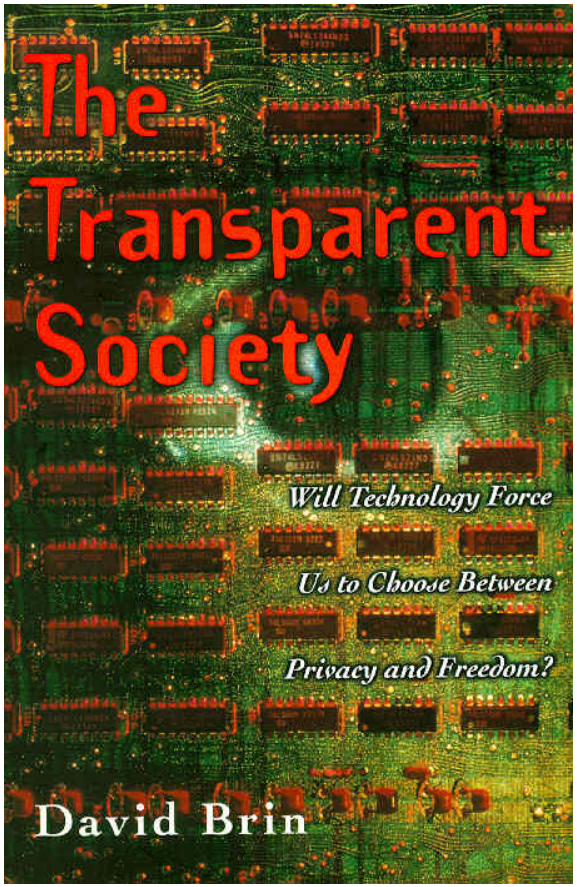
Conditional and Revocable Anonymity: an Overview

Anna Lysyanskaya
Brown University

Anonymity vs. Accountability

- The Transparent Society? (A 1998 book by David Brin)



Anonymity vs. Accountability

- Society without electronic data?

Anonymity vs. Accountability

- CURRENTLY: The worst of both worlds:
  - Personal data is collected and stored even when it is not needed, and can be accessed by savvy adversaries
  - Personal data cannot be located when you need it
  - (Or cannot be released due to a poorly designed or misunderstood privacy policy)
  - Examples:
    - Your login is your email address
    - Your bank asks for your grandparents' names
    - medical records…
    - RFID passports

Anonymity vs. Accountability

- WANT: the BEST of both worlds:
  - Personal attributes collected only when a task cannot be carried out without it
  - Personal data is only disclosed under well-defined conditions, to which the person agrees

Anonymity vs. Accountability

- GOVERNMENT'S ROLE:
  - Privacy standards/guidelines/policies
  - Policies for when to grant access to data
  - Identity infrastructure

Anonymity vs. Accountability

- What cryptography can do:
  - Everything!
  - Anonymity when you need it
  - Accountability when you need it
  - (Some of this is counter-intuitive)

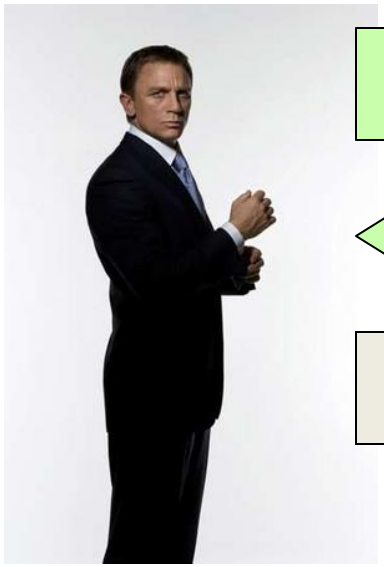
My Thesis Statement

- No contradiction between anonymity and accountability – can achieve the best of both worlds!

Specific Questions

- How can you make sure a user is authorized if this user is anonymous?
  - Use anonymous credentials!
- What if an anonymous authorized user does something that's not allowed?
  - Use conditional anonymity (anonymous ecash, etokens): identifying misbehaving users under well-defined conditions
- What if there is an emergency?
  - Use revocable anonymity (group signatures and variants)

James Bond Reads the News



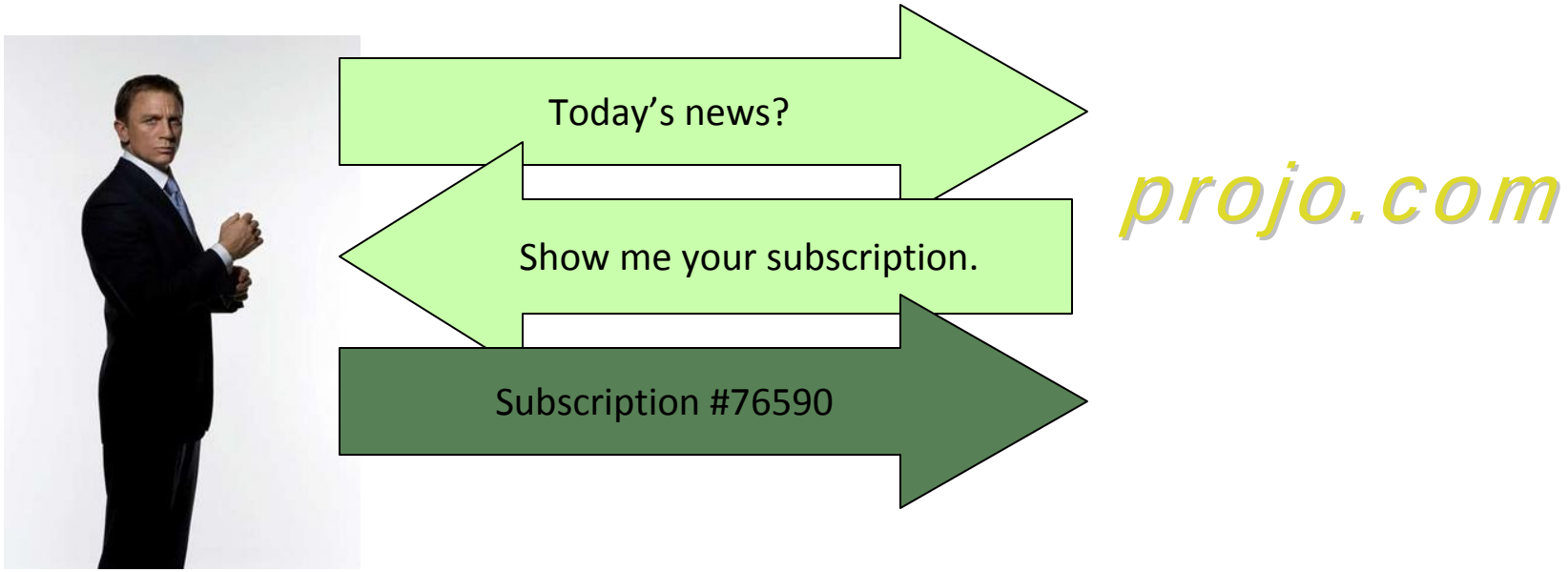
Today's news?

Who are you? Do you have a subscription?

I can tell you, but then I'll have to kill you...

projo.com

Newspaper Subscription

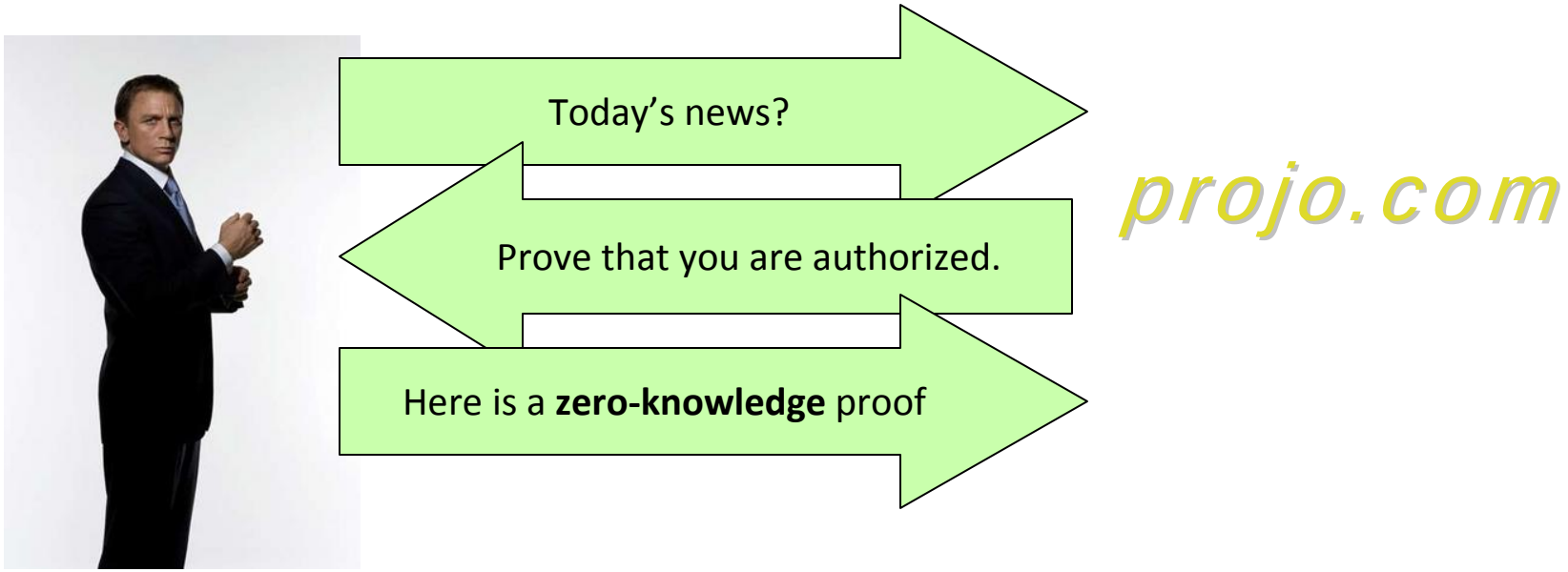


Subscription # is still personally identifiable information, because it allows projo.com to link all of James Bond's transactions together:

- projo.com learns his zip code when he looks up the weather
- learns his date of birth when he reads his horoscope
- learns his gender when he browses the personal ads

85% of US population is uniquely identifiable this way! [Sweeney]

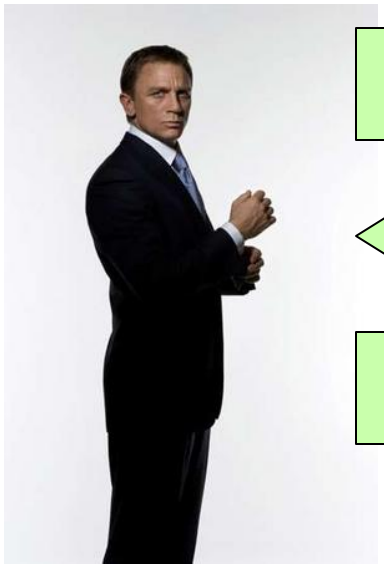
Anonymous Credentials



Zero-knowledge proof: a proof that a statement is true that does not contain any information as to *why*.

It's counter-intuitive that it can exist, but it does, for any provable assertion!

Anonymous Credentials



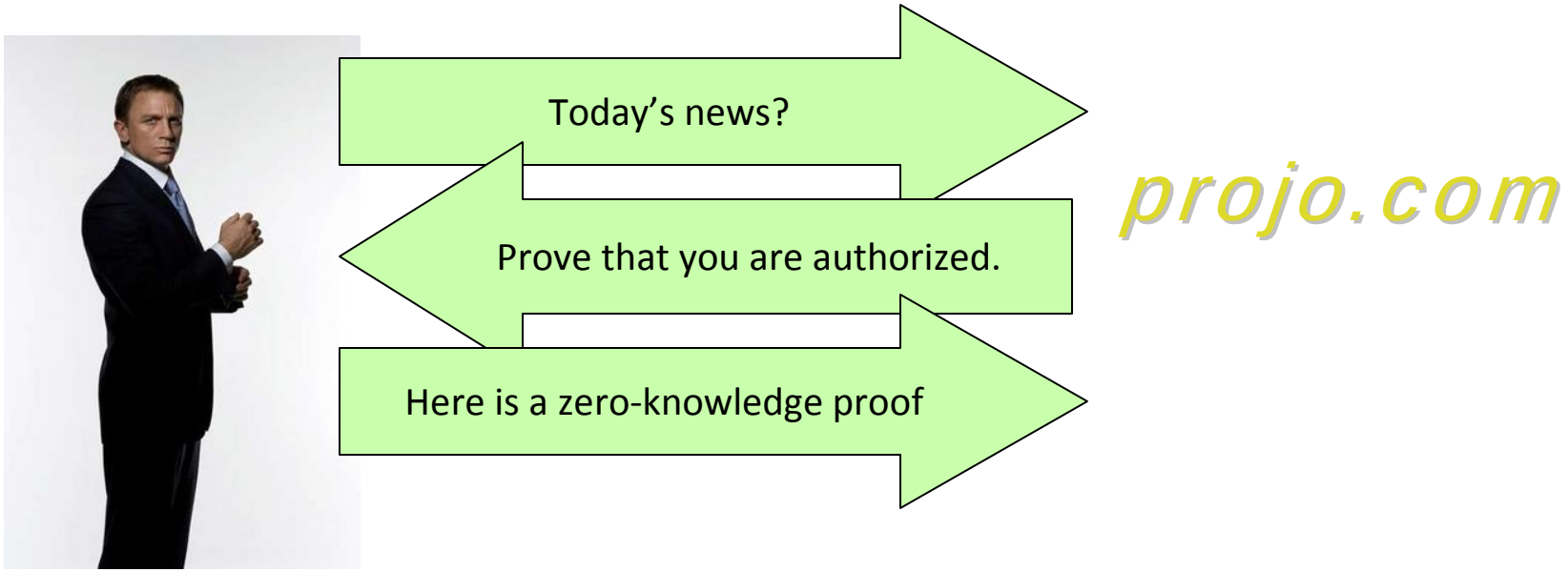
Today's news?

Prove that you have a subscription, a Ph.D. and a security clearance.

Here is a zero-knowledge proof

projo.com

Anonymous Credentials



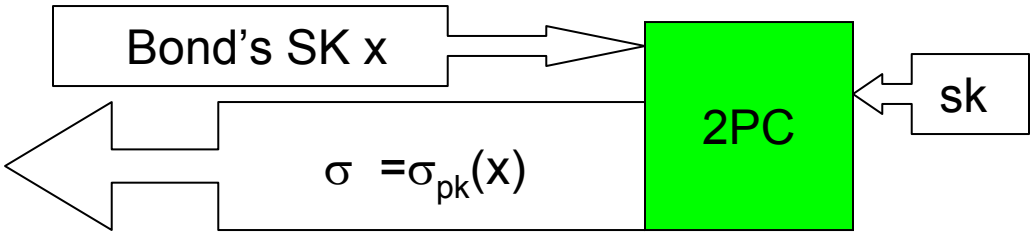
[GMR85, Chaum85,…,Brands99, CL01,L02,…,BCCKLS09]

How Does It Work?

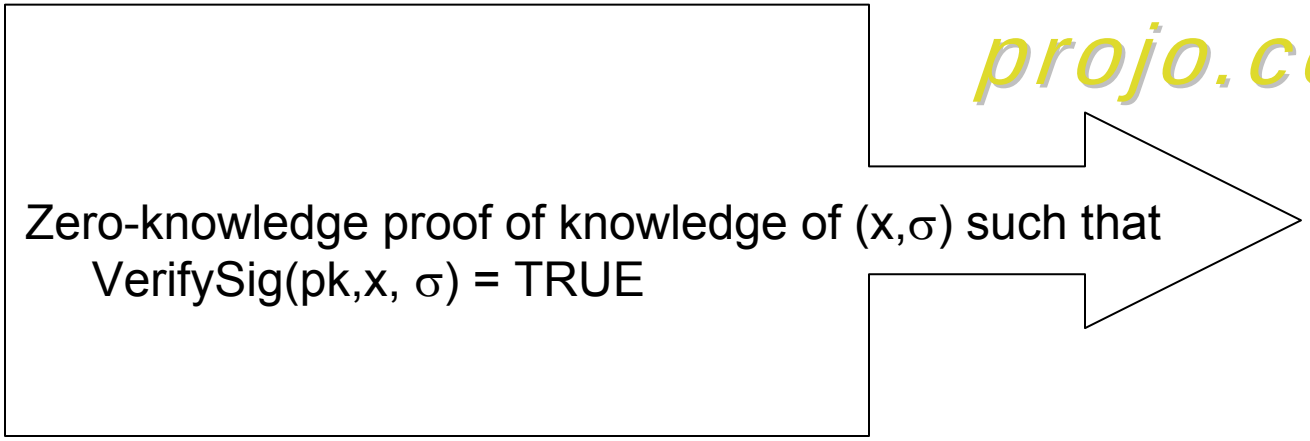
Building blocks: digital signatures, protocols, ZK proofs

SETUP: Signature key pair for CA (pk,sk).

SUBSCRIBE:



LOGIN:



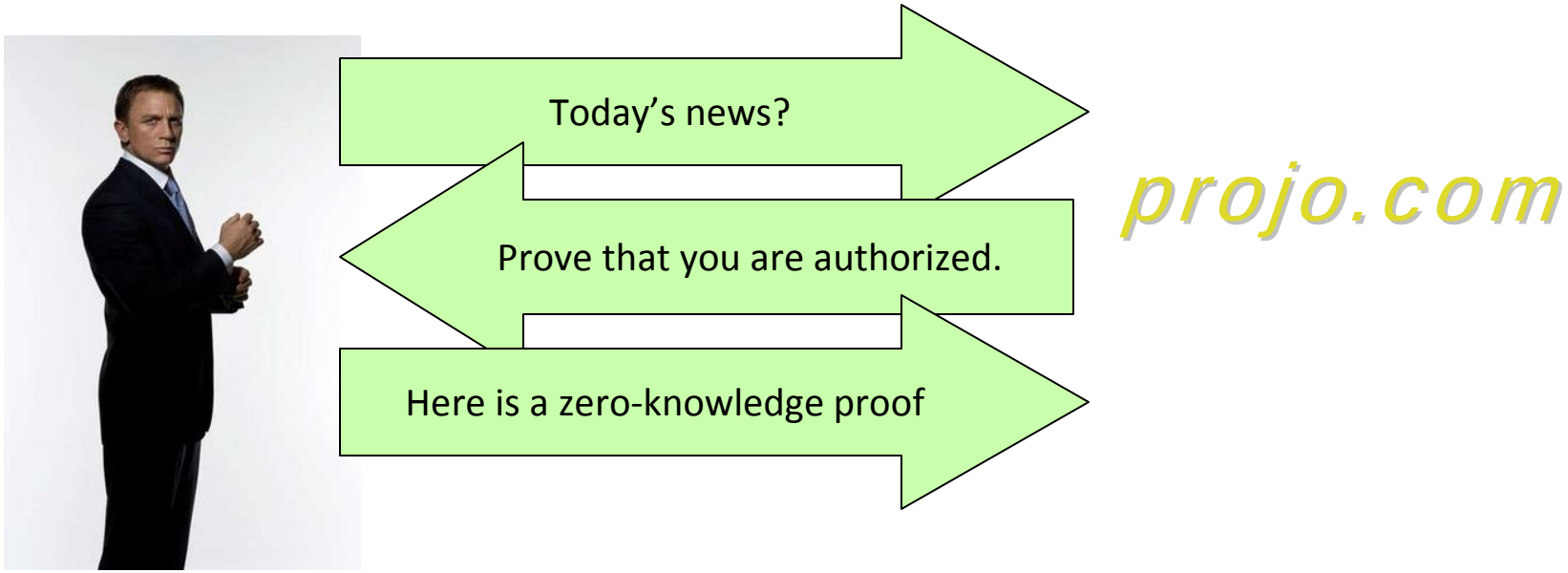
Is It Practical?

- Yes!
  - Idemix: works just as I described
  - uProve: slightly different (need a new σ for each login), still very practical

projo.com

σ, ZKPoK of x such that VerifySig(pk,x, σ) = TRUE

Anonymous Credentials

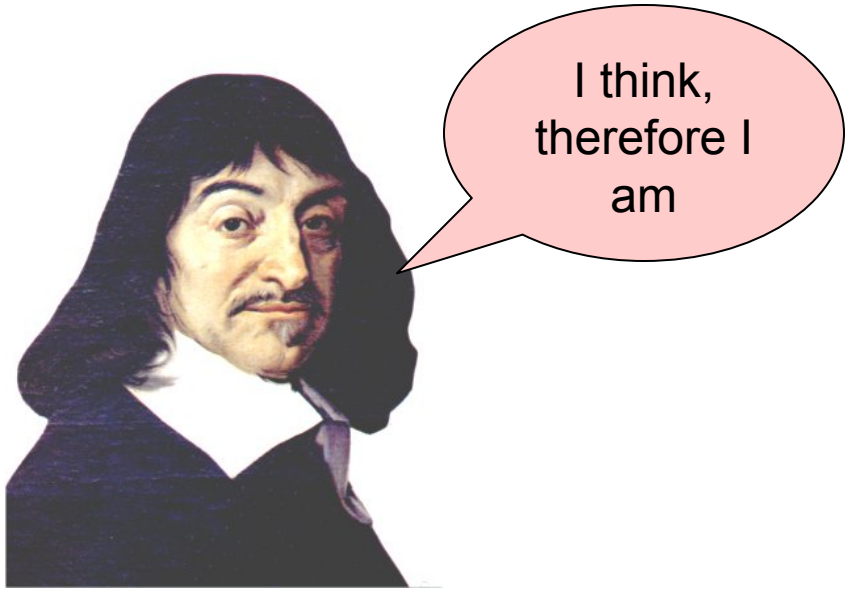


But how can we hold James Bond accountable if something goes wrong?

Digression: What is identity in this context?
(Never mind privacy!)
How can projo.com know it is talking to James Bond?

Your Identity Online

- When you are online, what makes you <u>you?</u>



René Descartes

Your Identity Online

- When you are online, what makes you you?

I log in, therefore I am

Disclaimer: provided no one else can log in as me

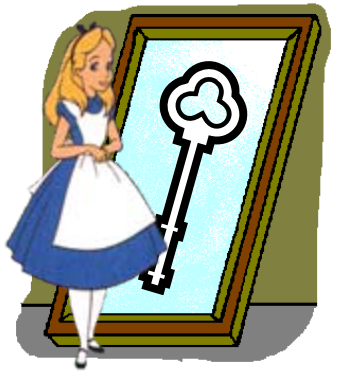
Anna Lysyanskaya

Conclusion: my password is what makes me me

Your Identity Online

- In general:
  - online, you only have your data to represent you
  - what makes you your online you is a secret that only you or your machine can know

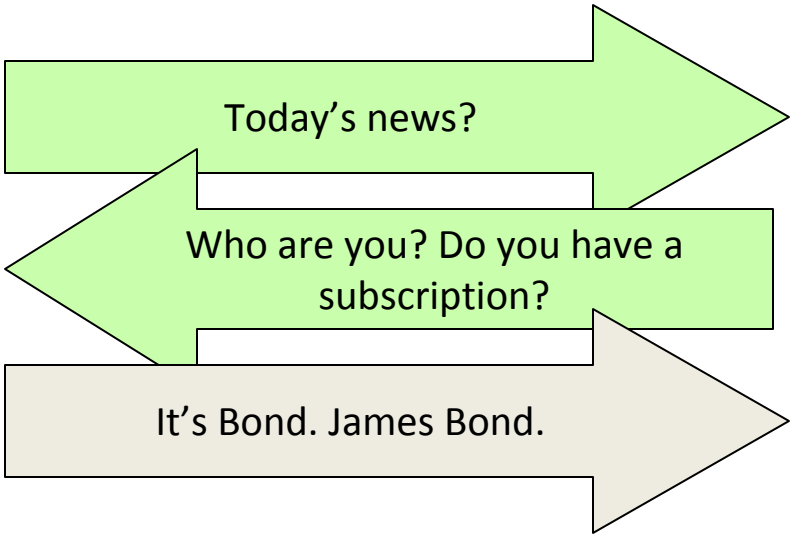
Your SECRET KEY is YOU.



Identity and Accountability

- What are the implications for accountability?
  - Bad news:
    - Identity theft -- someone steals your identity and now you can be held accountable for actions you didn't take.
    - Identity fraud -- you willingly share your identity with your friends, so they can use your credentials and benefits. Hard, but sometimes possible to prevent.
  - Misconception: if all transactions are private, you can't detect and prevent identity fraud. And how do you know that your identity was stolen?

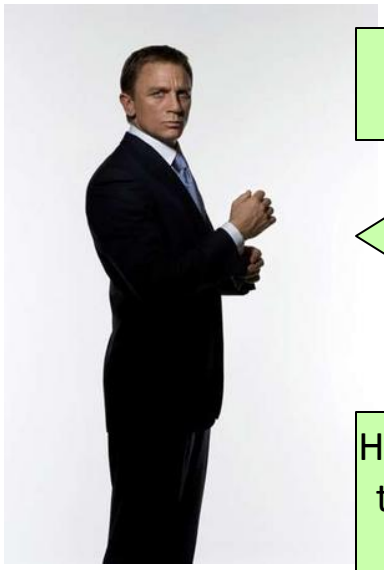
Identity Fraud/Theft



projo.com

Projo.com won't know it's not James Bond. They may get suspicious at the frequency with which this subscriber checks the news, and if the subscriber is anonymous they won't know any better.

Conditional Anonymity



Today's news?

Prove that you are authorized.

Here is a zero-knowledge proof, there are only five such proofs for today, and if I use one of them twice, you can add them together and learn my name

projo.com

[CHL05,CHKLM06]

How Do Single-Use Credentials Work? [ChaumFiatNaor,Brands

- Recall: digital s… ZK proofs of
- …
- Sl…
- LOGIN:

Suppose a cred is spent twice.
Same…

Privacy for user:
A,T: random,
proof is ZK!

0 < "new" R < Q

A (the credential serial number)
T =x+RB mod Q (double-spending equation)

ZKPOK of (x,B,σ) such that
1. T = x+RB
2. VerifySig(pk,(x,A,B), σ) = TRUE

Store
(A,R,T,proof)

projo.com

How Do Limited-Use Credentials Work? [CHL05,CHKLM06]

- SUBSCRIBE t

Suppose used >N times some day
=>

Privacy for user:
A,T: psedorandom,
proof is ZK!

$A=F_s(i,j)$ (the cred serial number)
$T = x+RF_t(i,j) \bmod Q$ (double-spending eq)

ZKPOK of (x,s,t,N,σ) such that
1. $1 \le i \le N$
2. $A = F_s(i,j)$
3. $T = x+RF_t(i,j)$
4. VerifySig(pk,(x,s,t,N), σ) = TRUE

projo.com

Store
(A,R,T,proof)

But what if something goes very, very wrong, and a thorough investigation is warranted?

Revocable Anonymity

Today's news?

Prove that you are authorized. If we are subpoenaed, a judge and an FBI officer will need to know your identity

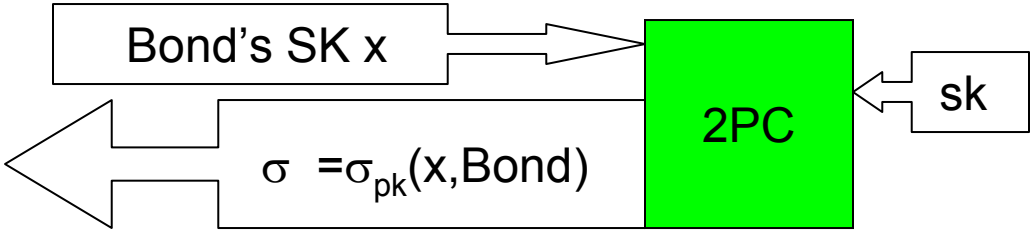
Here is a zero-knowledge proof, and an escrow of my identity that a judge and and FBI officer can decrypt together

How Does Revocable Anonymity Work?

Building blocks: digital signatures, protocols, ZK proofs, secure encryption

SETUP: Signature key pair for CA (pk,sk).

SUBSCRIBE:



LOGIN:

projo.com

C = $Enc_{FBI+Judge}$(Bond)
ZK proof of knowledge of (x,id,σ) such that
VerifySig(pk,(x,id),σ) = TRUE
and C encrypts id

Bibliography

- Anonymous credentials
  - Cryptographic algorithms [Chaum85 ,…, Brands99, CamenischLysyanskaya01,02,04,…]
  - Two deployable implementations:
    - Microsoft's Uprove
    - IBM's Idemix

- Anonymous e-tokens, conditional and revocable anonymity
  - Cryptographic algorithms for e-cash [Chaum82, …, Brands93,…] and compact e-cash and e-tokens [CamenischHohenbergerLysyanskaya05,CHKLM05], group signatures [CvH,…,ACJT00,BLS04]
  - Proof-of-concept implementation: Brown's "Brownie points" project

Conclusions

- No contradiction between anonymity and accountability!
  - There are technologies for it that have been extensively looked at by cryptographers and computer security researchers, in fact a diversity of algorithms to choose from.
  - Some of these ideas are counter-intuitive.
- Good policy is key