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DKOM
(Direct Kernel Object Manipulation)

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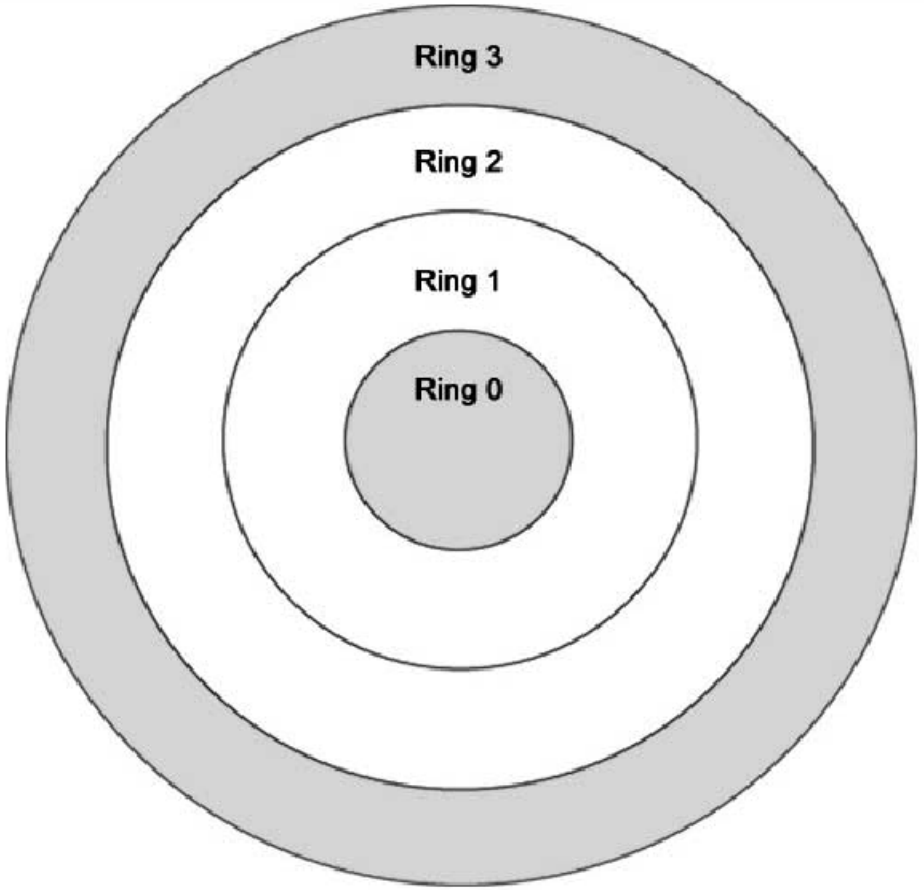
Operating System Design

- User Land
  - Operating system provides common API for developers to use
    - Kernel32.dll
    - Ntdll.dll
- Kernel Mode
  - The low level kernel functions that implement the services needed in user land
  - Protected memory containing objects such as those for processes, tokens, ports, etc.

Operating System Design

- Intel has four privilege levels or rings
- Microsoft and many other OS vendors use only two rings



Operating System Design

- By only using two privilege levels, there is no separation between the kernel itself and third party drivers or loadable kernel modules (LKM's)
- Drivers can modify the memory associated with kernel objects such as those that represent a process's token

Consumers demand more…

- Corporations and many private consumers see the need for more security
  - Personal firewalls
  - Host based intrusion prevention systems

Current HIDS/HIPS Functions

- To detect or prevent:
  - Processes running
  - Files that are created/deleted/modified
  - Network connections made
  - Privilege escalation
- Trusts the operating system to report these activities.
- If the underlying operating system is compromised, the HIDS/HIPS fails.

What Makes HIDS/HIPS Possible?

- Querying kernel reporting functions
- Hooking user land API functions
  - Kernel32.dll
  - Ntdll.dll
- Hooking the System Call Table
- Registering OS provided call-back functions

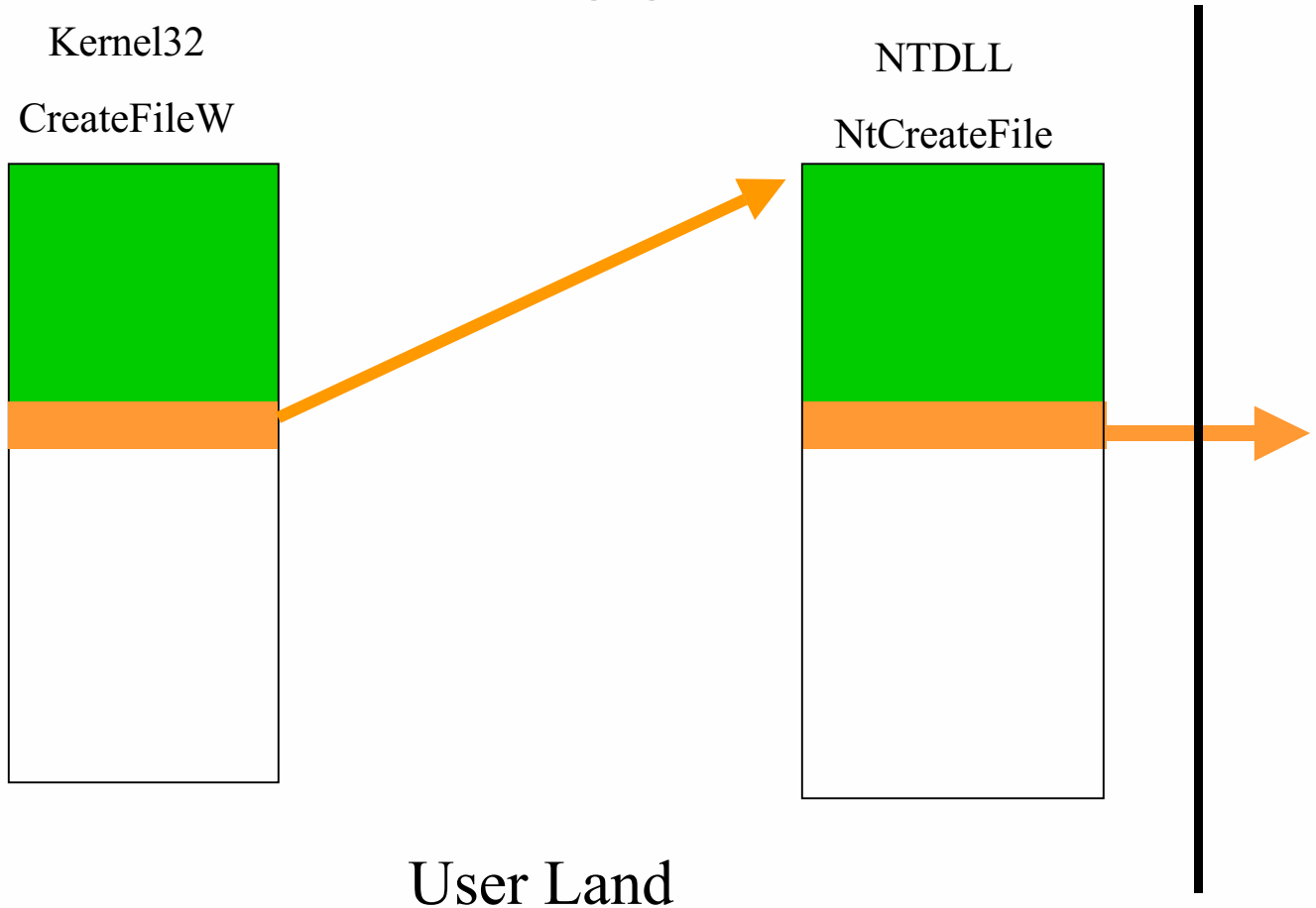
Attack Scenario

- Attacker gains elevated access to computer system
- Attacker installs a Rootkit
- Rootkit's functions
  - Hide processes
  - Hide files
  - Hide network connections
  - Install a backdoor for future access to the system
- Rootkits act as a part of the operating system so they have access to kernel memory.

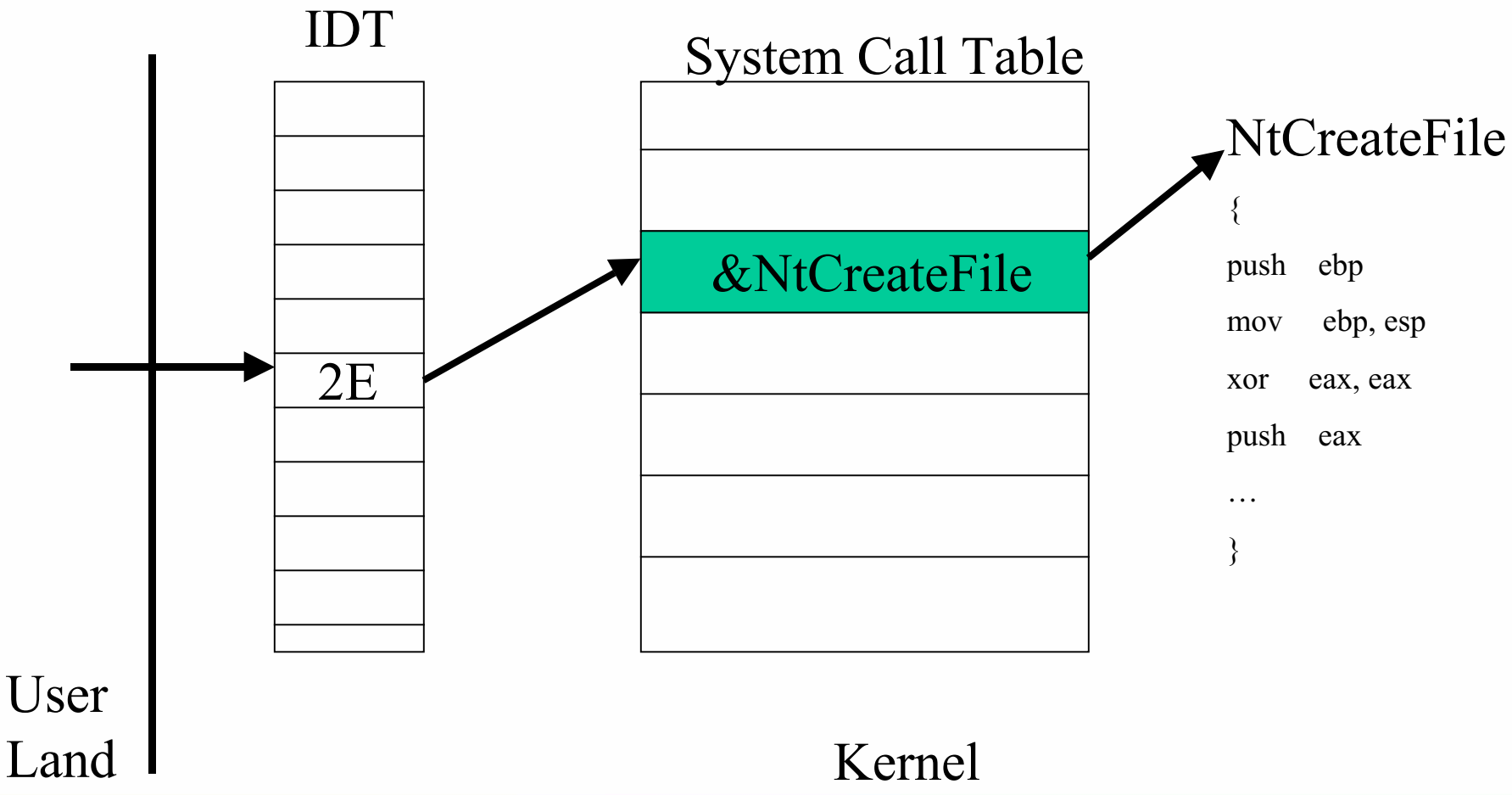
State of Current Rootkits

- Until recently, rootkits were nothing more than Trojan programs such as ps, ls, top, du, and netstat
- Advanced rootkits ***filter*** data
  - Hook the System Call Table of the operating system (the functions exported by the kernel)
  - Hook the Interrupt Descriptor Table (IDT)
    - Interrupts are used to signal to the kernel that it has work to perform.
    - By hooking one interrupt, a clever rootkit can filter all exported kernel functions.

Control Flow … aka Places to Hook



Control Flow … aka Places to Hook



Next Generation Rootkit Techniques

- **Direct Kernel Object Manipulation (DKOM) in memory**
  - A device driver or loadable kernel module has access to kernel memory
  - A sophisticated rootkit can modify the objects directly in memory in a relatively reliable fashion to hide.
  - Recall the goal of rootkits is to hide things: processes, files, and network connections.

- DKOM Uses
  - Hide Processes
  - Add Privileges to Tokens
  - Add Groups to Tokens
  - Manipulate the Token to Fool the Windows Event Viewer
  - Hide Ports

The Implication of Hidden Processes

- The intruder has full control of the system.
- Defeats a Host Based IDS/IPS that depends upon the underlying operating system.
- Will skew the results of forensic examinations.

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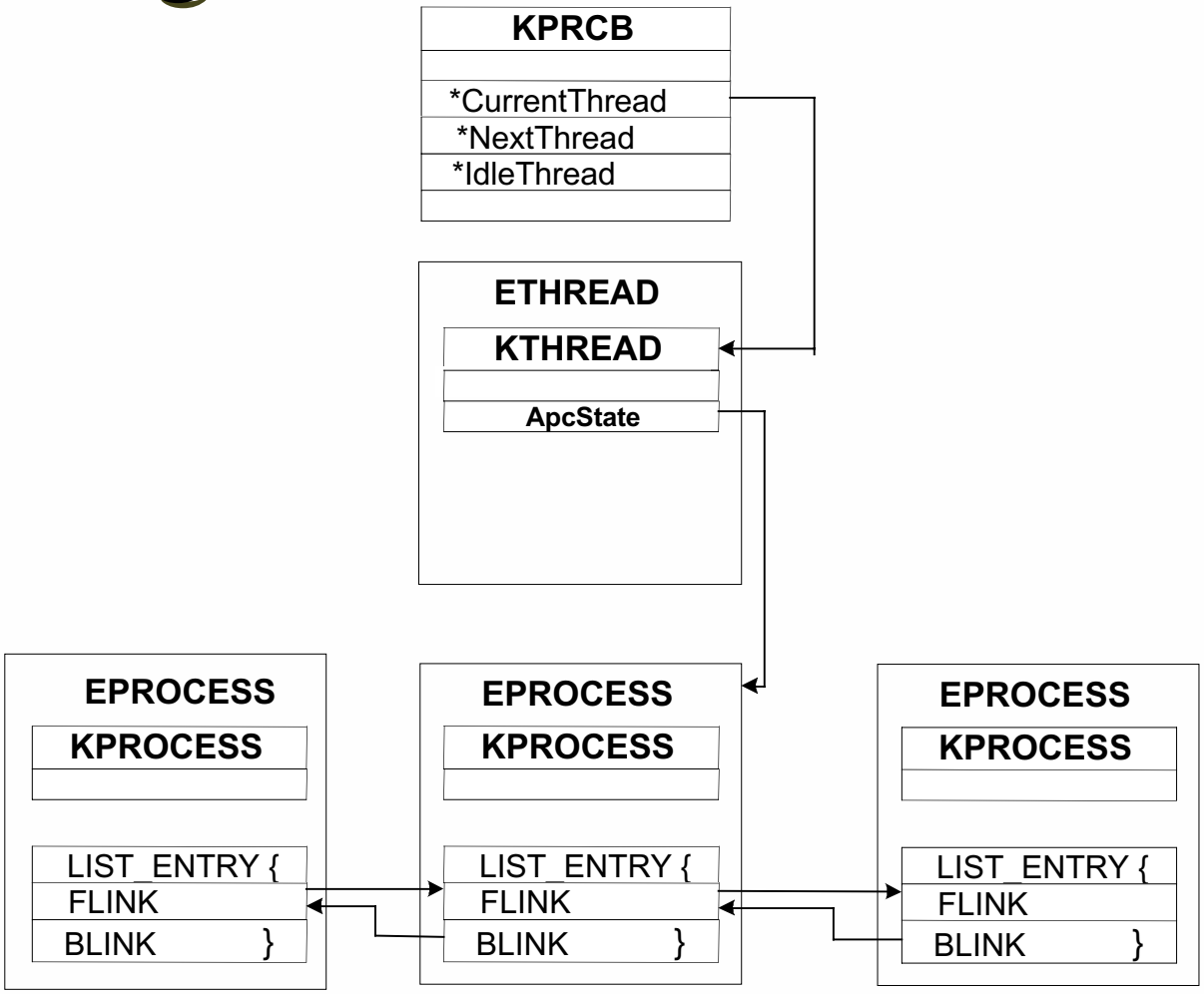
Hiding Processes - Windows



Hiding Processes - Windows

- Locate the Processor Control Block (KPRCB)
  - Located at 0xffdff120
  - fs register in kernel mode points to 0xffdff000
- Within the KPRCB is a pointer to the Current Thread block (ETHREAD)
  - Located at fs:[124] or 0xffdff124
  - An ETHREAD contains a KTHREAD structure

Hiding Processes - Windows

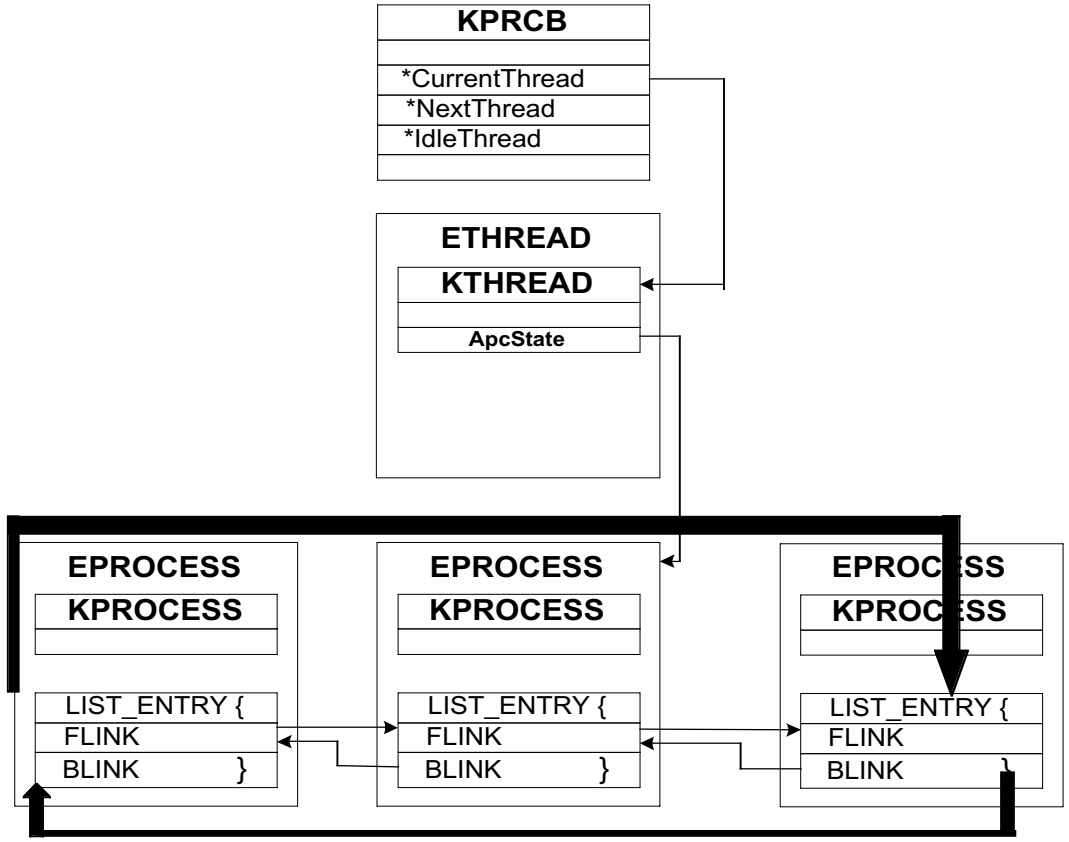
- The KTHREAD structure contains a pointer to the EPROCESS block of the current process
- The EPROCESS block contains a LIST structure, which has a forward and backward pointer to active processes
  - This creates the doubly linked list of active processes in Windows

Hiding Processes - Windows

- To hide a process
  - Locate the EPROCESS block of the process to hide
  - Change the process behind it to point to the process after the process you are hiding
  - Change the process after it to point to the process before the one you are trying to hide

Essentially, the list of active now processes points "around" the hidden process

Hiding Processes - Windows



Hiding Processes - Windows

- Why does the process continue to run?
  - Scheduling in the Windows kernel is thread based and not process based.
- Although scheduling code to run is based upon threads, when the kernel reports what is running on the system, it reports based upon EPROCESS blocks which can be modified with no adverse affect. This is what current tools (IDS/IPS's) rely upon to discover what is running on the system.

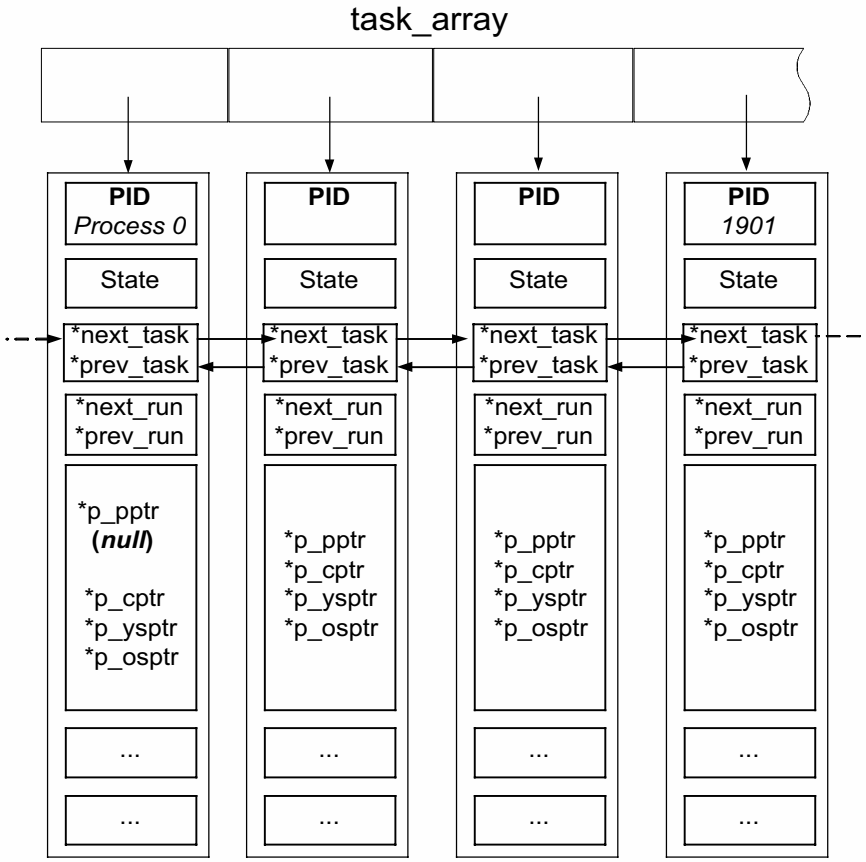
Hiding Processes – LINUX

- The LINUX kernel contains an array of task_struct's.
- A task_struct is similar to an EPROCESS block in Windows
- task_struct contains pointers to the prev_task and next_task
- task_struct also contains pointers to the prev_run and next_run for the running processes

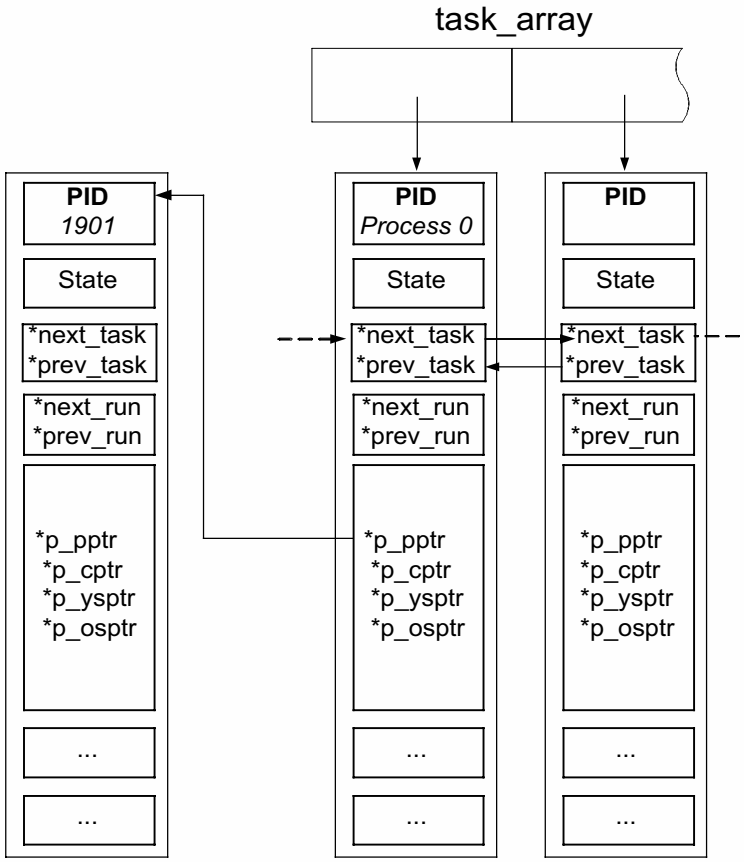
Hiding Processes – LINUX

- To hide a process, remove the process from the list of prev_task and next_task
- Leave next_run and prev_run alone

Hiding Processes - LINUX



Hiding Processes – LINUX



Hiding Processes - LINUX

- To prevent the process from freezing
  - The LINUX scheduler walks the list of task_struct's to calculate the goodness value of the process to decide rather to schedule it or not.
  - The LINUX scheduler must be modified to allocate time quantums to the parent of process of PID 0

Token Manipulation

- Add Privileges to Token
- Add Groups to Token
- Make the Owner of the Token Any User
- Make Any Actions Taken by the Process Appear to be Someone else such as System
  - Makes forensics difficult
  - Totally fakes out the Windows Event Viewer

Tokens

- Static Part
  - TOKEN SOURCE
  - TokenId
  - AuthenticationId
  - ParentTokenId
  - ExpirationTime
  - TokenLock
  - ModifiedId
  - SessionId
  - UserAndGroupCount
  - RestrictedSidCount
  - PrivilegeCount
  - VariableLength
  - Etc…

Tokens

- Variable Part
  - Privileges
    - LUID
    - Attribute
  - User and Groups
    - Pointer to SID
    - Attribute
  - Restricted SID's
    - Pointer to SID
    - Attribute

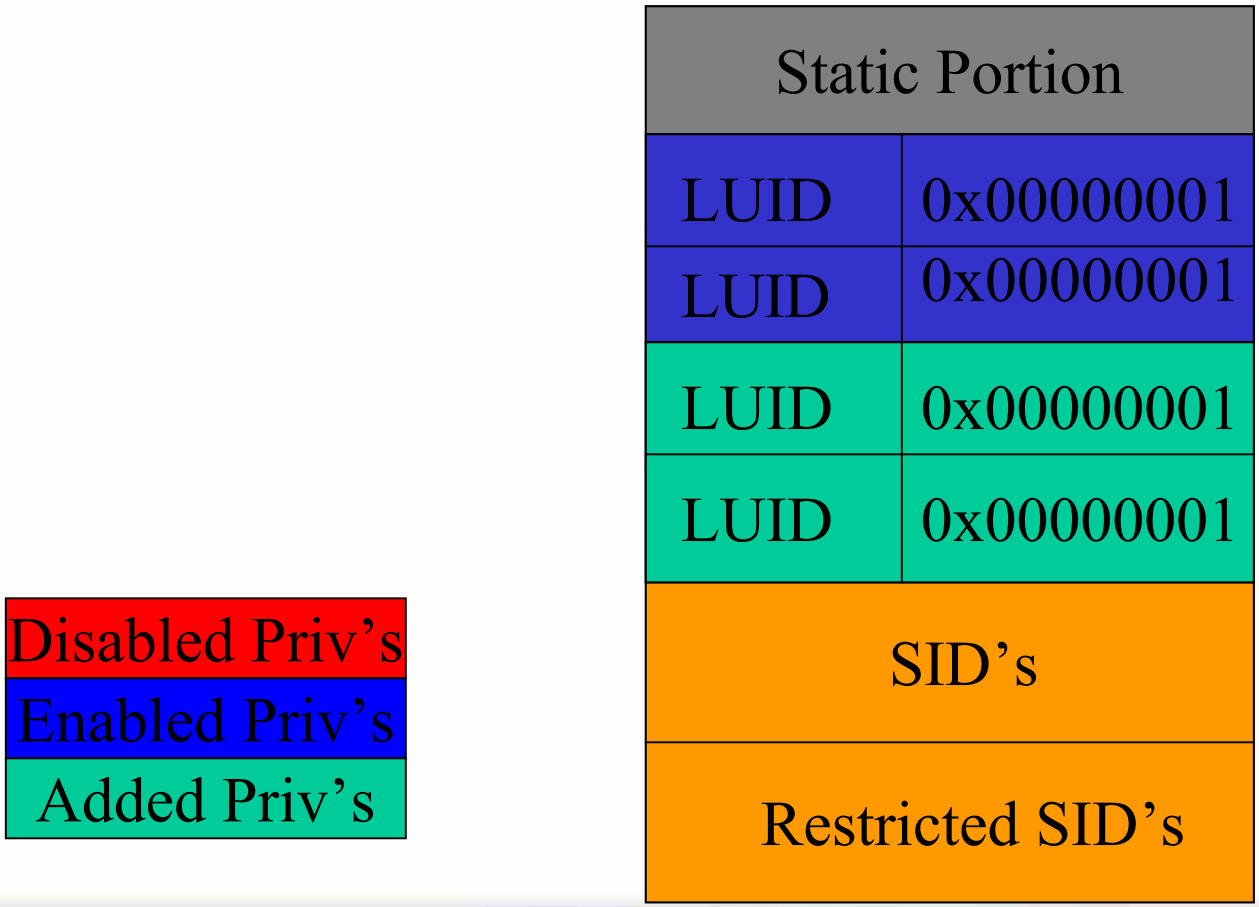
Manipulating Tokens

- Difficult to just grow the token because you are not sure what is after the variable part in memory
- Although static portion has pointers to the privileges and groups, just changing these to point to newly allocated memory does not work due to crazy math in a SepDuplicateToken() function

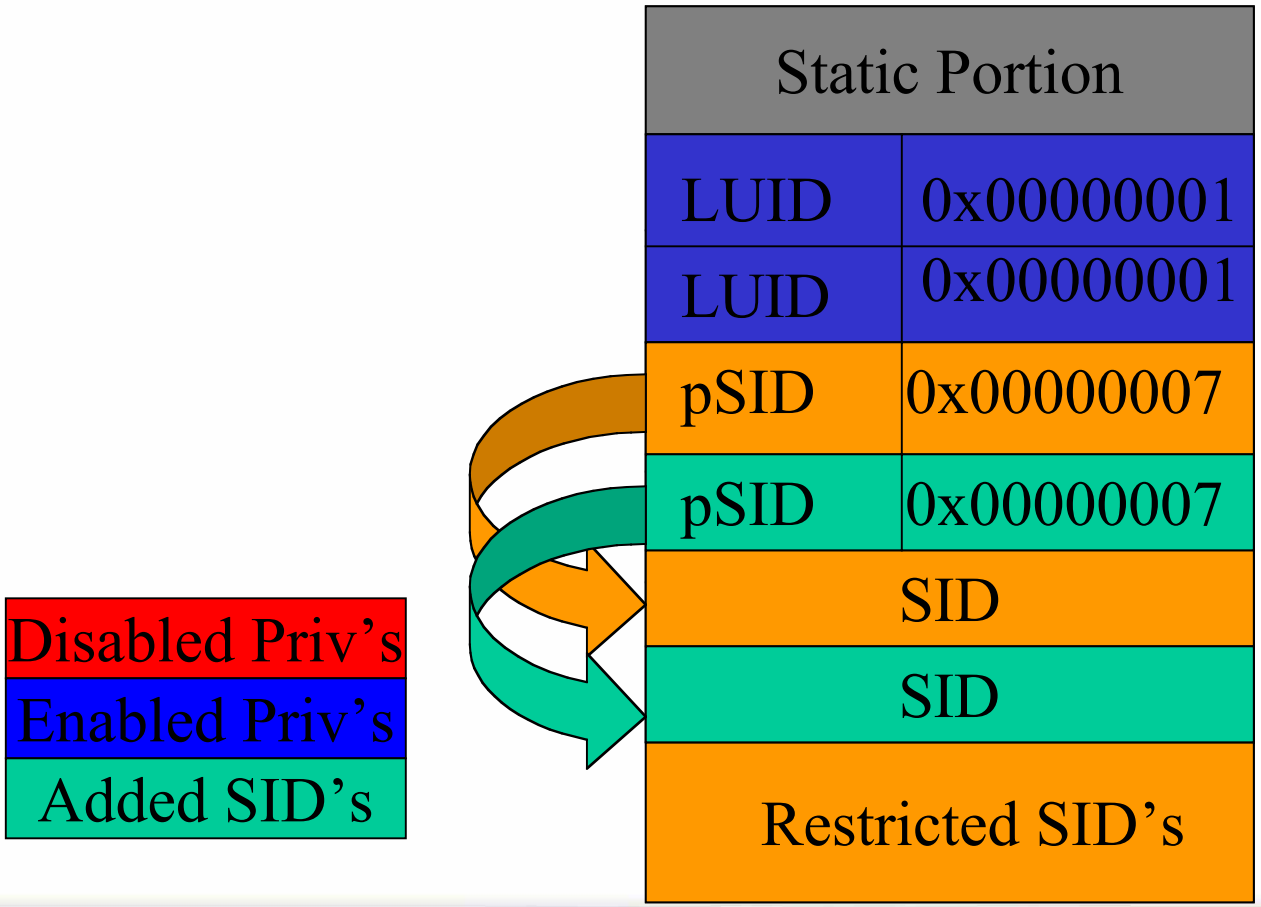
Manipulating Tokens

- There are a lot of Privileges in a token that are disabled
- We can discard these since they are disabled anyway and free up space for new privileges and groups
  - The “in-line” method

Adding Privileges to Tokens with DKOM



Adding Groups to Tokens with DKOM



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Faking Out the Windows Event Viewer using DKOM

- Change one DWORD in Static Portion of Token
  - SYSTEM_LUID = 0x000003E7
- Make FIRST SID in Token the System SID
- All logging of the Process now appears as System
- Useful if Detailed Process Tracking is Enabled

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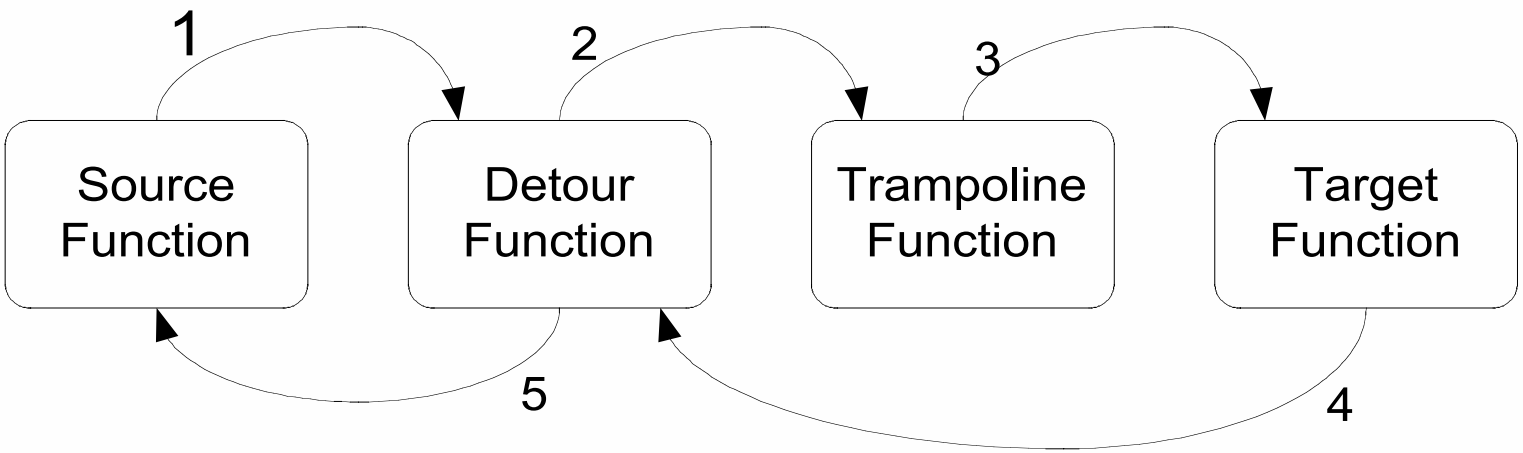
Detecting Hidden Processes in Windows

- Methodology: Examine each thread to ensure its corresponding process descriptor (EPROCESS) is appropriately linked.
- This requires patching the kernel in memory, in particular the SwapContext function.
- Hunt and Brubacher introduced Detours for intercepting Win32 binary functions.

Detours

- Overwrite beginning of target function (SwapContext) with an unconditional jump to a Detour function
- Detour function eventually calls a Trampoline function
- The Trampoline function contains the overwritten bytes of the target (SwapContext) function and calls the target (SwapContext) function
- The Target function returns to the Detour function
- The Detour function returns to the source caller (kernel dispatcher)

Detours


1
2
3
Source Function
Detour Function
Trampoline Function
Target Function
5
4

Patching the Windows kernel

- SwapContext function does context switching between threads in Windows
- Overwrite the first seven bytes of SwapContext with a jump to our Detour function
- The EDI register points to the KTHREAD of the thread to be scheduled to run
- Our Detour function follows the KTHREAD to the EPROCESS block and determines if it is still appropriately linked in the list of active processes.

Other Ways to Detect Hidden Processes

- Klister by Joanna Rutkowska
  - Presented at Black Hat Las Vegas 2003
  - Looks at Thread Queues since threads must be in one of four queues to be scheduled
  - Problem: Queue addresses are not exported so the addresses must be hard coded for each version of the OS

Detecting Hidden Processes in LINUX

- Injectso is a library similar to Detours except for LINUX
- When process state is Task_Running and it is placed in the LINUX run queue by setting the prev_run and next_run pointers appropriately, make sure it is properly linked by testing the next_task and prev_task of its neighbors.

Tool Demonstration: Process Hiding

Tool Demonstration: Gaining System Privilege

Conclusion

- We have shown the evolution of rootkit technology
  - No longer trojanized programs
  - No longer use hooking, which is easy to detect
  - Now act as a part of the Trusted Computing Base (TCB)
  - DKOM … what will it be used for next?

Questions?

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Thank you.

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"Aspects of Offensive Root-kit Technology"