Introduction to Computer Networks

Domain Name System (DNS)
Part 1 (§7.1.1-7.1.2)

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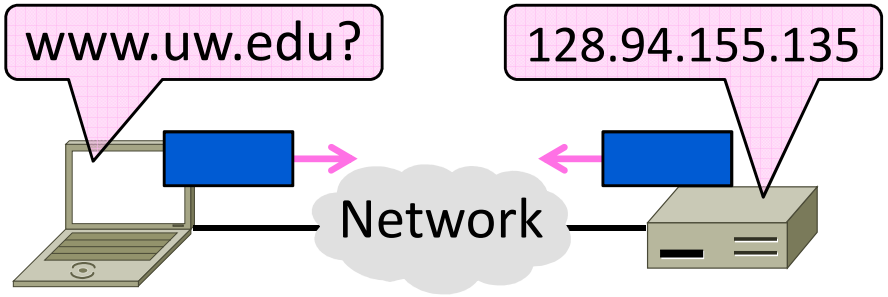
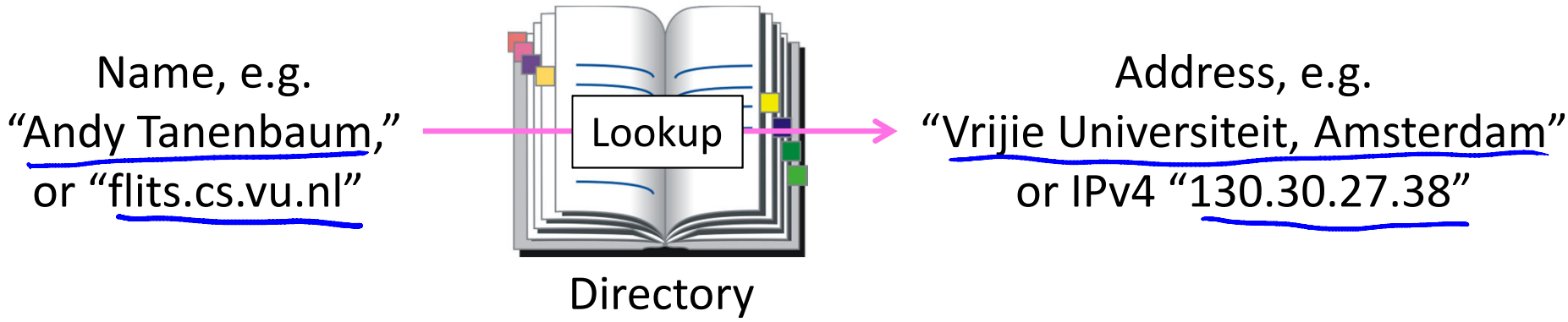
Topic

- The DNS (Domain Name System)
  - Human-readable host names, and more
  - Part 1: the distributed namespace



Names and Addresses

- Names are higher-level identifiers for resources
- Addresses are lower-level locators for resources
  - Multiple levels, e.g. full name → email → IP address → Ethernet address
- Resolution (or lookup) is mapping a name to an address



Before the DNS – HOSTS.TXT

- Directory was a file HOSTS.TXT regularly retrieved for all hosts from a central machine at the NIC (Network Information Center)
- Names were initially flat, became hierarchical (e.g., lcs.mit.edu) ~85

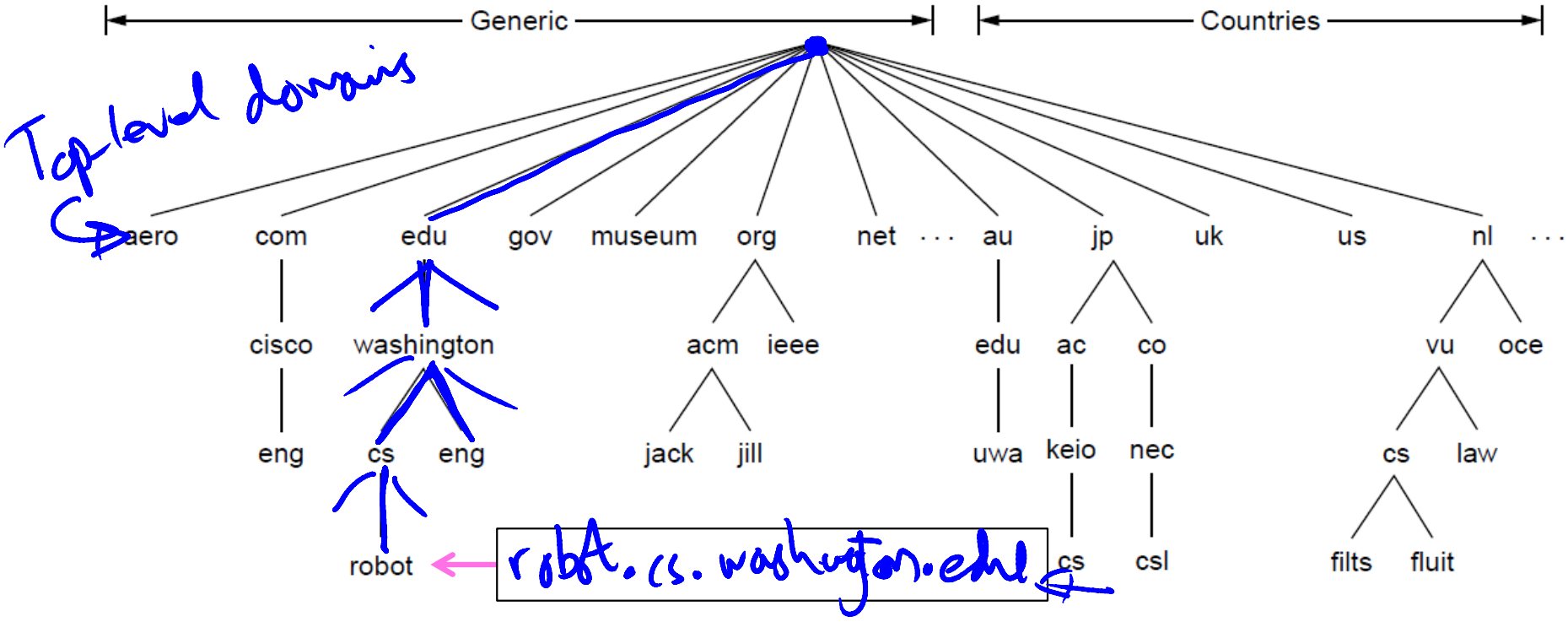
- Neither manageable nor efficient as the ARPANET grew …

DNS

- A naming service to map between host names and their IP addresses (and more)
  - www.uwa.edu.au → 130.95.128.140
- Goals:
  - Easy to manage (esp. with multiple parties)
  - Efficient (good performance, few resources)
- Approach:
  - Distributed directory based on a hierarchical namespace
  - Automated protocol to tie pieces together

DNS Namespace

- Hierarchical, starting from "." (dot, typically omitted)

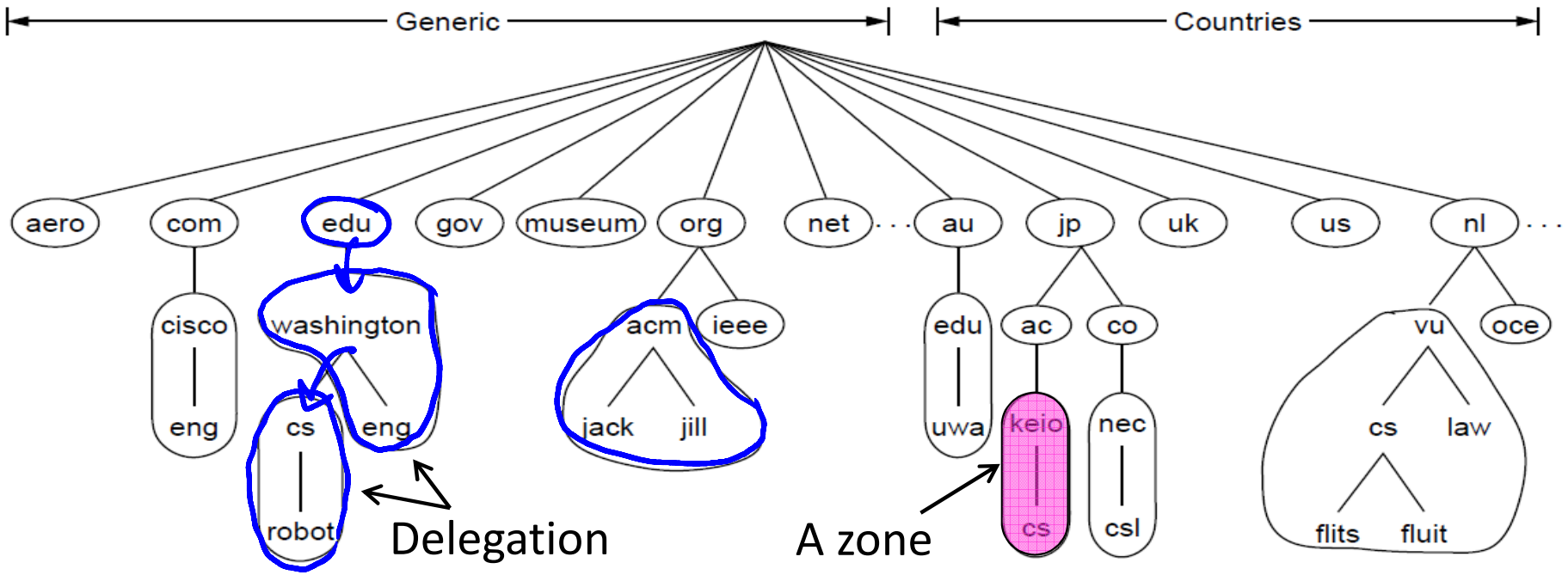


TLDs (Top-Level Domains)

- Run by ICANN (Internet Corp. for Assigned Names and Numbers)
  - Starting in '98; naming is financial, political, and international ☺
- 22+ generic TLDs
  - Initially .com, .edu , .gov., .mil, .org, .net
  - Added .aero, .museum, etc. from '01 through .xxx in '11
  - Different TLDs have different usage policies
- ~250 country code TLDs
  - Two letters, e.g., ".au", plus international characters since 2010
  - Widely commercialized, e.g., .tv (Tuvalu)
  - Many domain hacks, e.g., instagr.am (Armenia), goo.gl (Greenland)

DNS Zones

- A zone is a contiguous portion of the namespace



DNS Zones (2)

- Zones are the basis for distribution
  - EDU Registrar administers .edu
  - UW administers washington.edu
  - CS&E administers cs.washington.edu
- Each zone has a nameserver to contact for information about it
  - Zone must include contacts for delegations, e.g., .edu knows nameserver for washington.edu

DNS Resource Records

- A zone is comprised of DNS resource records that give information for its domain names

Type	Meaning
SOA	Start of authority, has key zone parameters
A	IPv4 address of a host
AAAA (“quad A”)	IPv6 address of a host
CNAME	Canonical name for an alias
MX	Mail exchanger for the domain
NS	Nameserver of domain or delegated subdomain

DNS Resource Records (2)

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; Authoritative data for cs.vu.nl
cs.vu.nl.       86400   IN  SOA     star boss (9527,7200,7200,241920,86400)
cs.vu.nl.       86400   IN  MX      1 zephyr
cs.vu.nl.       86400   IN  MX      2 top
cs.vu.nl.       86400   IN  NS      star

star            86400   IN  A       130.37.56.205
zephyr          86400   IN  A       130.37.20.10
top             86400   IN  A       130.37.20.11
www             86400   IN  CNAME   star.cs.vu.nl
ftp             86400   IN  CNAME   zephyr.cs.vu.nl

flits           86400   IN  A       130.37.16.112
flits           86400   IN  A       192.31.231.165
flits           86400   IN  MX      1 flits
flits           86400   IN  MX      2 zephyr
flits           86400   IN  MX      3 top

rowboat                 IN  A       130.37.56.201
                        IN  MX      1 rowboat
                        IN  MX      2 zephyr

little-sister           IN  A       130.37.62.23

laserjet                IN  A       192.31.231.216
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Name server

IP addresses of computers

Mail gateways

END