

Anonymous Communications



Steven J. Murdoch University College London

Who needs anonymity?

- Military personnel
- · Law enforcement
- Bloggers
- Activists and whistle-blowers
- Ordinary people





Encryption doesn't work

TLS, PGP, S/MIME only hide what is being said

- Alice uploaded a gigabyte to CNN 6 hours before footage of human rights abuses were aired
- Bob, who just joined our criminal organization sent an encrypted email to the FBI a week before our boss got arrested
- Charlie keeps browsing our website of illegal material, maybe we should give him fake data

BBC Horizon

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Remailers

penet.fi (1993-1996)

- Simply stripped headers off emails sent via remailer
- Allowed replies to be sent
- Easy to use, but single point of compromise
- Shut down following compromise by CoS

Type-1 (Cypherpunk)

- Mix decrypts messages
- Uses PGP

Mixmaster (1998-)

- Layered encryption
- Batching and re-ordering
- Based on Chaum Mix (1981)

Mixminion (2002-)

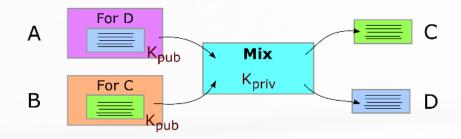
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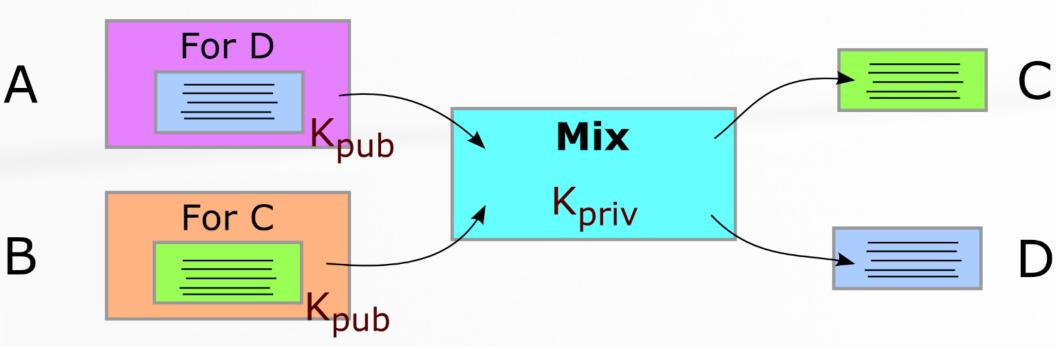
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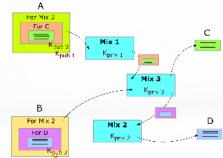
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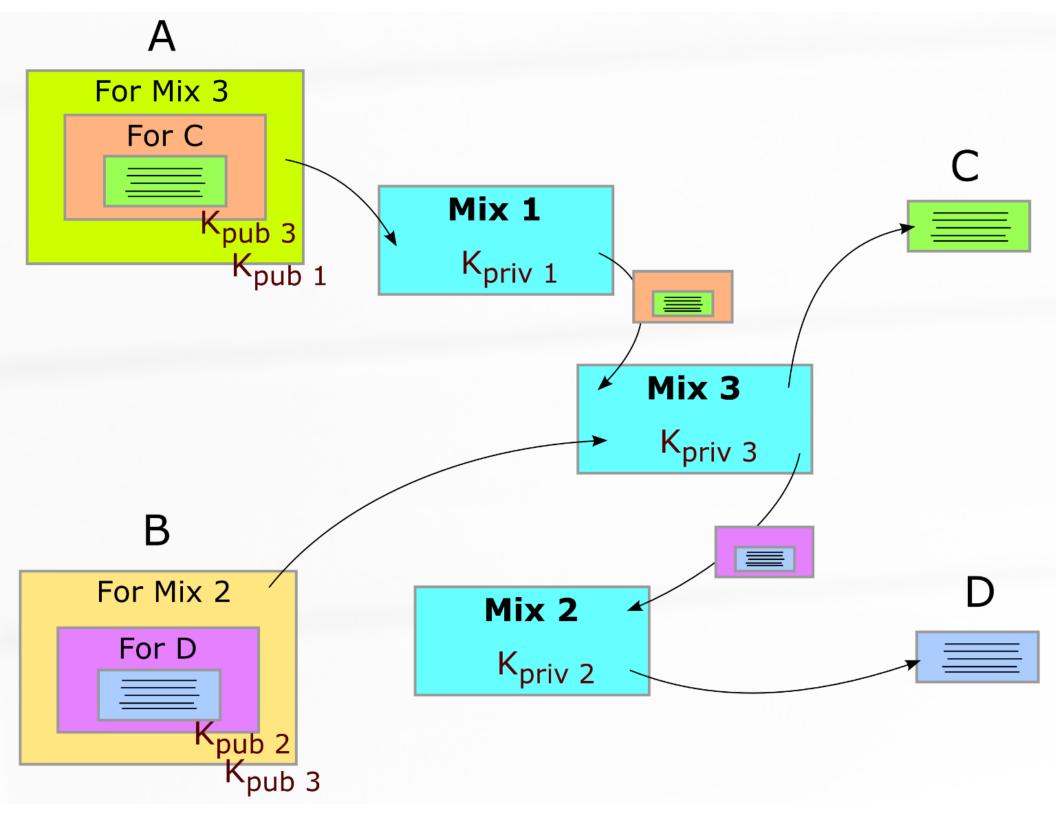


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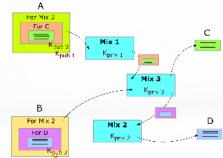


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Senders Receivers Mix

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Number of users ≈ 0

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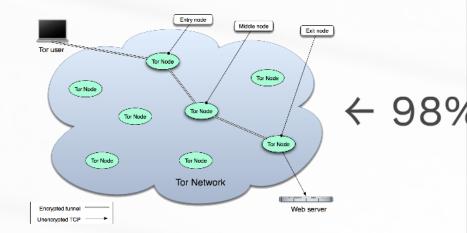
The Web

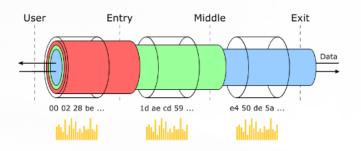
Web browsing is hard to secure

- Requires low latency
- High variability
- · Low tolerance to padding

Equivalent systems

Open proxies ≈ penet.fi VPN ≈ Type-0 MixMinion ≈ Tor





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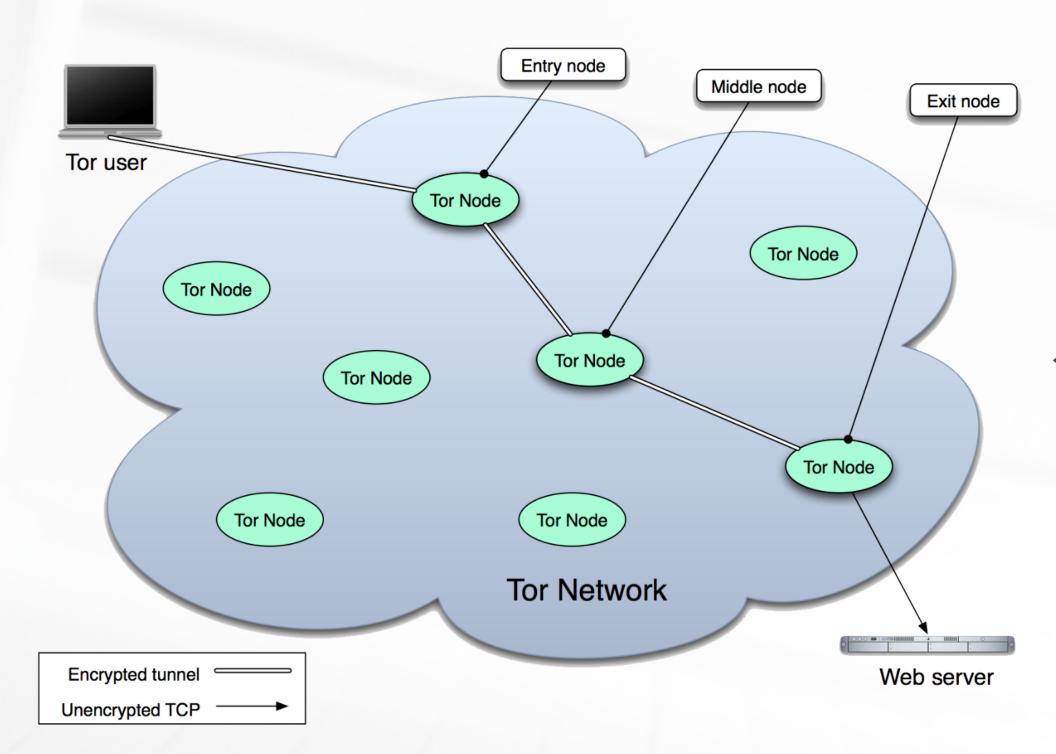
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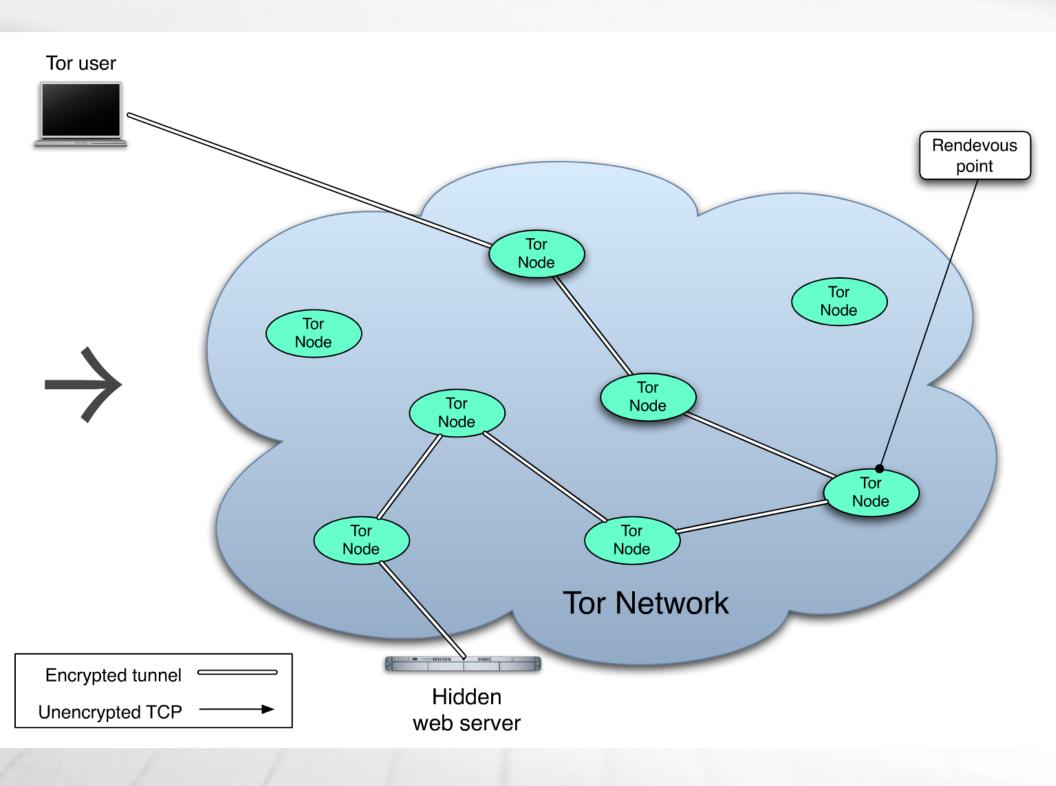
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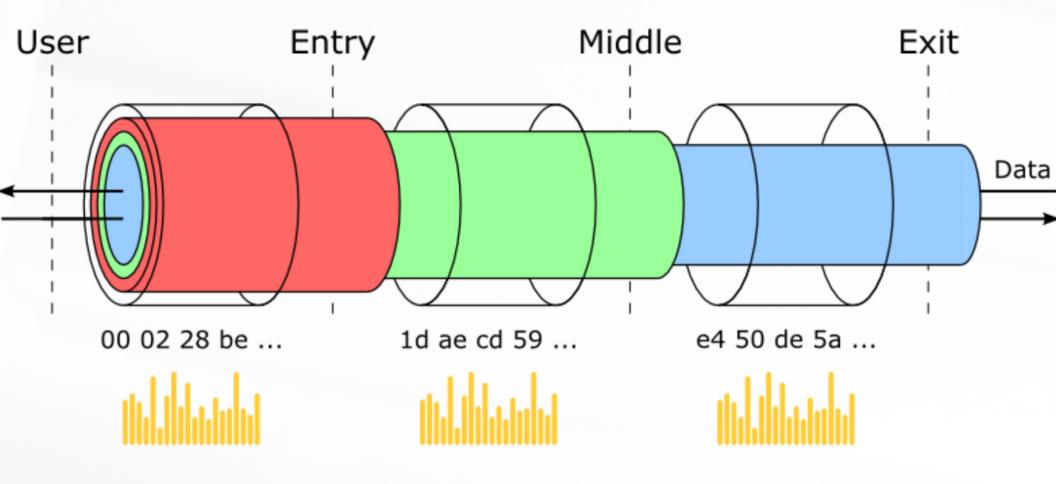
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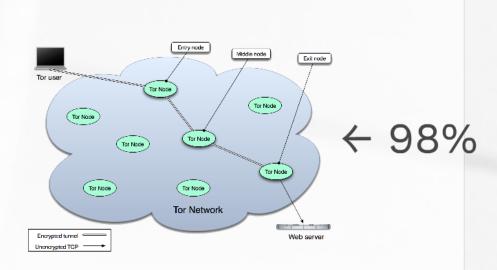
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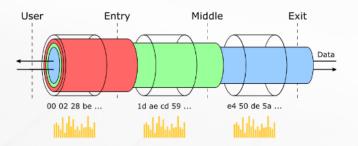
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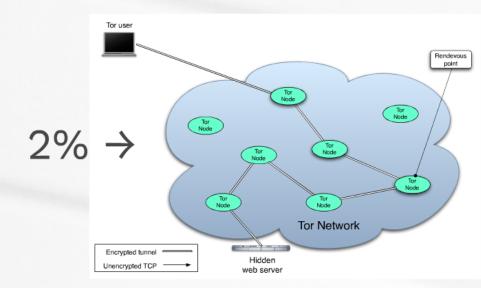












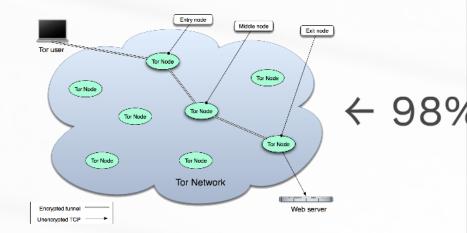
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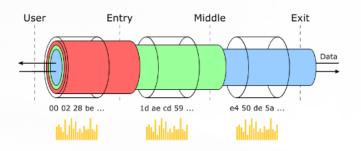
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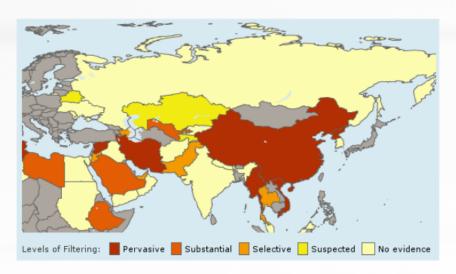
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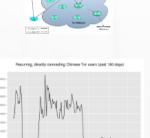


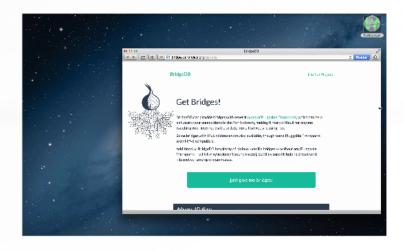
Censorship resistance







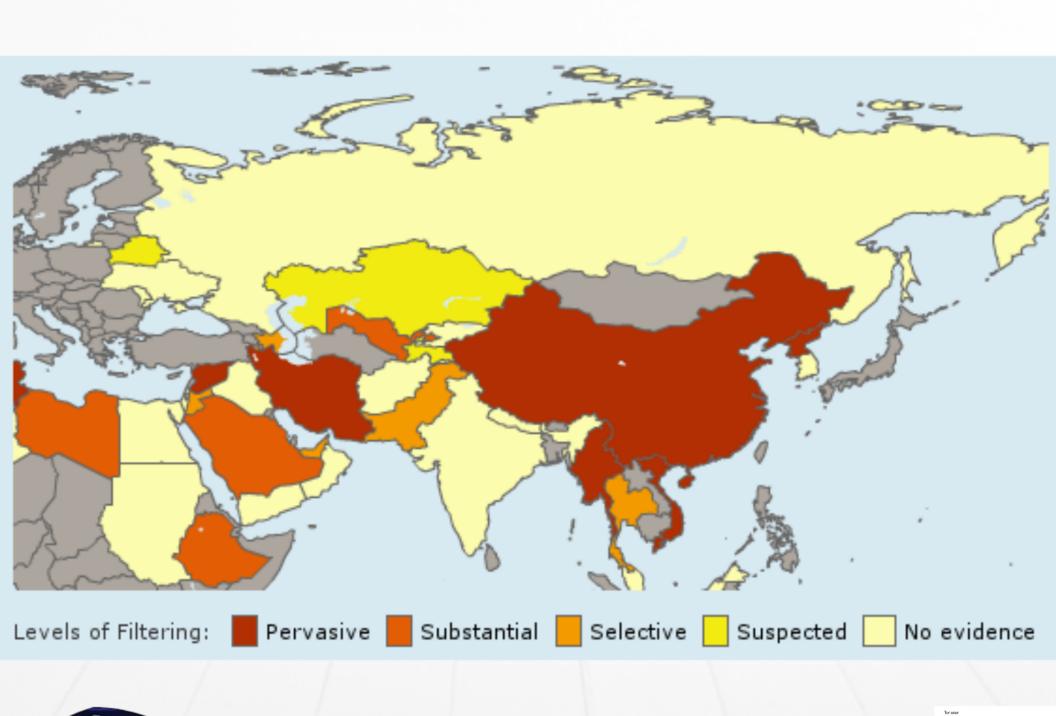




Open problems for bridges

- Protocol obfuscation
- Scanning resistance
- Distribution mechanisms

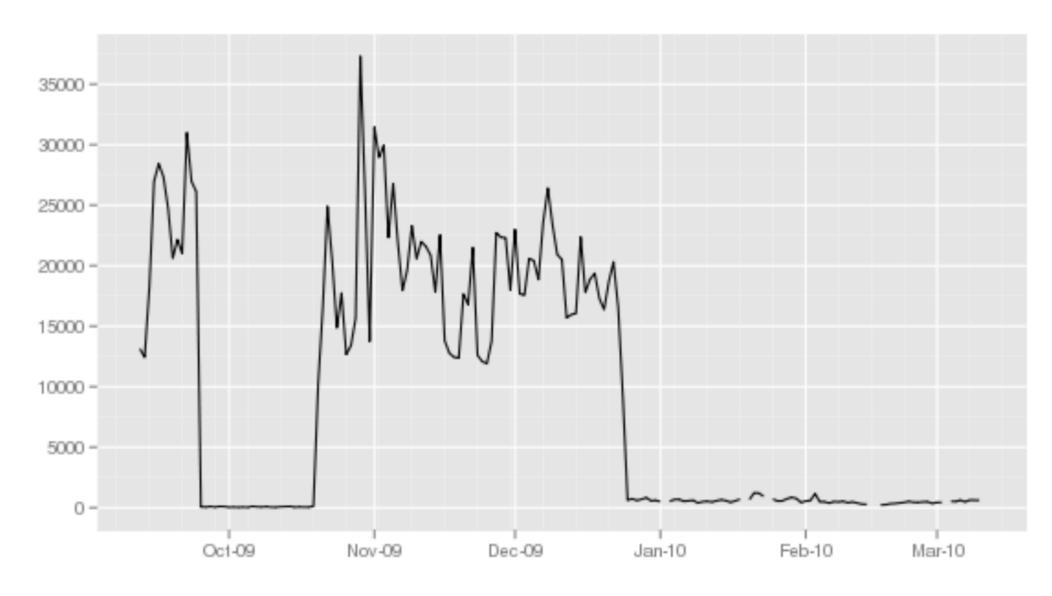
Domain fronting: run proxy as cloud service, connect to cloud via HTTPS (e.g. Google.com)

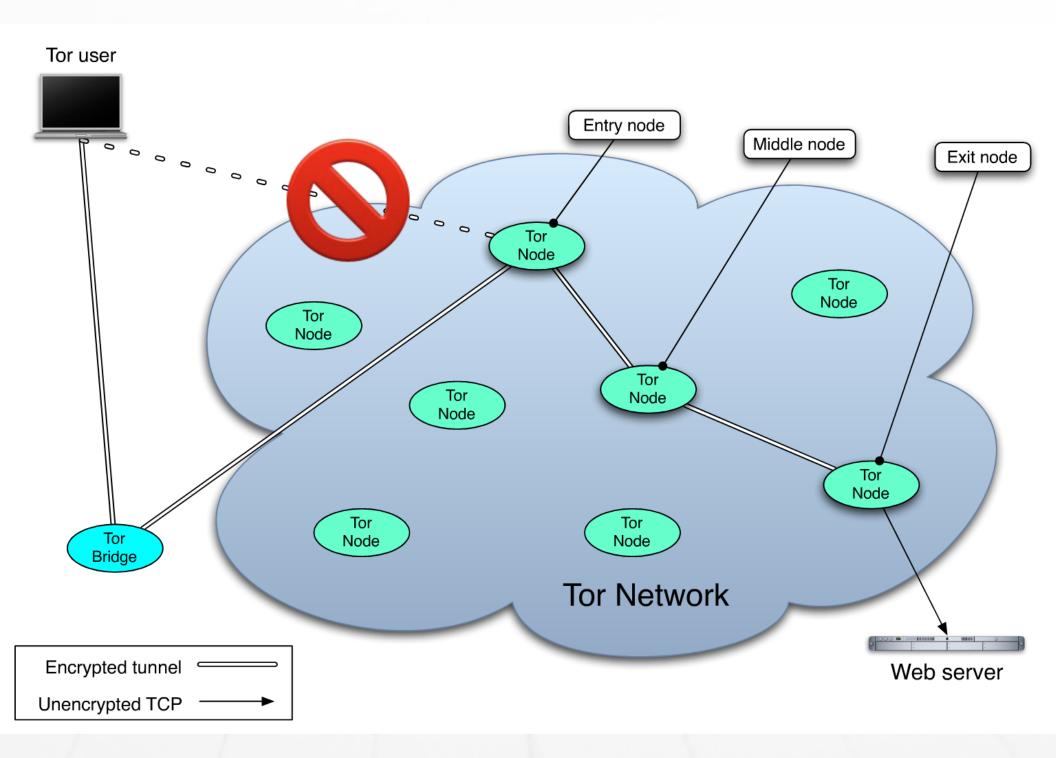




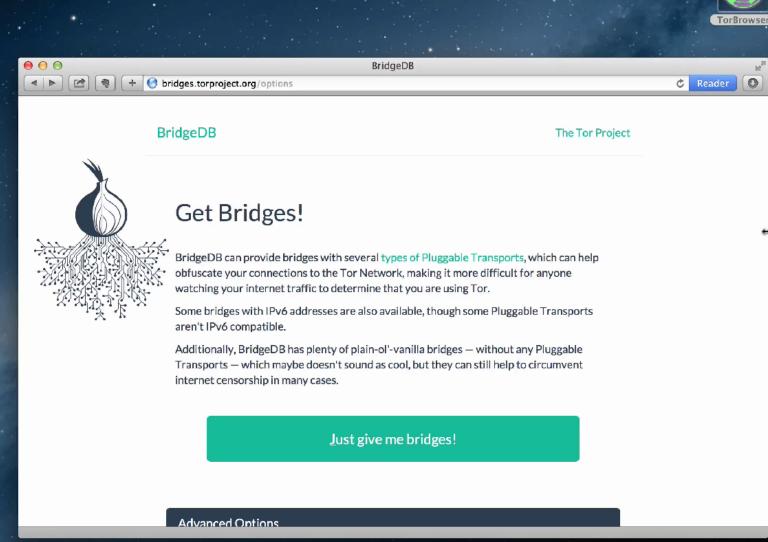


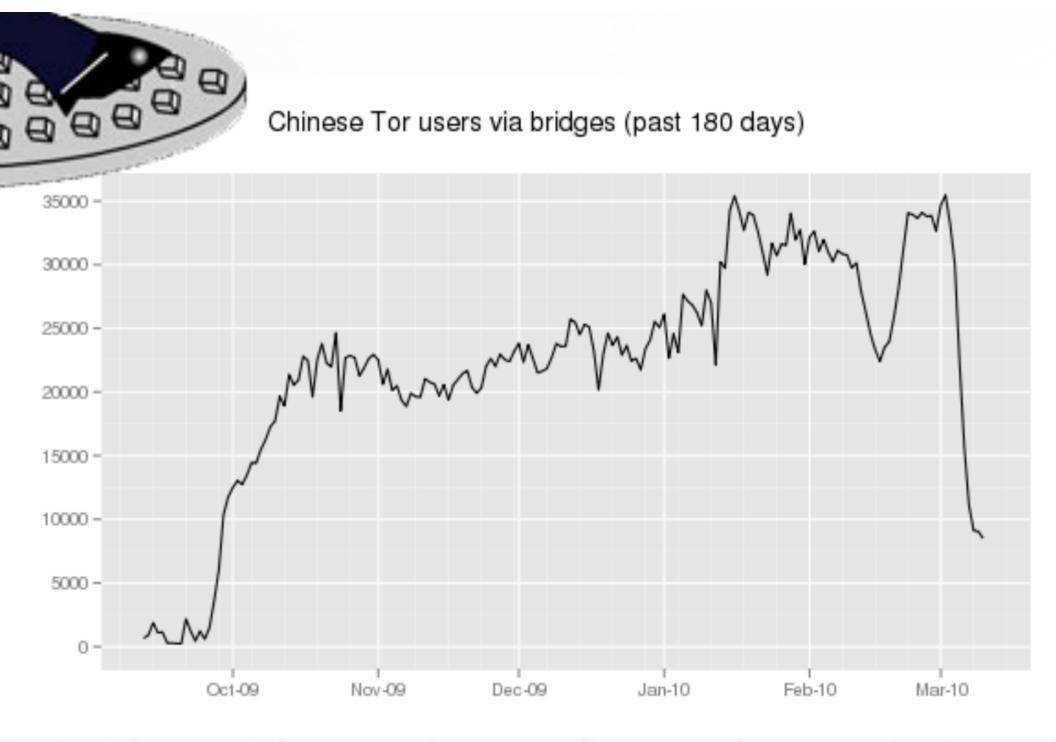
Recurring, directly connecting Chinese Tor users (past 180 days)









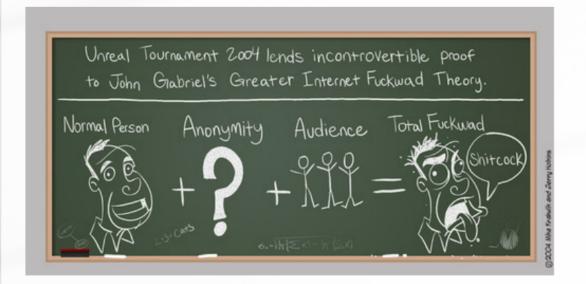


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Abuse





We're sorry...

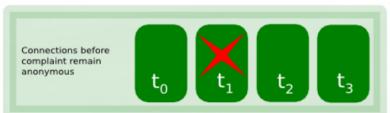
... but your computer or network may be sending automated queries. To protect our users, we can't process your request right now.

To continue searching, please type the characters you see below: I'm human!



See Google Help for more information.

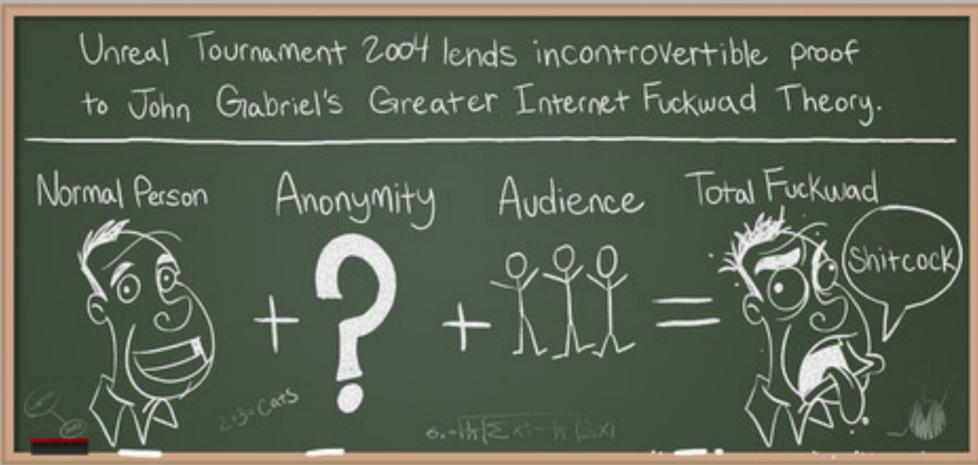
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Future connections from the same user are linkable, and the user is blocked

Nymble

Server complains about ticket **t1** and recieves linking token for misbehaving user





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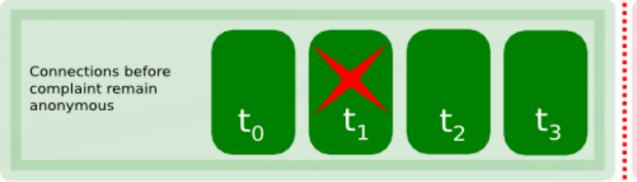
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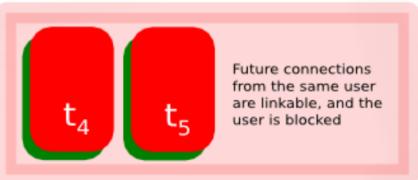




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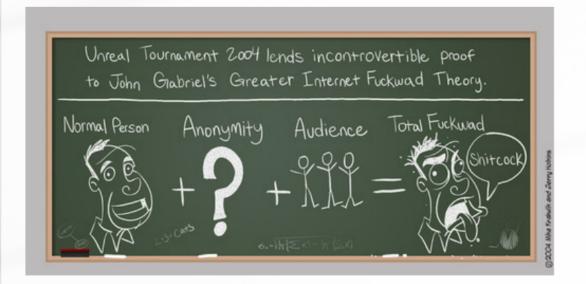




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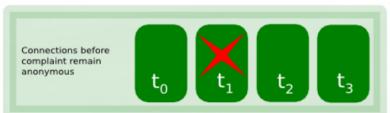
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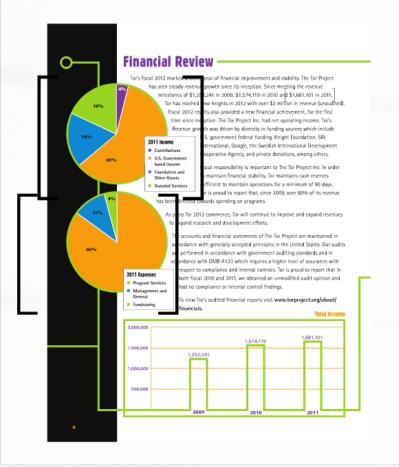


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Sustainability

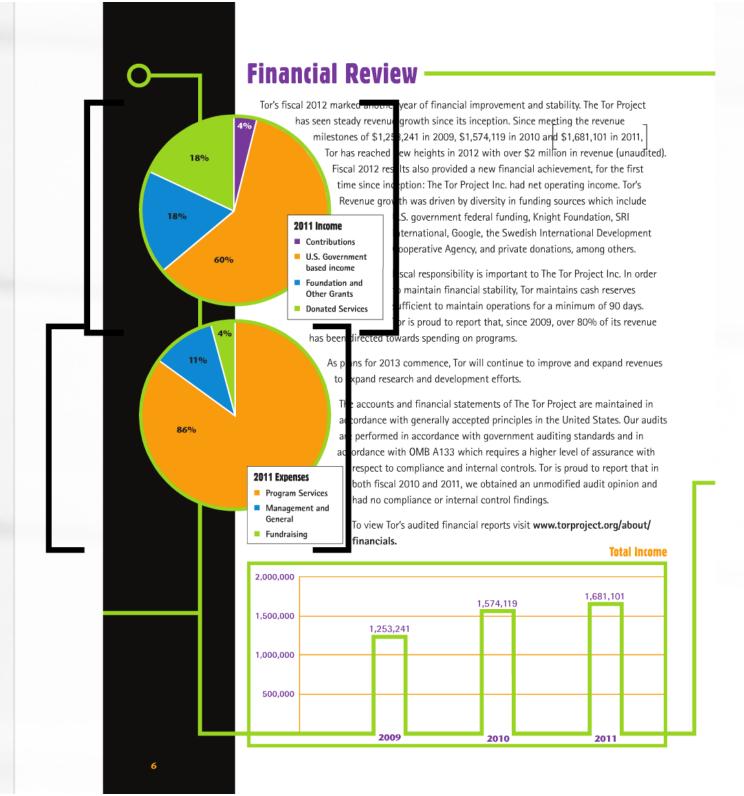




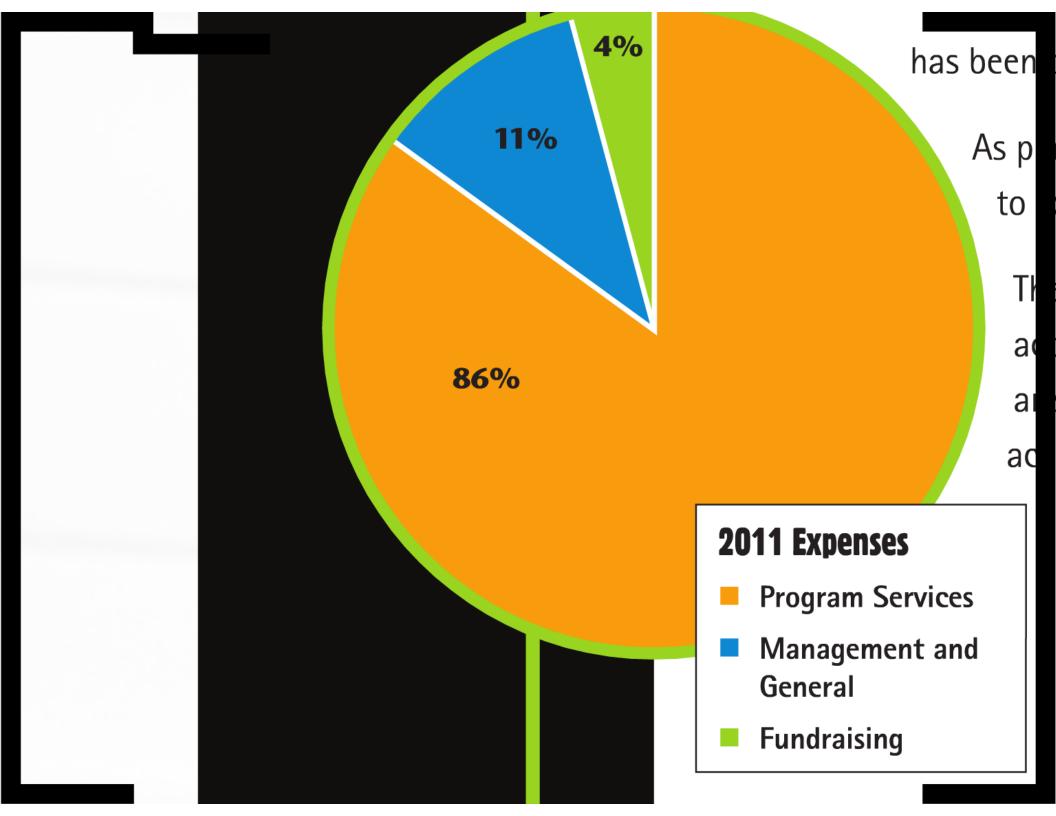


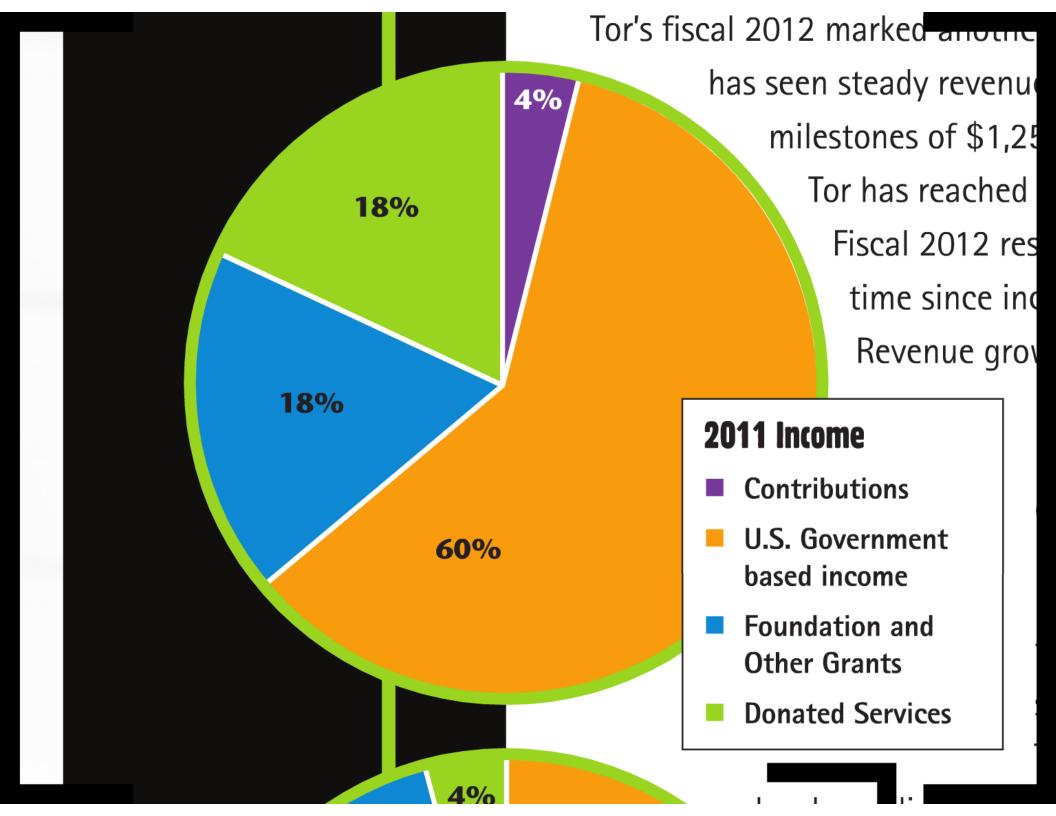
Incentives

- Many users are unable to pay (tragedy of the commons)
- Giving better performance to users who contribute could reduce anonymity
- If money is changing hands, volunteers may give up



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Juice Media Rap News September 2012

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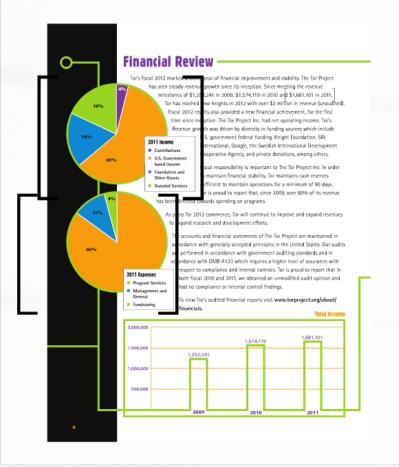


DAN ELLSBERG AND PATRICIA MARX ELLSBERG, PRIVACY ACTIVISTS

SUPPORTER LOOKS LIKE

#SUPPORT T

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