

# CS 591: Introduction to Computer Security

## Lecture 1: Overview

James Hook

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## Course Mechanics

- Course web page:
  - <http://web.cecs.pdx.edu/~hook/cs491sp08/index.html>
- Contains:
  - My contact information
  - Term paper handout
  - Grading guidelines
  - Topics and Reading Assignments for each lecture
  - Links to lecture notes

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## Texts

- Bishop
  - Encyclopedic; sometimes dry
- Anderson
  - Sometimes anecdotal; a good read
  - Available on-line for free
- Original materials linked on web page
  - Some materials in the ACM library are only accessible when using a PSU IP address (license is based on internet address)

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## Grading

- Midterm: 100 points
- Final: 100 points
- Term paper title, abstract, outline and annotated bibliography: 50 points
- Term paper: 100 points
- Quizzes, Discussion and Class participation: 50 points
  - These mechanisms will be used primarily to evaluate mastery of the reading assignments

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## Academic Integrity

- Be truthful
- Always hand in your own work
- Never present the work of others as your own
- Give proper credit to sources
- Present your data accurately
- Violations of academic integrity will be taken very seriously. Grade of 0 on the assignment. Reported to the university in a manner consistent with university policy.

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## Term Paper

- Select a topic of your choice on computer security
- Explore:
  - Problem space
  - Solution space
- Identify original sources
- Integrate knowledge; organize; critique

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# Term Paper

- Midterm:
  - Title
  - Abstract (short description of paper)
  - Outline (identifies structure of paper)
  - Annotated bibliography
    - Author
    - Title
    - Complete bibliographic reference
    - Short description of contribution of paper in your own words

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# Term Paper

- Due at beginning of last class
  - Final paper
  - 10 - 15 pages (no more than 20!)
  - Paper should have a proper bibliography, references, and should be presented in a manner similar to papers appearing in conferences
  - Paper is not expected to present original research results, but is to be written in your own words and represent what you believe based on your study of the literature

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# Plagiarism

- Copying text or presenting ideas without attribution is plagiarism
- Plagiarism is a violation of academic integrity
- If you commit plagiarism you will get a grade of 0 and be reported to the university
- I know how to use google
- I will accept no excuses
- There will be no second chances

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# Exams

- Midterm will cover first half of the class
  - Probably similar to past mid-terms (I will prepare it)
  - Blue book exam
  - Study questions in advance
  - Real questions partially overlap study questions
- Final will cover second half of the class
  - The final will be prepared by Professor Binkley
  - It will not be a blue book exam

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## Readings

- Reading assignments are on the web page
- Please come to class prepared to discuss the readings
  - You will learn more
  - The person sitting next to you will learn more
- I may institute pop quizzes at any time to evaluate your preparation for class

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## Class Mailing List

- Please sign up for the class mailing list

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## Objectives

- Discuss the scope of Computer Security
- Introduce a vocabulary to discuss security
- Sketch the course

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## CS as Engineering

- Is Computer Science, or Computer Security, an engineering discipline?
- Are we meeting the reasonable expectations of society to
  - Codify best practices
  - Not repeat mistakes
  - Appropriately apply relevant science to the construction of artifacts

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## Case Study

- Voting
- Do electronic voting machines meet the reasonable expectations of society to provide a technology that is trustworthy and cost effective?

**Trustworthy:** Worthy of confidence; dependable [Webster's on-line]

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## NY Times, January 2008:

“The 2000 election illustrated the cardinal rule of voting systems: if they produce ambiguous results, they are doomed to suspicion. The election is never settled in the mind of the public. To this date, many Gore supporters refuse to accept the legitimacy of George W. Bush's presidency; and by ultimately deciding the 2000 presidential election, the Supreme Court was pilloried for appearing overly partisan.”

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## Reaction to 2000 election

- Help America Vote Act (HAVA) of 2002
  - \$3.9 billion for new technology
  - “Computers seemed like the perfect answer to the hanging chad.
    - Touch-screen machines would be clear and legible, ...
    - The results could be tabulated very quickly ...
    - And best of all, the vote totals would be conclusive..
    - (Touch-screen machines were also promoted as a way to allow the blind or paralyzed to vote ... HAVA required each poll station to have at least one “accessible” machine.)”

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## Touch Screen Voting in 2008

- Computers have not solved the problem
- There is still a crisis of confidence in voting
  - <http://news.google.com/news?hl=en&ned=us&q=voting+machines&btnG=Search>
  - <http://news.google.com/news?hl=en&ned=us&q=new+jersey+voting+machines&btnG=Search>

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# New Jersey

- In February 2008, New Jersey used Sequoia voting machines in their primary election
- Election officials noted anomalies

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Candidate	Candidate Totals	Total
*** 2-DEM	***	
* President 11th delegate	(1)	
A1		
D13 BARACK OBAMA		57
E13 DENNIS KUCINICH		0
F13 JOHN EDWARDS		3
G13 JOE BIDEN		1
H13 BILL RICHARDSON		1
I13 HILLARY CLINTON		204
J13 Personal Choice		0
*** 1-REP	***	
* President	(1)	
A2		
D24 RUDY GIULIANI		1
E24 FRED THOMPSON		0
F24 MITT ROMNEY		11
G24 JOHN MCCAIN		9
H24 RON PAUL		0
I24 MIKE HUCKABEE		1
J24 Personal Choice		0
Write In Votes		
No Write In Votes In Memory		
Option Switch Totals		
1	UNUSED	0
2	UNUSED	0
3	UNUSED	0
4	UNUSED	0
5	UNUSED	0
6	2-DEM	267
7	UNUSED	0
8	UNUSED	0
9	UNUSED	0
10	UNUSED	0
11	UNUSED	0
12	1-REP	21
Total		283

New Jersey election tape, February 2008, source: Freedom to Tinker blog

$$57+3+1+1+204 = 266$$

$$1 + 11 + 9 + 1 = 22$$

Election Officers  
 Please Complete After Closing The Polls  
 We the undersigned Election Officers do  
 hereby certify that on the 5  
 day of FEB on 08 this year

## Several incidents

- The web site <http://citp.princeton.edu/njvotingdocuments/> includes nine tapes from Union County New Jersey
- Union County election officials solicited the help of Ed Felten's lab at Princeton

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## Sequoia's Response

Sender: Smith, Ed [address redacted]@sequoiavote.com  
To: felten@cs.princeton.edu, appel@princeton.edu  
Subject: Sequoia Advantage voting machines from New Jersey  
Date: Fri, Mar 14, 2008 at 6:16 PM

Dear Professors Felten and Appel:

As you have likely read in the news media, certain New Jersey election officials have stated that they plan to send to you one or more Sequoia Advantage voting machines for analysis. I want to make you aware that if the County does so, it violates their established Sequoia licensing Agreement for use of the voting system. Sequoia has also retained counsel to stop any infringement of our intellectual properties, including any non-compliant analysis. We will also take appropriate steps to protect against any publication of Sequoia software, its behavior, reports regarding same or any other infringement of our intellectual property.

Very truly yours,  
Edwin Smith  
VP, Compliance/Quality/Certification  
Sequoia Voting Systems

[contact information and boilerplate redacted]

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## Why?

“THE QUESTION, OF COURSE, is whether the machines should be trusted to record votes accurately. Ed Felten doesn’t think so.

Felten is a computer scientist at Princeton University, and he has become famous for analyzing — and criticizing — touch-screen machines.

In fact, the first serious critics of the machines — beginning 10 years ago — were computer scientists.” [NY Times; January 2008]

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## Why? (cont)

“One might expect computer scientists to be fans of computer-based vote-counting devices, but it turns out that the more you know about computers, the more likely you are to be terrified that they’re running elections.”

[NY Times; January 2008]

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## Leading Critics

- David Dill, Stanford:  
<http://www.verifiedvotingfoundation.org/>
- Matt Bishop, UC Davis  
<http://evote.cs.ucdavis.edu/>
- Ed Felten  
<http://itpolicy.princeton.edu/voting/>

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## Expectations of Voting

- Vote is by secret ballot  Confidentiality
- The vote should be correctly tallied; all votes cast should be counted in the election  Integrity
- Every eligible voter who presents themselves at the polling place should be able to vote  Availability

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## Security or Computer Security?

- Are the expectations of integrity, confidentiality, and availability specific to computers?
- Can the properties of the computer system be considered independently of its use?

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## Voting: Policies and Mechanisms

- Who can vote?
  - Legal requirements for eligibility
    - Must be a citizen residing in the precinct
    - Must be of voting age
  - Administrative requirements to register to vote
    - Fill out an application
    - Present evidence of residence (can be by mail or fax)

Policy

Mechanism

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## Voting Mechanisms

- Paper ballot in a ballot box (or mail)
  - May be implemented as a scan form
- Punch cards
- Mechanical voting machines
- Direct Recording Electronic
- Voter-verifiable paper audit trail

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## Evaluating mechanisms

- How do we evaluate these options?
- Evaluation must be relevant to a threat model

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## Voting threat models

- Correlating ballot with voter
- Ballot stuffing
- Casting multiple votes
- Losing ballot boxes
- Ballot modification
- Incorrect reporting of results
- Denial of access to polls
- Vandalism
- Physical intimidation

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## Felten's paper

- Security Analysis of the Diebold AccuVote-TS Voting Machine
  - Felten's team injected malware in a voting machine that could alter the outcome of an election or disable a voting machine during an election
  - Malware was spread by sharing memory cards

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# Video

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## Goals of the class:

- Provide a vocabulary to discuss issues relevant to the trustworthiness of systems that include computers
- Provide a set of models and design rules to assist in building and assessing trustworthy systems
- Introduce mechanisms that, when used correctly, can increase trust (e.g. crypto, access control)
- Survey common exploitable vulnerabilities (stack attacks, malware, bots)

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## Facets of Security

- Confidentiality
  - Keeping secrets
- Integrity
  - Users trust the system
- Availability
  - The system must be ready when needed

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## Confidentiality

- Concealment of information or resources
- Government/Military: “Need to Know”
- Mechanisms:
  - Access Control

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# Integrity

- Trustworthiness of data or resources
- Data Integrity
  - Integrity of content (the vote tallies add up)
- Origin Integrity
  - Source of data is known (each vote was cast by a voter)
- Mechanisms
  - Prevention: block unauthorized changes
  - Detection: analyze data to verify expected properties (e.g. file system consistency check)

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# Availability

- If an adversary can cause information or resources to become unavailable they have compromised system security
- Denial of Service attacks compromise Availability

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## Trust

- Every time I drive I trust the brake system on my car
- Before I drive, I do not systematically check the brake system in any way
  - The brake system is a “trusted component” of my car
  - In contrast, I inspect the brakes on my bicycle before I ride and typically test them before I go down a hill

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## Trustworthy

- Are the brakes on my car “trustworthy”? I.e. is that trust justified?
  - Car is well maintained
  - Brake system “idiot light” is off
  - Brake system hydraulics meet modern standards for redundancy and independence
  - Independent “emergency brake” system is available if primary braking system fails

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## Trustworthy

- What about my bike brakes?
  - Bike is also well maintained
  - Front and Rear brake systems are independent
  - Simplicity of system affords reduction of “trust base” to cables, rims, brake calipers, and pads (and structural integrity of bike)

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## Threat environment

- For normal operation (commuting) both my car and my bike are sufficiently trustworthy that I don't worry about my brakes (I worry about other drivers!)
- In a hostile environment
  - I trust my ability to verify the integrity of my bike more than my ability to verify the integrity of my Prius or my F-250 truck
  - My F-250 is the most structurally robust vehicle I own; my bike is “vulnerable”

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## Definitions

- Trust: a relationship, typically with respect to a property
  - I trust my the brake cables on my bike
  - My integrity depends upon the integrity of my bike brakes
  - The fact that I trust something does not make it trustworthy!
- Trusted: a set of things that in a trust relationship
  - Frame, wheelset, cables, tires, brake mechanism

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## Definitions

- Trustworthy: an attribute of an object
  - Is the object worthy of trust?

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## Ross Anderson anecdote

... if an NSA employee is observed in a toilet stall at BWI selling key material to a [foreign] diplomat, then (assuming his operation was not authorized) he can be described as "trusted but not trustworthy" [Ross Anderson, p9-10]

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## Threats

- Potential violation of security
- Classes
  - Disclosure: unauthorized access
  - Deception: acceptance of false data
  - Disruption: interruption or prevention of safe operation
  - Usurpation: unauthorized control of some part of a system

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## Classic Threats

- Snooping:
  - (passive) wiretapping
- Modification (alteration)
  - Active wiretapping; man-in-the-middle
- Masquerading (spoofing)
  - Impersonation with intent to deceive
  - Cf. Delegation: one entity authorizes another to perform functions on its behalf

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## More Classic Threats

- Repudiation of Origin
  - A false denial that an entity sent something
- Denial of Receipt
  - A false denial that an entity received something
- Delay
  - Temporary inhibition of a service
- Denial of Service
  - A long term inhibition of a service

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## Policy and Mechanism

- Security Policy: A statement of what is, and what is not, allowed
- Security Mechanism: A method, tool, or procedure for enforcing a security policy

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## PSU Computer & Network Acceptable Use Policy

- This acceptable use policy governs the use of computers and networks at Portland State University (PSU). As a user of these resources, you are responsible for reading and understanding this document. ...
- Portland State University encourages the use and application of information technologies to support the research, instruction, and public service mission of the institution. PSU computers and networks can provide access to resources on and off campus, as well as the ability to communicate with other users worldwide. Such open access is a privilege and requires that individual users act responsibly. Users must respect the rights of other users, respect the integrity of systems and related physical resources, and observe all relevant laws, regulations, and contractual obligations.

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## PSU AUP (cont)

- **Acceptable use terms and conditions:**
  - The primary purpose of electronic systems and communications resources is for University-related activities only.
  - Users do not own accounts on University computers, but are granted the privilege of exclusive use. Users may not share their accounts with others, and must keep account passwords confidential.
  - Each account granted on a University system is the responsibility of the individual who applies for the account. Groups seeking accounts must select an individual with responsibility for accounts that represent groups.
  - The University cannot guarantee that messages or files are private or secure. The University may monitor and record usage to enforce its policies and may use information gained in this way in disciplinary and criminal proceedings.
  - Users must adhere strictly to licensing agreements and copyright laws that govern all material accessed or stored using PSU computers and networks.
  - When accessing remote systems from PSU systems, users are responsible for obeying the policies set forth herein as well as the policies of other organizations.
  - Misuse of University computing, networking, or information resources may result in the immediate loss of computing and/or network access. Any violation of this policy or local, state, or federal laws may be referred to appropriate University offices and/or, as appropriate, law enforcement authorities.

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## PSU AUP (cont)

- **Conduct which violates this policy includes, but is not limited to the following:**
  - Unauthorized attempts to view and/or use another person's accounts, computer files, programs, or data.
  - Using PSU computers, accounts, and/or networks to gain unauthorized access to University systems or other systems.
  - Using PSU computers, accounts, and/or networks for: threat of imminent physical harm, sexual or other harassment, stalking, forgery, fraud, generally offensive conduct, or any criminal activity.
  - Attempting to degrade performance of University computers and/or networks.
  - Attempting to deprive other users of University technology resources or access to systems/networks.
  - Using University resources for commercial activity such as creating products or services for sale.
  - Copying, storing, sharing, installing or distributing software, movies, music, and other materials currently protected by copyright, except as permitted by licensing agreements or fair use laws.
  - Unauthorized mass e-mailings to newsgroups, mailing lists, or individuals, i.e. "spamming" or propagating electronic chain letters.
  - Unauthorized "broadcasting" of unsolicited mail, material, or information using University computers/networks.

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## Goals of Security

- Prevention: Guarantee that an attack will fail
- Detection: Determine that a system is under attack, or has been attacked, and report it
- Recovery:
  - Off-line recovery: stop an attack, assess and repair damage
  - On-line recovery: respond to an attack reactively to maintain essential services

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## Assumptions

- Since the adversary or attacker is unconstrained, the security problem is always "open"
- Assumptions, either explicit or implicit, are the only constraints on the adversary

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# Trust

- Every system must trust something
- Trust is an underlying assumption
- To understand a system we must know what it trusts
- Typical examples of trusted entities:
  - We trust the system administrator to not abuse the ability to bypass mechanisms that enforce policy (e.g. access control)
  - We trust the hardware to behave as expected

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## Minimizing what we trust

- How little can we trust?
- If we trust the processor do we have to trust the boot loader?
- Can we verify that we have the expected operating system before executing it?

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# Assurance

- An attempt to quantify “how much” to trust a system
- Baseline:
  - What you expect it to do
  - Why you expect it to do that
    - Trust the process
    - Studied the artifact
    - Experience

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## Why do you trust an Airplane?

- Which of these do you trust more? Why?



NASA images from web site: <http://www.dfr.nasa.gov/Gallery/Photo/>

Boeing images from web site: <http://www.boeing.com/companyoffices/gallery/flash.html>

## Framework for Assurance

- Specification: What the system does
  - May be formal or informal
  - Says what, but not how
- Design: An approach to solving the problem; typically identifies components of the solution
  - Design satisfies specification if it does not permit implementations that violate the spec
  - Software design might include component communication and component specifications
- Implementation: A system satisfying the design (transitively the specification)
  - Software: Might be implementations of components described in design in a programming language

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## Operational Issues

- Policy and Mechanism must be appropriate for context
- Consider policy on vehicle keys in urban and rural settings
  - In urban settings you always take your keys; discourage joy riding/theft
  - In some rural settings people leave keys in vehicles so they are available to someone if they need to move (or use) the vehicle
- How do you make these decisions rationally?

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## Cost-Benefit Analysis

- What does it cost to provide a security mechanism (or to adopt a security policy)?
- What are the benefits?

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## Risk Analysis

- What is the likelihood of an attack?
  - Risk is a function of the environment
  - Risks change with time
  - Some risks are sufficiently remote to be “acceptable”
  - Avoid “analysis paralysis”

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## People

- Ultimately it is the system in use by people that must be secure
- If security mechanisms “are more trouble than they are worth” then users will circumvent them
- Security must be a value of the organization
- Policy and mechanism must be appropriate to the context as perceived by members of the organization

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## People as threat/weak link

- Insider threat
  - Release passwords
  - Release information
- Untrained personnel
  - Accidental insider threat
- Unheeded warnings
  - System administrators can fail to notice attacks, even if mechanisms report them
- User error
  - Even experts commit user error!
  - Misconfiguration is a significant risk

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## Conclusions

- Vocabulary for Security:
  - Confidentiality, Integrity, Availability
  - Threats and Attacks
  - Policy and Mechanism
  - Assumptions and Trust
  - Prevention, Detection, Recovery
  - Assurance
  - Operational issues: cost/benefit, risk
- Ultimate goal: A system used by people in an organization to achieve security goals appropriate to their situation

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## Next Lecture

- Access Control & Foundational Results
- Reading:
  - NY Times article on voting
  - Felten blog on NJ elections
  - Felten paper on Diebold voting machines
  - Bishop chapters 1, 2 and 3
  - Anderson chapter 1

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