

Another example - xterm

`xterm` Provides a terminal window in X-windows - used to run with `setuid root` privileges

- Requires kernel pseudo-terminal (`pty`) device
- Required root privileges to change ownership of `pty` to user
- Also writes protected `utmp/wtmp` files to record users

Had feature to log terminal session to file

```
if (access (logfile, W_OK) < 0)
    return ERROR;

fd = open (logfile, O_CREAT|O_WRONLY|O_TRUNC, 0666);
/* ... */
```

➡ `xterm` is root, but should not log to file user cannot write

✓ `access` call does permission check with real, not effective UID

• but another TOCTOU bug

Another TOCTOU attack

xterm

access (“/tmp/log”) → OK

open (“/tmp/log”)

Attacker

creat (“/tmp/log”)

unlink (“/tmp/log”)

symlink (“/tmp/log” → “/etc/passwd”)

Attacker changes /tmp/log between check and use

➡ xterm unwittingly overwrites /etc/passwd

- OpenBSD man page - "CAVEATS : access() is a potential security hole and should never be used."