

# William Findlay

SECURITY RESEARCHER · SYSTEMS PROGRAMMER · KERNEL HACKER

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## Education

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### Carleton University

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY IN COMPUTER SCIENCE

Ottawa, Canada

Sept. 2021 – Present

- Current CGPA: Pending
- Thesis: Pending

### Carleton University

MASTER OF COMPUTER SCIENCE

Ottawa, Canada

Sept. 2020 – Aug. 2021

- CGPA: 12.00 (A+)
- Accelerated Master's Program
- Research focused on operating system and container security
- Nominated for a Senate medal for academic achievement (decision pending)
- Thesis: [A Practical, Flexible, and Lightweight Confinement Framework in eBPF](#)

### Carleton University

B.Sc. COMPUTER SCIENCE, HONOURS

Ottawa, Canada

Sept. 2015 – Apr. 2020

- CGPA: 11.05 (A)
- Accelerated Master's Program
- Graduated with High Distinction, Dean's Honour List
- Thesis: [Host-Based Anomaly Detection with Extended BPF](#)

## Skills

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**Linux Kernel** Kernel Hacking, Kernel Module Development, eBPF, XDP, bcc, libbpf

**Systems Programming** C, C++, Rust

**Data Science** Pandas, Numpy, Scipy, R

**Research** Applied Security, Operating System Security, Sandboxing, Intrusion Detection

## Languages

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**Programming** C, Rust, Python

**Human** English, French

## Academic Experience

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### Carleton University

RESEARCH ASSISTANT

Ottawa, Canada

Apr. 2019 – Present

- Member of the [CCSL/CISL](#) research group.
- Researching Extended BPF for runtime security implementations under the Linux kernel.
- Co-supervised by [Dr. Anil Somayaji](#) and [Dr. David Barrera](#).
- Designed and developed ebpH, an anomaly detection system for Linux, using eBPF.
  - This work was the subject of my undergraduate [Honours Thesis](#).
- Designed and developed bpfbox, a process confinement tool for Linux, using eBPF.
  - This work was [published at ACM CCSW'2020](#).

### Carleton University

TEACHING ASSISTANT, COMP4000/5012 DISTRIBUTED OPERATING SYSTEMS

Ottawa, Canada

Sept. 2021 – Present

- Assisted the professor with planning and developing course material for a 50 student mixed graduate and undergraduate seminar course
- Created bi-weekly quizzes based on the content of research papers
- Designed two implementation experiences for students, focused around Kubernetes deployments in the cloud
- Graded assignments, term papers, and exams

## Carleton University

HEAD TEACHING ASSISTANT, COMP3000 OPERATING SYSTEMS

Ottawa, Canada

Sept. 2018 – Sept. 2021

- Nominee for the [Outstanding Teaching Assistant Award](#) in the 2018/2019, 2019/2020, and 2020/2021 academic years.
- Ran tutorial sessions for groups of 50 students.
- Took a leadership role to ensure tutorials proceeded smoothly.
- Held weekly office hours and workshops for students.
- Graded assignments and tests and gave appropriate feedback.
- Developed a [Discord bot](#) to help manage the class Discord server, used during the COVID-19 pandemic.
- Developed new tutorials which are now used each semester:
  - [Concurrency tutorial](#)
  - [Kernel memory management tutorial](#)
  - [eBPF tutorial](#)
  - [Rootkit tutorial](#)

## Other Experience

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### Metro Ontario, Inc.

CUSTOMER SERVICE SUPERVISOR

Ottawa, Canada

Apr. 2014 – Jan. 2018

- Managed day-to-day operations in the front end service department.
- In charge of store payroll and accounting on a part-time basis.
- Exhibited superior customer service skills as required.

## Awards and Nominations

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### ACCOLADES

2021	<b>Nominee</b> , Senate Medal for Academic Achievement, Carleton University	Ottawa, Canada
2021	<b>Nominee</b> , Outstanding Teaching Assistant Award, Carleton University	Ottawa, Canada
2020	<b>Nominee</b> , Outstanding Teaching Assistant Award, Carleton University	Ottawa, Canada
2019	<b>Nominee</b> , Outstanding Teaching Assistant Award, Carleton University	Ottawa, Canada
2020	<b>Recipient</b> , Dean's Honour List, Carleton University	Ottawa, Canada
2019	<b>Recipient</b> , Dean's Honour List, Carleton University	Ottawa, Canada

### SCHOLARSHIPS

2020	<b>Recipient</b> , Domestic Entrance Masters (\$2,000 CAD), Carleton University	Ottawa, Canada
2020–2021	<b>Recipient</b> , Departmental Scholarships (\$6,000 CAD / year), Carleton University	Ottawa, Canada
2020–2021	<b>Recipient</b> , Research Assistants (\$6,000 CAD / year), Carleton University	Ottawa, Canada
2020–2021	<b>Recipient</b> , Teaching Assistants (\$11,000 CAD / year), Carleton University	Ottawa, Canada
2015–2019	<b>Recipient</b> , Entrance Scholarship (\$2,000 CAD / year), Carleton University	Ottawa, Canada

## Presentations and Invited Talks

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### Invited Talk, IBM Research – Security and Privacy

BPFBOX: SIMPLE PRECISE PROCESS CONFINEMENT WITH eBPF

Virtual Event, USA

Dec. 2020

- Invited guest speaker for the IBM Security and Privacy research group.
- Discussed my work on bpfbox, a process confinement mechanism for Linux using eBPF.
- Presented an overview of process confinement, eBPF, and its applications to security.

### Conference Presentation, ACM CCSW'2020

BPFBOX: SIMPLE PRECISE PROCESS CONFINEMENT WITH eBPF

Virtual Event, USA

Nov. 2020

- Presented my work and accompanying paper on bpfbox, a process confinement mechanism for Linux using eBPF.

### Seminar Presentation, CCSL/CISL Seminar

BPFBOX: SIMPLE PRECISE PROCESS CONFINEMENT WITH eBPF

*Ottawa, Canada*

*Oct. 2020*

- Speaker at a seminar for the CCSL/CISL research group.
- Discussed my work on bpfbox, a process confinement mechanism for Linux using eBPF.
- Presented an overview of process confinement, eBPF, and its applications to security.

### Lightning Talk, First Annual eBPF Summit

BPFBOX: SIMPLE PRECISE PROCESS CONFINEMENT WITH eBPF AND KRSI

*Virtual Event, USA*

*Oct. 2020*

- Invited to give a lightning talk for the [inaugural eBPF summit](#), hosted by Cilium.
- Gave a brief talk about my work on bpfbox, a process confinement mechanism for Linux using eBPF.

### Seminar Presentation, CCSL/CISL Seminar

EXTENDED BPF PROCESS HOMEOSTASIS

*Ottawa, Canada*

*Apr. 2020*

- Speaker at a seminar for the CCSL/CISL research group.
- Discussed my work on ebpH, an anomaly detection system for Linux using eBPF.
- Presented an overview of anomaly detection, eBPF, and its applications to security.

# Publications

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## CONFERENCE PROCEEDINGS

- [1] William Findlay, Anil Somayaji, and David Barrera. “bpfbox: Simple Precise Process Confinement with eBPF”. In: *Proceedings of the 2020 ACM SIGSAC Conference on Cloud Computing Security Workshop*. CCSW’20. Virtual Event, USA: Association for Computing Machinery, 2020, pp. 91–103. DOI: [10.1145/3411495.3421358](https://doi.org/10.1145/3411495.3421358).

## TECHNICAL REPORTS, ARCHIVES, AND THESES

- [1] William Findlay. “Host-Based Anomaly Detection with Extended BPF”. Honours Thesis. Carleton University, 2020. URL: <https://www.cisl.carleton.ca/~will/written/coursework/undergrad-ebpH-thesis.pdf>.

# Open-Source Software

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## CREATOR/MAINTAINER

### BPContain

EXPERIMENTAL CONTAINER SECURITY MECHANISM USING eBPF

- Designed and implemented a container security framework using eBPF programs and LSM hooks.
- Tech stack for this project includes Rust, libbpf-rs, and eBPF.
- BPContain is the subject of ongoing research and development, and will be the topic of my 2021 Master’s Thesis.
- Full source code available: <https://github.com/willfindlay/bpcontain-rs>

### bpfbox

eBPF-BASED PROCESS CONFINEMENT MECHANISM

- Designed and implemented the first eBPF-based policy enforcement engine and a high-level policy language for process confinement.
- This work was [published at ACM CCSW’2020](#).
- Full source code available: <https://github.com/willfindlay/bpfbox>

### ebpH

eBPF-BASED INTRUSION DETECTION SYSTEM

- Designed and implemented an intrusion detection system for Linux based on eBPF.
- Establishes per-executable system call profiles in order to establish normal behaviour and detect anomalies.
- Full source code is available: <https://github.com/willfindlay/ebpH>.

## CONTRIBUTOR

### bcc

eBPF PROGRAMMING FRAMEWORK FOR PYTHON

- Regular contributor to a large open-source project.
- Implemented the following major features:
  - Support for the ringbuf eBPF map
  - Enhanced support for LSM probes
  - Python support for stack and queue eBPF maps
- Full source code is available: <https://github.com/ iovisor/bcc>.

### libbpf-rs

RUST IMPLEMENTATION OF LIBBPF

- Implemented several major features to an open-source Rust project:
  - Support for the ringbuf eBPF map
  - Enhanced support for LSM probes
  - Bugfixes and general API improvements
- Full source code is available: <https://github.com/libbpf/libbpf-rs>.