Intruders

They agreed that Graham should set the test for Charles Mabledene. It was neither more nor less than that Dragon should get Stern's code. If he had the 'in' at Utting which he claimed to have this should be possible, only loyalty to Moscow Centre would prevent it. If he got the key to the code he would prove his loyalty to London Central beyond a doubt.

—***Talking to Strange Men,*** **Ruth Rendell**

Intruders

- significant issue for networked systems is hostile or unwanted access
- either via network or local
- can identify classes of intruders:
  - masquerader
  - misfeasor
  - clandestine user
- varying levels of competence

Intruders

- clearly a growing publicized problem
  - from “Wily Hacker” in 1986/87
  - to clearly escalating CERT stats
- range
  - benign: explore, still costs resources
  - serious: access/modify data, disrupt system
- led to the development of CERTs
- intruder techniques & behavior patterns constantly shifting, have common features

Examples of Intrusion

- remote root compromise
- web server defacement
- guessing / cracking passwords
- copying viewing sensitive data / databases
- running a packet sniffer
- distributing pirated software
- using an unsecured modem to access net
- impersonating a user to reset password
- using an unattended workstation

Hackers

- motivated by thrill of access and status
  - hacking community a strong meritocracy
  - status is determined by level of competence
- benign intruders might be tolerable
  - do consume resources and may slow performance
  - can't know in advance whether benign or malign
- IDS / IPS / VPNs can help counter
- awareness led to establishment of CERTs
  - collect / disseminate vulnerability info / responses

Hacker Behavior Example

1. select target using IP lookup tools
2. map network for accessible services
3. identify potentially vulnerable services
4. brute force (guess) passwords
5. install remote administration tool
6. wait for admin to log on and capture password
7. use password to access remainder of network

Criminal Enterprise

- organized groups of hackers now a threat
  - corporation / government / loosely affiliated gangs
  - typically young
  - often Eastern European or Russian hackers
  - often target credit cards on e-commerce server
- criminal hackers usually have specific targets
- once penetrated act quickly and get out
- IDS / IPS help but less effective
- sensitive data needs strong protection

Criminal Enterprise Behavior

1. act quickly and precisely to make their activities harder to detect
2. exploit perimeter via vulnerable ports
3. use trojan horses (hidden software) to leave back doors for re-entry
4. use sniffers to capture passwords
5. do not stick around until noticed
6. make few or no mistakes.

Insider Attacks

- among most difficult to detect and prevent
- employees have access & systems knowledge
- may be motivated by revenge / entitlement
  - when employment terminated
  - taking customer data when move to competitor
- IDS / IPS may help but also need:
  - least privilege, monitor logs, strong authentication, termination process to block access & mirror data

Insider Behavior Example

1. create network accounts for themselves and their friends
2. access accounts and applications they wouldn't normally use for their daily jobs
3. e-mail former and prospective employers
4. conduct furtive instant-messaging chats
5. visit web sites that cater to disgruntled employees, such as f'dcompany.com
6. perform large downloads and file copying
7. access the network during off hours.

Intrusion Techniques

- aim to gain access and/or increase privileges on a system
- often use system / software vulnerabilities
- key goal often is to acquire passwords
  - so then exercise access rights of owner
- basic attack methodology
  - target acquisition and information gathering
  - initial access
  - privilege escalation
  - covering tracks

Password Guessing

- one of the most common attacks
- attacker knows a login (from email/web page etc)
- then attempts to guess password for it
  - defaults, short passwords, common word searches
  - user info (variations on names, birthday, phone, common words/interests)
  - exhaustively searching all possible passwords
- check by login or against stolen password file
- success depends on password chosen by user
- surveys show many users choose poorly

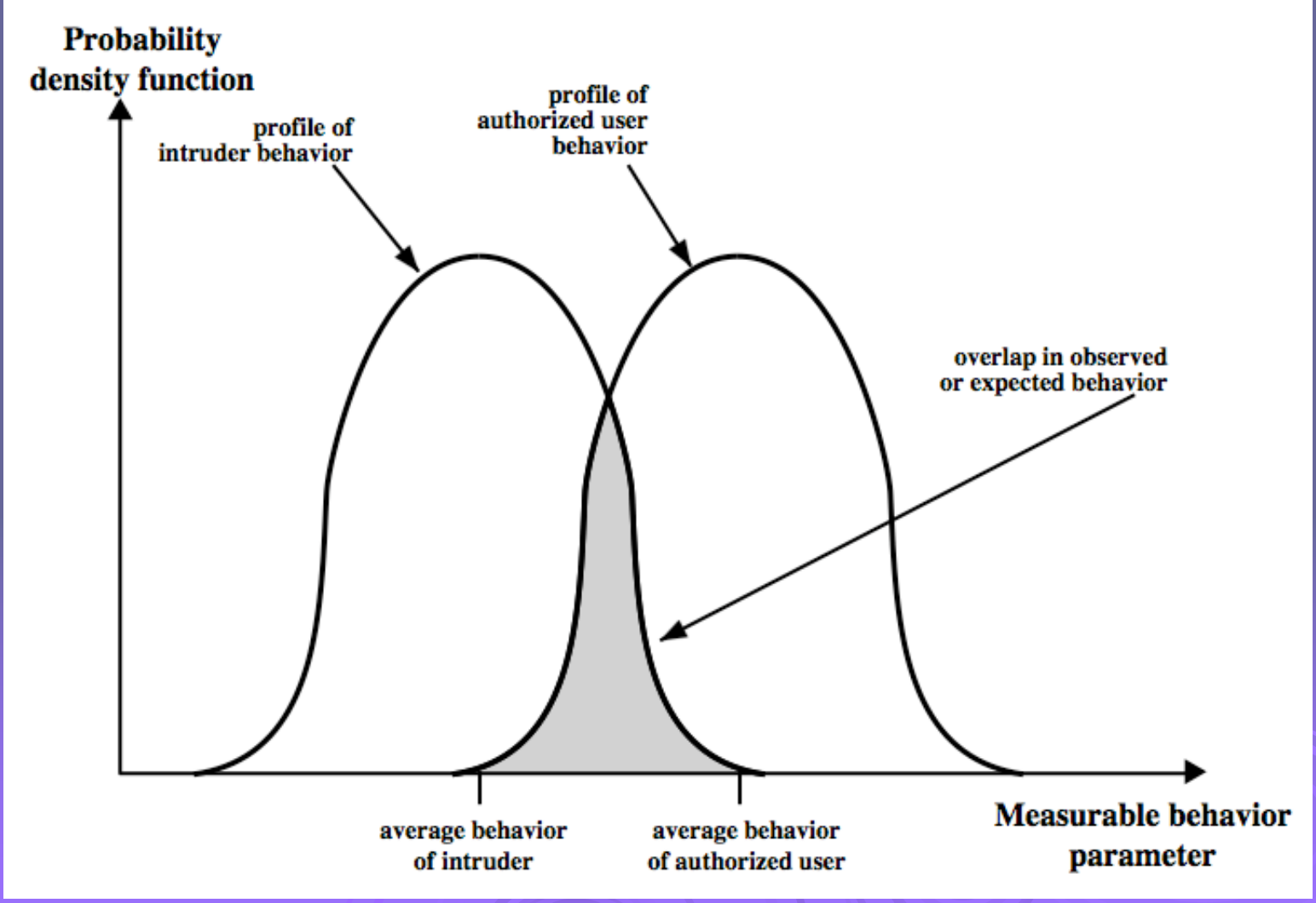
Password Capture

- another attack involves **password capture**
  - watching over shoulder as password is entered
  - using a trojan horse program to collect
  - monitoring an insecure network login
    - eg. telnet, FTP, web, email
  - extracting recorded info after successful login (web history/cache, last number dialed etc)
- using valid login/password can impersonate user
- users need to be educated to use suitable precautions/countermeasures

Intrusion Detection

- inevitably will have security failures
- so need also to detect intrusions so can
  - block if detected quickly
  - act as deterrent
  - collect info to improve security
- assume intruder will behave differently to a legitimate user
  - but will have imperfect distinction between

Intrusion Detection



Approaches to Intrusion Detection

- statistical anomaly detection
  - attempts to define normal/expected behavior
  - threshold
  - profile based
- rule-based detection
  - attempts to define proper behavior
  - anomaly
  - penetration identification

Audit Records

- fundamental tool for intrusion detection
- native audit records
  - part of all common multi-user O/S
  - already present for use
  - may not have info wanted in desired form
- detection-specific audit records
  - created specifically to collect wanted info
  - at cost of additional overhead on system

Statistical Anomaly Detection

- threshold detection
  - count occurrences of specific event over time
  - if exceed reasonable value assume intrusion
  - alone is a crude & ineffective detector
- profile based
  - characterize past behavior of users
  - detect significant deviations from this
  - profile usually multi-parameter

Audit Record Analysis

- foundation of statistical approaches
- analyze records to get metrics over time
  - counter, gauge, interval timer, resource use
- use various tests on these to determine if current behavior is acceptable
  - mean & standard deviation, multivariate, markov process, time series, operational
- key advantage is no prior knowledge used

Rule-Based Intrusion Detection

- observe events on system & apply rules to decide if activity is suspicious or not
- rule-based anomaly detection
  - analyze historical audit records to identify usage patterns & auto-generate rules for them
  - then observe current behavior & match against rules to see if conforms
  - like statistical anomaly detection does not require prior knowledge of security flaws

Rule-Based Intrusion Detection

- rule-based penetration identification
  - uses expert systems technology
  - with rules identifying known penetration, weakness patterns, or suspicious behavior
  - compare audit records or states against rules
  - rules usually machine & O/S specific
  - rules are generated by experts who interview & codify knowledge of security admins
  - quality depends on how well this is done

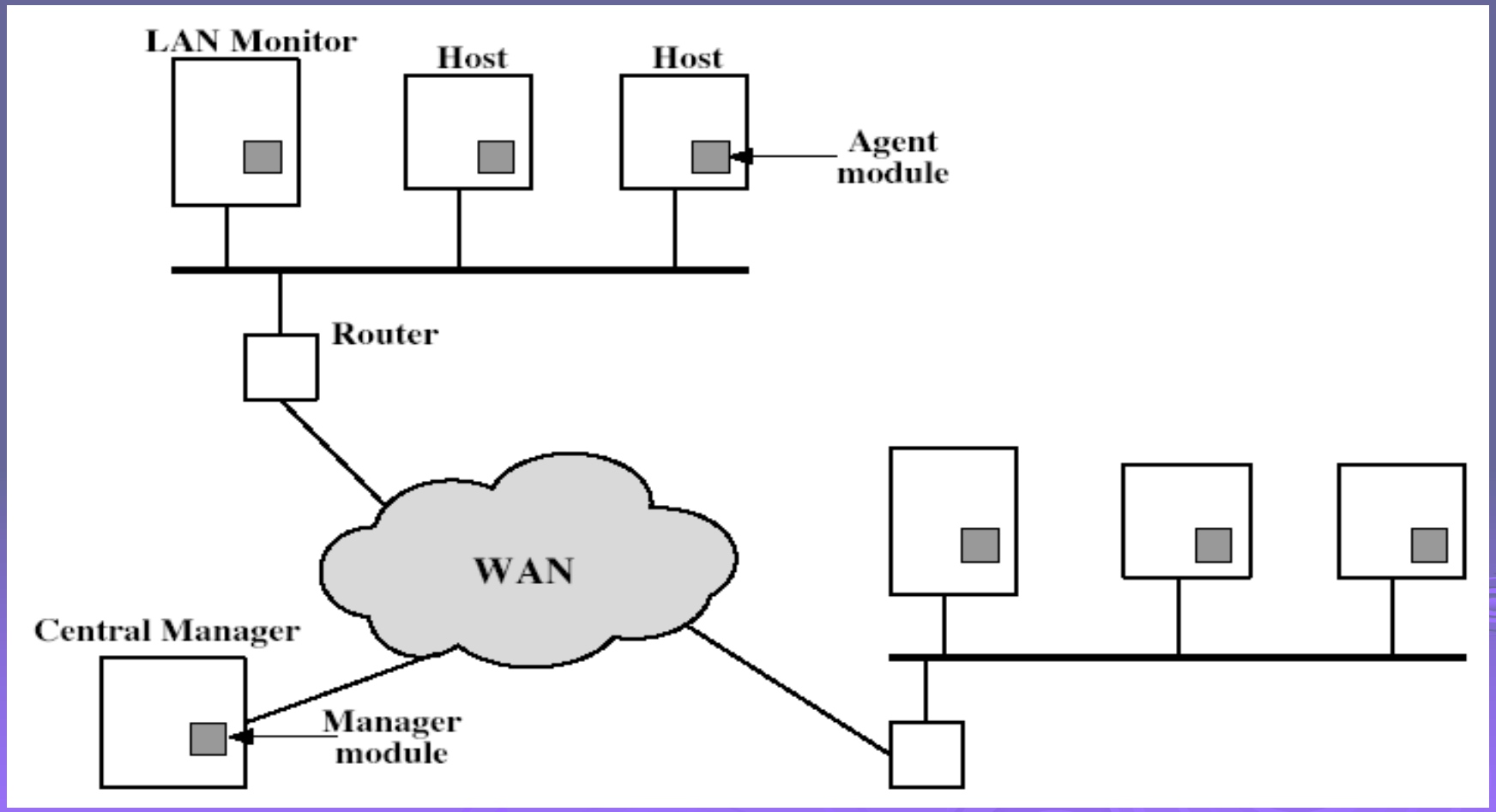
Base-Rate Fallacy

- practically an intrusion detection system needs to detect a substantial percentage of intrusions with few false alarms
  - if too few intrusions detected -> false security
  - if too many false alarms -> ignore / waste time
- this is very hard to do
- existing systems seem not to have a good record

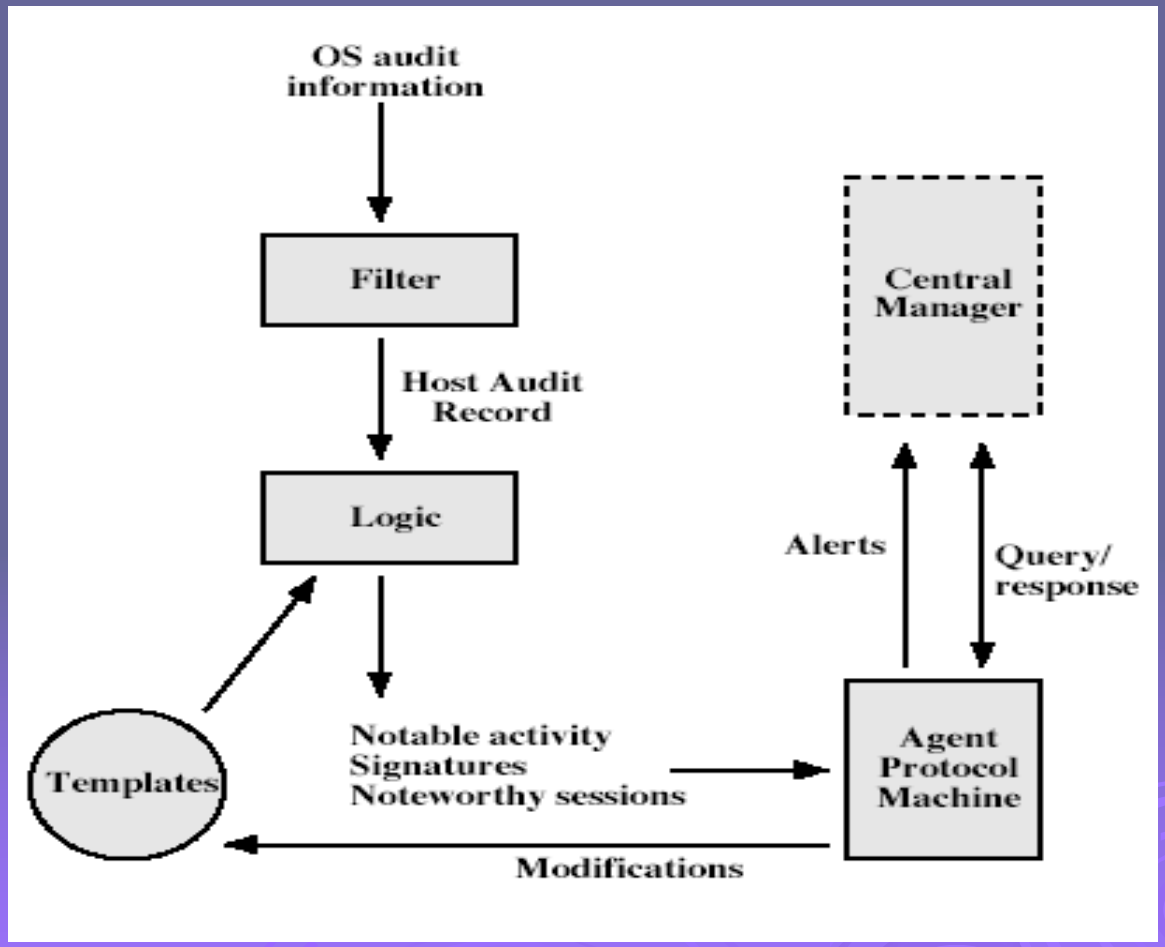
Distributed Intrusion Detection

- traditional focus is on single systems
- but typically have networked systems
- more effective defense has these working together to detect intrusions
- issues
  - dealing with varying audit record formats
  - integrity & confidentiality of networked data
  - centralized or decentralized architecture

Distributed Intrusion Detection - Architecture



Distributed Intrusion Detection – Agent Implementation



Honeypots

- decoy systems to lure attackers
  - away from accessing critical systems
  - to collect information of their activities
  - to encourage attacker to stay on system so administrator can respond
- are filled with fabricated information
- instrumented to collect detailed information on attackers activities
- single or multiple networked systems
- cf IETF Intrusion Detection WG standards

Password Management

- front-line defense against intruders
- users supply both:
  - login – determines privileges of that user
  - password – to identify them
- passwords often stored encrypted
  - Unix uses multiple DES (variant with salt)
  - more recent systems use crypto hash function
- should protect password file on system

Password Studies

- Purdue 1992 - many short passwords
- Klein 1990 - many guessable passwords
- conclusion is that users choose poor passwords too often
- need some approach to counter this

Managing Passwords - Education

- can use policies and good user education
- educate on importance of good passwords
- give guidelines for good passwords
  - minimum length (>6)
  - require a mix of upper & lower case letters, numbers, punctuation
  - not dictionary words
- but likely to be ignored by many users

Managing Passwords - Computer Generated

- let computer create passwords
- if random likely not memorisable, so will be written down (sticky label syndrome)
- even pronounceable not remembered
- have history of poor user acceptance
- FIPS PUB 181 one of best generators
  - has both description & sample code
  - generates words from concatenating random pronounceable syllables

Managing Passwords - Reactive Checking

- reactively run password guessing tools
  - note that good dictionaries exist for almost any language/interest group
- cracked passwords are disabled
- but is resource intensive
- bad passwords are vulnerable till found

Managing Passwords - Proactive Checking

- most promising approach to improving password security
- allow users to select own password
- but have system verify it is acceptable
  - simple rule enforcement (see earlier slide)
  - compare against dictionary of bad passwords
  - use algorithmic (markov model or bloom filter) to detect poor choices

Summary

- have considered:
  - problem of intrusion, behavior and techniques
  - intrusion detection (statistical & rule-based)
  - password management