Zero Knowledge Protocols

CS 6750 Lecture 10

November 19, 2009

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Mise en Situation

Suppose Alice knows a secret S

- You want to check that Alice knows the secret
- How can Alice convince you she does?

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Suppose Alice knows a secret S

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- How can Alice convince you she does?

… without actually revealing S!

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Repeat until Bob is convinced

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- Bob gives her the scrambled cube
- She secretly scrambles it further (remembering how)
- Bob asks her to either: unscramble the cube now, or restore the original scrambling
- Alice can do either if she knows how to unscramble the original cube; not otherwise

Zero Knowledge Protocols

Introduced by Goldwasser, Micali, and Rackoff in 1985

- Refined and explored by Goldreich, Micali, and Wigderson in 1986

There is a constantly changing definition of zero knowledge protocols and many papers are still coming out

- We will remain informal here

The Setup

The Prover

- has a secret
- Usually a probabilistic polynomial time (interactive) Turing machine
    - Sometimes completely unconstrained

The Verifier

- Usually a probabilistic polynomial time (interactive) Turing machine

No limits on the number of rounds of communication

Properties

Completeness

- A prover who knows the secret (honest prover) can prove it with probability 1

Soundness

- The probability that a cheating prover can get away with it can be made arbitrarily small

Zero Knowledge

- If the prover knows the secret, no verifier learns anything beyond that fact

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- If ... the ...cret, no verifier learns anything beyond that fact

More precisely:

... does not learn anything useful beyond that fact

Applications

Zero-knowledge protocols can be used when secret knowledge too sensitive to reveal needs to be verified

- Key authentication
- PIN numbers
- **Smart cards**

Example 3: Discrete Log

P wants to convince V that $\alpha^k = \beta$ for some k in $[0..\lambda]$

- α, β known

P V

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Assume this is a group for which the discrete log problem is hard, as usual.

The secret here is the k

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P $\xrightarrow{\alpha^j}$ V

rand $j \in [0, \lambda - 1]$

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You want
to avoid 0 or 1 here (why?)

So pick $j \in [j_0, \lambda - 1]$ where $1 < j_0 <= \lambda - 1$

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P → V: α^j

P: rand $j \in [0, \lambda - 1]$

V: rand $i \in \{0,1\}$

V → P: i

As remarked during lecture:
this should really be i chosen at
random in [1..lambda-1]

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P		V
rand $j \in [0, \lambda - 1]$	α^j →	rand $i \in \{0,1\}$
	← i	
$j + ik \bmod \lambda$	$j + ik \bmod \lambda$ →	

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	← i	
$j + ik \bmod \lambda$	$j + ik \bmod \lambda$ →	
		α^{j+ik} (= $\alpha^j \alpha^{ik}$) = $\alpha^j \beta^i$?

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P $\xrightarrow{\alpha^j}$ V

rand $j \in [0, \lambda - 1]$ ... $i \in \{0,1\}$

$j + ik \bmod \lambda$

When you repeat the protocol (to help convince verifier) make sure you pick a different random j every time

Example 4: Graph 3-Coloring

G a known graph, Prover has a (secret) 3-coloring

- Wants to convince Verifier she has one

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rand recoloring of G

encrypted recoloring → (one key per node)

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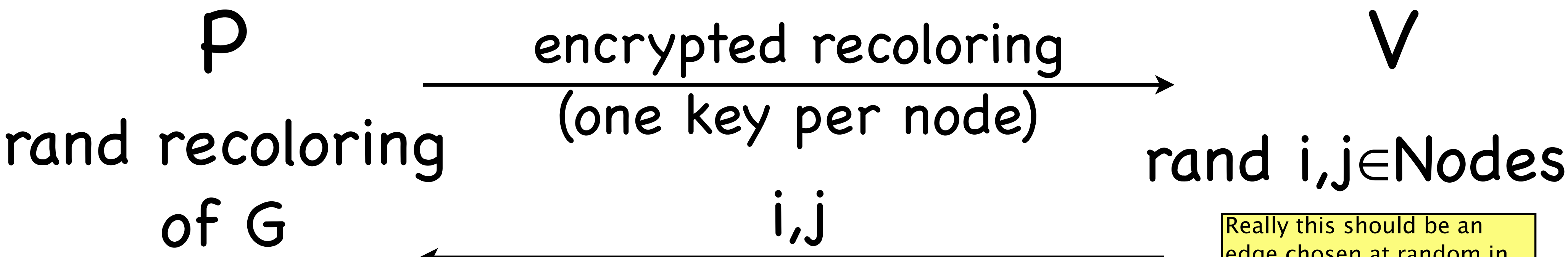

Really this should be an edge chosen at random in the graph, and V sends the two nodes at the end of the chosen edge.

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P		V
rand recoloring of G	encrypted recoloring (one key per node) →
	← i,j	rand i,j∈Nodes
	keys for i and j colors →
		color(i) ≠ color(j)

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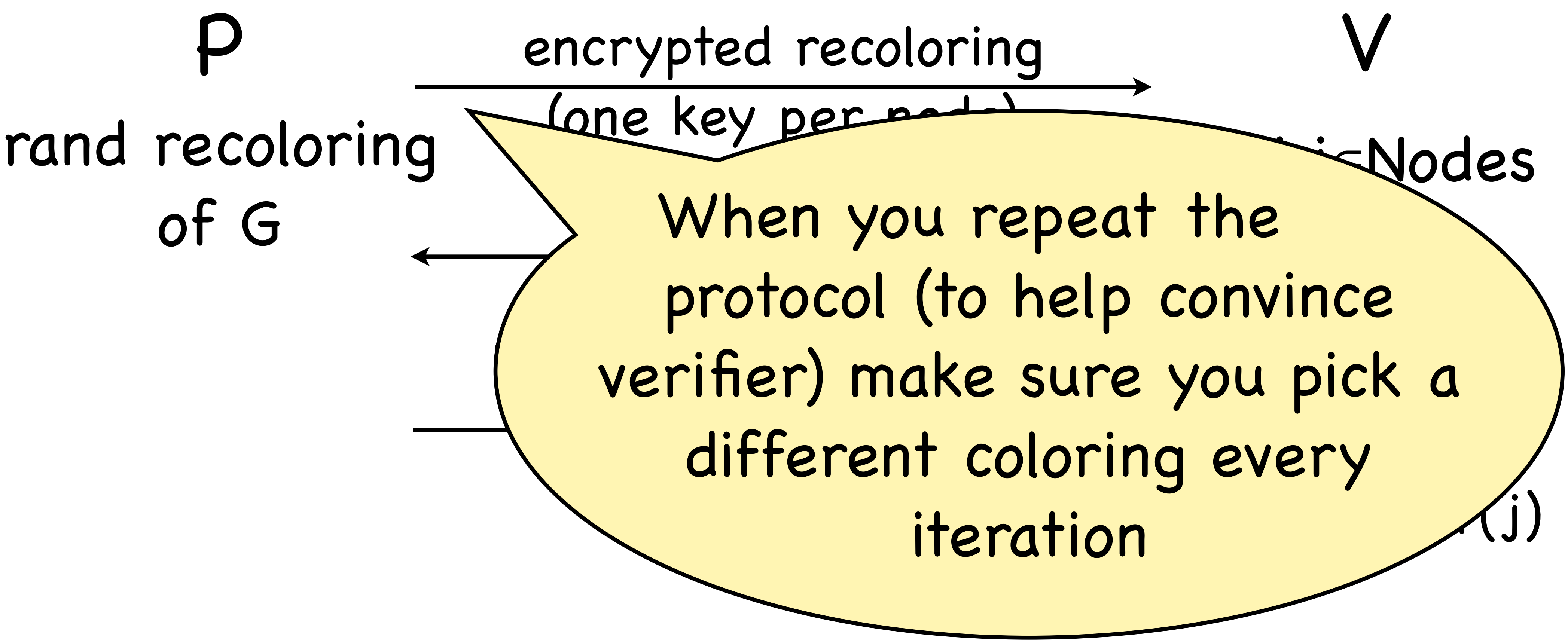

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requested answer →

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... one

V

rand {give me π, give me Hamiltonian path in H}

ra... isomorph... copy H of G (π is the matching)

requested answer →

check iso or check path

Even if V knows H, it is hard to reconstruct π from G and H

(Although no one knows quite how hard...)

Commitment Scheme

A key ingredient in many zero knowledge protocols

- Interesting in its own right

How do you flip a coin in real life?

(1) Bob "calls" the coin flip

(2) Alice flips the coin, and if Bob's call is correct, he wins, otherwise Alice does

Flipping a Coin Over the Phone

How do you do this over the telephone?

- Bob cannot trust Alice to reply honestly

Need commitment:

- A value of 0 or 1 is committed to by encrypting it or hashing it with a one-way function to get a "blob"
- We can verify the commitment by "unwrapping" this blob after revealing the key

Flipping a Coin Over the Phone

How do you do this over the telephone?

- Bob cannot trust Alice to reply honestly

(1) Bob "calls" the coin flip and tells Alice only a commitment to his call

(2) Alice flips the coin and reports the result

(3) Bob reveals what he committed to; if that matches the coin result Alice reported, Bob wins

Flipping a Coin Over the Phone

H

For Alice to be able to skew the results in her favor, she must be able to understand the call hidden in Bob's commitment, so if the commitment scheme is a good one, Alice cannot affect the results.

Similarly, Bob cannot affect the result if he cannot change the value he commits to.

(3) Bob reveals what he committed to; if that matches the coin result Alice reported, Bob wins

Bit Commitment Properties

Concealment:

- Receiver cannot determine the value of the bit from the "blob"

Binding:

- Sender cannot open the "blob" as both a zero and a one

ZK from NP-Complete Problems

Given an instance of an NP-complete problem

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Given an instance of an NP-complete problem

- Prover generates a new isomorphic instance based on the original one
- Prover commit the solution to the new problem to Verifier with a commitment protocol
- Verifier can challenge Prover with one of the questions:
  - Prove the two instances are isomorphic
  - Or show me the solution to the new instance

ZK from NP-Complete Problems

Given an instance of an NP-complete problem

- Prover generates a new isomorphic instance based on the original one
- Prover commit the solution to the new problem to Verifier with a commitment protocol
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  questions:
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As usual, repeat procedure until Verifier is satisfied.

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Tricky bit:

Verifier should not be able to transfer a solution back to the original instance

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G_0 and G_1 are known graphs.

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random H and isomorphism μ between G_0 and H

$\sigma_0 = \mu$

$\sigma_1 = \mu \circ \pi^{-1}$

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$\sigma_0 = \mu$ $\sigma_1 = \mu \circ \pi^{-1}$	σ_i →	check that σ_i is an isomorphism between G_i and H

More about NPC Problems

Every NPC problem yields a zero knowledge protocol

- Assumes existence of one-way functions
- Or existence of an encryption scheme
  - Basically, for commitment scheme

Variant that does not require such an assumption:

- Use multiple independent provers instead of only one, allowing the verifier to validate prover results against each others to avoid being misled.

ZK Proofs of Identity

If a private key is used as an identity, we can use a zero-knowledge proof for identity

- Chess Master problem: When Alice is proving her identity to a malicious node, the malicious node may be proving to a third party
- Cf wormhole attacks on wireless networks

Proposed solutions:

- Accurately synchronized clocks