COMP4108 Final Exam Practice

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Contents

1   Preamble

1.1   Textbook

- here is a link to "Tools and Jewels"

1.2   General

1. Please follow the provided format
2. We should prioritize the mock exam over notes

Part I

Mock Exam

1   Basic Concepts and Principles

1. Provide definitions for the following:

   a)   Confidentiality

   b)   Data integrity

   c)   Authentication

   d)   Authorization

   e)   Availability

    f) Accountability

2. Briefly explain how repudiation violates accountability.

3. Describe the difference between a *trusted* and *trustworthy* actor.

4. Compare and contrast *privacy*, *protection*, and *anonymity*.

5. Come up with a simple example of a security policy for a house and describe a way it might be violated.

6. Label each number in Figure 1.1 using the following terms:

    a) target asset

    b) vulnerability

    c) attacker

    d) attack vector

    e) threat agent
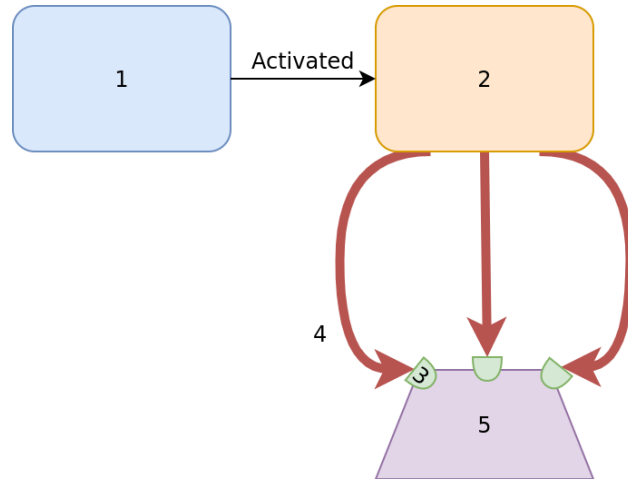
Figure 1.1

7. Draw a state machine diagram of a system's transition from a secure state to either a secure state or an insecure state.

8. Compare and contrast quantitative and qualitative risk assessment. Consider the advantages and disadvantages of each, as well as how each might work in theory/practice.

Qualitative	Quantitative

9. Consider $R = T \times V \times C$.

    a)   What is this equation for?

    b)   Describe each variable in this equation. How does each variable relate to the equation's purpose?

    c)   Which two variables may be combined into P? What does the simplified equation look like? What does P represent?

10. Describe two risk assessment challenges.

11. Which of the following is not an adversary attribute?

    a)   objectives

    b)   outsider/insider

    c)   methods

    d)   funding level

    e)   capabilities

    f)   attack vector

12. What is a categorical schema? How is it different from a capability-level schema?

13. Compare and contrast a formal security evaluation with penetration testing.

Formal Security Evaluation	Penetration Testing

14. What is white-box pen testing? Black-box?

15. Consider STRIDE. What does each letter stand for?

   a) S:

   b) T:

   c) R:

   d) I:

   e) D:

   f) E:

16. Draw a tree model for compromising the password to a bank account. Include at least three leaf nodes.

17. Is it possible to completely test a comprehensive (and practical) set of security mechanisms for a system? Why or why not?

18. Explain the observability (or lack thereof) of security in the context of *negative goals.*

19. Assurance in security is best described as which of the following?

    a) Simple, effective

    b) Difficult, partial

    c) Simple, practical

    d) Difficult, complete

    e) None of the above

2   Cryptographic Building Blocks

20. Suppose Alice encrypts a message to Bob using $E_k(m) = c$. How does Bob decrypt the message?

21. What is an exhaustive key search? What does the attacker try to do? Is this the worst case for attacking a cryptosystem?

22. Label each of the following attacks as either an action by an *active* or a *passive* adversary. Once you have labeled the attack, describe it.

   a) Known plaintext attack

   b) Ciphertext only attack

   c) Chosen plaintext attack

   d) Chosen ciphertext attack

23. What is the main advantage of a one-time pad? Describe three disadvantages. Why are one-time pads not used?

24. What is the current standard for block ciphers?

25. Describe a situation in which we would need to use a stream cipher. Why can't you use another type of cipher?

26. What is a mode of operation used for?

27. What is one major flaw with the ECB mode of operation?

28. Draw a picture of the CBC mode of operation.

29. Draw a picture of the CTR mode of operation.

30. If Alice wants to send a message to Bob using public-key encryption, _____ is used to encrypt and _____ is used to decrypt.

   a) Bob's private key, Alice's public key

   b) Bob's public key, Alice's private key

   c) Bob's public key, Bob's private key

   d) Alice's private key, Alice's public key

   e) None of the above

31. If Alice wants to send a message to Bob using a public-key signature scheme, _____ is used to sign and _____ is used to verify

   a) Bob's private key, Alice's public key

   b) Bob's public key, Alice's private key

   c) Bob's public key, Bob's private key

   d) Alice's private key, Alice's public key

   e) None of the above

32. How does hybrid encryption work? What role does symmetric key encryption play? Public-key encryption?

33. What three security properties do digital signature schemes provide? To whom to they provide them?

34. What two security properties do MACs provide? To whom do they provide them?

35. What security property does a cryptographic hash provide? To whom does it provide the property?

36. Describe each of the following properties of cryptographic hash functions.

    a) Preimage resistance

    b) Second preimage resistance

    c) Collision resistance

37. How are hash functions used for password storage and verification? What property or properties of hash functions make this a desirable use case?

38. Is it generally better to MAC then encrypt, or encrypt then MAC?

3   User Authentication

39. Describe each of the following ways to defeat password authentication. For each technique you describe, provide one way to prevent it.

   a)   Online guessing

   b)   Offline guessing

   c)   Defeating password recovery

   d)   Bypassing authentication interface

   e)   Password capture

40. Describe 3 advantages of passwords. Describe 3 disadvantages.

41. What is a password hash salt? A pepper?

42. What is iterated hashing? What is it used for? How does it compare with other techniques to solve the same problem?

43. Explain the following:

   a) Dictionary attack

   b) Mangling rules

44. Describe the trade-off that occurs when using system-assigned passwords. How do these passwords help to mitigate dictionary attacks

45. Suppose you had a password scheme that has an alphabet of size b and allows passwords as long as n characters. How long would it take to brute force passwords in this scheme in:

   a) The worst case?

   b) The average case?

46. Consider $q = GT/R$. What does this equation describe? What is each variable for?

47. Draw password distributions in Figure 3.1 according to the captions.

Password space

Password space

(a) Password distribution we want.   (b) Password distribution we see in practice.
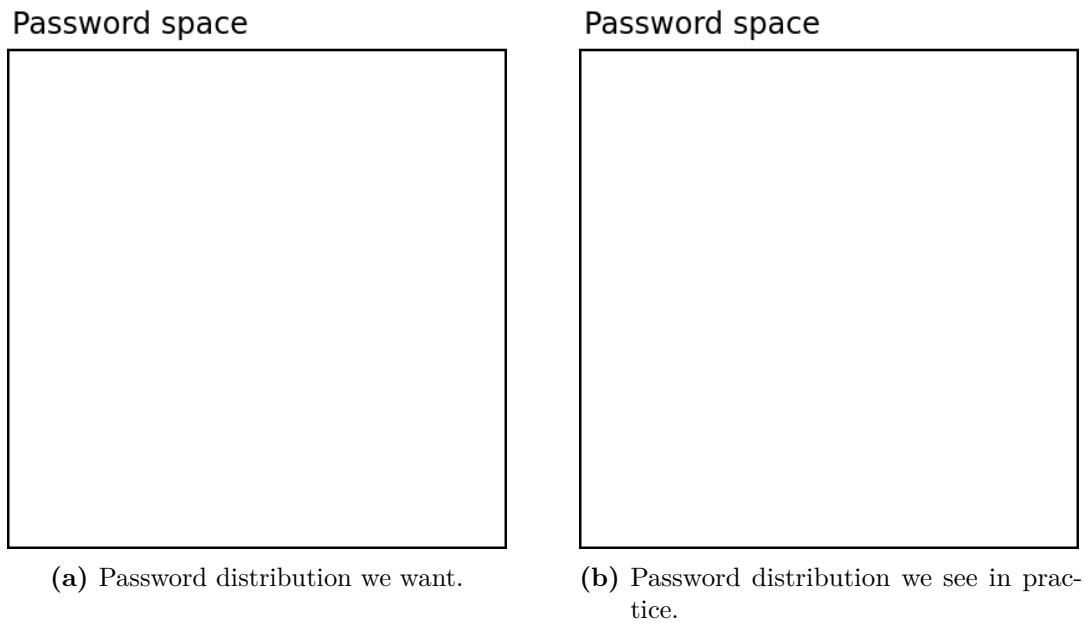
Figure 3.1

48. Discuss rate limiting and password change policies with respect to online guessing attacks. How does $q = GT/R$ factor into making decisions regarding these policies?

49. Discuss the drawbacks of complex site login password composition policies. Suggest at least three better alternatives.

50. What is a passkey? Why are complex passwords preferred for passkeys? How can passphrases help with usability issues associated with these complex passwords?

51. How can password blacklisting be used to reduce the effectiveness of dictionary attacks?

52. Why are secret questions generally a terrible method for password recovery? Why do you think they are so widely used despite their drawbacks?

53. What is a one-time password? How can a Lamport Hash Chain be used to extend a single key word to t one-time passwords?

54. Explain how Lamport Hash Chains are vulnerable to a man-in-the-middle attack using small $n = t - i$.

55. Describe the following categories of authentication and provide an example for each:

   a) What you have

   b) What you are

   c) What you know

   d) Where you are

56. What is multi-factor authentication?

57. Describe some advantages and disadvantages of hardware token authentication.

58. Give an example of each of the following modalities with respect to biometric authentication:

   a) Physical

   b) Behavioral

   c) Mixed

59. Biometrics are secrets.

   a) True

   b) False

60. Biometric authentication to a remote site via a phone sends your biometric signature for authentication.

   a) True

   b) False

61. Is it better to have a higher false acceptance rate or false rejection rate? Make an argument using the definitions of each.

62. Draw a bimodal distribution with a higher false acceptance rate than false rejection rate. Clearly define where your t is located with a straight line.

63. What is *EER*? How is it used in practice?

64. What is the difference between identification and authentication?

65. Describe at least three criteria used for the evaluation of biometric authentication.

66. Explain failure to enroll and failure to capture in the context of biometric authentication.

4   Authentication Protocols and Key Establishment

5   Operating Systems Security and Access Control

6   Software Security – Privilege and Escalation

7   Malicious Software

8   Public Key Certificate Management and Use Cases

67. What is a distinguished name? What does it do?

68. What is a public key certificate? What does it do? What trusted third party does it rely on?

69. Which of the following is generally preferred?

   a)   An entity sends a public key in their certification request

   b)   An entity sends a certification request and the CA generates their key pair

   c)   These are equivalent

70. What does a PKI do? Give one example of a PKI and how it is used in practice.

71. What is X509 used for? What does it specify?

72. What is a certificate chain? Why are they necessary?

73. What part of a certificate chain requires implicit trust? What part(s) is expected to sign its own certificate?

74. What happens if part of a certificate chain is broken?

75. What is an out-of-band channel? What do we use them for when checking certificate integrity?

76. Why is allowing users to manually trust certificates not always the best idea? Why do browsers do it anyway?

77. Consider Trust-On-First-Use under the following circumstances. What is the result in each case?

   a) An attacker has replaced a self-signed certificate with their own

   b) The self-signed certificate is legitimate

78. Suppose you tried to browse a site with an X509v3 certificate that had 4 extension fields, one marked critical, the other three non-critical. What would happen in the following scenarios (assuming the rest of the certificate is fine)?

    a) You have an older browser that cannot handle the critical extensions

    b) You have an older browser that cannot handle one of the non-critical extensions

    c) You have an older browser that cannot handle any of the non-critical extensions

79. Draw a picture of a cross certificate between two hierarchies. Describe one use case for cross certificates.

80. Consider the difference between *trust* and *trustworthiness*. What does a certificate trust model provide with respect to these terms?

81. Label (a), (b), and (c) in Figure 8.1 with the correct label from the following choices:

    a) Ring mesh

    b) Bridge CA model

    c) Separate domains

82. Circle the trust anchor(s) for the right-most leaves in each diagram in Figure 8.1.
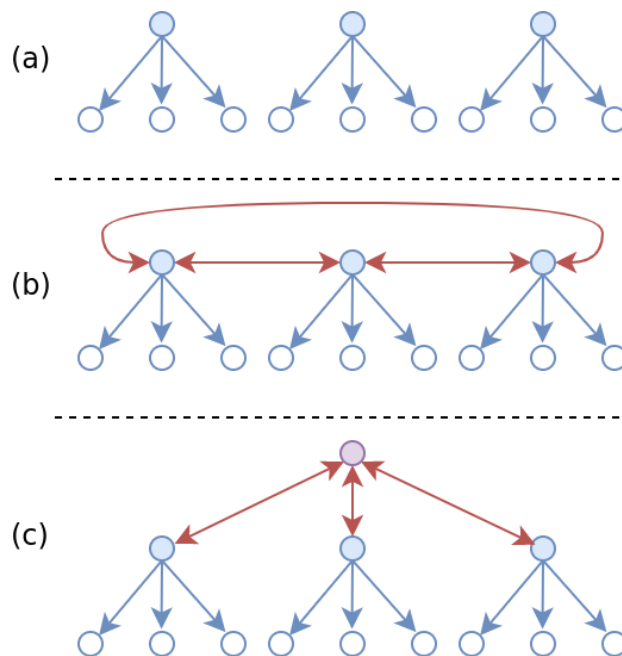

Figure 8.1

83. What are the leaf nodes in the browser trust model for CAs?

84. For each label in Figure 8.2, decide which of the following terms suits it best.

   a)   Browser trust model

   b)   Strict CA hierarchy model

   c)   Enterprise PKI model

85. Circle the trust anchor(s) for the right-most leaves in each diagram in Figure 8.2.
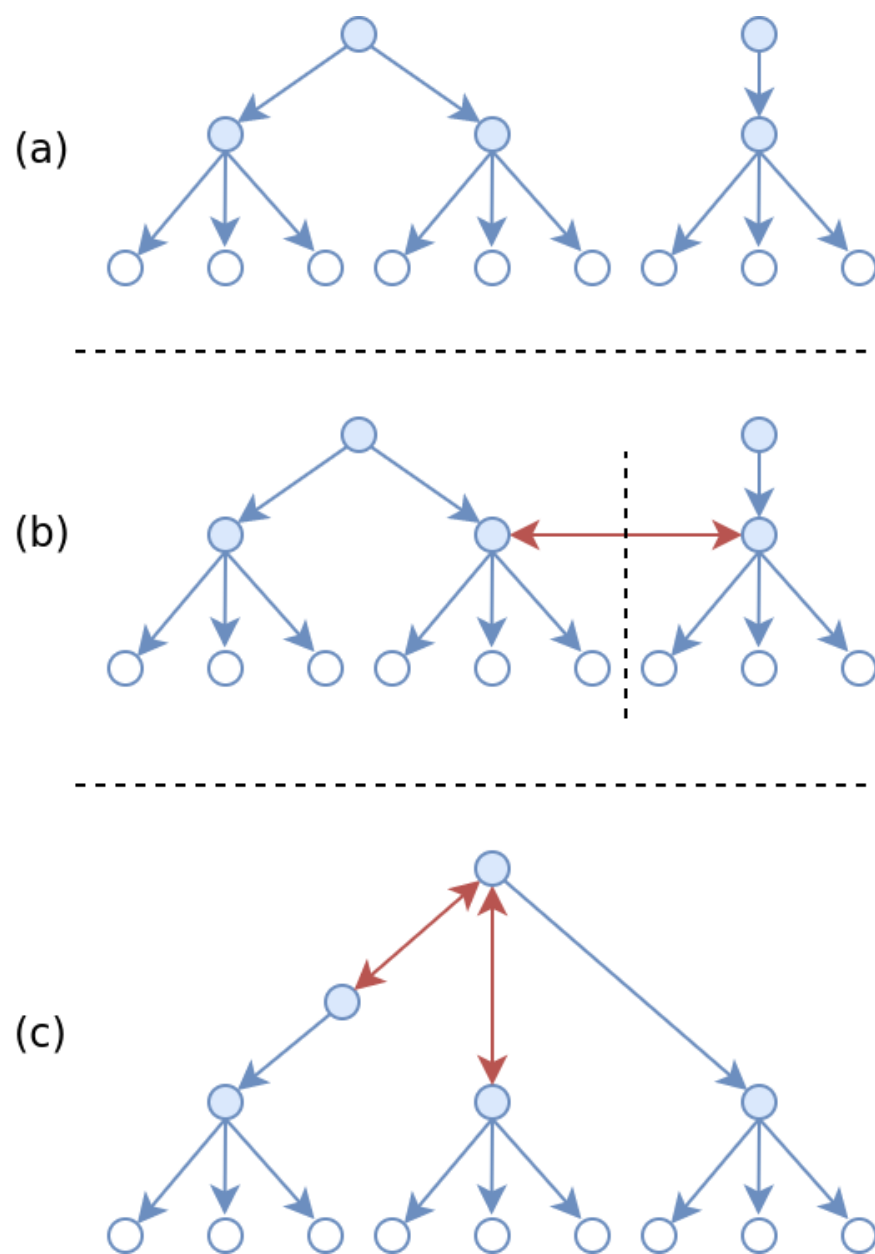
Figure 8.2

86. What is Web of Trust? Give an example of where we might use it.

87. Order the following validation types from least to most thorough:

    a) DV

    b) OV

    c) EV

    d) IV

88. What is a certificate substitution attack? What does this mean for the browser trust model?

89. How easy is it for a user to alter the browser trust model? Answer in terms of both accepting and revoking trust. Is this a good thing or a bad thing?

90. What do PEM, PGP, and S/MIME all have in common?

91. Where is the security header added in secure email?

92. Briefly explain how secure email uses public-key and/or symmetric-key cryptography.

93. What is a public key server? What is a certificate directory? What problem do these hope to solve?

9   Web and Browser Security

10   Firewalls and Tunnels

11   Intrusion Detection and Network-Based Attacks

Part II

Notes

12   Basic Concepts and Principles

13   Cryptographic Building Blocks

14   User Authentication

15   Authentication Protocols and Key Establishment

16   Operating Systems Security and Access Control

17   Software Security – Privilege and Escalation

17.1   Race Conditions

- TOCTOU
  - ▸ time of check to time of use
  - ▸ setuid has owner's privileges, but we need to make sure real user can access the file
  - ▸ `access` system call traditionally used
  - ▸ but an attacker can attempt to change the file between checking access and opening it for writing
  - ▸ this allows us to access another file that we shouldn't
- how to stop this?
  - ▸ atomic privilege checks would be nice
    - ◦ not portable
  - ▸ drop privileges and then fork before opening the file, make descriptor available to parent before exiting
    - ◦ also not portable
  - ▸ use system calls that deal directly with file descriptors
    - ◦ also not portable
  - ▸ no perfect solution, application dependent
- other notes
  - ▸ niceness can tip the balance in the attacker's favor
  - ▸ make checking process much higher niceness (slower) -> larger window to win the race

17.2   Integer-Based Vulnerabilities and C Issues

- problems:

- ▸ signedness
- ▸ overflow
- ▸ underflow

17.2.1   Problems with C

- favor efficiency/direct access over security
  - ▸ it lets us make mistakes like the ones above without warning
- undefined behavior -> machine-dependent results
  - ▸ signed integers have undefined behavior, unsigned integers use modular wrapping
- pointer arithmetic
- accessing memory using overflow/underflow values
- using overflow/underflow values for branching conditions
- pointer arithmetic changes based on size of type
- types can have different sizes based on architecture

Why We Can't Just Fix This.

- some developers rely on the behavior we described above (intentional overflows)
  - ▸ introducing runtime errors breaks backwards compatibility
- warning about possible errors is not necessarily possible
- safe integer libraries are a good option, but how do we enforce adoption?

17.3   Stack-Based Buffer Overflows

- too many bytes written to stack may overflow into adjacent memory
- natural vs intentional
  - ▸ natural yields unexpected outcomes
  - ▸ intentional results in security issues

17.3.1   Memory Layout

- text and global data segments are lowest, initialized at start
- heap is low, grows up
- stack is high, grows down

17.3.2   How it Works

- on function call, new args are pushed onto stack
- current instruction pointer is pushed as return address
- now we push local vars onto stack and execute the function
- overflowing a local var overwrites higher memory
  - ▸ if we overwrite return address, we can point it elsewhere, including into our overwritten memory

17.4   Heap-Based Buffer Overflows

- dynamic allocation is less predictable, varies between systems
- attacker has to experiment to find a vulnerable variable
    - ▸ there needs to be a useful higher memory address that is exploitable
- this is also only useful if memory corruption does not crash the program

17.4.1   Heap Spraying

- inject code many, many times into various locations in the heap
- then use an independent exploit to trigger code execution
- you only need to get it right once

17.5   Three Main Steps for Buffer Overflows

1. Code injection
    - inject code into an area of memory
2. Corruption of control flow
    - change control flow to go to that code
3. Seizure of control
    - run that code

17.6   Buffer Overflow Exploit Defenses

- make head and stack non-executable
- stack canaries
    - ▸ key words that detect code injection
    - ▸ if the key word is overwritten, raise an error
- run-time bounds checking
- ASLR, random heap allocators
    - ▸ randomize memory layout
    - ▸ disrupts attacks that rely on known memory locations
- type-safe languages
- safe C libraries
- static analysis tools
    - ▸ analyze code and flag potential problems

17.7   Privilege Escalation

- move from fixed functionality to a command shell
- escape a sandbox
- gain root privileges
- move from root privileges to kernel privileges (e.g., install a rootkit kernel module)

18   Malicious Software

18.1   Viruses vs Worms

- both propagate, carry a payload
  - ‣ mechanisms differ
- virus
  - ‣ requires user interaction to propagate, run
  - ‣ payload triggers on a condition
  - ‣ infect host files / software
    - ◦ even documents -> macro viruses
- worm
  - ‣ propagate automatically, over networks
  - ‣ don't need to be run by a user
  - ‣ exploit running software

Virus Infection Strategies.

1. Write beginning of file
2. Write end of file
3. Overwrite entire file
4. Overwrite a specific portion of file

- appending or prepending does not damage functionality, but is noticeable due to file size change
- overwriting harms functionality of program
  - ‣ make sure it's not critical to running the system

Virus Detection.

- impossible to write a program to detect all possible viruses
- instead, we play a cat and mouse game with attackers
  - ‣ increasing complexity
- detection: data signature-based detection, integrity checking, behavioral signatures

Virus Anti-Detection.

- encrypt and store internal decryptor key
- polymorphic virus that changes decryptor portions across infections
- place decryption key in an external file
- metamorphic virus -> mutates both body and mutation engine

Auto Rooters.

- scan for vulnerable targets, exploit opportunistically
- only need one vulnerability to spawn a root shell and/or install a rootkit

Fast Worm Spreading.

- generate hit lits by scanning for vulnerable hosts
- permute compromised addresses to find new targets strategically
- internet-scale hit lists
    - ▸ scan servers

18.2   Trojan Horses

- disguises malicious functionality as useful functionality
- sometimes combines malicious functionality with useful functionality
- often social engineering
    - ▸ disguised updates for legitimate programs
- may remain undetected for some time

18.3   Backdoors

- bypass normal entrypoints (and access control)
- remote-access Trojan (spawn a remote root shell)
- malicious remote desktop/shell tools
- rootkits

18.4   Key Loggers

- can be implemented with rootkits hooking system calls
- log user actions / keystrokes to steal information
- more severe -> surveillance software

18.5   Rootkits

- installed after an attack to allow attacker to keep coming back
- goals
    - ▸ conceals its presence
    - ▸ controls or manipulates applications/OS
    - ▸ facilitates long-term additional malicious activity
- rootkits often provide backdoors
- can be implemented in userspace or kernelspace
    - ▸ kernelspace is more dangerous (supervisor mode, control whole OS, easier to conceal itself)

Rootkit Methods.

- hooking system calls (patch dispatch table)
- inline hooking
    - ▸ detour and trampoline functions
- kernel object modification (to hide activity)

- ▸ either directly change the kernel object
- ▸ or modify the return values of key system calls via postprocessing
- installation strategies
    - ▸ exploit buffer overflows in kernel
    - ▸ alter shared library or application in userspace
    - ▸ install loadable kernel module (after gaining root privilege via some other means)

18.6   Drive-By Downloads

- exploit browser vulnerability + code injection to legitimate site (or by phishing with a malicious site)
- results in downloading a malicious executable silently
- defenses?
    - ▸ downloader graphs
    - ▸ comparing download patterns

18.7   Droppers

- malicious software whose job it is to download and install other malicious software
- can arrive by means of a worm, virus, trojan, or drive-by-download

18.8   Ransomware

- malware designed to extort users into paying
- often controlled via a botnet
- anonymous payment methods like bitcoin are exacerbating their effectiveness
- examples
    - ▸ encryption file lockers (use encryption to lock users out of their files and require payment to unlock the key)
    - ▸ other methods of file locking (access control, threaten to erase data, syskeying in Windows)

18.9   Botnets

- a coordinated network of enslaved machines
    - ▸ exploited initially via shell code or other means
- attack establishes control over many remote systems
    - ▸ the controlling machine is called the botnet header
- uses these systems to commit cyber crimes
    - ▸ provide an economy of scale to attackers
    - ▸ DDOS attacks, spread ransomware, malicious crypto mining, etc.

18.10   Zero-Day Exploits

- target a vulnerability in a program that was not known previously

- only useful before the vulnerability is patched
- users not patching their software can make this especially problematic

18.11   Logic Bomb

- malicious payload executed when a condition is met
- this is used in viruses and worms for example

19   Public Key Certificate Management and Use Cases

19.1   PKIs

19.2   Certificates

19.3   Certificate Authorities

19.4   Certificate Trust Models

Separate Domains.

Ring Mesh.

Bridge CA Model.

Browser Trust Model.

Enterprise PKI.

Web of Trust.

19.5   Secure Email / Public Key Distribution

20   Web and Browser Security

21   Firewalls and Tunnels

22   Intrusion Detection and Network-Based Attacks