

Software Reverse Engineering

COMP 272 | Spring 2022 | University of the Pacific | Jeff Shafer

Behavioral Analysis

KNOW YOUR MALWARE 101



Malware

Dark Caracal – January 2018

- "Dark Caracal" is name of spyware campaign
- Operations observed (w/ different malware) since 2012
 - Publically disclosed in 2018 in joint report by EFF and Lookout
- Advanced Persistent Threat (APT) surveillance targeting individuals and institutions (utilities, financial institutions, defense contractors, ...)
 - Observed operations exfiltrating "hundreds of gigabytes of data"
- Authors: Lebanese General Security Directorate (alleged)
 - Attack infrastructure correlated to building they own
 - So we have to watch out for Lebanon now too??

Software Reverse Engineering

Dark Caracal – January 2018

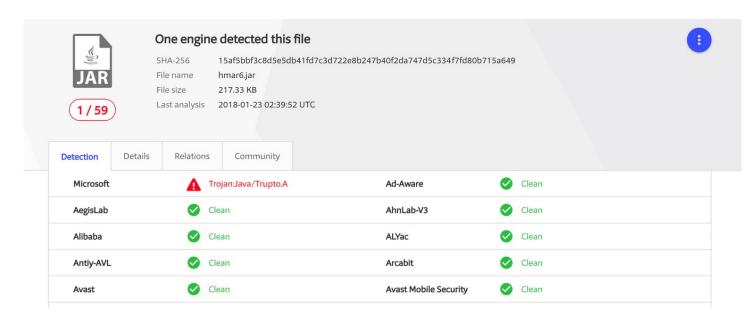
- Multiple tools in use since inception
 - FinFisher "lawful intercept" tool sold to governments for "legitimate purposes"
 - Bandook RAT Original RAT, Windows-only
 - CrossRAT New RAT? Cross platform! (Windows, OSX, Linux) Written in Java
 - Pallas Android malware in trojanized apps
- Capture documents, messaging clients (contacts and messages), audio, ...
 - Mobile component

Dark Caracal

15af5bbf3c8d5e5db41fd7c3d722e8b247b 40f2da747d5c334f7fd80b715a649

VirusTotal detection on 1/23/2018

Thanks to digitalsecurity.com



Dark Caracal

- Dark Caracal: Cyber-espionage at a Global Scale
 - https://info.lookout.com/rs/051-ESQ-475/images/Lookout_Dark-Caracal_srr_20180118_us_v.1.0.pdf
- Very good report you should at least read the executive summary
 - 11 Android malware IOCs
 - 26 desktop malware IOCs
 - 60 domains and IP addresses
 - Lots of hashes to search for

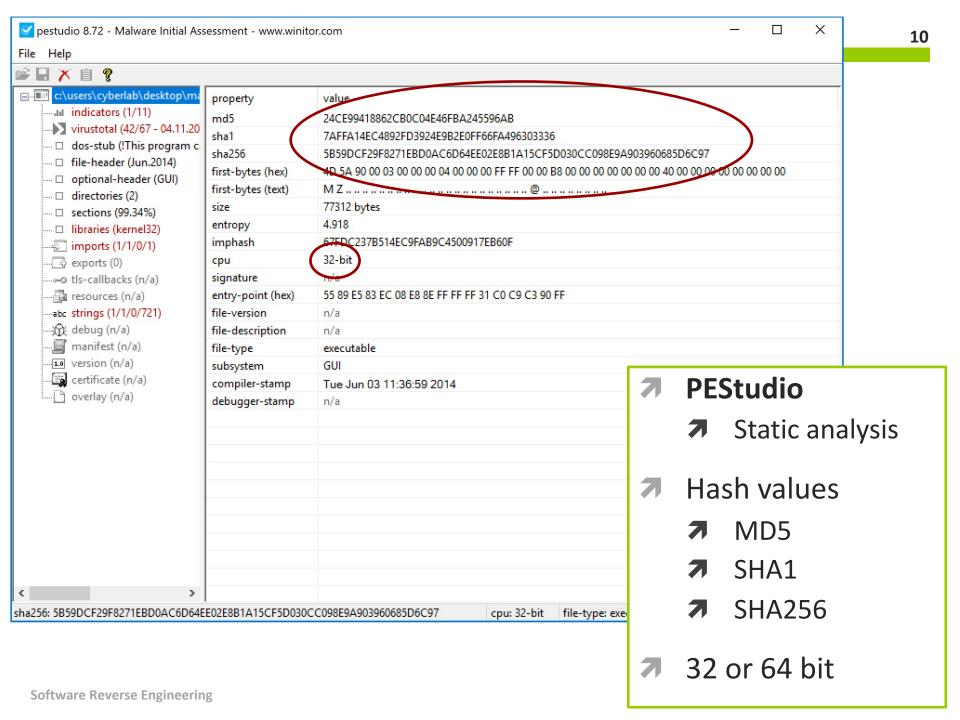
Dark Caracal

- Analyzing CrossRAT: A cross-platform implant, utilized in a global cyber-espionage campaign
 - https://digitasecurity.com/blog/2018/01/23/crossrat/



Build Your Own: Malware Analysis Lab

- What tools do we need in the lab?
- Static property analysis (program not running)
 - PEStudio, Strings, BinText, ...
- Interactive behavioral analysis (program is running)
 - Process Hacker, RegShot, Wireshark, API Monitor, ...
- **♂** Code analysis/reversing (We ♥ Assembly)
 - IDA Pro, Ghidra, x64dbg, OllyDbg, ...



X

File Help X 1 ?



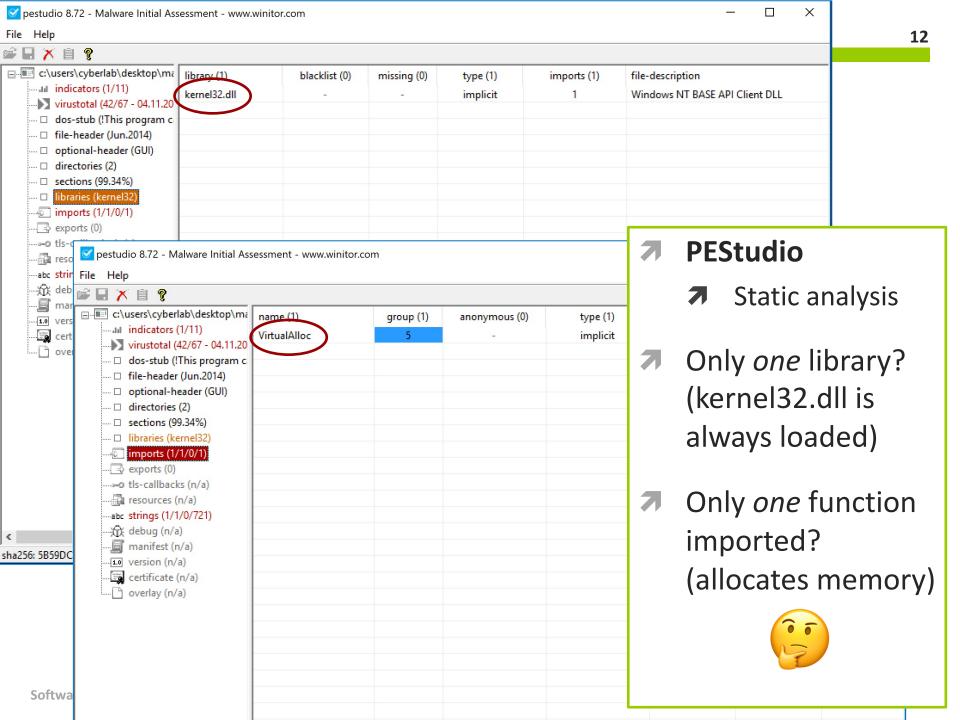
PEStudio

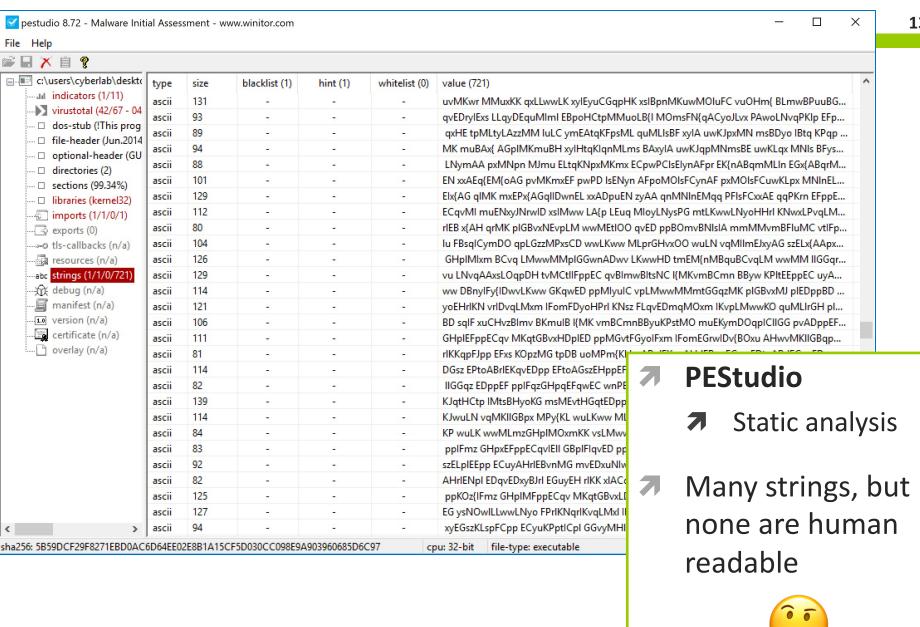
age (days)

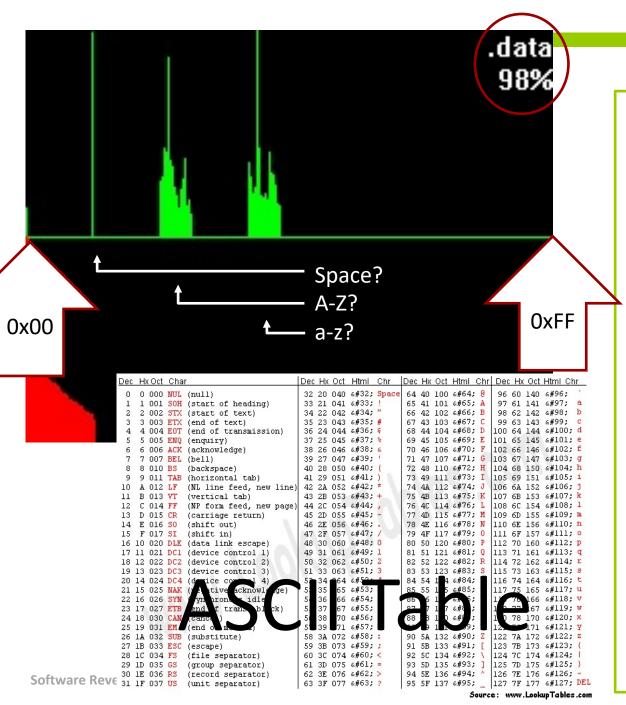
Static analysis

What do VirusTotal AV scanners think?









- bytehist
 - Static analysis
- Green section is histogram of byte occurrences from 0x00 to 0xFF
- or encrypted (which would show fully random/even distribution), but perhaps encoded?





Static Analysis

- We could continue using other static analysis tools, but likely a waste of time
- Few imported libraries?
 Few imported functions?
 Few readable strings?
 Histogram showing perfectly random or lumpy distribution?
- Could be a binary program that does absolutely nothing useful, or malware is likely packed

Software Reverse Engineering

Packing

Original Executable

- Malware
- Not obfuscated
- Easy for AV programs to detect
- Easy for static analysis tools to examine

Packing program

- Compression
- Encryption
- XOR
- Standard or custom algorithms easy to write new variants

Obfuscated Malware

- Unpacking program is wrapper
- Original executable is payload to be unpacked



Next Steps

- We *could* dive into the packer assembly code next
 - **7** Figure out exactly how it works...
 - Write a tool to extract the malware payload...
 - Try our static analysis tools again...
- But, the payload may not be a nice PE executable with perfect header. Could be a binary blob injected into memory
- And do we really care how the packer works?
 - Packers are throwaway code You have your malware interns write them!

Software Reverse Engineering



Behavioral Analysis

- Run the malware in its native environment and observe what happens
 - Filesystem access? (Read/Write/Create/Delete)
 - Registry access? (Read/Write/Create/Delete)
 - Network access?
 - System calls?
- Can interact with malware and change its behavior

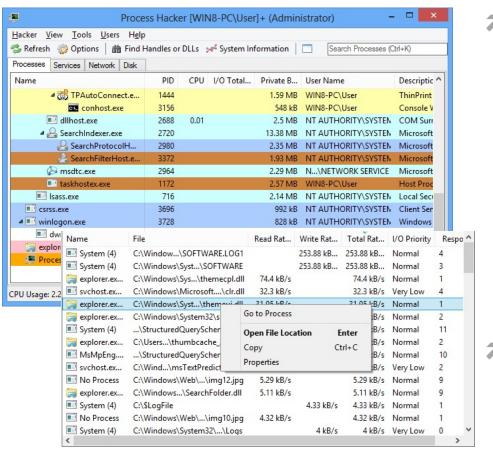
Software Reverse Engineering





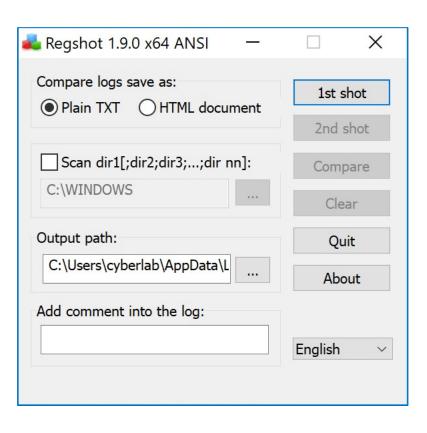
Or trampled...

Tools – Process Hacker



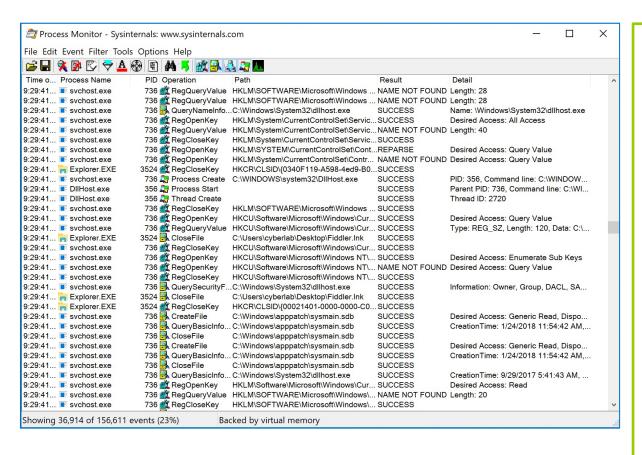
- Like Task Manager on steroids
 - Processes and threads
 - Resource utilization
 - Disk utilization (open files, I/O activity)
 - Network utilization (active connections, I/O activity)
 - Handles (Mutexes, Keys, ...)
 - Stack traces
 - Strings / Memory dumps
- [Demo: Changing text in Notepad]

Tool - Regshot



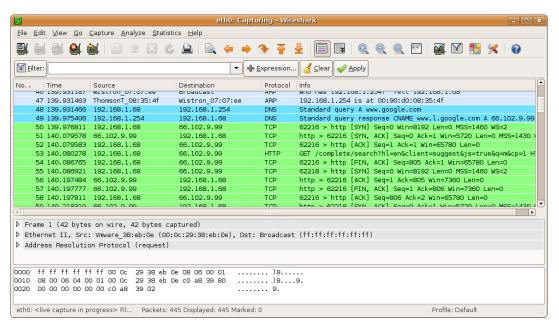
- Registry and file monitoring utility
- Snapshots
 - **₹** #1 − *Before* malware runs
 - **₹** #2 − *After* malware runs
 - Compare to see what the malware did
- Limitations: Will not report the *sequence* of events, or catch temporary changes

Tool – Process Monitor



- Capture real-time file system, registry, and process/thread activity
- Will need to filter desired processes or events (or be overwhelmed with data)

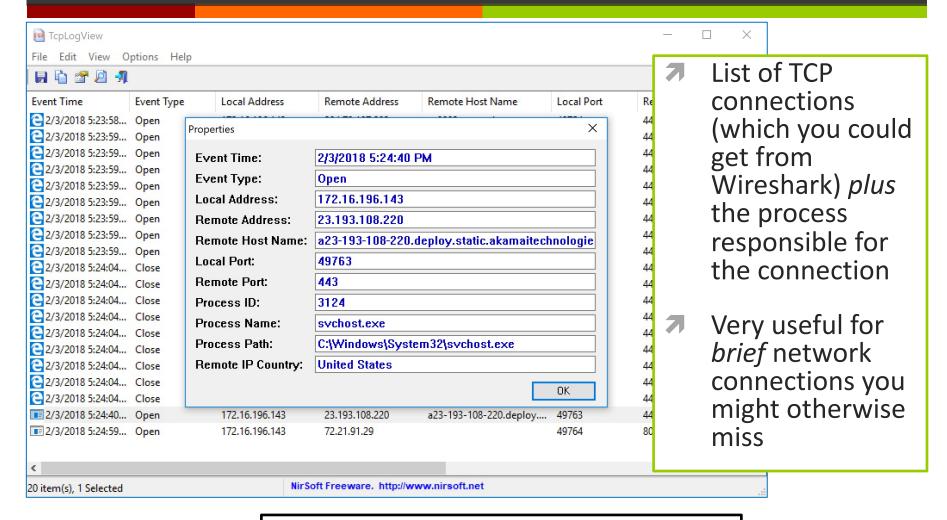
Tool - Wireshark



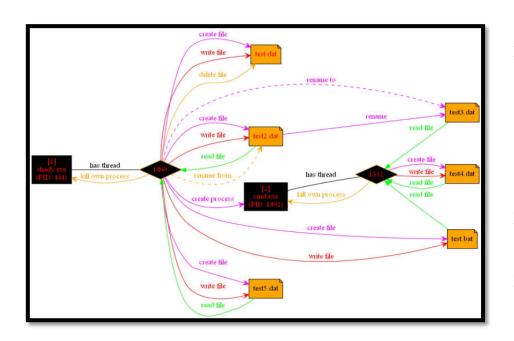
Software Reverse Engineering

- Packet capture and analysis
- Will need to filter (or be overwhelmed with data)
- Suggestion: Run this outside of the Windows VM to minimize interference or detection

Tool - TcpLogView

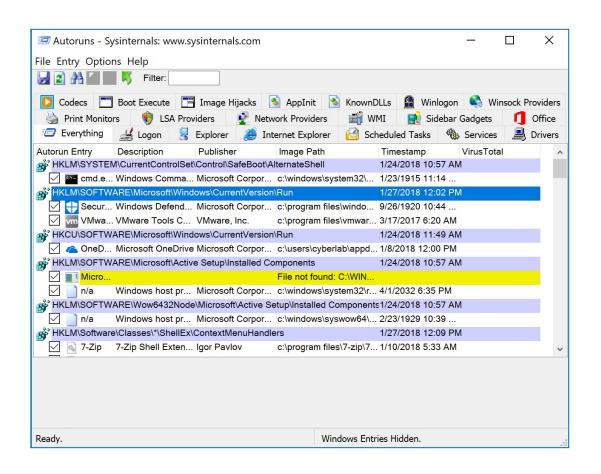


Tool - ProcDOT



- Correlation of data from Process Monitor (system calls) and Wireshark (networking)
- Interactive visual analysis
- Timeline (sequence) of events

Tool - AutoRuns



- What services, processes, or drivers will start at system boot?
- At user login?
- When launching IE or Windows Media Player?

MALWARE DEMO!

Upcoming Events

- Tuesday Feb 22nd
 - Exam 1
 - ▼ Topics: Static and behavioral analysis
 - In class
 - Open notes, open computer, open Internet
 - "Lab-like activities" (Labs 1-3)