

ESILSolve: A Symbolic Execution Engine using ESIL

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\$ whoami

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- Studied Math and Physics at University but sold out and did infosec instead
- Background of doing CTFs and game hacking for fun, as well as some iOS tweak dev
- Have worked as both a Reverse Engineer and boring Software Developer in previous roles
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Introduction to ESILSolve

```
[0x400590]
:-- section..text:
409: int main (uint32 t argc, char **src);
; arg uint32 t argc @ rdi
; arg char **src @ rsi
0x00400590 4883ec08 sub rsp, 8
0x00400594 831f02 cmp edi, 2
0x00400597 7411 je 0x4005aa
```

```
0x400599 [oc]
0x00400599 be58354000 mov esi, str._unbreakable_enterprise_product_activation_product_key
0x00400533 31c0 mov edi, 1
xor eax, eax
call sym.imp.errx; [ob]
```

I don't want to manually reverse this.

```
0x4005aa [oBe]
0x004005aa 488b7608
0x004005ae ba43000000
                          mov edx, 0x43
mov edi, 0x6042c0
0x004005b3 bfc0426000
0x004005b8 e853ffffff
                          call sym.imp.strncpy;[od]
0x004005bd 31c0
                          xor eax, eax
0x004005bf e82c220000
                          call fcn.004027f0:[oe]
0x004005c4 31c0
                          xor eax, eax
0x004005c6 e865220000
                          call fcn.00402830;[of]
0x004005cb 31c0
                          xor eax, eax
0x004005cd e89e220000
                          call fcn.00402870; [og]
0x004005d2 31c0
                          xor eax, eax
0x004005d4 e8e7220000
                          call fcn.004028c0;[oh]
0x004005d9 31c0
0x004005db e830230000
                          call fcn.00402910;[01]
0x004005e0 31c0
                          call fcn.00402940;[0j]
0x004005e2 e859230000
0x004005e7 31c0
                          xor eax, eax
0x004005e9 e892230000
                          call fcn.00402980;[ok]
0x004005ee 31c0
                          xor eax, eax
                          call fcn.004029c0;[ol]
0x004005f0 e8cb230000
0x004005f5 31c0
                          xor eax, eax
0x004005f7 e804240000
                          call fcn.00402a00:[om]
0x004005fc 31c0
                          xor eax, eax
0x004005fe e83d240000
                          call fcn.00402a40:[on]
0x00400603 31c0
                          xor eax, eax
0x00400605 e866240000
                          call fcn.00402a70;[00]
0x0040060a 31c0
                          call fcn.00402ab0;[op]
0x0040060c e89f240000
0x00400611 31c0
                          xor eax, eax
0x00400613 e8d8240000
                          call fcn.00402af0;[oq]
0x00400618 31c0
                          xor eax, eax
                          call fcn.00402b20;[or]
0x0040061f 31c0
                          xor eax, eax
0x00400621 e82a250000
                          call fcn.00402b50;[os]
0x00400626 31c0
                          xor eax, eax
0x00400628 e863250000
                          call fcn.00402b90;[ot]
0x0040062d 31c0
                          xor eax, eax
                         call fcn.00402bc0; [ou
```

Too long!

RZ4PN 0~2~1)-02-40

Why did you make this? Why should I use it?

- ???
- ESILSolve will likely never have the stability or sophistication of established tools. But...
- Tight integration with r2 makes it usable with all different kinds of IO plugins in situations that might be awkward for more monolithic tools
- Support for architectures not covered by other tools
- It is a great way to learn about symbolic execution if you are familiar with r2 and ESIL, and is a simple but solid framework to test out novel ideas and strategies
- Good for CTFs :)

Symbolic Execution - A very short review

- Symbolic Execution is the emulation of a program with the ability to make some data, memory or register values, symbolic
- Using symbolic values allows exploration of code paths without needing to know concrete values that actually reach them
- Taking branches constrains the symbolic values and an SMT solver (ESILSolve uses Z3) is used to evaluate the resulting expressions to get concrete values
- Some SymEx tools tools you may have heard of and used: angr, KLEE, MAYHEM, more recently SymCC, Sys

Z3 simplified beyond usefulness

```
In [1]: import z3
In [2]: x = z3.BitVec("x", 32)
In [3]: y = z3.BitVec("y", 32)
In [4]: 3*x + y
   |4| | 3*x + y
In [5]: z3.simplify(3*x + x + y)
Out[5]: 4*x + y
In [6]: z = z3.If(x/2 == 27, 4*x, x*y)
In [7]: z
Out[7]: If(x/2 == 27, 4*x, x*y)
In [8]: solver = z3.Solver()
In [9]: solver.add(x == 54)
In [10]: solver.check()
    10
         sat
In [11]: model = solver.model()
```

```
In [13]: model.eval(z)
Out[13]: 216

In [14]: 54*4
Out[14]: 216
```

- Z3 can solve expressions involving Ints, Floats, and most importantly Bit Vectors
- Symbolic values are initialized and used in arithmetic and logical expressions
- Solvers (or Optimizers) can create models that satisfy the added constraints

Simple Branch

```
[0x5fa]
               31: int main (uint32 t argc, char **argv);
               ; var char **var 10h @ rbp-0x10
               ; var uint32 t var 4h @ rbp-0x4
               ; arg uint32 t argc @ rdi
               ; arg char **argy @ rsi
               0x000005fa 55
               0x000005fb 4889e5
                                         mov rbp, rsp
                                         mov dword [var 4h], edi
               0x000005fe 897dfc
               0x00000601 488975f0
                                         mov qword [var 10h], rsi
                                         cmp dword [var 4h], 2
               0x00000605 837dfc02
               0x00000609 7507
                                          ine 0x612
0x60b [ob]
                                              0x612 [oc]
0x0000060b b800000000
                                              0x00000612 b801000000
                         mov eax, 0
                                                                       mov eax, 1
0x00000610 eb05
                          jmp 0x617
                        0x617 [od]
                        0x00000617 5d
                                                 pop rbp
                        0x00000618 c3
```

```
expr: rbp,8,rsp,-,=[8],8,rsp,-=
 00000000000005fa: push rbp
 expr: rsp,rbp,=
 00000000000005fb: mov rbp, rsp
 expr: edi,0x4,rbp,-,=[4]
 00000000000005fe: mov dword [rbp - 4], edi
 expr: rsi,0x10,rbp,-,=[8]
 00000000000000001: mov gword [rbp - 0x10], rsi
 expr: 2,0x4,rbp,-,[4],==,$z,zf,:=,32,$b,cf,:=,$p,pf,:=,31,$s,sf,:=,2
 00000000000000605: cmp dword [rbp - 4], 2
 expr: zf,!,?{,1554,rip,=,}
 00000000000000009: jne 0x612
 condition val: If(Extract(31, 0, rdi) == 2, 0, 1)
symbolic pc: If(If(Extract(31, 0, rdi) == 2, 0, 1) == 0, 1547, 1554)
                            1547 == 0x60b
                            1554 == 0x612
```

Simplish Branch

```
[0x63a]
               62: sym.check (int64 t arg1);
               ; var int64 t var 4h @ rbp-0x4
; arg int64 t arg1 @ rdi
               0x0000063a 55
               0x0000063b 4889e5
                                          mov rbp, rsp
               0x0000063e 897dfc
                                          mov dword [var 4h], edi
               0x00000641 8b45fc
                                          mov eax, dword [var 4h]
               0x00000644 35bebafeca
                                          xor eax. Oxcafebabe
               0x00000649 89c1
                                          mov ecx, eax
               0x0000064b babdbcc8ef
                                          mov edx, 0xefc8bcbd
               0x00000650 89c8
                                          mov eax, ecx
               0x00000652 f7e2
                                          mul edx
               0x00000654 89d0
                                          mov eax, edx
               0x00000656 cle80e
                                          shr eax, 0xe
               0x00000659 69c054440000
                                          imul eax, eax, 0x4454
               0x0000065f 29c1
                                          sub ecx, eax
               0x00000661 89c8
                                          mov eax, ecx
               0x00000663 3de7110000
                                          cmp eax, 0x11e7
               0x00000668 7507
                                          ine 0x671
0x66a [ob]
                                               0x671 [oc]
0x0000066a b800000000
                                               0x00000671 b801000000
                          mov eax, 0
                                                                         mov eax, 1
0x0000066f eb05
                          jmp 0x676
                                                                              1642 == 0x66a
                         0x676 [od]
                        0x00000676 5d
                                                  pop rbp
                                                                              1649 == 0x671
                        0x00000677 c3
```

```
symbolic pc: If(If(Concat(~Extract(31, 30, rdi),
             Extract(29, 28, rdi).
             ~Extract(27, 27, rdi),
             Extract(26, 26, rdi),
             ~Extract(25, 25, rdi),
             Extract(24, 24, rdi),
             ~Extract(23, 17, rdi),
             Extract(16, 16, rdi),
             ~Extract(15, 15, rdi),
             Extract(14, 14, rdi),
             ~Extract(13, 11, rdi),
             Extract(10, 10, rdi),
             ~Extract(9, 9, rdi),
             Extract(8, 8, rdi),
             ~Extract(7, 7, rdi),
             Extract(6, 6, rdi),
             ~Extract(5, 1, rdi),
             Extract(0, 0, rdi)) ==
      4583 +
      17492*
      Concat(0,
             Extract(63,
                     46.
                     4022910141*
                     Concat(0,
                             ~Extract(31, 30, rdi),
                            Extract(29, 28, rdi),
                            ~Extract(27, 27, rdi),
                            Extract(26, 26, rdi),
                            ~Extract(25, 25, rdi),
                            Extract(24, 24, rdi),
                            ~Extract(23, 17, rdi),
                            Extract(16, 16, rdi),
                            ~Extract(15, 15, rdi),
                            Extract(14, 14, rdi),
                            ~Extract(13, 11, rdi),
                            Extract(10, 10, rdi)
                            ~Extract(9, 9, rdi),
                            Extract(8, 8, rdi).
                            ~Extract(7, 7, rdi),
                            Extract(6, 6, rdi),
                            ~Extract(5, 1, rdi),
                            Extract(0, 0, rdi)))),
      0,
      1) ==
   0,
   1642,
   1649)
```

ESIL - Another even shorter review

- ESIL is radare2's built in intermediate language
- It uses a simple, stack based system to express any instruction as a string of values and operators
- Example: add x0, x1, x2 in AArch64 becomes "x2,x1,+,x0,="
- It's simple, readable, and great
- It is an interesting IR for symbolic execution
- There is a really great in depth talk on ESIL from r2con 2019 by @arnaugamez

```
; CALL XREF from main @ 0x6d8
 117: sym.check (int64 t arg1);
           ; var int64 t var 4h @ rbp-0x4
           ; arg int64 t arg1 @ rdi
           0x0000063a
           0x0000063b
                           4889e5
                                          mov rbp, rsp
           0x0000063e
                                          mov dword [var 4h], edi
                                                                      ; edi,0x4,rbp,-,=[4] ; argl
           0x00000641
                           8b45fc
                                          mov eax, dword [var 4h]
                           35feca0000
           0x00000644
                                          xor eax, Oxcafe
           0x00000649
                           89c1
                                          mov ecx, eax
           0x0000064b
                           ba5f5ee477
                                          mov edx, 0x77e45e5f
           0x00000650
                           89c8
                                          mov eax, ecx
           0x00000652
                           f7ea
                                          imul edx
                           c1fa0d
           0x00000654
                                          sar edx, 0xd
           0x00000657
                           89c8
                                          mov eax, ecx
           0x00000659
                                          sar eax, 0x1f
           0x0000065c
                           29c2
                                          sub edx, eax
                                                                       : eax,edx,-=,eax,0x80000000,-,!,31,$o,^,of,:=,31,$s,sf,:=,$z,zf,:=,$p,pf,:=,32,$b,cf,:=,3,$b,af,:=
           0x0000065e
                           89d0
                                          mov eax, edx
                           69c054440000
                                          imul eax, eax, 0x4454
           0x00000660
           0x00000666
                                                                      ; eax,ecx,-=,eax,0x80000000,-,!,31,$o,^,of,:=,31,$s,sf,:=,$z,zf,:=,$p,pf,:=,32,$b,cf,:=,3,$b,af,:=
                           29c1
                                          sub ecx, eax
           0x00000668
                           89c8
                                          mov eax, ecx
                           3d53140000
           0x0000066a
                                          cmp eax, 0x1453
                                                                       : 5203,eax,==,$z,zf,:=,32,$b,cf,:=,$p,pf,:=,31,$s,sf,:=,5203,0x80000000,-,!,31,$o,^,of,:=,3,$b,af,:=
        0x0000066f
                                          ine 0x6a8
                           8b45fc
                                                                      ; 0x4, rbp, -, [4], rax,=
           0x00000671
                                          mov eax, dword [var 4h]
           0x00000674
                           35beba0000
                                          xor eax, Oxbabe
           0x00000679
                           89c1
                                          mov ecx, eax
           0x0000067b
                           ba5f5ee477
                                          mov edx, 0x77e45e5f
           0x00000680
                           89c8
                                          mov eax, ecx
           0x00000682
                           f7ea
                                          imul edx
           0x00000684
                           c1fa0d
                                          sar edx, 0xd
                                                                       : 0,cf,:=,1,13,-,1,<<,edx,&,?{,1,cf,:=,},13,edx,>>>,edx,=,$z,zf,:=,$p,pf,:=,31,$s,sf,:=
           0x00000687
                           89c8
                                          mov eax, ecx
           0x00000689
                                          sar eax, 0x1f
           0x0000068c
                           29c2
                                          sub edx, eax
                                                                       : eax.edx.,-=.eax.0x80000000.-.!.31.$o.^.of.:=.31.$s.sf.:=.$z.zf.:=.$p.pf.:=.32.$b.cf.:=.3.$b.af.:=
           0x0000068e
                                          mov eax, edx
           0x00000690
                           69c054440000
                                          imul eax, eax, 0x4454
           0x00000696
                                          sub ecx, eax
                                                                      ; eax,ecx,-=,eax,0x80000000,-,!,31,$o,^,of,:=,31,$s,sf,:=,$z,zf,:=,$p,pf,:=,32,$b,cf,:=,3,$b,af,:=
           0x00000698
                           89c8
                                          mov eax, ecx
           0x0000069a
                           3dbf1f0000
                                                                       : 8127,eax,==,$z,zf,:=,32,$b,cf,:=,$p,pf,:=,31,$s,sf,:=,8127,0x80000000,-,!,31,$o,^,of,:=,3,$b,af,:=
                                          cmp eax, 0x1fbf
           0x0000069f
                                          jne 0x6a8
           0x000006a1
                           b800000000
                                          mov eax, 0
          0x000006a6
                                                                      ; 0x6ad, rip,=
                           eb05
                                          imp 0x6ad
            CODE XREFS from sym.check @ 0x66f, 0x69f
      LL > 0x000006a8
                           b801000000
                                          mov eax, 1
            ; CODE XREF from sym.check @ 0x6a6
         > 0x000006ad
                                          pop rbp
           0x000006ae
[0x0000063a1>
```

```
push rbp
mov rbp, rsp
mov dword [var 4h], edi
mov eax, dword [var 4h]

; rbp,8,rsp,-,=[8],8,rsp,-=
; rsp,rbp,=
; edi,0x4,rbp,-,=[4]; arg1
; 0x4,rbp,-,[4],rax,=
```

Challenges of ESIL based SymEx

- ESIL is a lot less verbose / precise than other IR
- "add x0, x1, x2" in VEX ->
- Every value and operation has an explicit size, type, and signedness in other IR
- Turns out they are being overly cautious dorks

Challenges of ESIL based SymEx Part II

- <show main parse_expression method>
- Other IR have data only in temporary registers and variables
- ESILSolve needs to have a *symbolic stack*, where for every conditional both IF and ELSE expressions are executed, their stacks are unwound, and a new stack with If(CONDITION, IF_VALUE, ELSE_VALUE) values is pushed
- The GOTO operator essentially uses arbitrarily nested conditionals which creates a host of issues, most of which are soluble
- These operations happen to be relatively efficient ones for python

The ESILSolve API

ESILSolver

- call_state, init_state, blank_state create
 an initial state to begin running
- register_hook, register_sim register hooks
 or simulated methods to manipulate state
- run, terminate start symbolically executing, finding find, avoiding avoid

```
from esilsolve import ESILSolver
import r2pipe
import z3
esilsolver = ESILSolver("ais3 crackme")
state = esilsolver.call state("sym.verify")
addr = 0 \times 1000000
state.registers["rdi"] = addr
flag = z3.BitVec("flag", 24*8)
state.memory[addr] = flag
def check(state):
    state.constrain(state.registers["zf"] == 1)
    if state.is sat():
        flag str = state.evaluate string(flag)
        print("FLAG: %s " % flag str)
        esilsolver.terminate()
esilsolver.register hook(0x004005bd, check)
state = esilsolver.run()
```

The ESILSolve API

ESILState

- registers an instance of ESILRegisters with the register values for this state
- memory an instance of ESILMemory for this state
- o solver and instance of a Z3 solver class (Solver, SimpleSolver, Optimizer)
- constrain an alias for solver.add
- o constrain_bytes method to constrain the bytes of a buffer to match a regex range
- evaluate model and eval a symbolic expression if it is satisfiable
- evaluate_buffer, state.evaluate_string convenience methods for evaluating a BV and casting it to bytes / string
- o clone make a (COW) copy of the state
- step single step the state, executing the current instruction

Demo ESILSolve

Show some cool stuff now

ESILSolve plugin for r2

```
[0x00400729] > aesx?
Usage: aesx[iscxrebda] # Core plugin for ESILSolve
  aesxi [debug] [lazy]
                                     Initialize the ESILSolve instance and VM
  aesxs[bc] reg[addr [name] [length] Set symbolic value in register or memory
  aesxv regladdr value
                                     Set concrete value in register or memory
  aesxc sym value
                                     Constrain symbol to be value, min, max, regex
  aesxx[ec] expr value
                                     Execute ESIL expression and evaluate/constrain the result
  aesxr[ac] target [avoid x,y,z]
                                     Run symbolic execution until target address, avoiding x,y,z
  aesxe[j] sym1 [sym2] [...]
                                     Evaluate symbol in current state
                                     Evaluate buffer in current state
  aesxb[j] sym1 [sym2] [...]
  aesxd[j] [reg1] [reg2] [...]
                                     Dump register values / ASTs
                                     Apply the current state, setting registers and memory
 aesxa
[0x00400729]>
```

ESILSolve plugin II

```
undefined8 fcn.004006fd(int64 t arg1)
                                                                      Prove long strings of arithmetical
                                                                      instructions equivalent to simpler ones
    int64 t var 38h;
    char *var 24h;
    char *var 18h:
    char *var 10h;
    stack0xffffffffffffffd8 = "Dufhbmf";
   var 18h = "pG`imos";
   var 10h = "ewUglpt";
   var 24h. 0 4 = 0;
   while( true ) {
       if (0xb < (int32 t)var 24h) {
   // target: flag = b'Code Talkers'
            return 0:
        if ((int32 t)*(char *)((int64 t)(((int32 t)var 24h / 3) * 2) +
                              *(int64 t *)((int64 t)&var 24h + (int64 t)((int32 t)var 24h % 3) * 8 + 4)) -
            (int32 t)*(char *)(arg1 + (int32 t)var 24h) != 1) break;
       var 24h. 0 4 = (int32 t) var 24h + 1;
    return 1:
                             Automatically add comments that show concrete values
                             that reach any point in code, for every symbol
```

[0x00000610]> s sym.rotateLeft [0x000007f2]> pdf CALL XREF from main @ 0x78d 89: sym.rotateLeft (int64 t arg1, int64 t arg2); ; var int64 t var 18h @ rbp-0x18 ; var int64 t var 14h @ rbp-0x14 ; var int64 t var 4h @ rbp-0x4 ; arg int64 t arg1 @ rdi ; arg int64 t arg2 @ rsi 0x000007f2 0x000007f3 mov rbp, rsp 0x000007f6 mov dword [var 14h], edi 0x000007f9 8975e8 mov dword [var 18h], esi 0x000007fc 8b4de8 mov ecx, dword [var 18h] ba85104208 mov edx, 0x8421085 0x000007ff 0x00000804 mov eax, ecx 0x00000806 f7e2 mul edx 0x00000808 mov eax, ecx 0x0000080a 29d0 sub eax, edx 0x0000080c shr eax. 1 0x0000080e add eax, edx 0x00000810 shr eax, 4 0x00000813 mov edx, eax 0x00000815 mov eax, edx 0x00000817 shl eax, 5 0x0000081a sub eax, edx 0x0000081c sub ecx, eax 0x0000081e 89c8 mov eax, ecx 0x00000820 mov dword [var 18h], eax 0x00000823 jmp 0x839 CODE XREF from sym.rotateLeft @ 0x844 0x00000825 mov eax, dword [var 14h] 0x00000828 cle81f shr eax, 0x1f mov dword [var 4h], eax 0x0000082b 8b45ec mov eax, dword [var 14h] 0x0000082e 0x00000831 add eax, eax 0x00000833 0b45fc or eax, dword [var 4h] 0x00000836 8945ec mov dword [var 14h], eax CODE XREF from sym.rotateLeft @ 0x823 0x00000839 mov eax, dword [var 18h] 0x0000083c lea edx, [rax - 1] 0x0000083f 8955e8 mov dword [var 18h], edx 0x00000842 test eax, eax ine 0x825 0x00000846 8b45ec mov eax, dword [var 14h] 0x00000849 pop rbp 0x0000084a $[0 \times 0000007f2] > aeim$ [0x000007f2]> aei [0x000007f2]> aesxi [0x000007f2]> aesxs rdi num 8 0x000007f2]> aesxv rsi 8 0x000007f2]> aesxr 0x00000849 [0x000007f2]> aesxxc "esi,edi,<<<,eax,-,!" 0 [0x000007f2]> aesxe eax error: state has unsatisfiable constraints

Using ESILSolve to improve ESIL

- Symbolic execution of ESIL allows us to convert the string expression to an AST which can be compared to the ASTs generated by other symex tools
- If expressions are not equivalent the SMT solver can give example values that produce different results in the two systems
- ESILCheck is a tool which compares the ASTs generated from ESIL expressions and the ones produced by angr's VEX execution engine
- The claripy backend objects provide conversion to Z3 enabling easy testing
- Other engines, like KLEE, could provide additional checks and coverage, any tool supporting the same SMT solvers can be used.
- A tool called VEX2ESIL also comes with ESILSolve

Future Goals

- Use ESILSolve to prove the equality of ESIL expressions and other IR expressions, or fix them if necessary, to cover more architectures more faithfully
- Make a modest Sim Procedure library so that common libc functions do not cause state explosion
- Create Sims for syscalls and hopefully have syscalls handled natively in concrete emulation in r2
- Create a fuzzer leveraging ESILSolve, concrete ESIL emulation in r2, and maybe r2frida to generate amazing coverage guided fuzzing that is snapshot emulated for speed but in-memory fuzzed for accuracy

Thanks To:

Pancake and everyone who has worked on ESIL and radare2!



Thank You