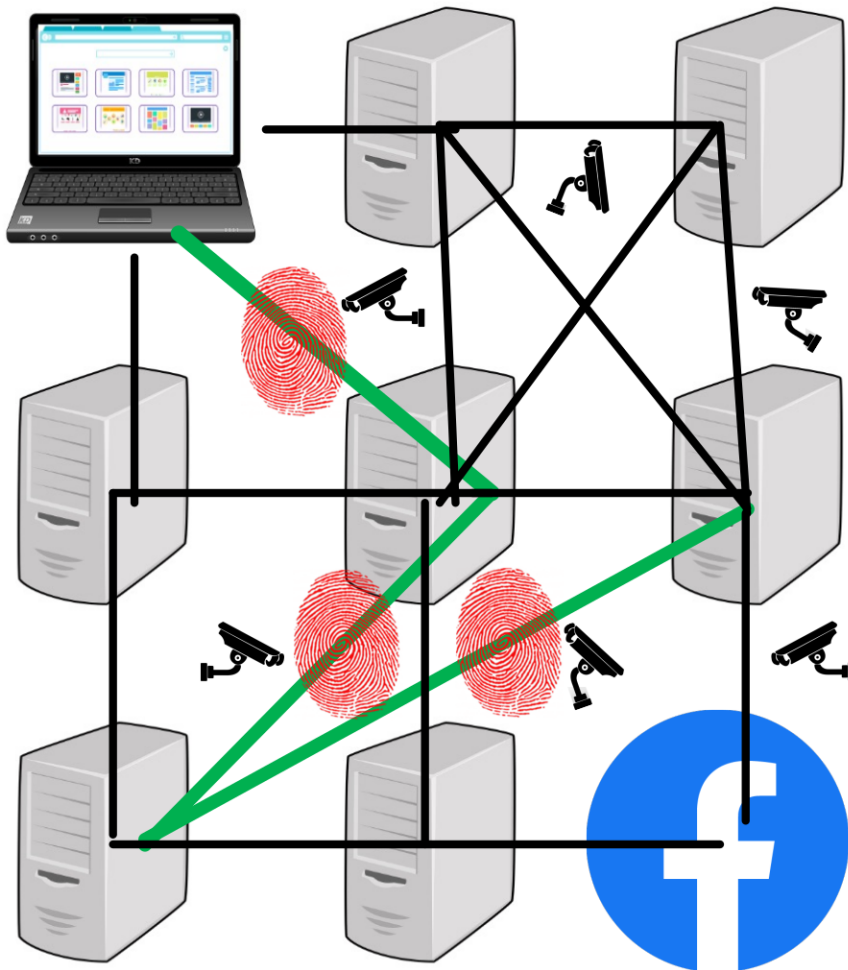


A **Correlation Attack** is a type of side-channel that uses metadata to deanonymize traffic.

- Only needs 1 identifiable aspect
  - Packet size
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# Metadata Correlation Attacks

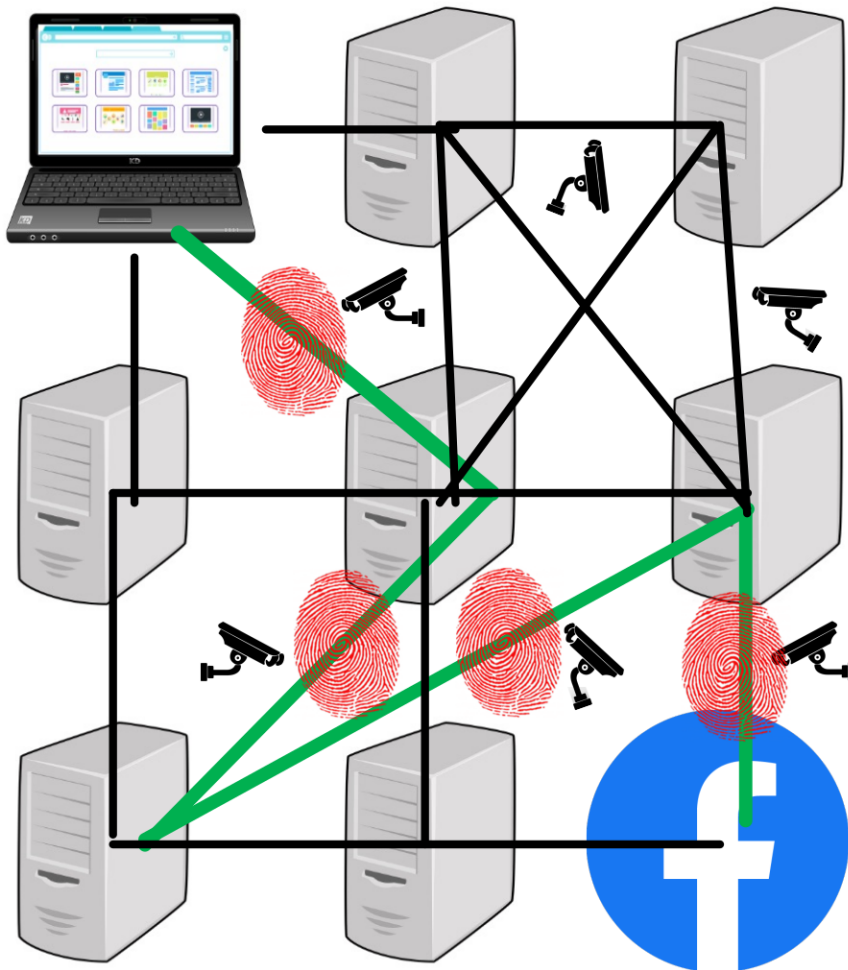


A **Correlation Attack** is a type of side-channel that uses metadata to deanonymize traffic.

- Only needs 1 identifiable aspect
  - Packet size
  - Packet count
  - Packet timing



# Metadata Correlation Attacks



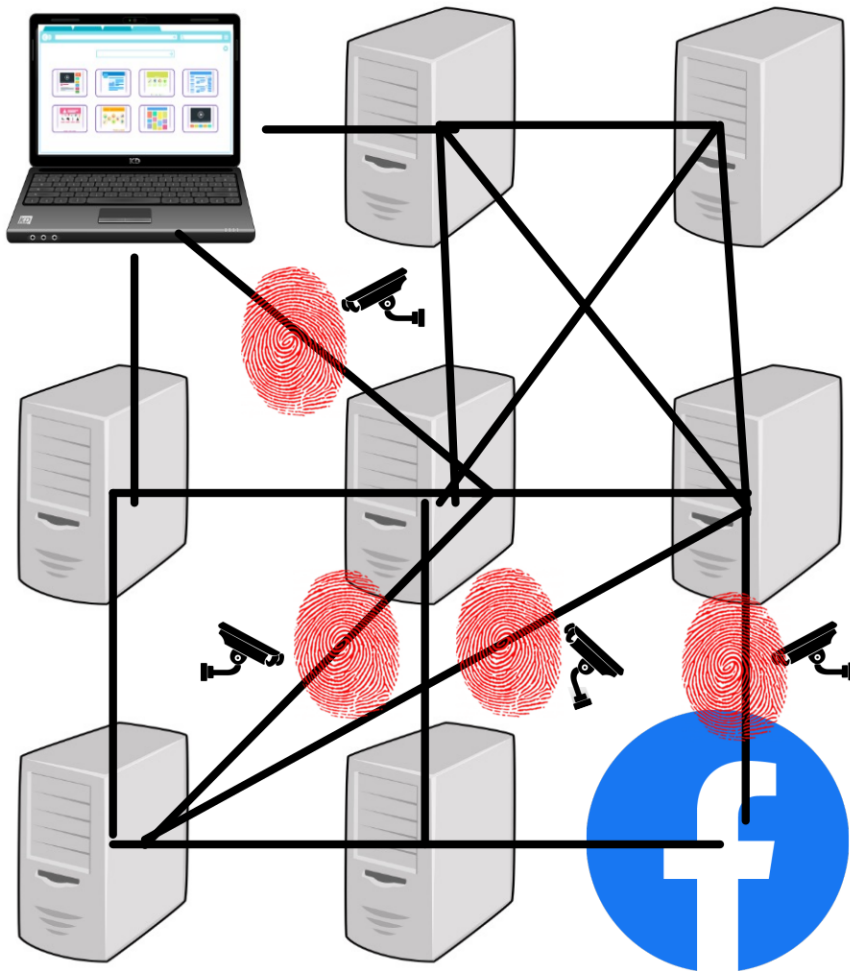
A **Correlation Attack** is a type of side-channel that uses metadata to deanonymize traffic.

- Only needs 1 identifiable aspect
  - Packet size
  - Packet count
  - Packet timing





# Metadata Correlation Attacks



A **Correlation Attack** is a type of side-channel that uses metadata to deanonymize traffic.

- Only needs 1 identifiable aspect
  - Packet size
  - Packet count
  - Packet timing



# Metadata



Digital **metadata** is any information *about* a digital artifact/object but is explicitly *not* the artifact/object itself.

- File metadata
  - Author, modify-time, program, etc
- Network metadata
  - TCP/IP headers, location, size, etc
- Service-side records
  - Billing data, advertising data, etc

# Oct 2001: USA Patriot Act



PUBLIC LAW 107-56—OCT. 26, 2001

UNITING AND STRENGTHENING AMERICA BY  
PROVIDING APPROPRIATE TOOLS REQUIRED  
TO INTERCEPT AND OBSTRUCT TERRORISM  
(USA PATRIOT ACT) ACT OF 2001

- Major rule changes on Law Enforcement access to information
- Major focus on “Tangible things” and “Business Records”



# Call Detail Records (CDRs)



**Call Detail Records (CDRs)** are metadata about a phone call but not contents.



## Verizon CDR



| Network Element Name | Mobile Directory Number | Dialed Digit Number | Call Direction | Seizure Dt Tm | Seizure Duration | First Serving Cell Site | First Serving Cell Face | Last Serving Cell Site | Last Serving Cell Face | Calling Party Number |
|----------------------|-------------------------|---------------------|----------------|---------------|------------------|-------------------------|-------------------------|------------------------|------------------------|----------------------|
| Raleigh              | 919452                  | 919797              | 1              | 1/1/2015 0:00 | 44               | 485                     | 3 = Gamma               | 485                    | 3 = Gamma              | 919452               |
| Raleigh              | 919452                  | 404955              | 1              | 1/1/2015 0:00 | 6                | 485                     | 3 = Gamma               | 0                      | 0                      | 919452               |
| Raleigh              | 919452                  | 919797              | 1              | 1/1/2015 0:01 | 42               | 485                     | 3 = Gamma               | 658                    | 1 = Alpha              | 919452               |
| Raleigh              | 919452                  | 404585              | 1              | 1/1/2015 0:01 | 7                | 485                     | 3 = Gamma               | 0                      | 0                      | 919452               |
| Raleigh              | 919452                  | 919452              | F              | 1/1/2015 0:04 | 39               | 0                       | 0                       | 0                      | 0                      | 919599               |
| Raleigh              | 919452                  | 919452              | F              | 1/1/2015 0:04 | 6                | 0                       | 0                       | 0                      | 0                      | 202760               |
| Greensboro_MTX       | 919452                  | 919797              | 5              | 1/1/2015 0:04 | 4                | 0                       | 0                       | 0                      | 0                      | 202760               |
| Raleigh_MTX08        | 919452                  | 404585              | 5              | 1/1/2015 0:04 | 14               | 0                       | 0                       | 0                      | 0                      | 919599               |
| Raleigh              | 919452                  | 919599              | 1              | 1/1/2015 0:05 | 108              | 475                     | 1 = Alpha               | 464                    | 3 = Gamma              | 919452               |
| Raleigh              | 919452                  | 919452              | 0              | 1/1/2015 0:11 | 33               | 464                     | 3 = Gamma               | 616                    | 1 = Alpha              | 919358               |
| Raleigh              | 919452                  | 919452              | 0              | 1/1/2015 0:29 | 97               | 464                     | 3 = Gamma               | 464                    | 3 = Gamma              | 919358               |
| Raleigh              | 919452                  | 919452              | 0              | 1/1/2015 0:39 | 45               | 464                     | 3 = Gamma               | 464                    | 3 = Gamma              | 919797               |
| Raleigh              | 919452                  | 919519              | 1              | 1/1/2015 1:06 | 266              | 464                     | 3 = Gamma               | 616                    | 1 = Alpha              | 919452               |
| Raleigh              | 919452                  | 404955              | 1              | 1/1/2015 1:06 | 7                | 464                     | 3 = Gamma               | 0                      | 0                      | 919452               |
| Raleigh              | 919452                  | 919358              | 1              | 1/1/2015 1:11 | 43               | 464                     | 3 = Gamma               | 464                    | 3 = Gamma              | 919452               |
| Raleigh              | 919452                  | 404955              | 1              | 1/1/2015 1:11 | 7                | 464                     | 3 = Gamma               | 0                      | 0                      | 919452               |

# 215 Telephony Metadata Program



PRIVACY AND CIVIL LIBERTIES OVERSIGHT BOARD

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*Report on the Telephone Records Program  
Conducted under Section 215  
of the USA PATRIOT Act and on the  
Operations of the Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Court*

JANUARY 23, 2014

- Bulk collection of all CDRs to/from/in the US
  - Billions per day



# 215 Telephony Metadata Program



## B. Standards for Approving Queries

A telephone number (or other selection term) used to search the calling records is referred to as a “seed.”<sup>58</sup> Before analysts can search the records with that seed, one of twenty-two designated NSA officials must give approval.<sup>59</sup> Such approval can be granted only if the official determines that there is reasonable, articulable suspicion that the selection term is associated with terrorism: in the words of the FISA court orders, a term can be approved for use as a seed only after the designated official has determined that, “based on the factual and practical considerations of everyday life on which reasonable and prudent persons act, there are facts giving rise to a reasonable, articulable suspicion” that the number “is associated with” a terrorist organization identified in the FISA court’s orders.<sup>60</sup>

The *Terry* decision allows investigatory detentions of individuals so that police can search for weapons to protect themselves and the public. The Court concluded that these detentions can only take place when the officer has a reasonable, articulable suspicion that the individual is armed; a mere “hunch” is inadequate to support a stop.<sup>34</sup> In reaching its decision, the Court indicated that the scope of the search must not exceed the actions necessary to determine whether the suspicious individual is armed.<sup>35</sup>

- Bulk collection of all CDRs to/from/in the US
  - Billions per day
- Query own database if have “reasonable articulable suspicion” of crime
  - No warrant/subpoena/judge

# 215 Telephony Metadata Program



Figure 18: Call Event Hop Scenario and Method of Counting

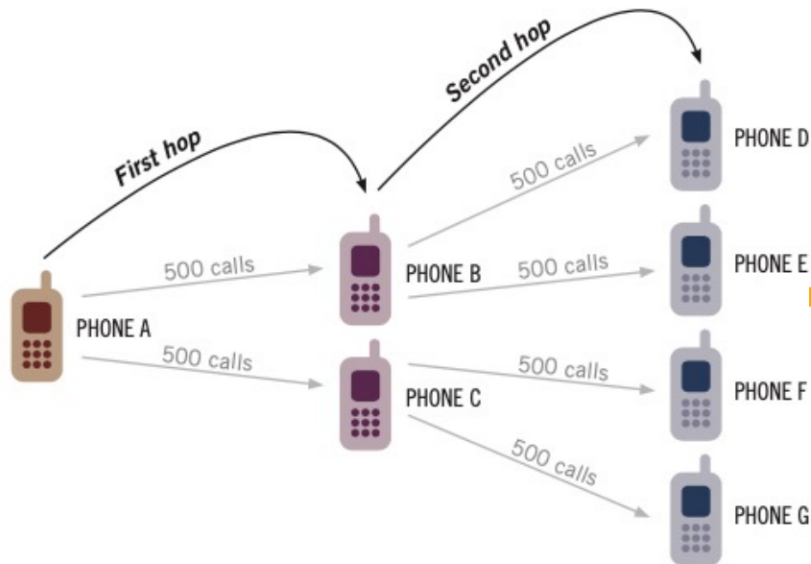


Figure 20: Unique Identifiers in the CDRs Received

| Call Detail Records (CDRs)—Section 501(b)(2)(C)  | 23 May to 31 December 2018  |
|--|---|
| The number of unique identifiers used to communicate information collected pursuant to such orders under Section 501(b)(2)(C)* | 19,372,544 Phone Numbers, which are associated with 7,285,362 IMSIs and 5,305,578 IMEIs |

Figure 19: CDRs Received Arising from Such Targets

| Call Detail Records (CDRs)—Section 501(b)(2)(C)   | CY2016      | CY2017      | CY2018      |
|---|-------------|-------------|-------------|
| Estimated number of call detail records arising from such targets that NSA received from providers pursuant to Section 501(b)(2)(C) and stored in its repositories* | 151,230,968 | 534,396,285 | 434,238,543 |

Bulk collection of all CDRs to/from/in the US

- Billions per day

Query own database if have “reasonable articulable suspicion” of crime

- No warrant/subpoena/judge

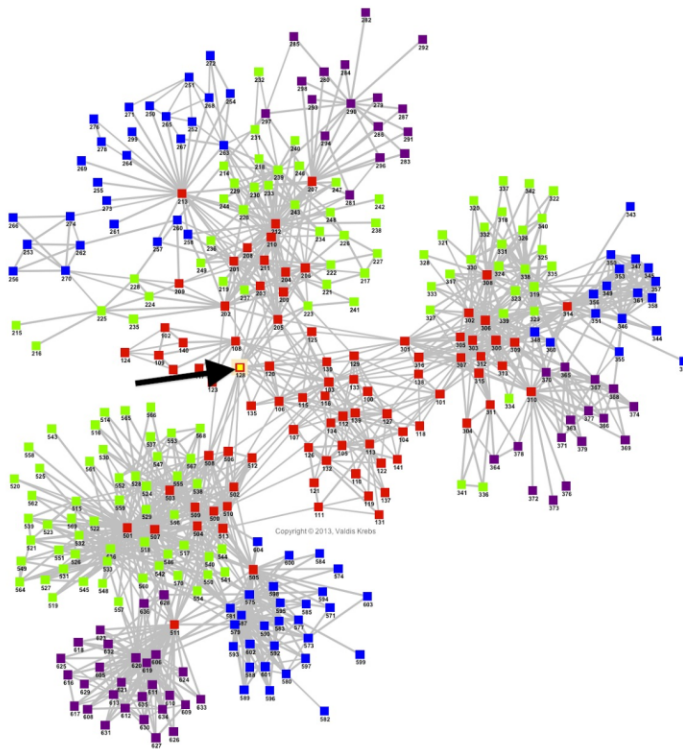
Allowed to chain multiple layers of people

- Root at seed number
- 2/3 “hops” from “seed” number

# Contact Chaining



**Contact Chaining** is a technique in which digital metadata allows recovery of social-graph



- Useful in locating cliques and hidden members of groups
- *Alice, Bob, Charlie call each other a lot*

# Computer and Network Security

## Lecture 28: Surveillance



Fall 2025  
COMP-5370/6370

