

# The Fundamental Limits of Statistical Data Privacy

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ILLINOIS

[illinois.edu](http://illinois.edu)



# 30 YEARS AGO

Pre-internet

*Human to  
human*



# THEN CAME THE INTERNET

Pre-internet

Internet of  
content

*Human to  
human*



*World Wide  
Web*

Google  
YAHOO!

+ *smart  
networks, IT  
platforms and  
services*

# AND THEN THE INTERNET GOT BETTER

Pre-internet

Internet of  
content

Smart  
internet

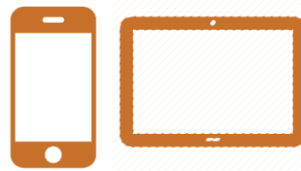
*Human to  
human*



*World Wide  
Web*

Google  
YAHOO!

*Smart phones  
and tablets*



+ *smart  
networks, IT  
platforms and  
services*

+ *smart  
devices*

# AND BETTER



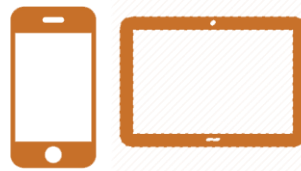
*Human to human*



*World Wide Web*



*Smart phones and tablets*



*Social Media*

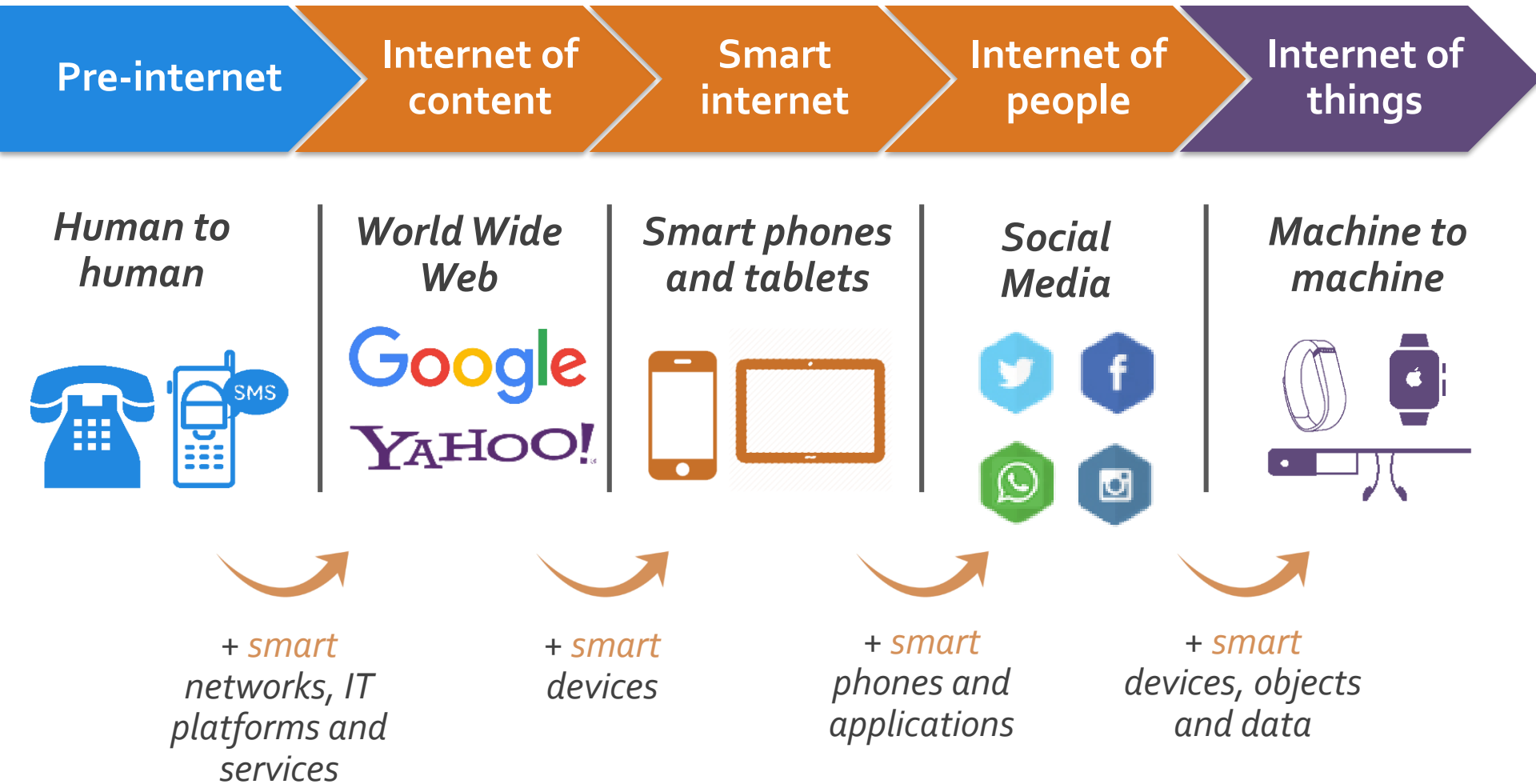


+ *smart networks, IT platforms and services*

+ *smart devices*

+ *smart phones and applications*

# UNPRECEDENTED LEVEL OF CONNECTIVITY



# WE'RE BEING WATCHED!

Pre-internet

Internet of  
content

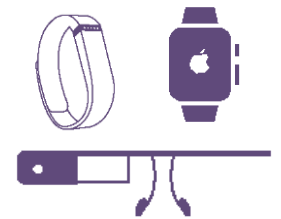
Smart  
internet

Internet of  
people

Internet of  
things



Google  
YAHOO!





TARGET

IT'S OKAY, OUR DATA IS ENCRYPTED



iCloud





DON'T RELY EXCLUSIVELY  
ON ENCRYPTION

# NETFLIX



de-anonymizing Netflix watch histories  
EVEN IF YOU'RE CAREFUL, THINGS CAN GO WRONG  
identifying surnames and ages from anonymized genomes

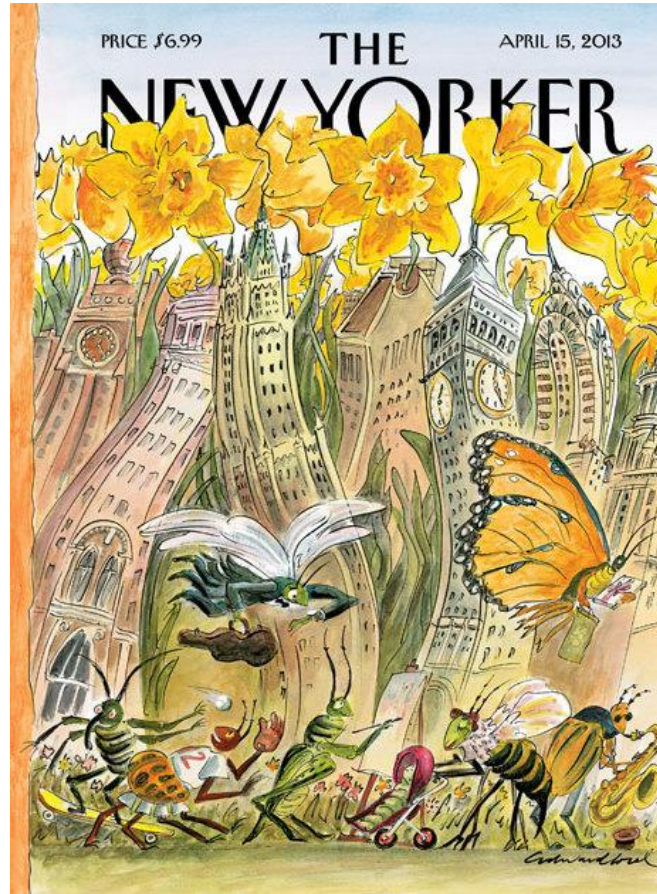


from anonymous faces to social security numbers

WE NEED CONTEXT FREE  
PRIVACY GUARANTEES

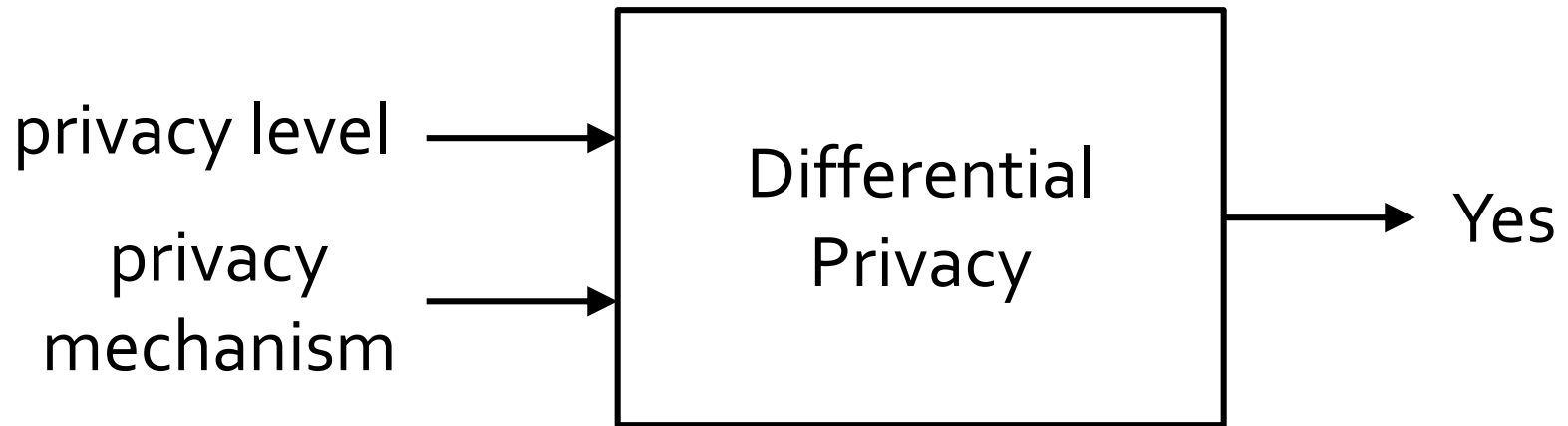
# THE ULTIMATE PROTECTION

“the future of privacy is lying”

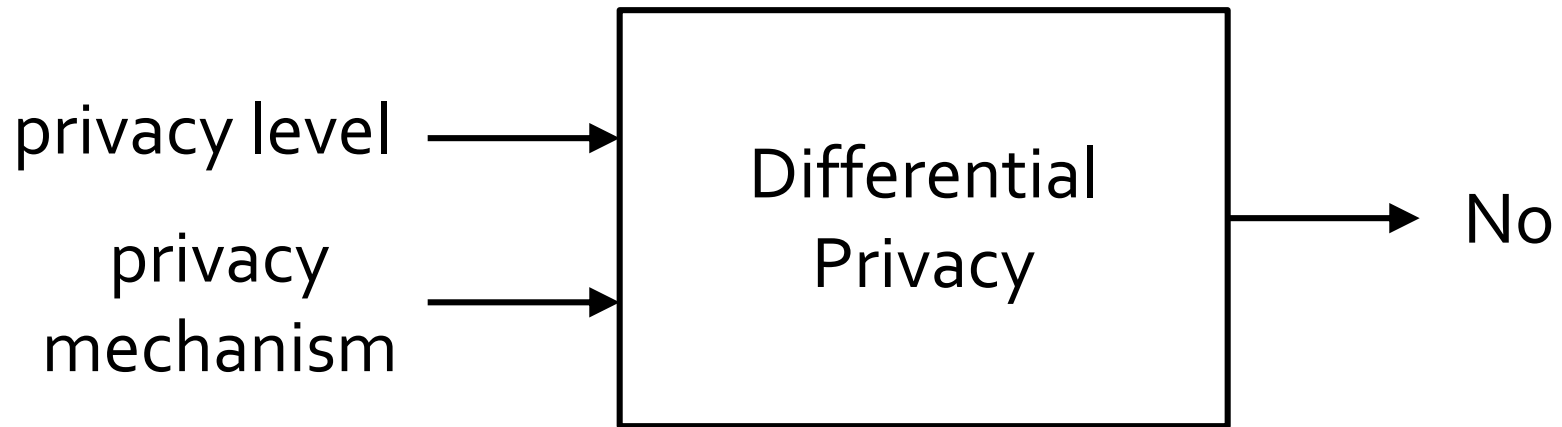


lying = adding noise to data

# DIFFERENTIAL PRIVACY

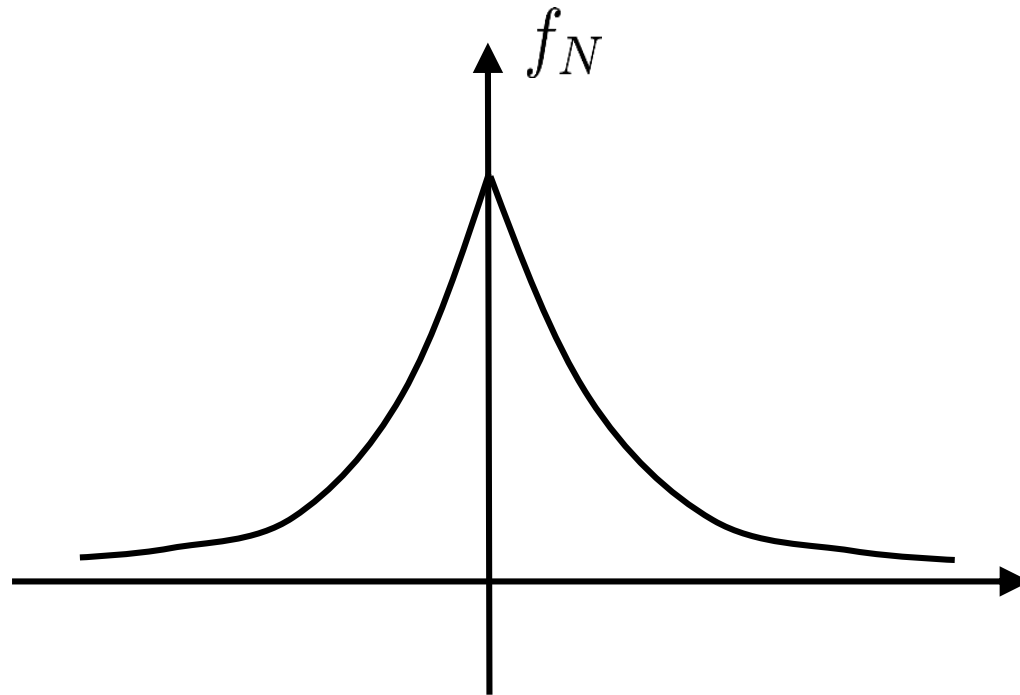


# DIFFERENTIAL PRIVACY



# DIFFERENTIAL PRIVACY

## Laplace Mechanism



standard deviation proportional to privacy level

# PRIVACY VS. UTILITY



GIVEN A PRIVACY LEVEL

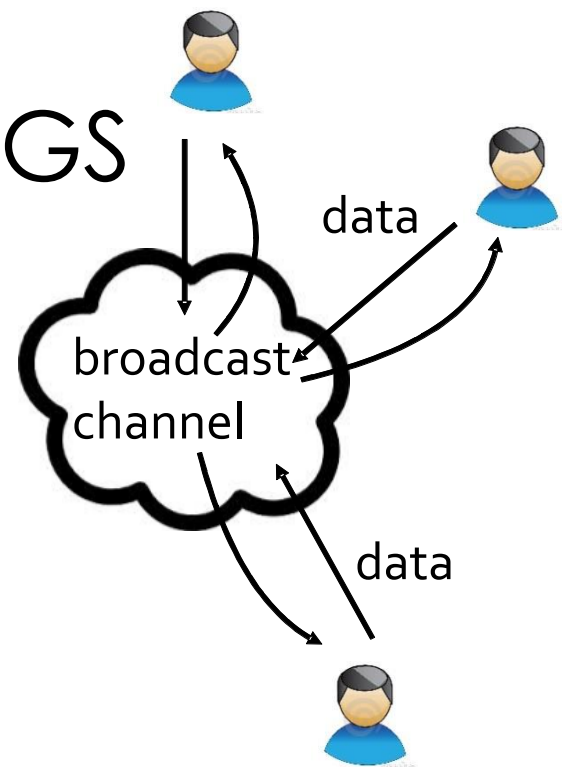
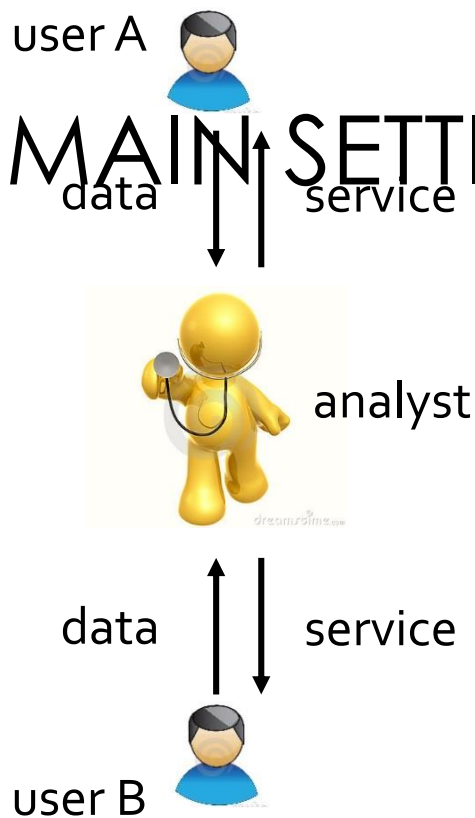
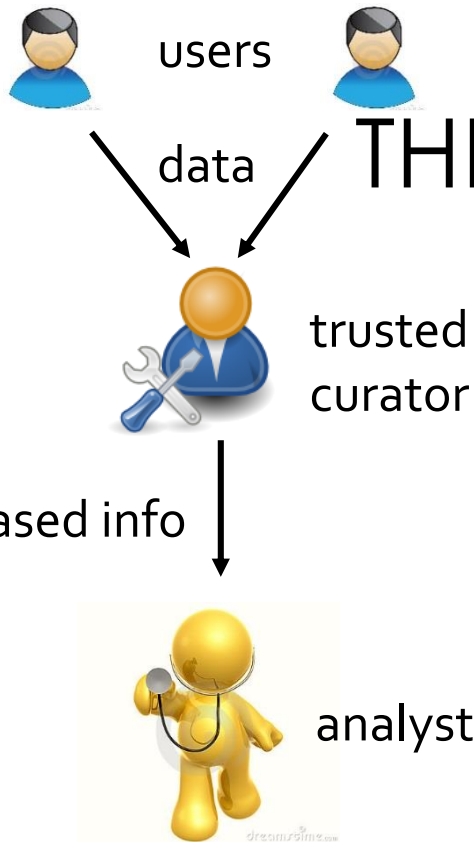
FIND THE “BEST” PRIVACY  
MECHANISM UNDER  
DIFFERENTIAL PRIVACY

Global Privacy

Local Privacy

Multi-Party Privacy

# THREE MAIN SETTINGS



# OUR MAIN RESULT

Global Privacy

Local Privacy

Multi-Party  
Privacy

**privacy mechanisms** that achieve the best privacy-utility tradeoff

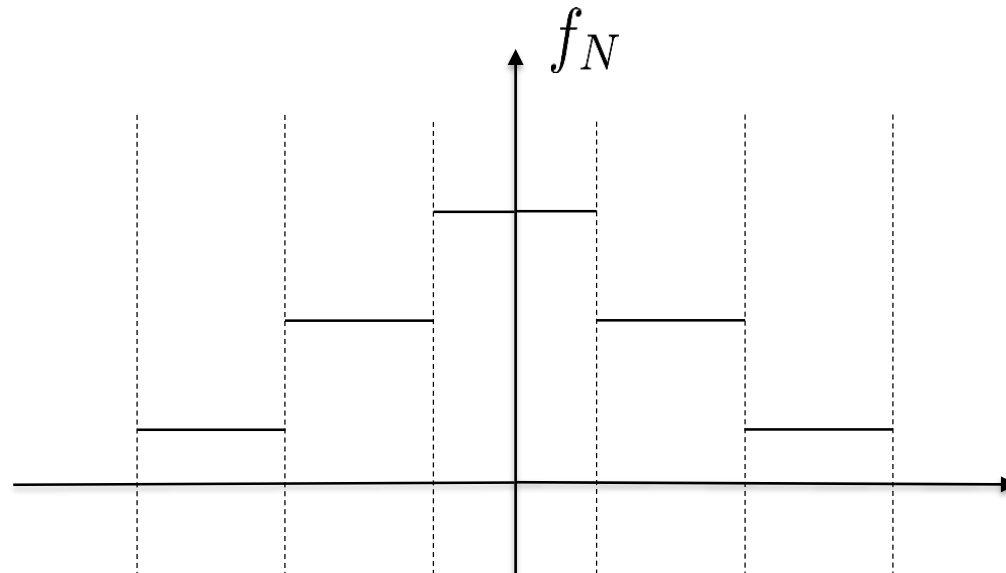
# OUR MAIN RESULT

Global Privacy

Local Privacy

Multi-Party  
Privacy

the optimal mechanisms in all three settings have a **staircase shape**



[NIPS 14, NIPS 15, ICML 15, TSTSP 15, CISS 16, JMLR 16, TIT 16]

# STAIRCASE MECHANISMS ARE OPTIMAL



differential privacy

Scholar

About 2,560,000 results (0.03 sec)

Articles

Case law

My library

## Differential privacy

[C Dwork](#) - Automata, languages and programming, 2006 - Springer

Abstract In 1977 Dalenius articulated a desideratum for statistical databases: nothing about an individual should be learnable from the database that cannot be learned without access to the database. We give a general impossibility result showing that a formalization of ...

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Any time

Since 2016

Since 2015

Since 2012

Custom range...

## Differential privacy: A survey of results

[C Dwork](#) - Theory and applications of models of computation, 2008 - Springer

Abstract Over the past five years a new approach to **privacy**-preserving data analysis has born fruit [13, 18, 7, 19, 5, 37, 35, 8, 32]. This approach differs from much (but not all!) of the related literature in the statistics, databases, theory, and cryptography communities, in that ...

Cited by 749 Related articles All 24 versions Cite Save

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include citations

## Mechanism design via differential privacy

[F McSherry](#), [K Talwar](#) - ... of Computer Science, 2007. FOCS'07. ..., 2007 - ieeexplore.ieee.org

Abstract We study the role that **privacy**-preserving algorithms, which prevent the leakage of specific information about participants, can play in the design of mechanisms for strategic agents, which must encourage players to honestly report information. Specifically, we ...

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## Differential privacy via wavelet transforms

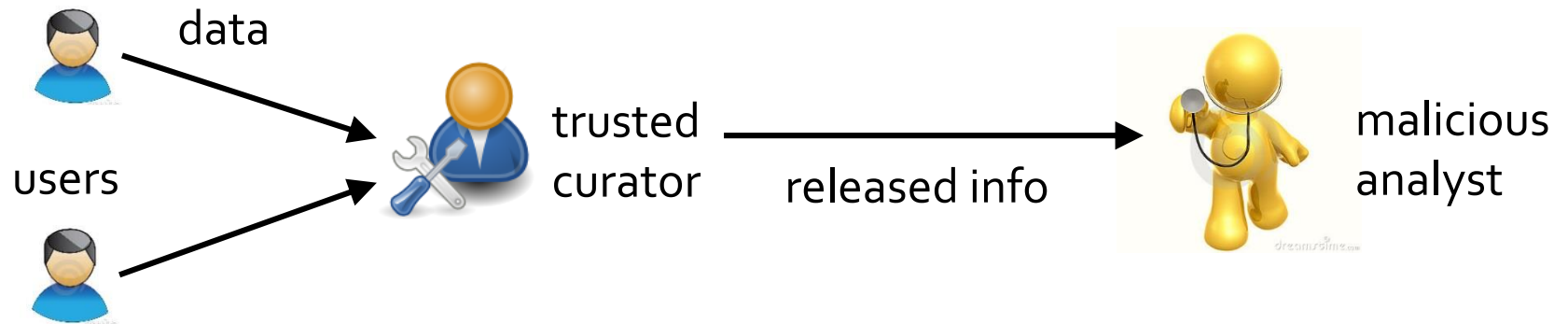
[X Xiao](#), [G Wang](#), [J Gehrke](#) - Knowledge and Data Engineering, ..., 2011 - ieeexplore.ieee.org

Abstract—**Privacy** preserving data publishing has attracted considerable research interest in recent years. Among the existing solutions, e-**differential privacy** provides the strongest **privacy** guarantee. Existing data publishing methods that achieve e-**differential privacy**, ...

Create alert

PART 1/3:  
GLOBAL PRIVACY

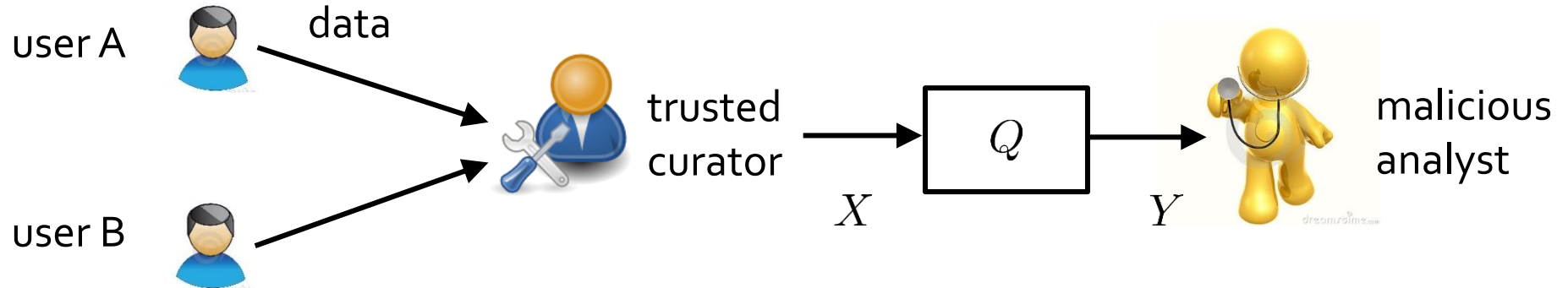
# GLOBAL PRIVACY MODEL



National Institutes  
of Health



# GLOBAL DIFFERENTIAL PRIVACY

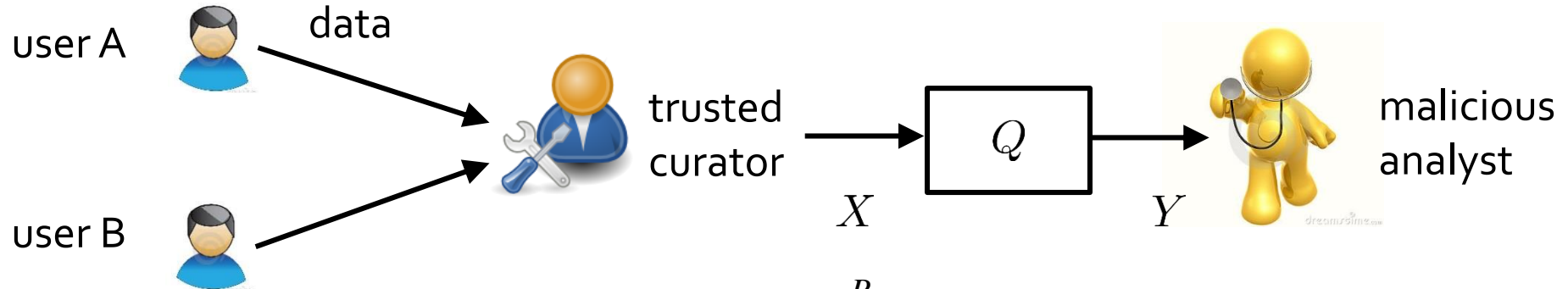


$$e^{-\epsilon} \leq \frac{\mathbb{P}(Y | \text{user A present})}{\mathbb{P}(Y | \text{user A absent})} \leq e^{+\epsilon}$$

$\epsilon$  controls the level of privacy  
large  $\epsilon$ , low privacy  
small  $\epsilon$ , high privacy

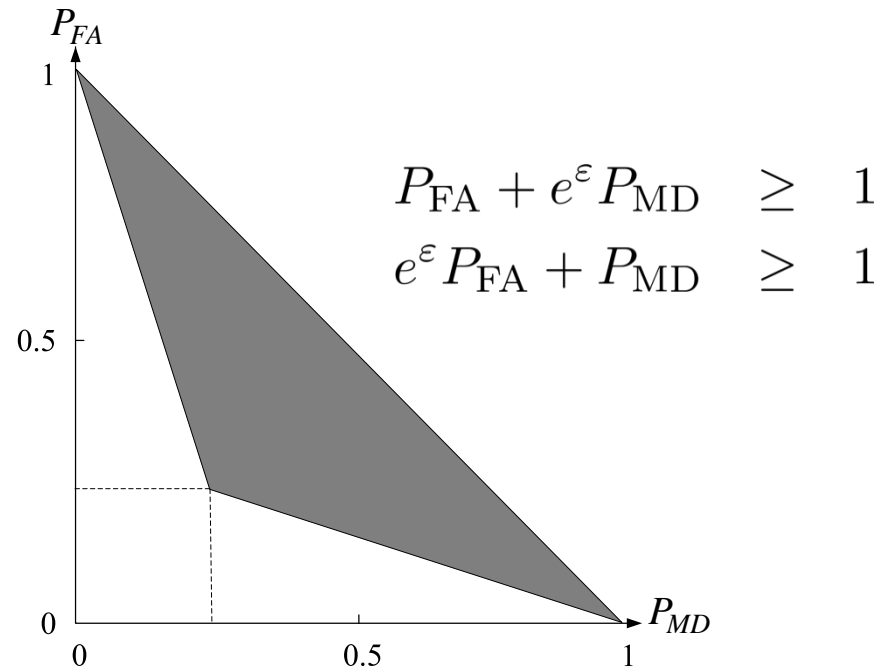


# OPERATIONAL INTERPRETATION

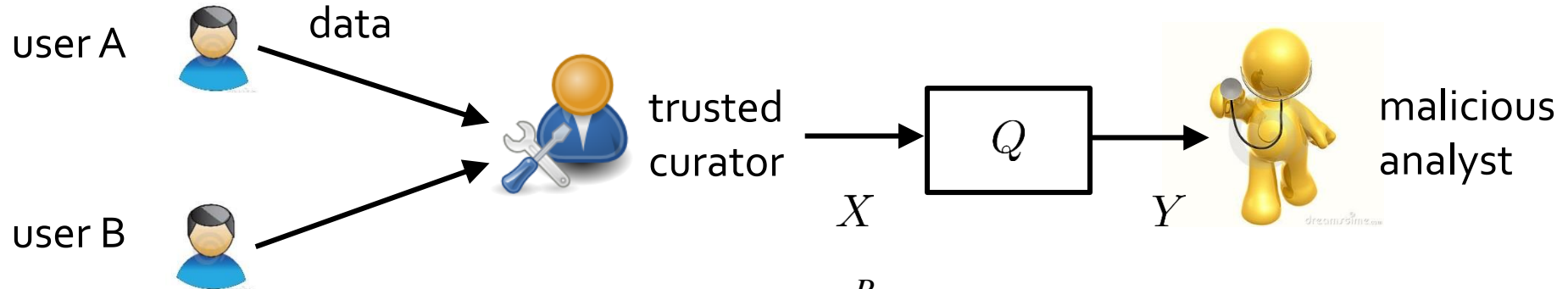


Ho: user A is absent

H1: user A is present

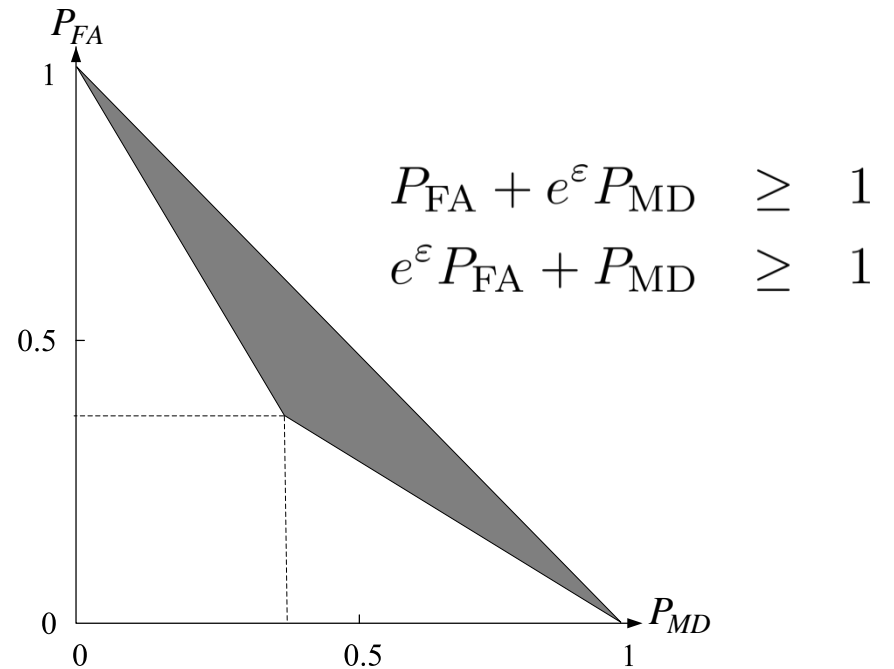


# OPERATIONAL INTERPRETATION

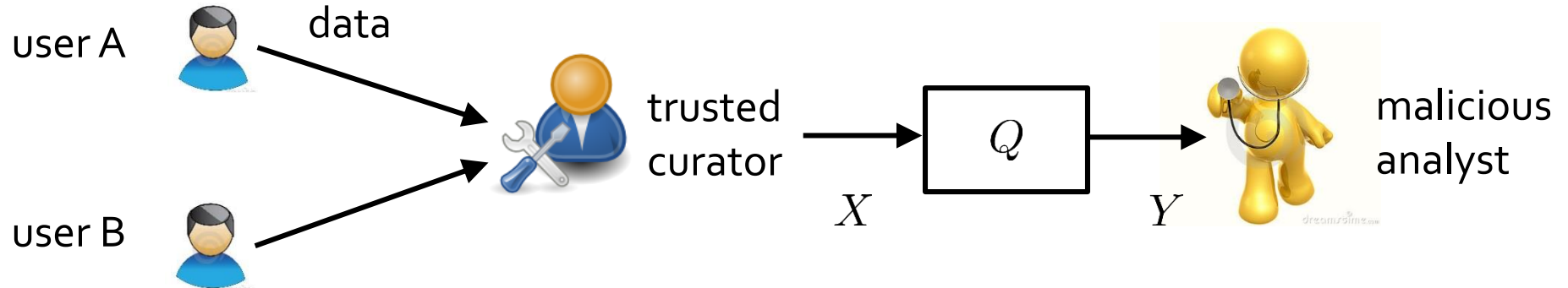


Ho: user A is absent

H1: user A is present



# PRIVACY-UTILITY TRADEOFF

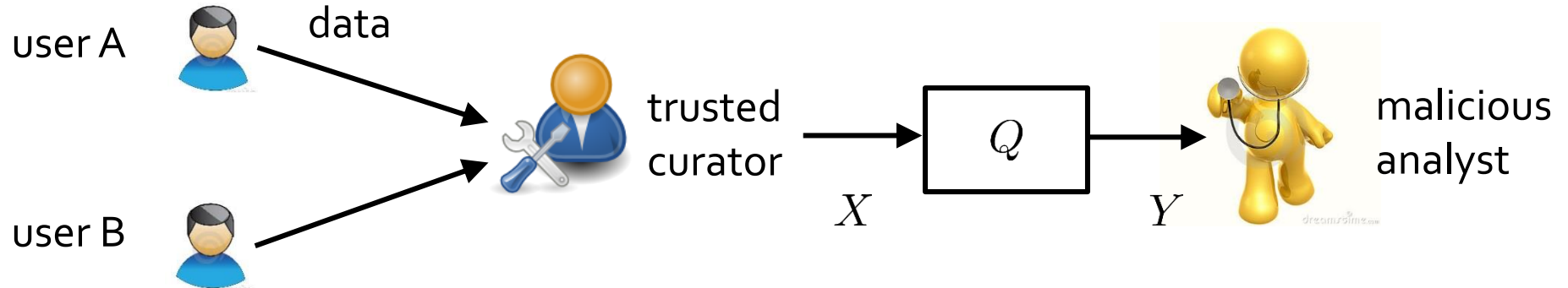


$$\text{loss} = |X - Y|$$

$$\text{average loss} = \mathbb{E}|X - Y|$$

worst case average loss

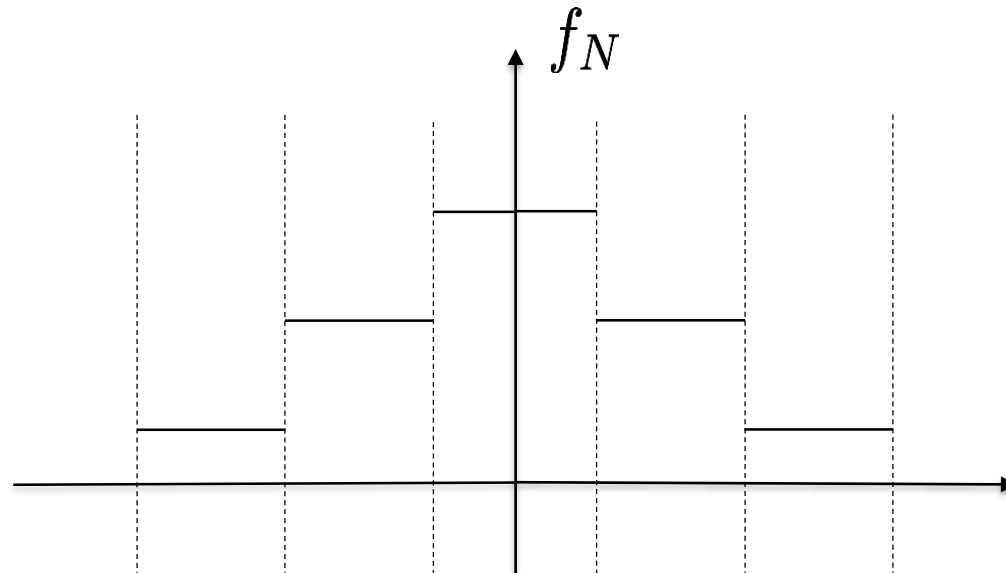
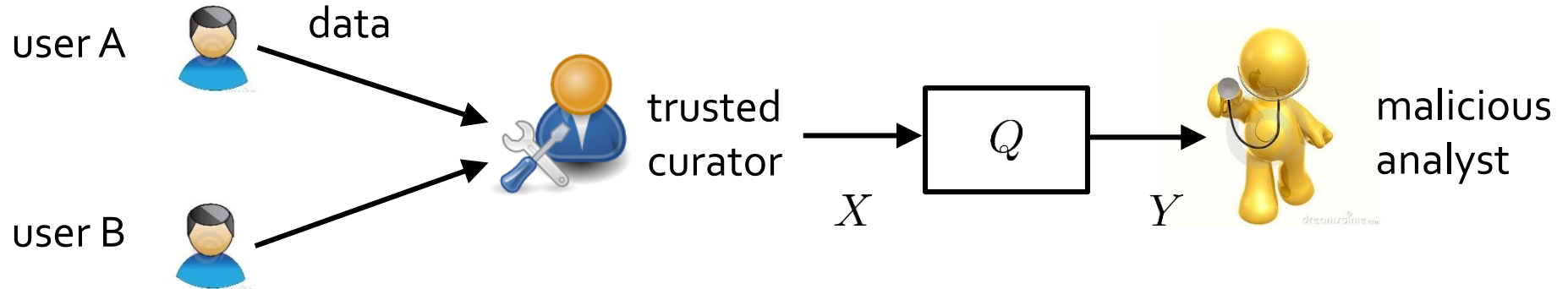
# PRIVACY-UTILITY TRADEOFF



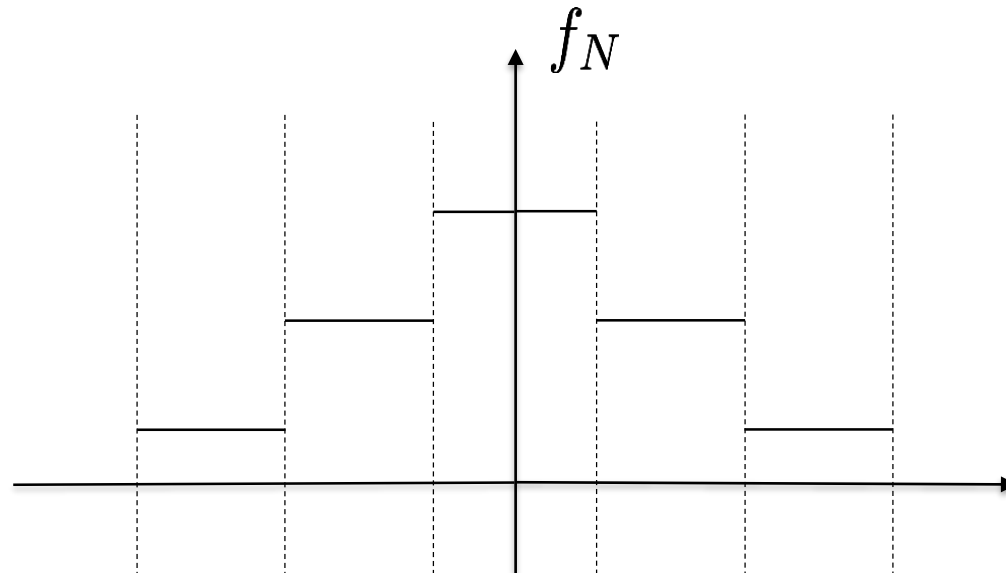
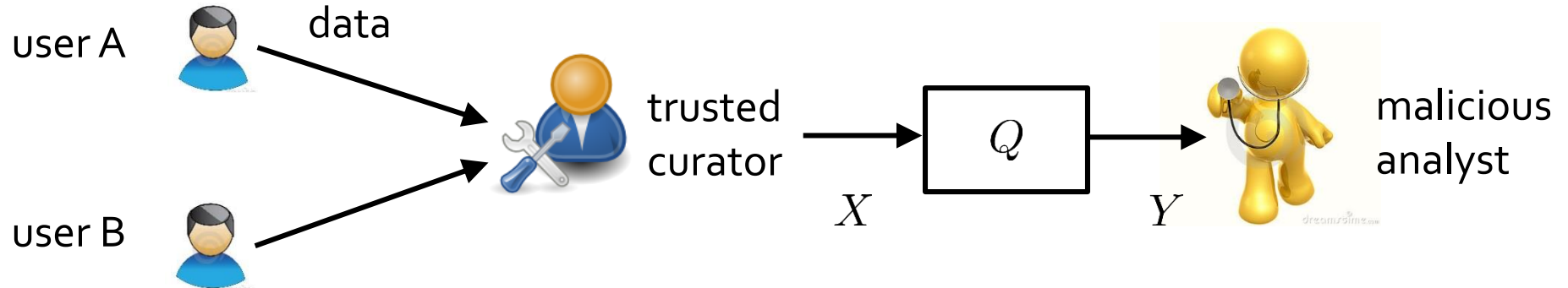
minimize the worst case average loss

subject to differential privacy

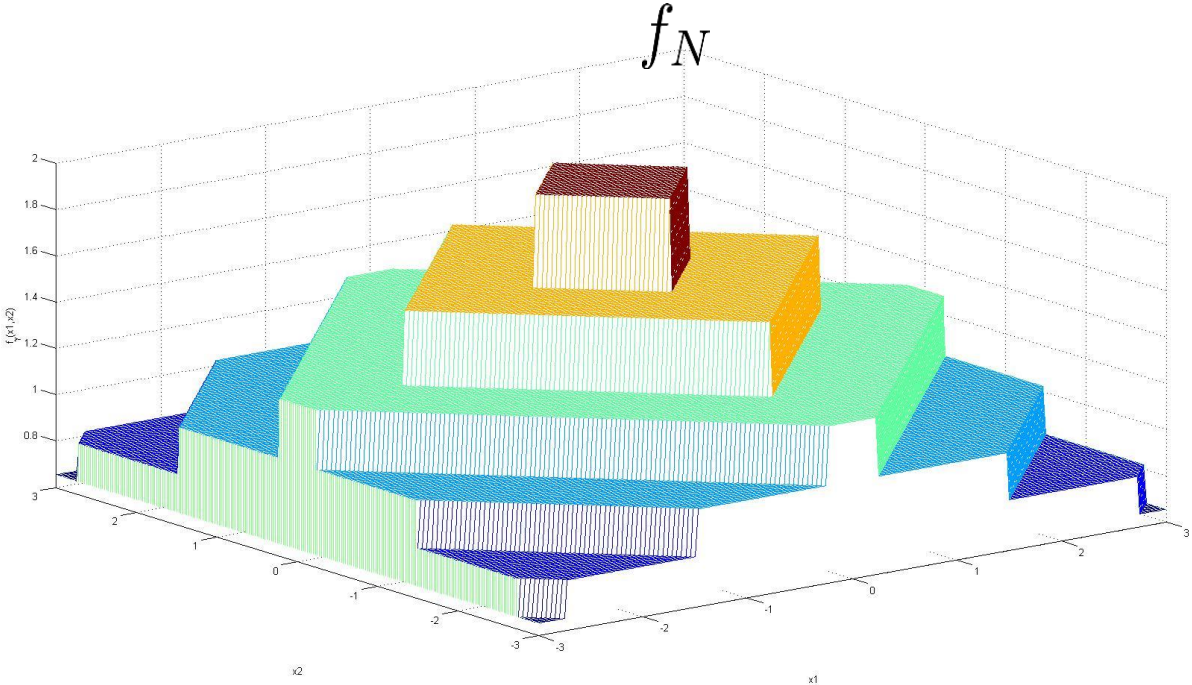
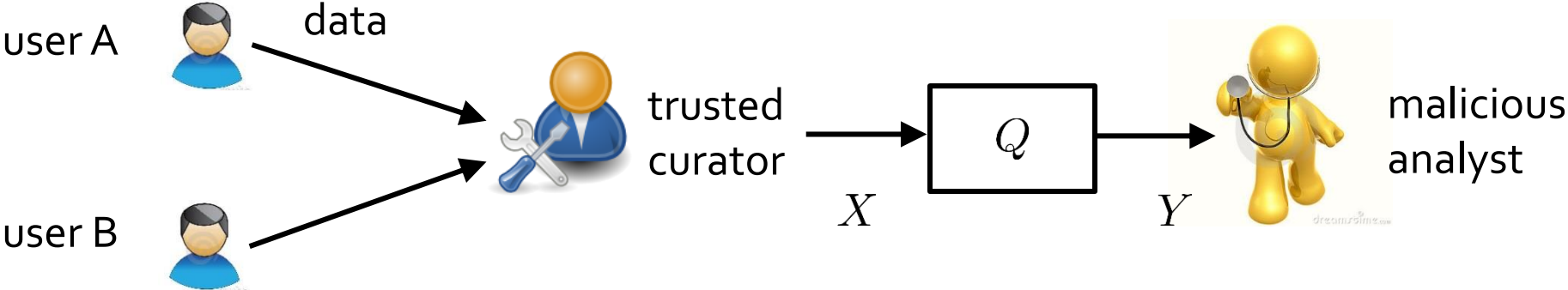
# OPTIMALITY OF STAIRCASE MECHANISM



# WHAT ABOUT OTHER LOSSES



# WHAT ABOUT 2 DIMENSIONAL DATA



PART 2/3:  
LOCAL PRIVACY

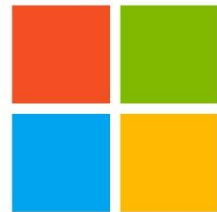


# LOCAL PRIVACY MODEL



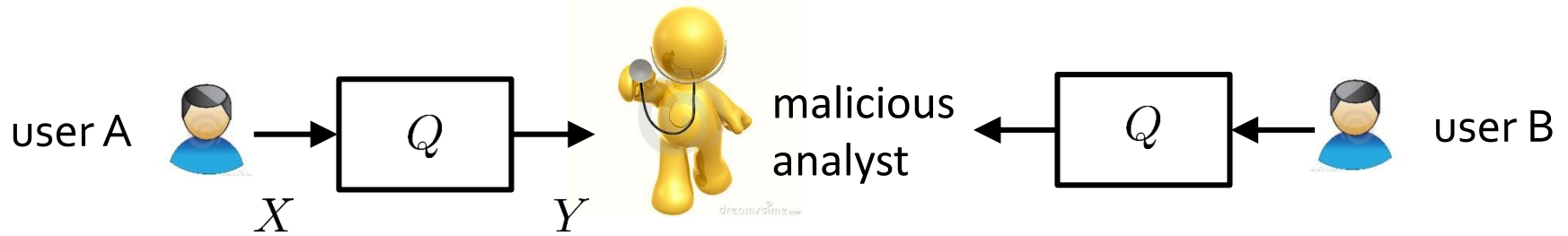
Google

facebook®



Microsoft

# LOCAL PRIVACY MODEL



have you ever used illegal drugs?



answer truthfully



answer wrongly

# LOCAL DIFFERENTIAL PRIVACY



$$e^{-\epsilon} \leq \frac{\mathbb{P}(Y|X)}{\mathbb{P}(Y|X')} \leq e^{+\epsilon}$$

$\epsilon$  controls the level of privacy  
large  $\epsilon$ , low privacy  
small  $\epsilon$ , high privacy

# PRIVACY-UTILITY TRADEOFF



maximize utility

subject to differential privacy

# BINARY DATA



answer truthfully

$$\frac{e^\epsilon}{e^\epsilon + 1}$$



answer wrongly

$$\frac{1}{e^\epsilon + 1}$$

# WARNER'S RESPONSE IS OPTIMAL



answer truthfully



answer wrongly

optimal for all privacy levels & all well behaved utilities

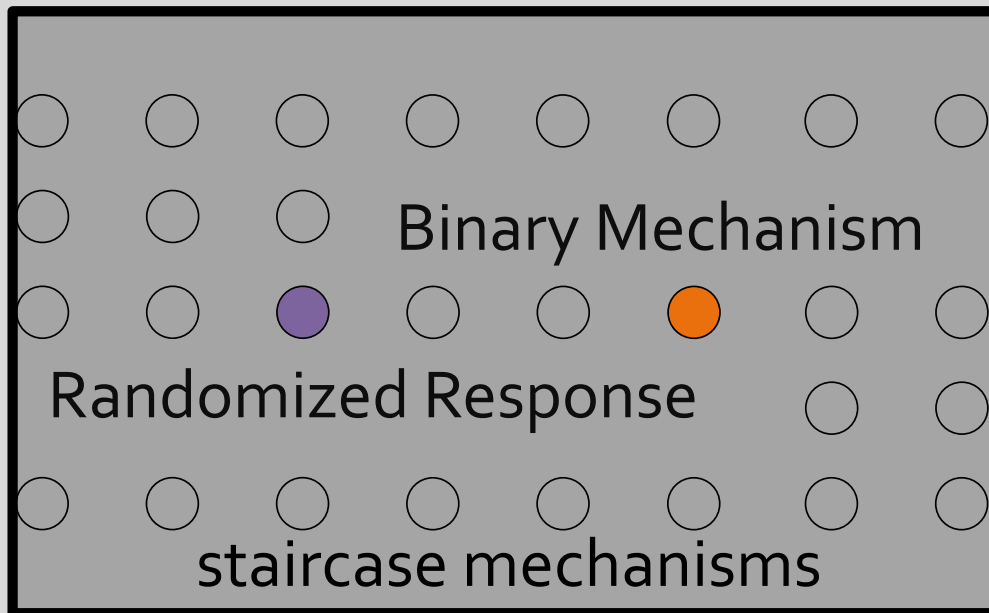
# WHAT ABOUT NON-BINARY DATA



maximize utility

subject to differential privacy

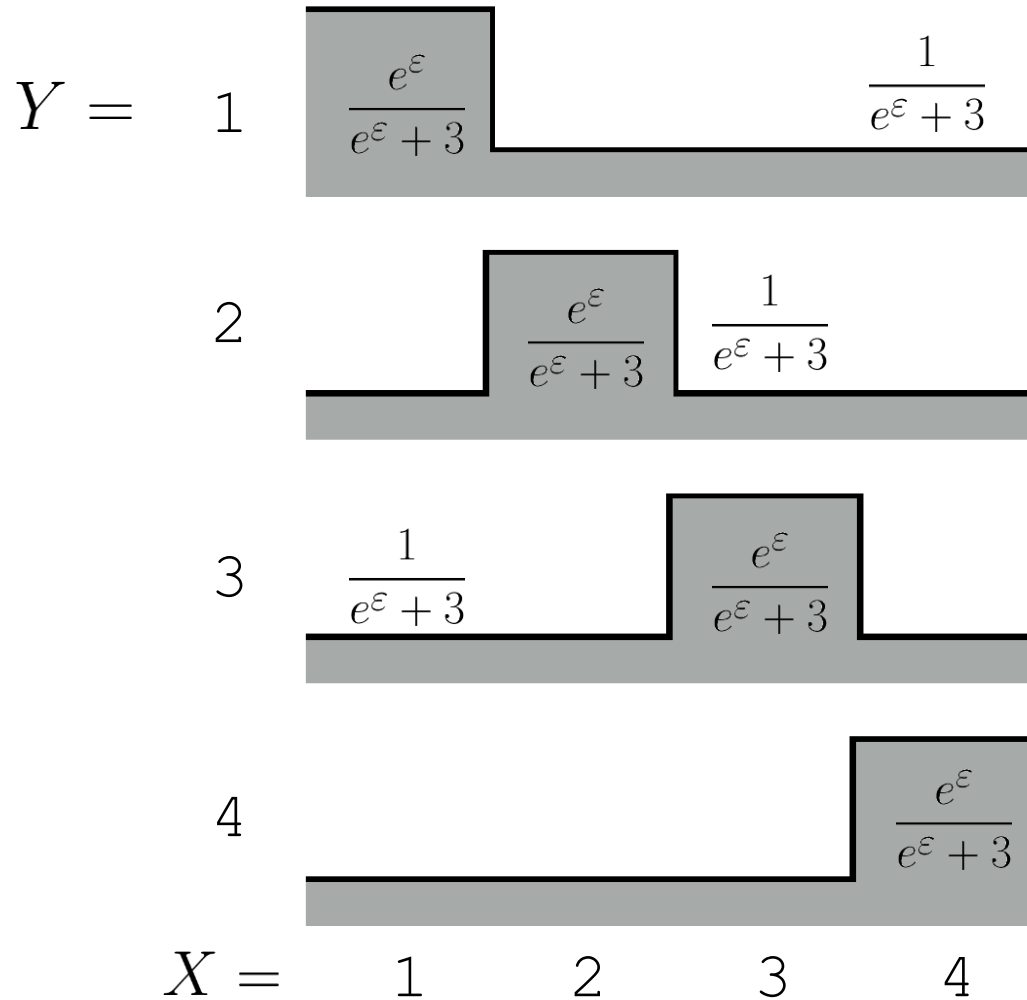
# MAIN RESULTS



all differentially private mechanisms

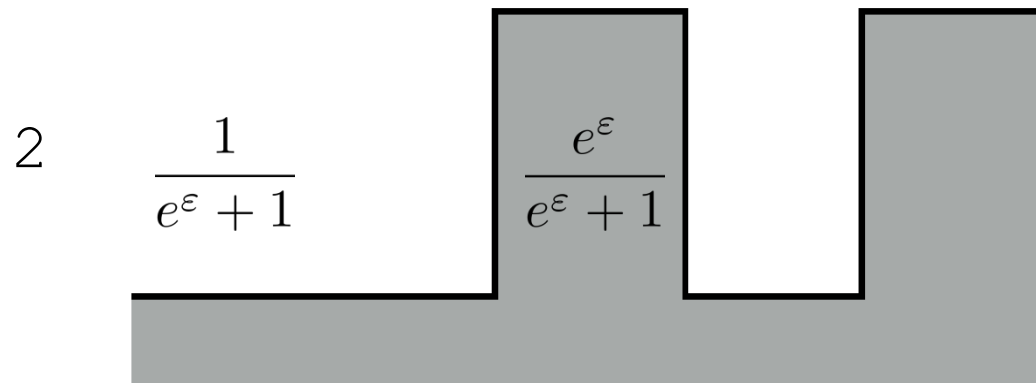
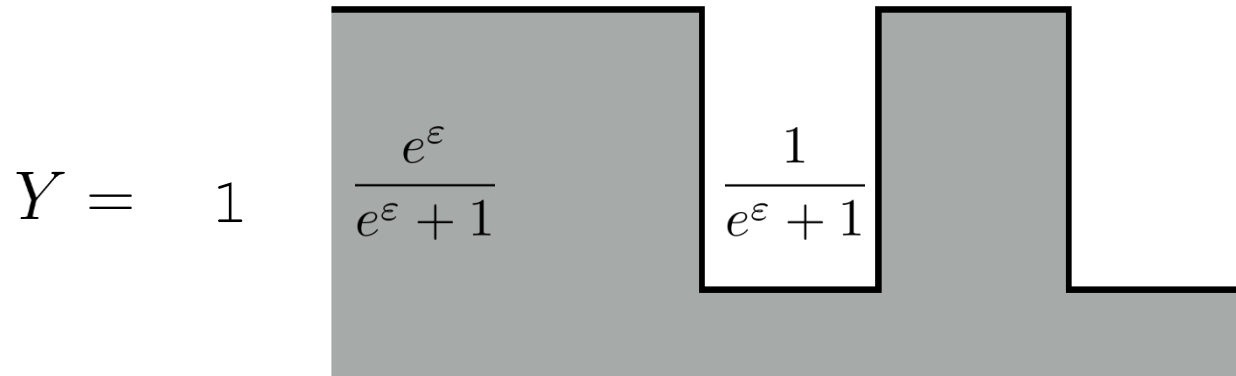


# RANDOMIZED RESPONSE



optimal in the low privacy regime

# BINARY MECHANISM



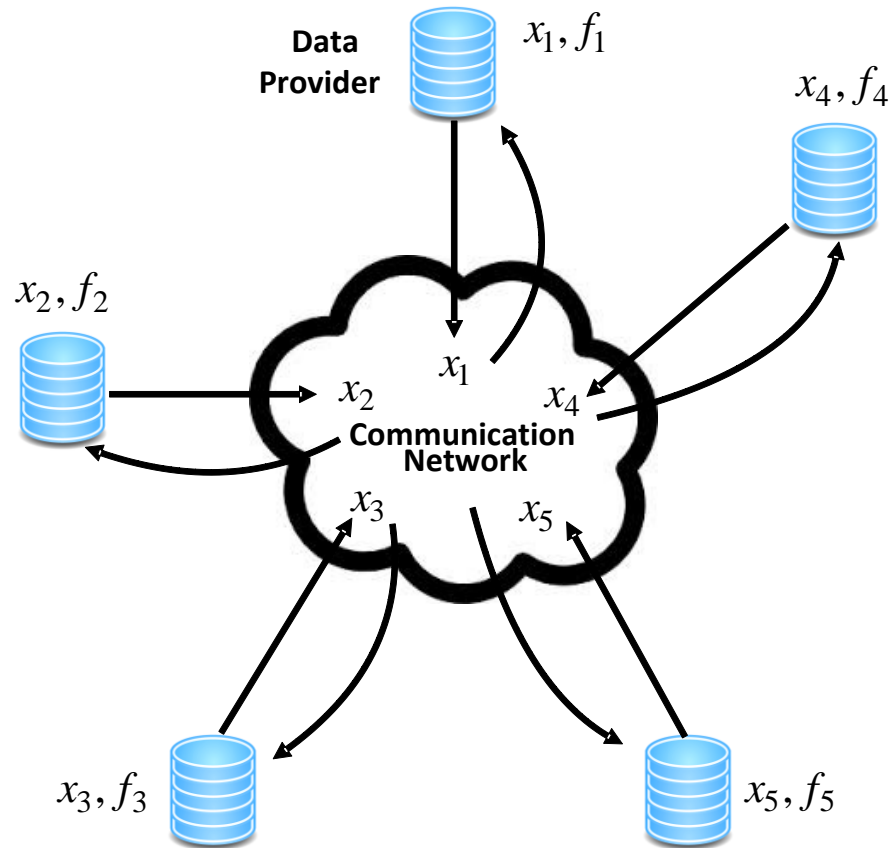
$X =$  1 2 3 4 5

optimal in the high privacy regime

@Google

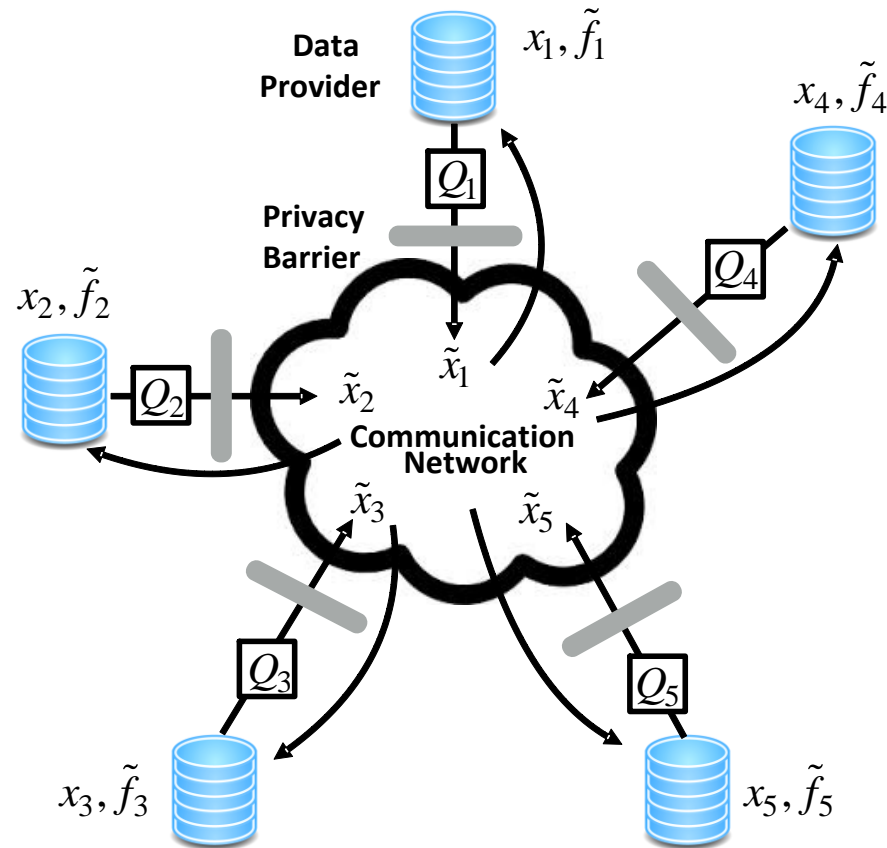
PART 3/3:  
MULTI-PARTY  
PRIVACY

# MULTI-PARTY COMPUTATION



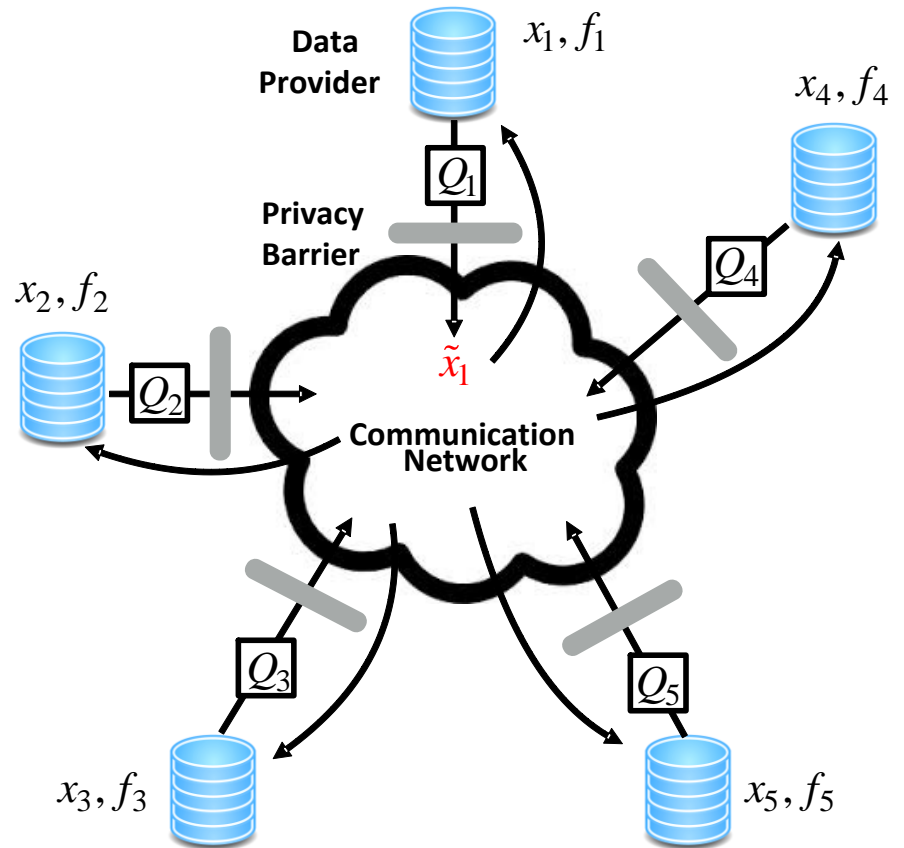
an important setting in distributed systems

# PRIVATE MULTI-PARTY COMPUTATION

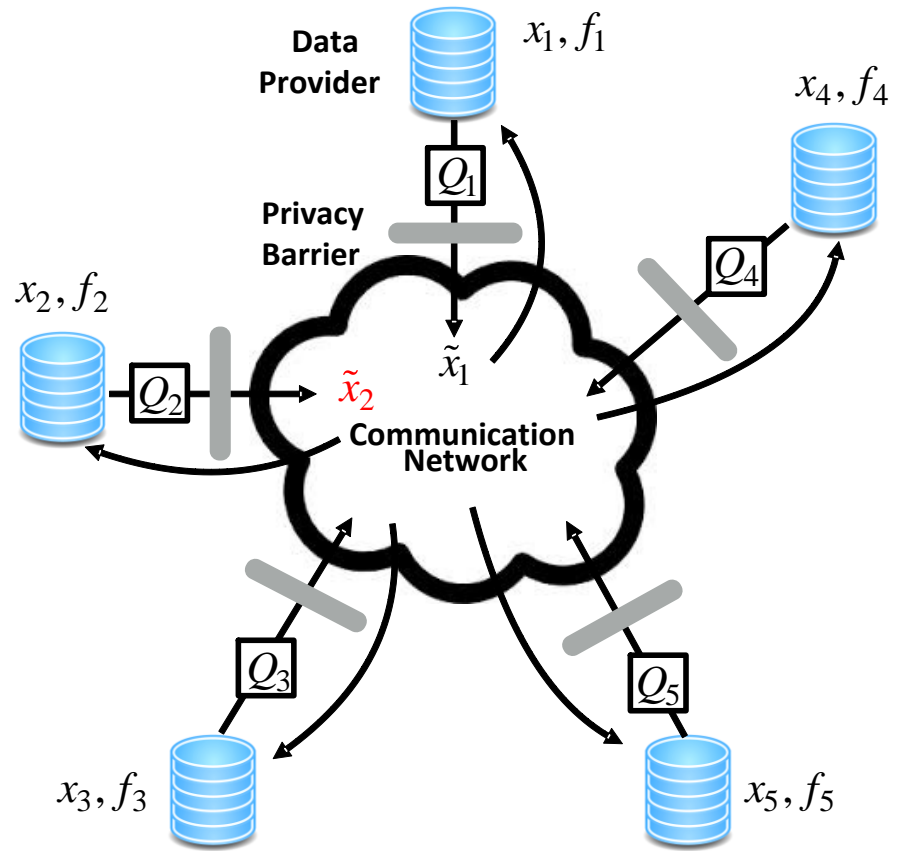
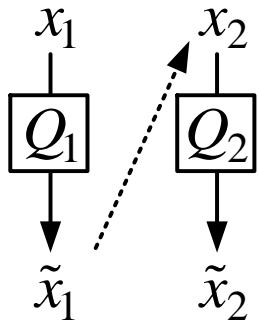


each party shares a noisy version of its data

# INTERACTIVE MECHANISMS

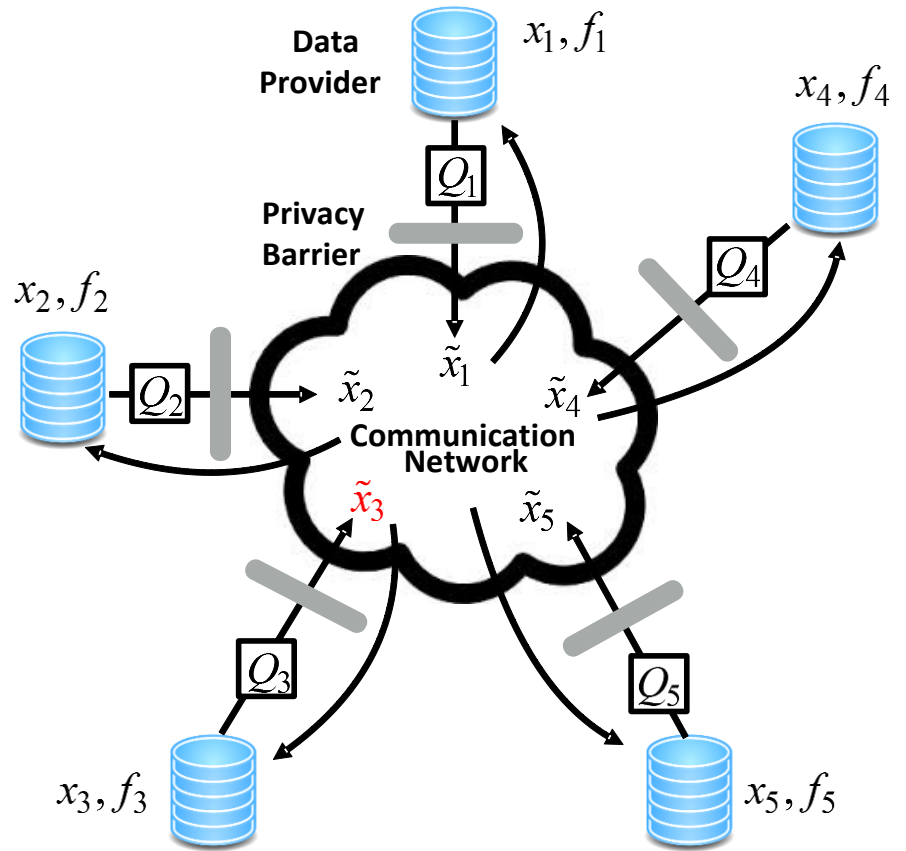
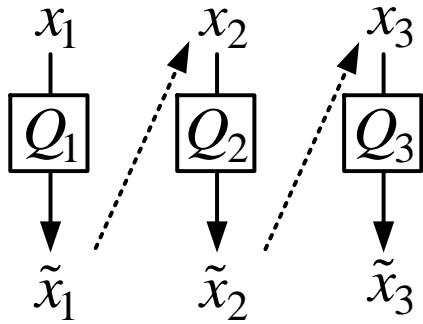


# INTERACTIVE MECHANISMS

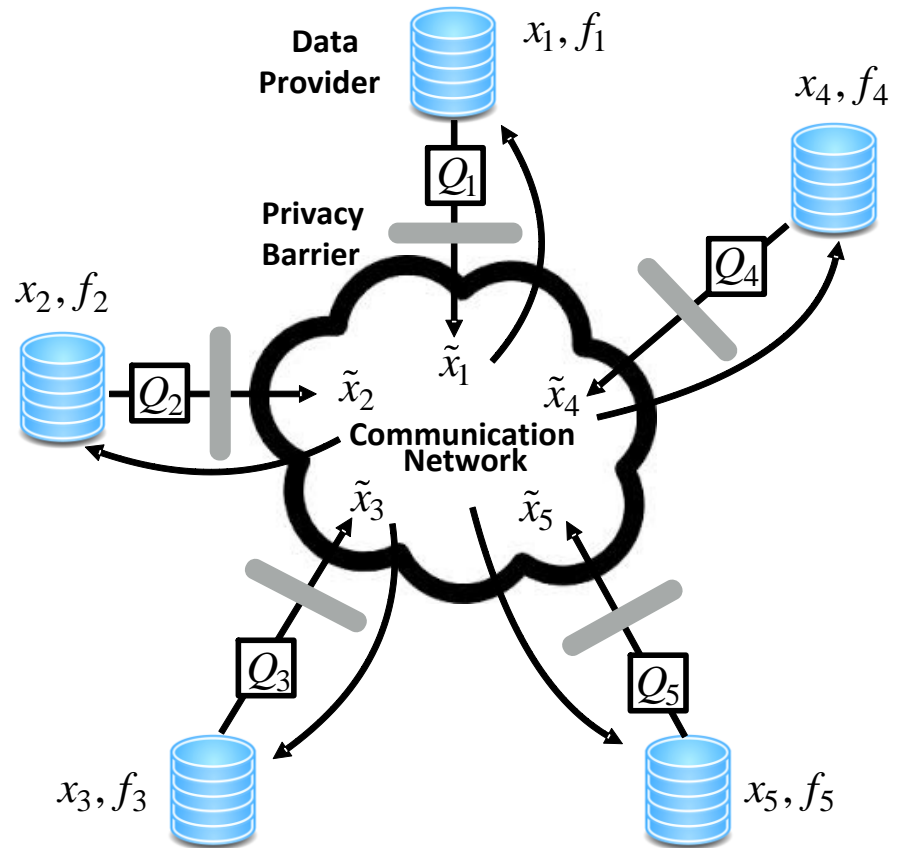
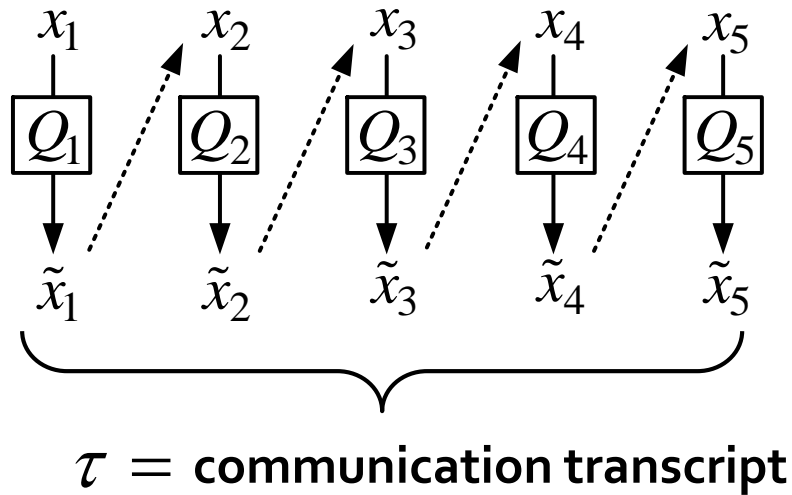




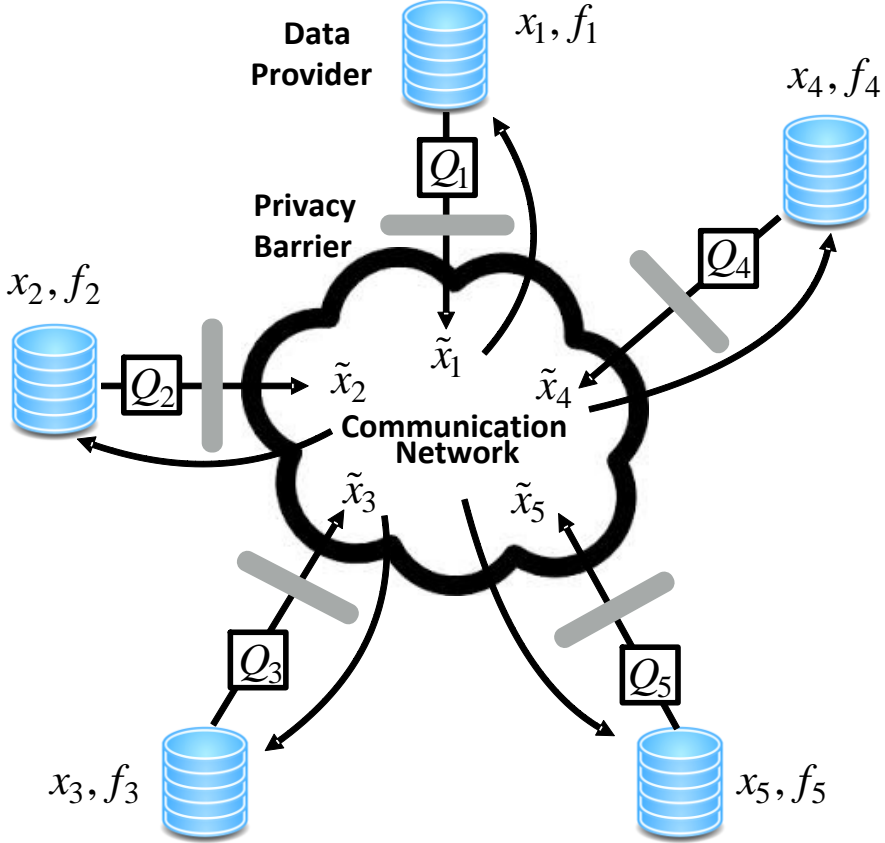
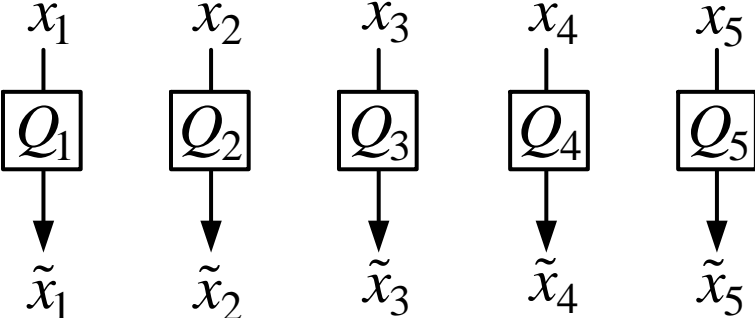
# INTERACTIVE MECHANISMS



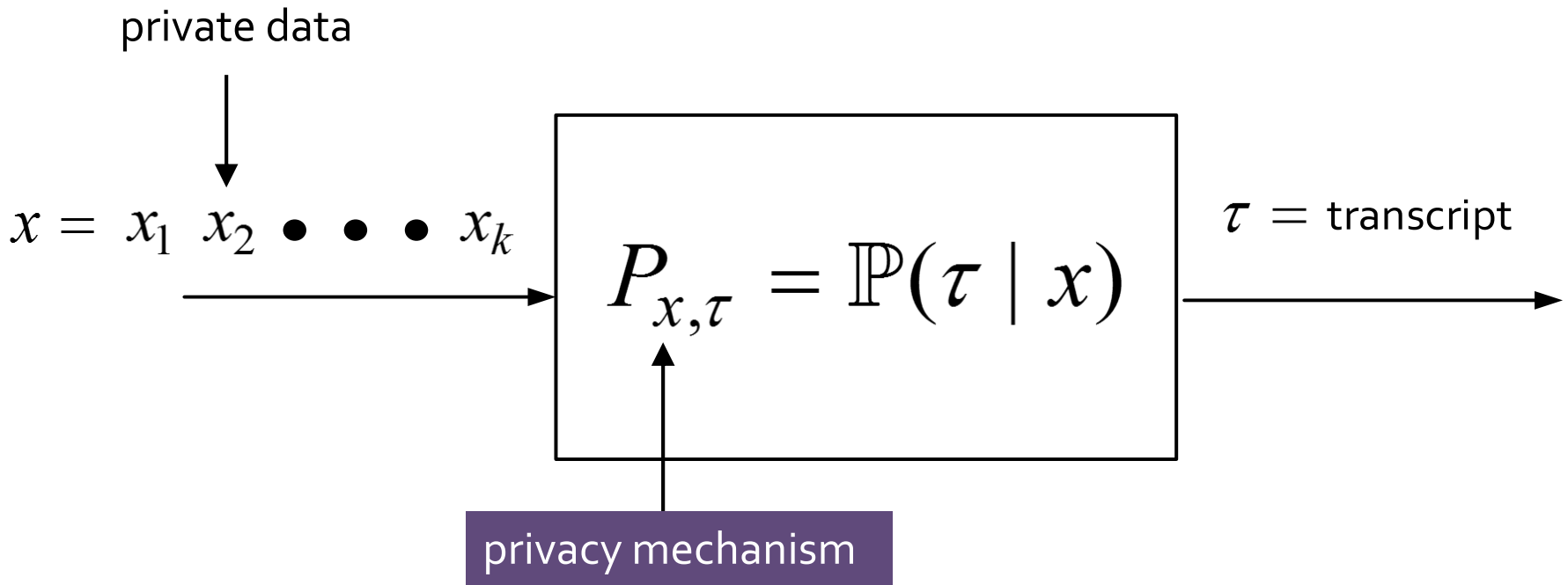
# INTERACTIVE MECHANISMS



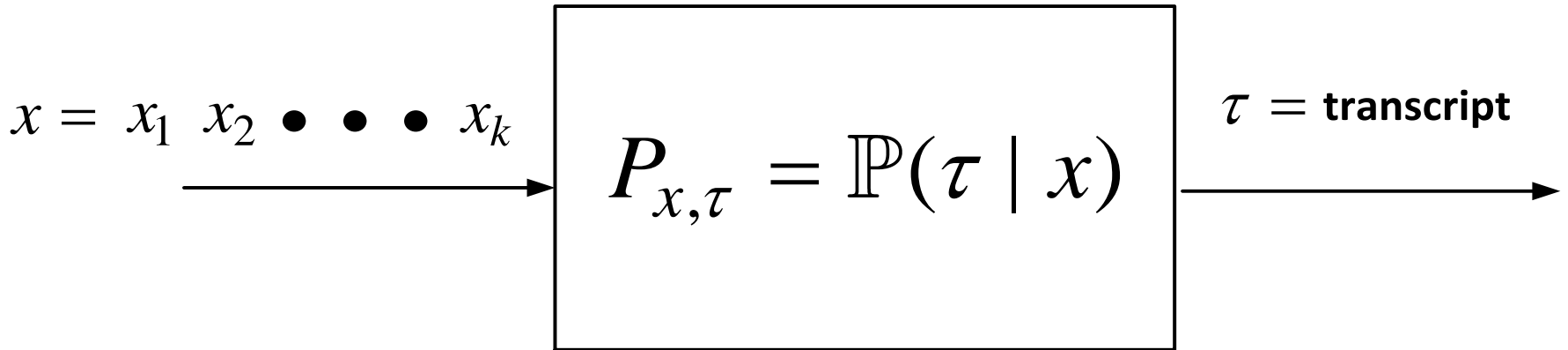
# NON-INTERACTIVE MECHANISMS



# GENERAL REPRESENTATION



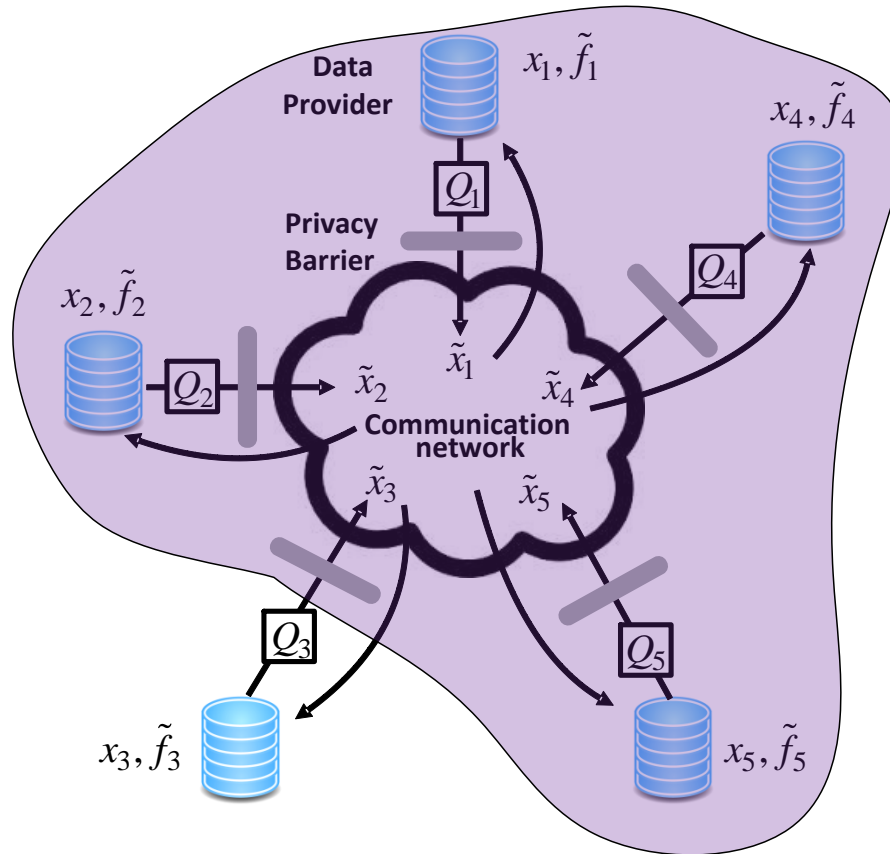
# MULTI-PARTY DIFFERENTIAL PRIVACY



$$e^{-\varepsilon_i} \leq \frac{\mathbb{P}(\tau | x_i = 0, x_{-i})}{\mathbb{P}(\tau | x_i = 1, x_{-i})} \leq e^{\varepsilon_i}$$

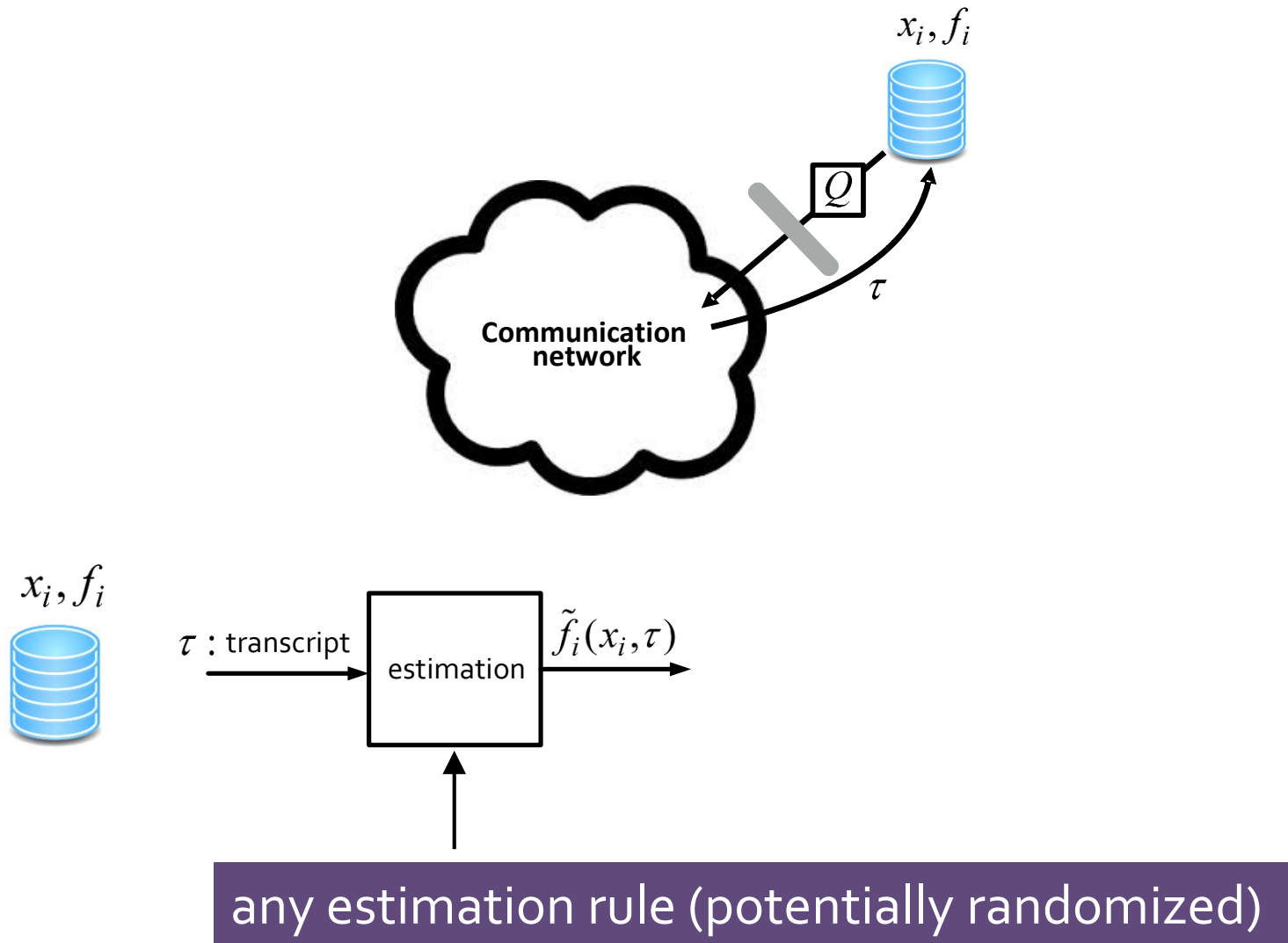
$$x_{-i} = (x_1, \dots, x_{i-1}, x_{i+1}, \dots, x_k)$$

# CAN'T SAY MUCH EVEN IF...

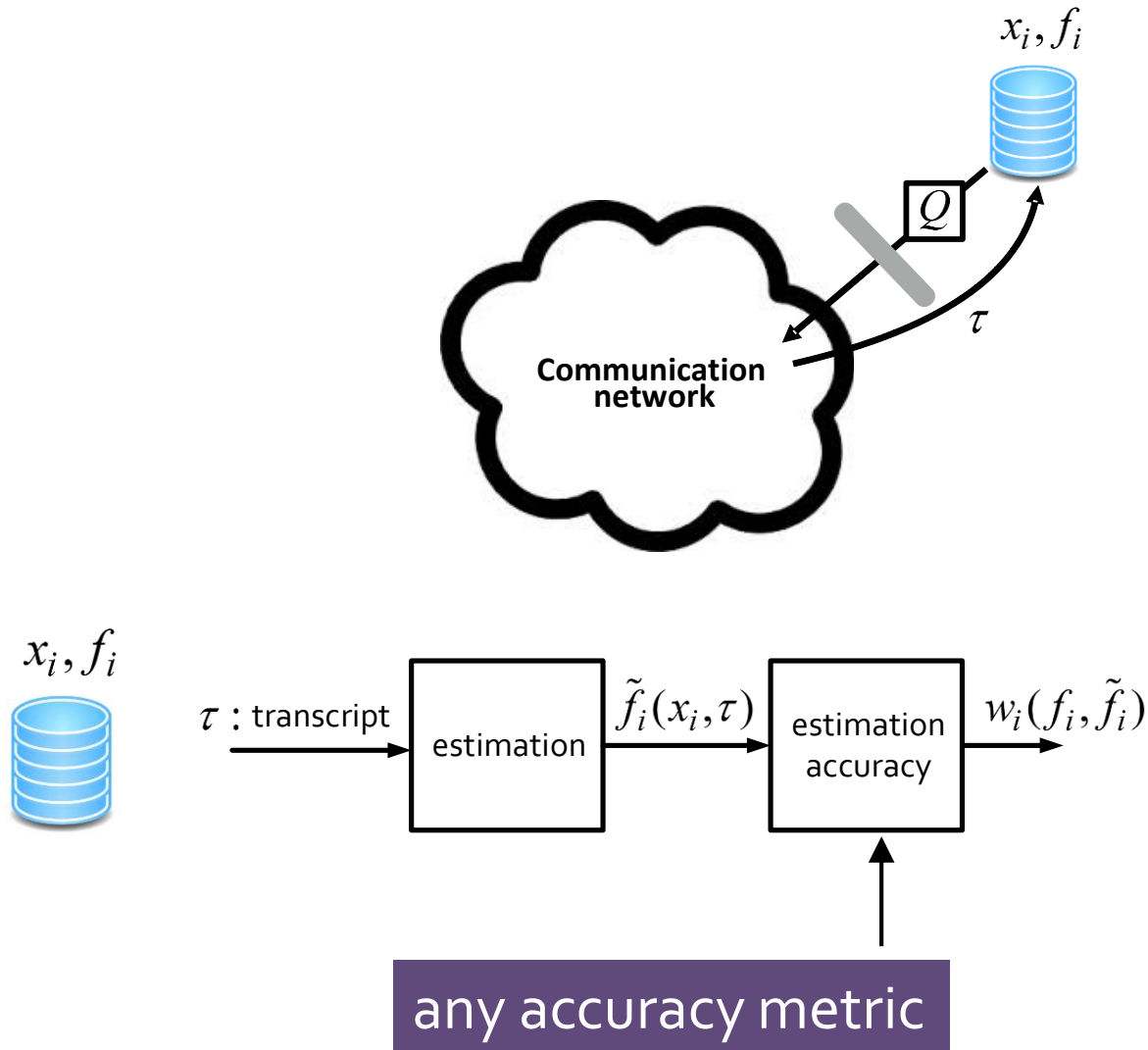


all parties but one collude to figure out a party's bit

# FUNCTION ESTIMATION

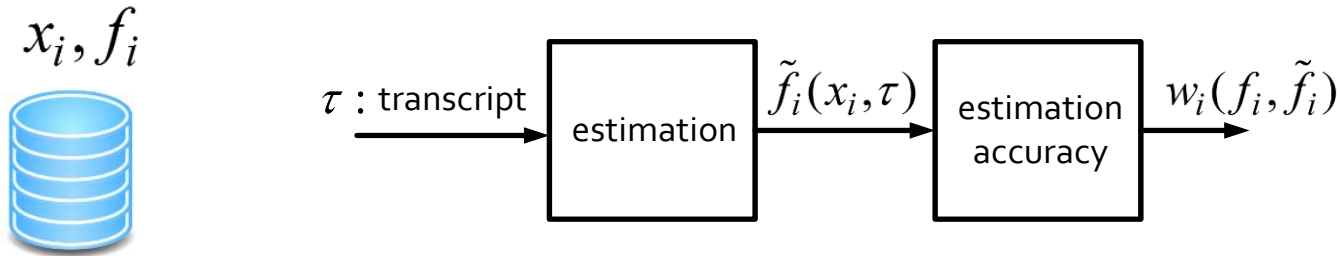


# FUNCTION ESTIMATION





# ACCURACY-PRIVACY TRADEOFF



$$\text{ACC}_{\text{ave}} \equiv \underbrace{\frac{1}{2^k} \sum_{x \in \{0,1\}^k}}_{\text{average over all possible inputs}} \mathbb{E}_{\hat{f}_i, P_{x,\tau}} [w_i(f_i(x), \tilde{f}_i(\tau, x_i))]$$

average over all possible inputs

# ACCURACY-PRIVACY TRADEOFF

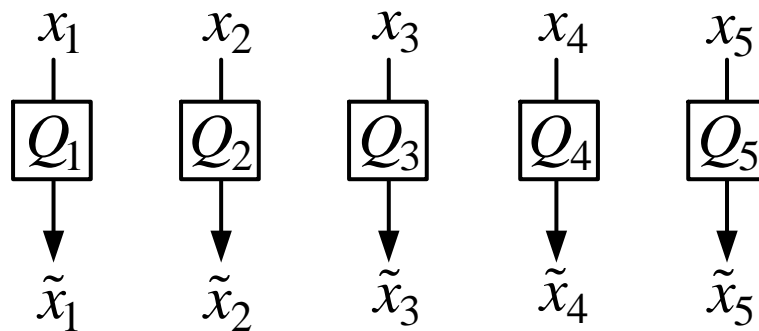
maximize  $\text{ACC}_{\text{ave}}(P, w_i, f_i, \tilde{f}_i),$   
           $P, \tilde{f}_i$

subject to  $P$  and  $\tilde{f}_i$  are row-stochastic matrices  
 $P$  satisfies the differential privacy constraints  
for all parties

- heterogeneous privacy levels across users
- each party possesses a single bit
- the functions can vary from one party to the other
- the accuracy metrics can vary from one party to the other
- interactive & non-interactive mechanisms

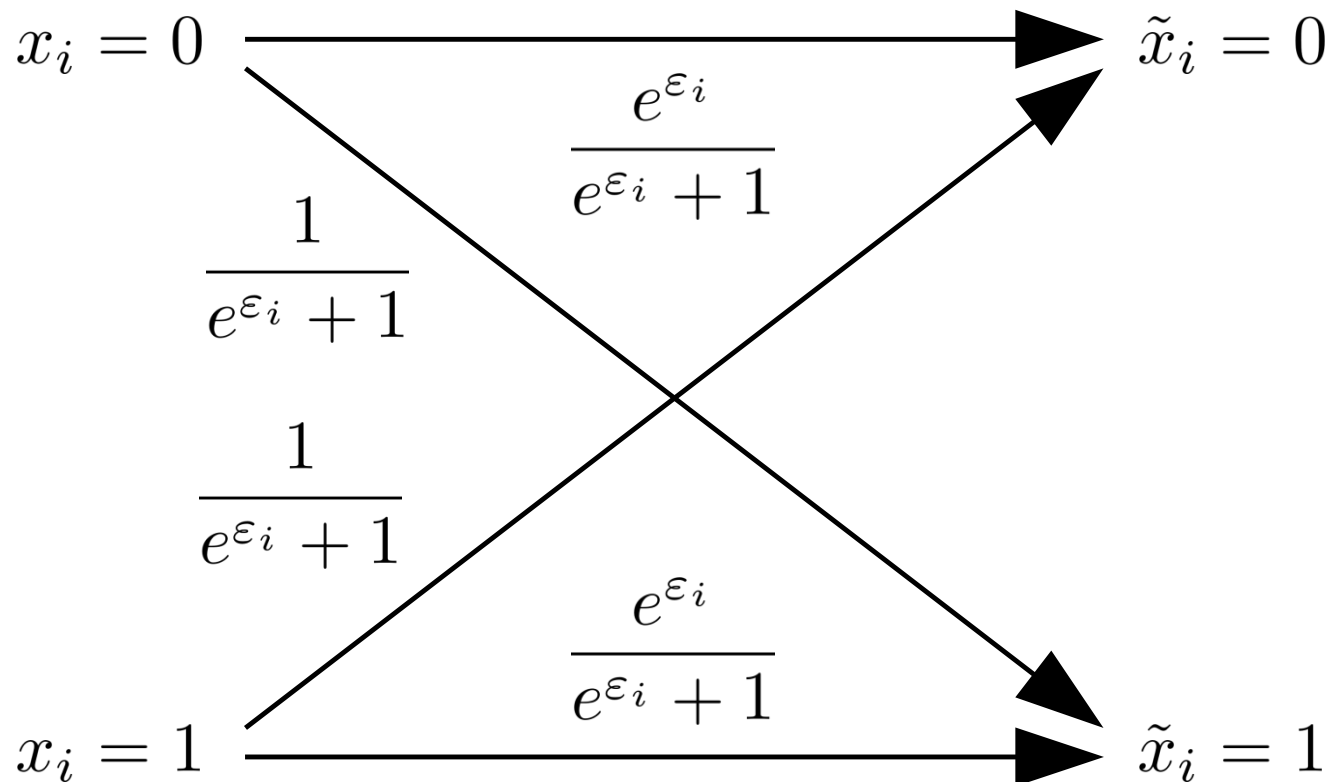
# OUR RESULT

non-interactive mechanisms are optimal



# OUR RESULT

Warner's randomized response is optimal



NON-BINARY DATA



Bob

@bob



I just learned that I'm HIV positive. I feel devastated and need your support to go through these tough times.

7 Jul 12

Reply Retweet Favorite

# METADATA PRIVACY

# METADATA PRIVACY



Bob

@bob



I just learned that I'm HIV positive. I feel devastated and need your support to go through these tough times.

7 Jul 12

← Reply ↻ Retweet ★ Favorite

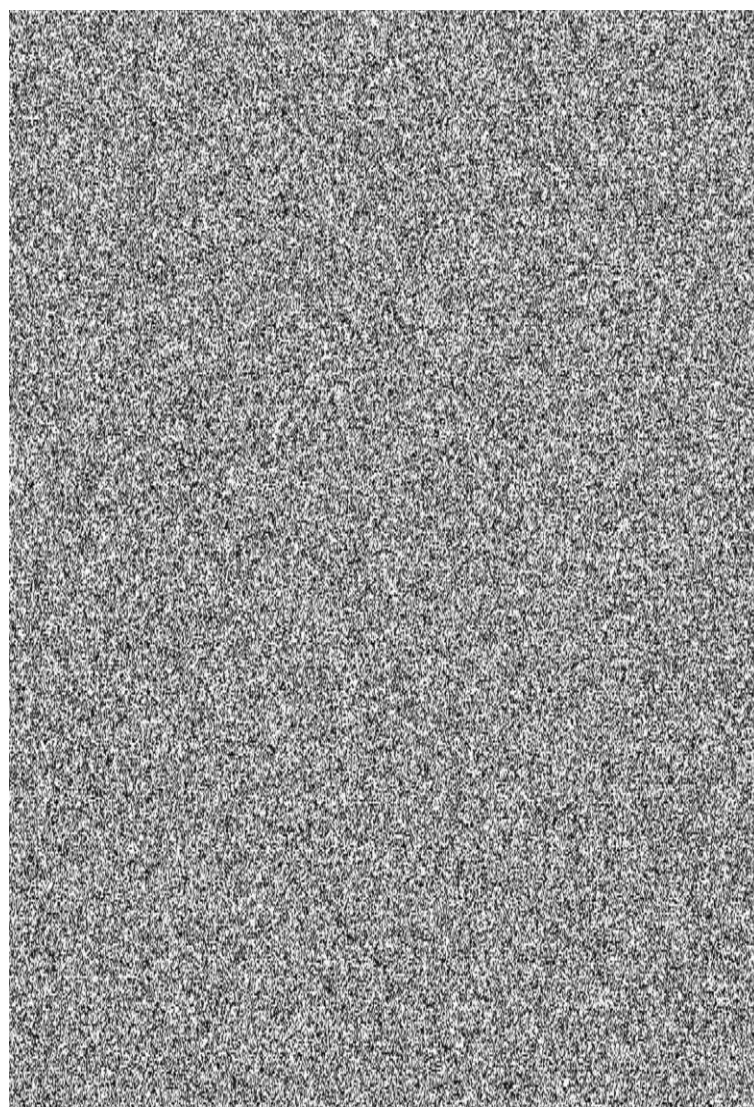
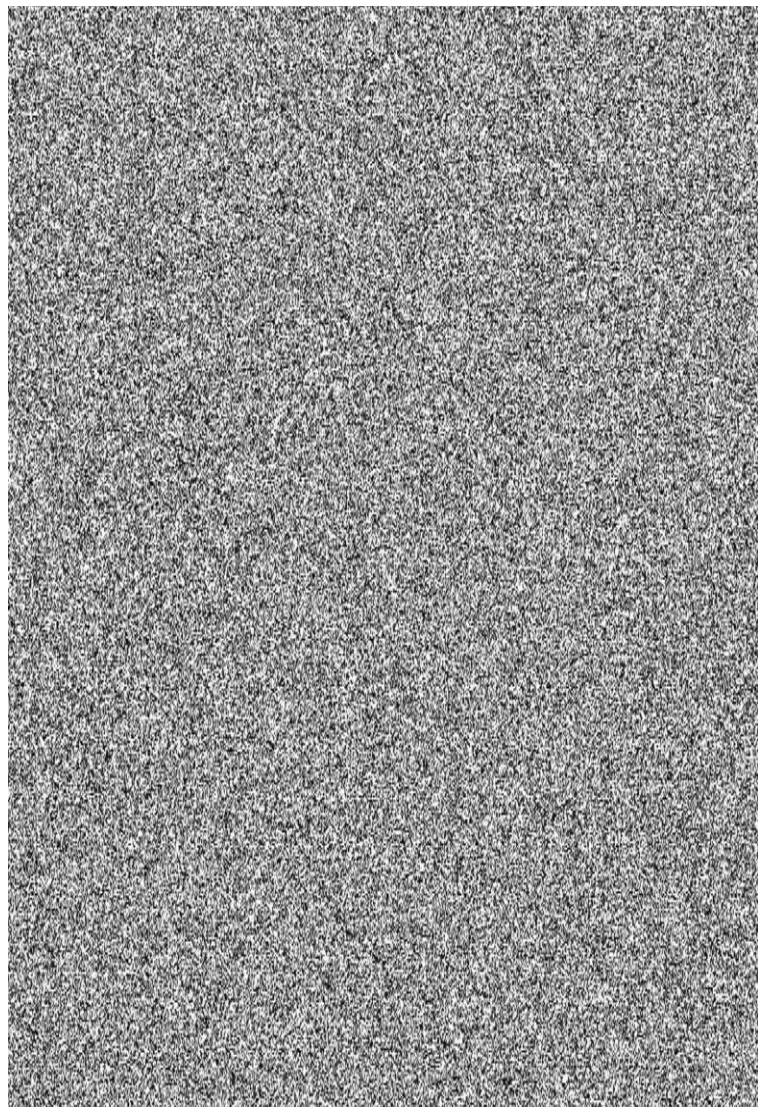
[Best Paper Award at SIGMETRICS 15, SIGMETRICS 16]

first fully distributed, truly **anonymous social network**

THANK YOU!



A VERY BIG THANK YOU!



# A VERY BIG THANK YOU!



Sewoong Oh



Pramod Viswanath

A VERY SPECIAL THANK YOU!



# A VERY SPECIAL THANK YOU!



SELFIE EVERYONE?