Zheng Zhang

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EDUCATION

Doctor of Philosophy in Computer Science *Sep 2021 - Present*
Northwestern University
Concentrations: System Security and Privacy

Bachelor of Science in Statistics & Data Sciences *Aug 2016 - Dec 2020*
The Pennsylvania State University
Concentrations: Computational Statistics, Statistical Modeling Data Sciences
Minors in Computer Science & Mathematics
Member of Mu Sigma Rho - National Honorary Society for Statistics

RESEARCH INTERESTS

I have a broad interest in the area of system security and privacy. More concretely, I've been working on improving the security and privacy guarantees of database management systems by applying differential-privacy mechanisms and cryptography protocols. I'm also interested in adversarial and backdoor attacks of deep learning models/systems.

PUBLICATIONS

· 2021 Euro S&P: Xinyang Zhang, Zhang, Zheng, and Ting Wang. **Trojaning Language Models for Fun and Profit**. 2020, *https://arxiv.org/abs/2008.00312*

· Preprint: Ren Pang, Zheng Zhang, Xiangshan Gao, Zhaohan Xi, Shouling Ji, Peng Cheng, and Ting Wang. **TrojanZoo: Towards Unified, Holistic, and Practical Evaluation of Neural Backdoors**, (In submission)

WORK & RESEARCH EXPERIENCES

Research Associate Mar 2020 - July 2021
ALPS Lab, Department of Information Science & Technology *State College, PA*

· Advised by: Dr. Ting Wang
· Conducted deep learning security research in attacking and defending the general natural language models.
· Conducted adversarial machine learning research in defending multiple adversarial perturbations for image classification models.
· Implemented and evaluated deep learning attack and defense methods using PyTorch.
· Presented and discussed the research progress weekly.
· Co-authored and submitted three conference proceedings to the major machine learning / security and privacy conferences.

Bioinformatics Programmer May 2019 - Jan 2020
The Mahony Lab, Center for Eukaryotic Gene Regulation *State College, PA*

· Advised by: Dr. Shaun Mahony
· Participated in the "Encode Imputation" challenge hosted by Stanford University.
· Developed high-performance parallel algorithms and the data processing pipeline to model the massive datasets.

- Developed algorithms and models for predicting the signal of biochemical activities in human genome.
- Utilized Spark and HDFS to provide solutions for handling over 4 TBs massive datasets.
- Created parallel applications for data pre-processing and post-processing.
- Link to Research: https://secantzhang.github.io/project/encode-imputation

Entry Analyst Intern Jun 2017 - Sep 2017
Beijing JAYA Technology *Beijing, China*

- Crawled and collected public-available financial data published in 5 companies' annual report.
- Visualized and analyzed the data extensively using R and Python.

TEACHING EXPERIENCES

Teaching Assistant Fall 2019, Fall 2020
CMPSC/DS 410 - Programming Models for Big Data *State College, PA*

- Developed guided tutorials and solutions to interact students on their labs and homework.
- Individualized learning with 70+ students through one-on-one tutorials in office hours.

Grader Spring 2020
CMPSC 442 - Artificial Intelligence *State College, PA*

- Assisted Dr. Kelvin Kamali in grading 100+ student's homework in CMPSC 442 class.

PROJECTS

Trojan-Zoo May 2020 - June 2021
Python, PyTorch, Bash *State College, PA*

- Research project for benchmarking various SoTA attacks and defenses of deep learning systems in adversarial machine learning.
- Implemented and integrated the method in paper **An Embarrassingly Simple Approach for Trojan Attack in Deep Neural Networks** Link: *https://arxiv.org/abs/2006.08131*
- Implemented and integrated the method in paper **Targeted Backdoor Attacks on Deep Learning Systems Using Data Poisoning** Link: *https://arxiv.org/abs/1712.05526*
- Evaluated various metrics in the Trojan-Zoo system such as attack accuracy and defense successful rate.

Composite Perturbations Sep 2020 - Nov 2020
Python, PyTorch, Bash *State College, PA*

- Research project for defending multiple adversarial perturbations for deep neural networks.
- Co-authored the paper "Composite Adversarial Training for Multiple Adversarial Perturbations and Beyond", in preparation.

NLP Security May 2020 - Oct 2020
Python, PyTorch, Bash *State College, PA*

- Research project for backdoor-attacking and defending general language models.
- Co-authored the conference proceeding "Trojaning Language Models for Fun and Profit", accepted by Euro S&P 2021.

rmodel2tex Dec 2018 - May 2019
R (Personal project) *State College, PA*

- R package for easily converting various existing r model to latex code.

- Supported various statistical models such as linear regression and logistic regression.
- Took into consideration of the differences between population model and fitted model, and supported different representation of interaction and categorical terms.
- Link to Project: https://secantzhang.github.io/project/rmodel2tex

A-weatheR Oct 2018
Swift (HackPSU project) *State College, PA*

- Developed an AR iOS application using AccuWeather API on HackPSU Fall 2018.
- Integrated Augmented Reality within the mobile application to visually sense the weather condition at home.
- Link to Project: https://secantzhang.github.io/project/a-weather

HONORS AND AWARDS

CMPSC 448 Deep Learning Classification Challenge April 2020
Ranked 3/98 *State College, PA*

ECoS Summer Undergraduate Research Scholarship April 2019
Scholarship for Conducting Research During Summer *State College, PA*

DataFest April 2019
Finalists & Best Visualization Award *State College, PA*

HackPSU October 2018
Second Place in AccuWeather Challenge *State College, PA*

Penn State Behrend Honors Student April 2018
Honors Student Award *Erie, PA*

TECHNICAL STRENGTHS

Computer Languages	Python, R, C++, Shell Script
Data Analysis & Processing	Spark, Hadoop, HDFS, Scikit-Learn, Pandas
Deep Learning	PyTorch, TensorFlow

COURSEWORKS

Core Computer Sciences	Data Structures and Algorithms, Concurrent Scientific Programming
Artificial Intelligence	Machine Learning, Artificial Intelligence, Computer Vision
Statistics & Data Sciences	Applied Regression Analysis, Computational Statistics, Programming Models for Big Data
Security & Privacy	Foundations in Data Privacy (Graduate), Cryptography