

# Security II



THE UNIVERSITY OF  
NEW SOUTH WALES

COMP3231

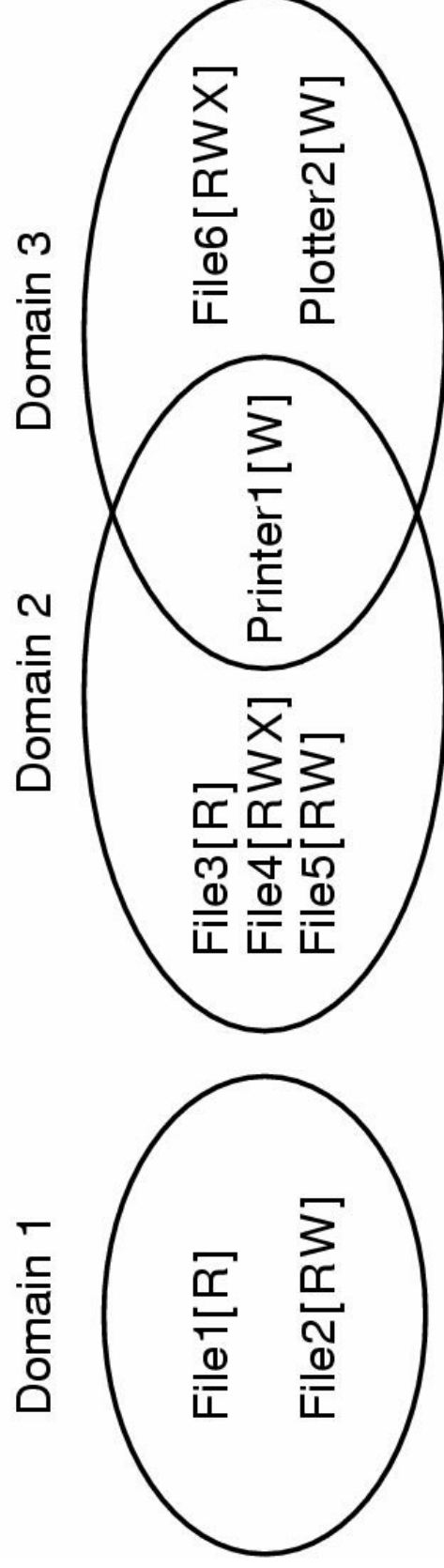
# Security Policy & Mechanisms

- Policy decides what kinds of entities can perform operations on what kinds of objects
  - Deals with users, processes, students, files, printers, managers
    - Example: Students can't use the colour printer
- *Protection mechanisms* are used to represent and enforce security policy
  - Example: reference monitor looks up a table representing a policy and decided yes/no.

# Protection Mechanisms

- Protection system deals with
  - *Objects*
    - Set of ‘things’ in the system that can be operated on
      - Files, devices, sockets, etc...
  - *Rights*
    - The permission to perform one of the operations possible on an object
      - Example: Possessing permission to read an object is termed possessing a *read right* to the object.
  - *Domains*
    - A set of (object, right) pairs which together represent the set of possible operations on objects.
    - Each process has a domain associated with it.

# Protection Domains



## Examples of three protection domains

# Protection Domain Example

- UNIX
  - The UID and GID of a process determines the *domain* the process executes within
    - Determines exactly what rights the process has to objects (files) in the system
  - Another process with the same UID, GID lies with the same domain
    - Has exactly the same set of access rights to objects
  - Process can change domains to gain access rights via SETUID or SETGID

# Protection Domains

Domain	Object							
	File1	File2	File3	File4	File5	File6	Printer1	Printer2
1	Read	Read Write						
2			Read	Read Write Execute	Read Write		Write	
3						Read Write Execute	Write	Write

Represent access rights using a protection matrix

# Protection Domains

	Object										
	File1	File2	File3	File4	File5	File6	Printer1	Plotter2	Domain1	Domain2	Domain3
main											
1	Read	Read Write								Enter	
2			Read	Read Write Execute	Read Write		Write				
3						Read Write Execute	Write	Write			

A protection matrix with domains as objects

# Access Matrix Issue

- Most domains have access to a subset of all objects in the system
  - ⇒ Matrix is sparsely populated
  - ⇒ Wastes space
- Idea
  - Store populated entries by column (object)
    - List of domains and operation that can operate on the object
  - Store populated entries by rows (domain)
    - List of objects and operations domain can perform
    - Note: Domains are sometimes termed *subject*, or *principal*.

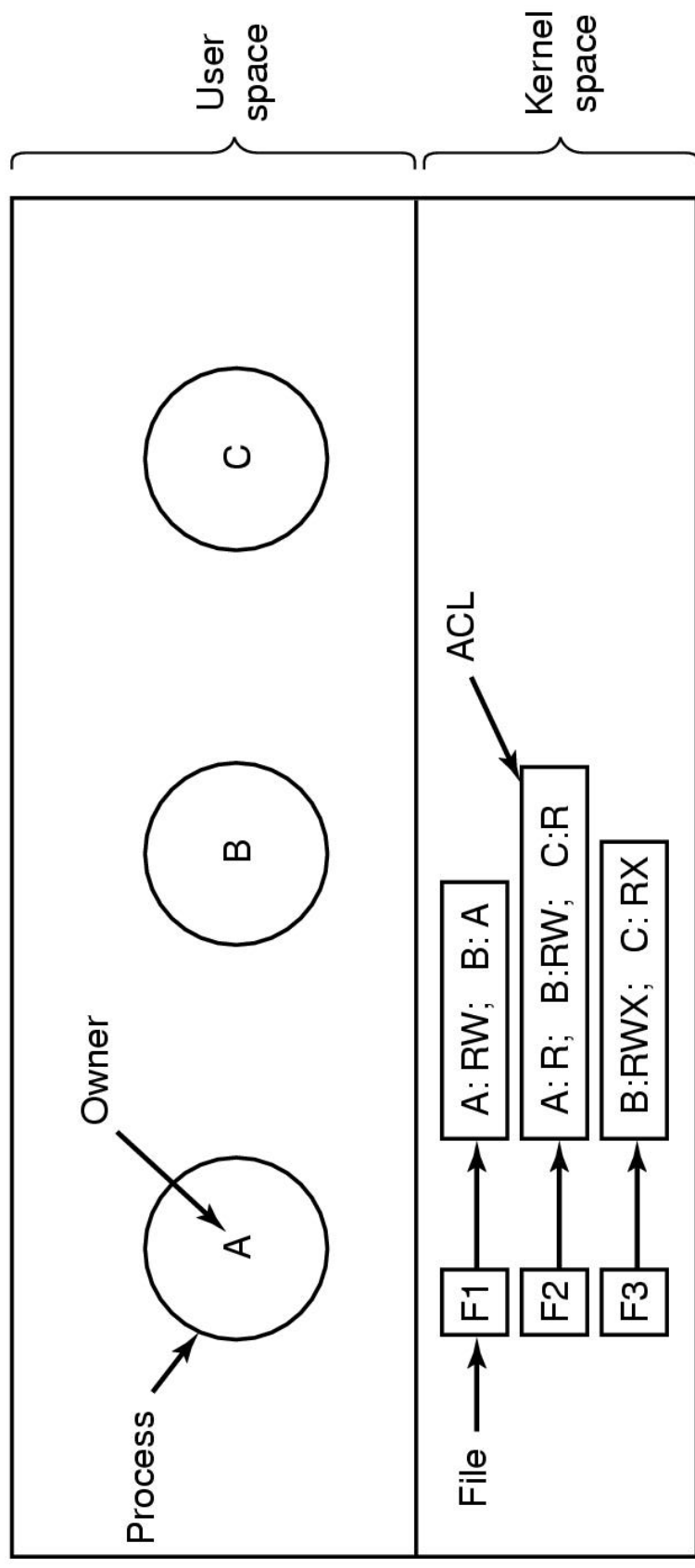


Domain	Object							
	File1	File2	File3	File4	File5	File6	Printer1	Plotter2
1	Read	Read Write						
2			Read	Read Write Execute	Read Write		Write	
3						Read Write Execute	Write	Write

- **Columns: Access Control Lists**
- **Rows: Capabilities**



# Access Control Lists

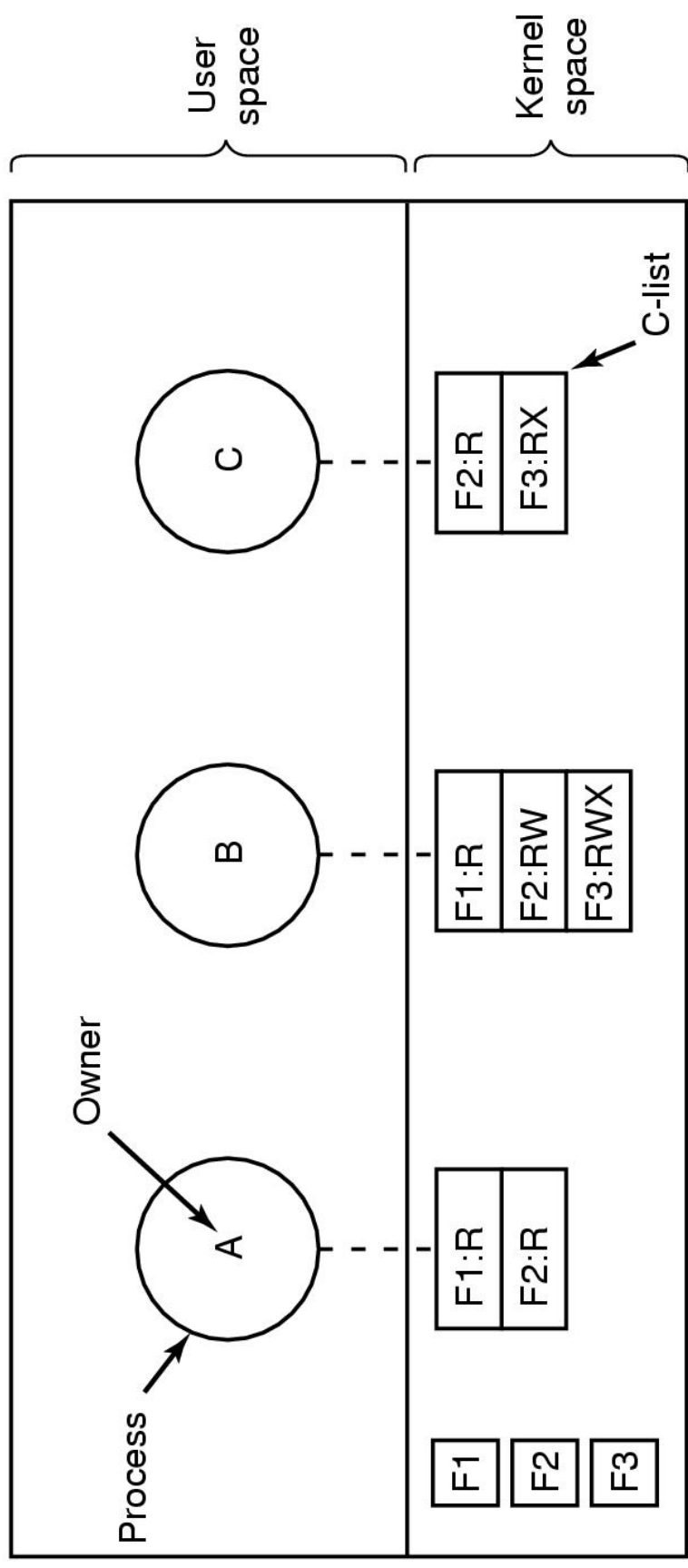


## Use of access control lists of manage file access

# Access Control Lists

- List stored with meta-data of object
  - Example: stored in the inode of the file
- Easy to revoke access to the object
- Easy to determine who has (direct) rights to the file
  - ‘*direct*’ meaning ignoring transitive rights changes
    - Example: A writes B, B writes C  $\Rightarrow$  A writes C

# Capabilities



Each process has a capability list

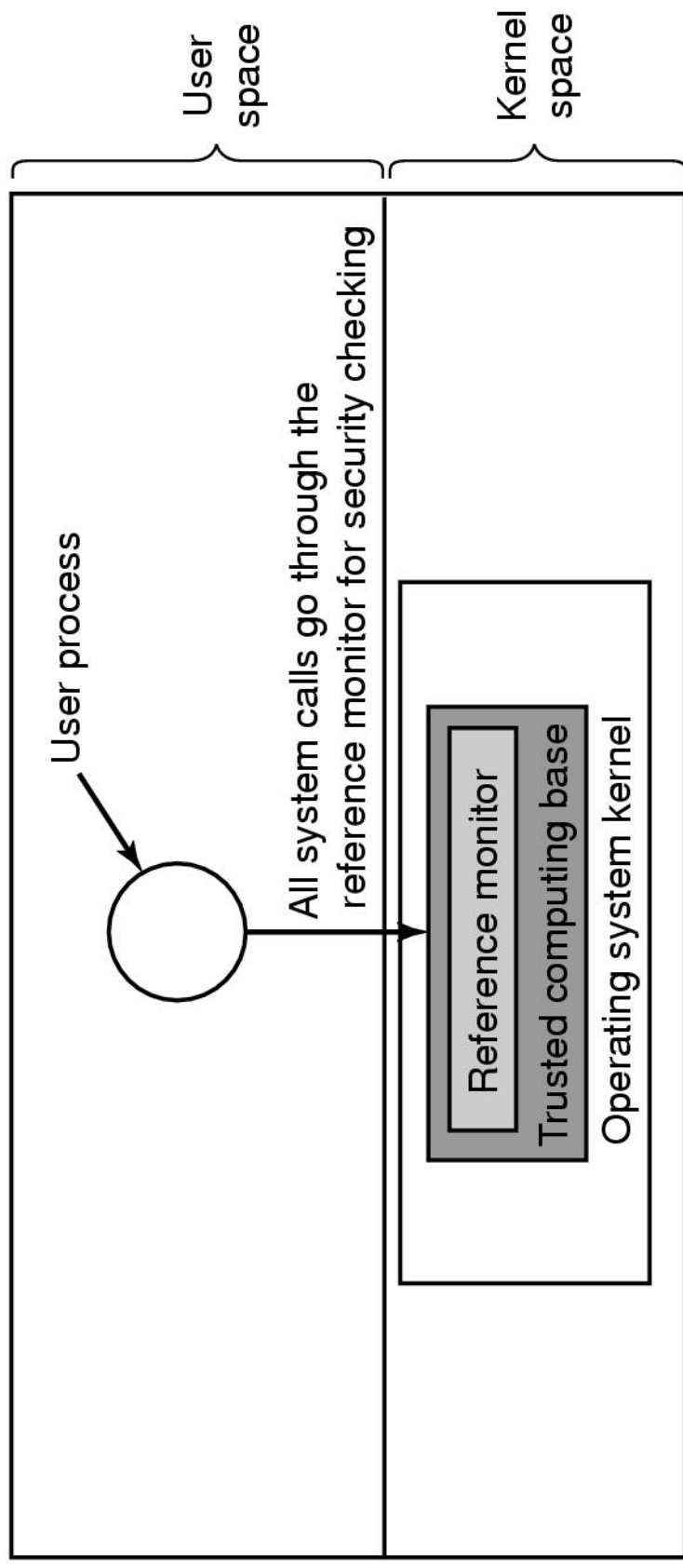
# Capabilities

- Capability list stored with the subject (e.g., the process)
- Set of capabilities forms the protection domain of the subject
  - Easy to determine the protection domain of the process
- Hard to determine who has (direct) access to a particular object
  - Capabilities can be stored in many places (with each process, each user, etc..)
  - Have to examine them all for one referring to the object
- Revocation is hard
  - Have to remove all capabilities to an object

# Building Secure Systems

- Sometimes called *Trusted Systems*
- Consist on users/processes running on *Trusted Computing Base (TCB)*
- Idea
  - TCB has a small, understandable, verifiable, security model
  - Enables statements/reasoning about security properties
    - “Bob can never read file X”
    - “Alice can only run the word processor”
    - “The program can only modify file Z”
  - **All operations are authorised via the TCB.**

# Trusted System Trusted Computing Base



## A reference monitor

# Formal Models of Secure Systems

		Objects	
	Compiler	Mailbox 7	Secret
Eric	Read Execute		
Henry	Read Execute	Read Write	
Robert	Read Execute	Read Execute	Read Write

(a)

		Objects	
	Compiler	Mailbox 7	Secret
Eric	Read Execute		
Henry	Read Execute	Read Write	
Robert	Read Execute	Read Execute	Read Write

(b)

- (a) An authorized state
  - (b) An unauthorized state (Robert can read Henry's mailbox)
- Given a set of authorized and unauthorized states, and the TCB's security model, can we prove that starting at (a), (b) can never happen??



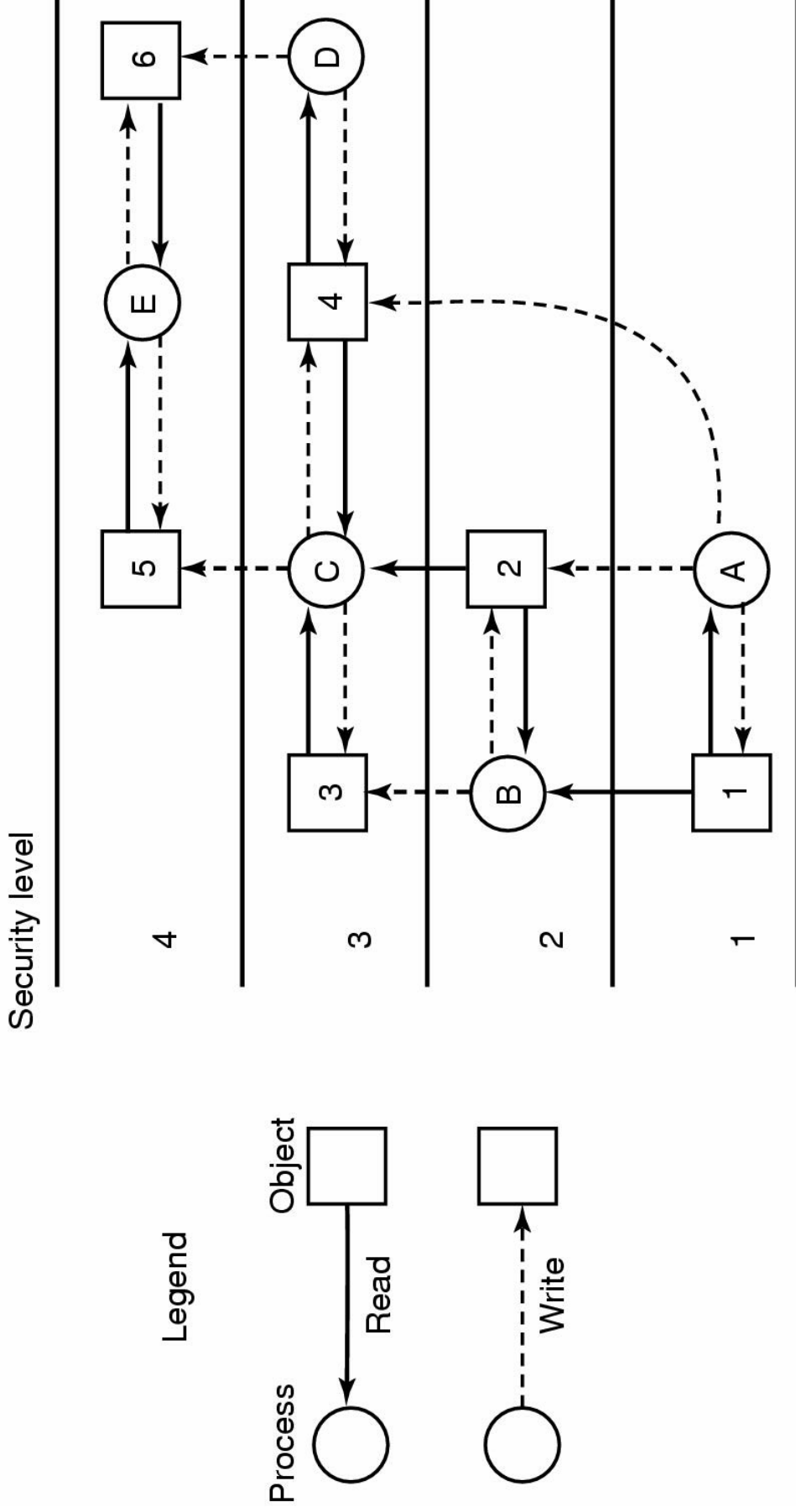
# Access Control Policy

- *Discretionary Access Control*
  - Allow users to determine who can read and write their files
  - Policy not enough to control information flow
  - Example: UNIX
- *Mandatory Access Control*
  - System determines (and enforced) who can read and write individual files
  - Example policies: Bell-La Padula and Biba

# Bell-La Padula Multilevel Security

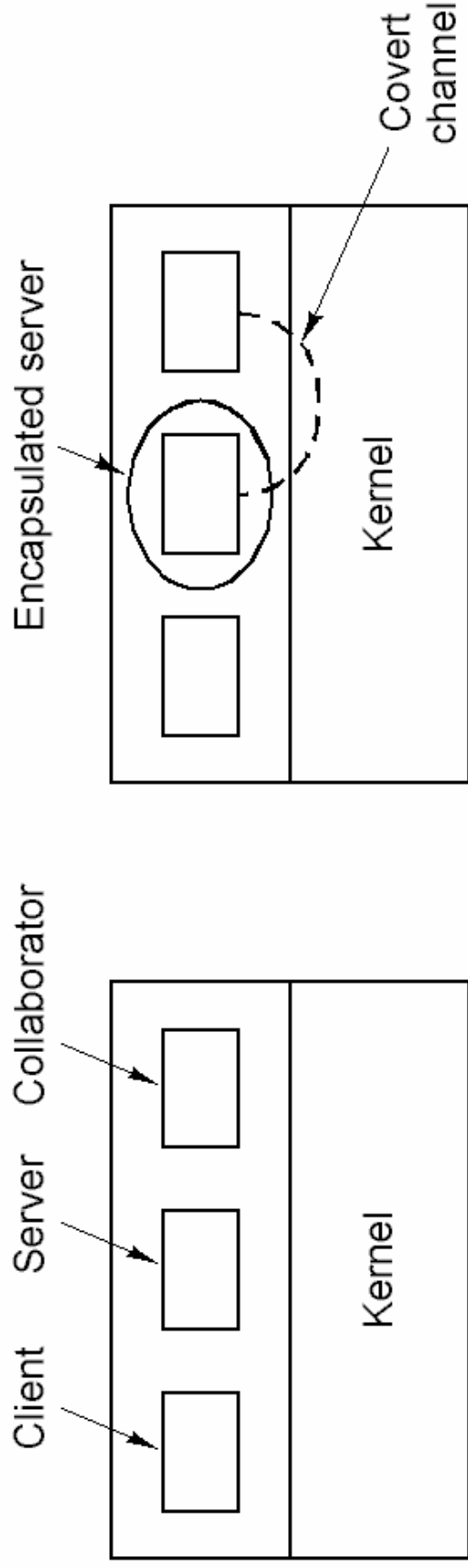
- Designed to keep secrets
  - Simple security property
    - A process at level  $k$  can read objects at its level or lower
      - Lieutenant can read sergeant's files, but not vice versa
      - Can read down
  - The \* property
    - A process can write files to its level or above
      - Sergeants can write information to Lieutenants, who can write to Generals.
      - Can write up
- Issue
  - Generals can't write to Lieutenants, etc.
    - Can't write down
  - Generals can't give orders!!
  - Privates can write to generals potentially false informations

# Multilevel Security



## The Bell-La Padula multilevel security model

# Covert Channels



(a)

Client, server and collaborator processes

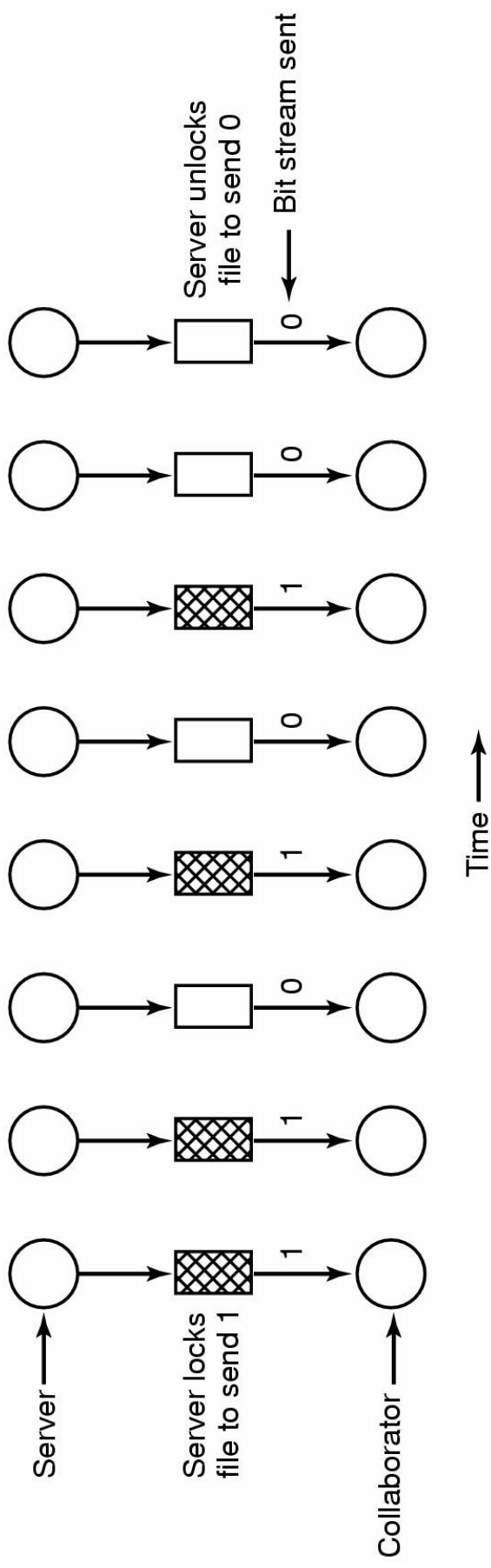
We'd like to confine the server so as to not pass on client's info

(b)

Encapsulated server can still leak to collaborator via covert channels

Example: CPU modulation

# Covert Channels



A covert channel using file locking  
(Assuming a common read-only file)

# Covert Channels

- Can be created using a any shared resource whose behaviour can be monitored
  - Network Bandwidth
  - CPU time
  - Disk Response time
  - Disk Bandwidth

# Covert Channel

- Need to limit and control available bandwidth
- Tends to annoy legitimate users!