

CSI:Rowhammer

Cryptographic Security and Integrity against Rowhammer

**Jonas Juffinger, Lukas Lamster, Andreas Kogler, Moritz Lipp,
Maria Eichlseder, Daniel Gruss**

2023-05-23

IEEE Symposium on Security and Privacy 2023

The **Problem** with Rowhammer Countermeasures





- Focusing on **characteristics**



- Focusing on **characteristics**
- Which later turn out to be **incomplete**



- Focusing on **characteristics**
- Which later turn out to be **incomplete**
 - Bit Flips are infrequent - ECC, Refresh Rate



- Focusing on **characteristics**
- Which later turn out to be **incomplete**
 - ~~Bit Flips are infrequent – ECC, Refresh Rate [Kim+14]~~



- Focusing on **characteristics**
- Which later turn out to be **incomplete**
 - ~~Bit Flips are infrequent – ECC, Refresh Rate [Kim+14]~~
 - Detectable with Performance Counters - ANVIL



- Focusing on **characteristics**
- Which later turn out to be **incomplete**
 - ~~Bit Flips are infrequent – ECC, Refresh Rate [Kim+14]~~
 - ~~Detectable with Performance Counters – ANVIL [Gru+18]~~



- Focusing on **characteristics**
- Which later turn out to be **incomplete**
 - ~~Bit Flips are infrequent – ECC, Refresh Rate [Kim+14]~~
 - ~~Detectable with Performance Counters – ANVIL [Gru+18]~~
 - Hammer Distance is 1 - TRR, ZebRAM, B-CATT



- Focusing on **characteristics**
- Which later turn out to be **incomplete**
 - ~~Bit Flips are infrequent – ECC, Refresh Rate [Kim+14]~~
 - ~~Detectable with Performance Counters – ANVIL [Gru+18]~~
 - ~~Hammer Distance is 1 – TRR, ZebRAM, B-CATT [Kog+22]~~

CSI:Rowhammer



Generic approach to data integrity
protection



- **Generic** approach to data integrity protection



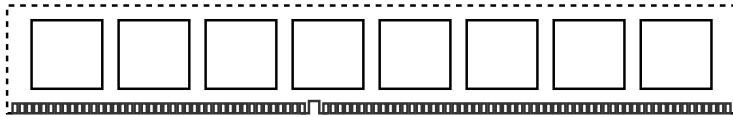
- **Generic** approach to data integrity protection
- Detect **all** data integrity failures with a MAC

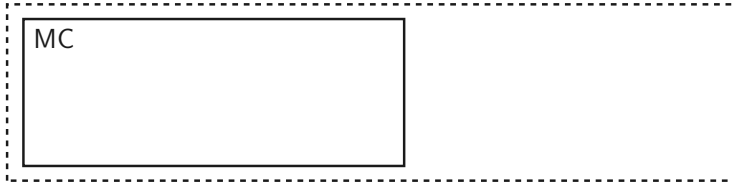
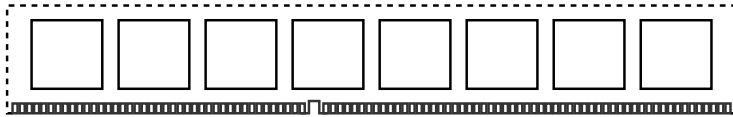


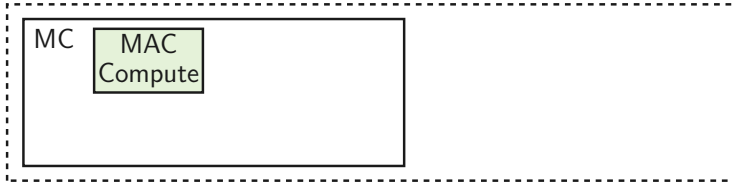
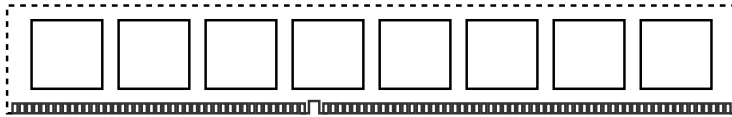
- **Generic** approach to data integrity protection
- Detect **all** data integrity failures with a MAC
- Best effort correction

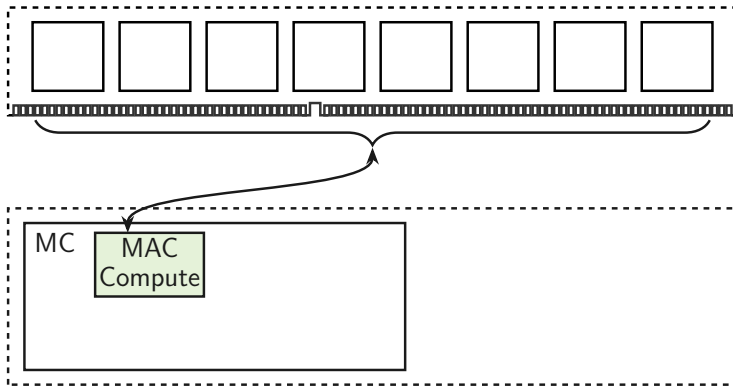


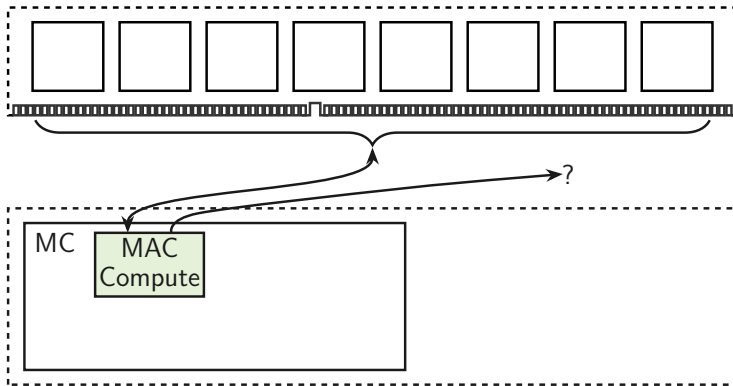
- **Generic** approach to data integrity protection
- Detect **all** data integrity failures with a MAC
- Best effort correction
- **All** Rowhammer attacks are DoS in the **worst case**

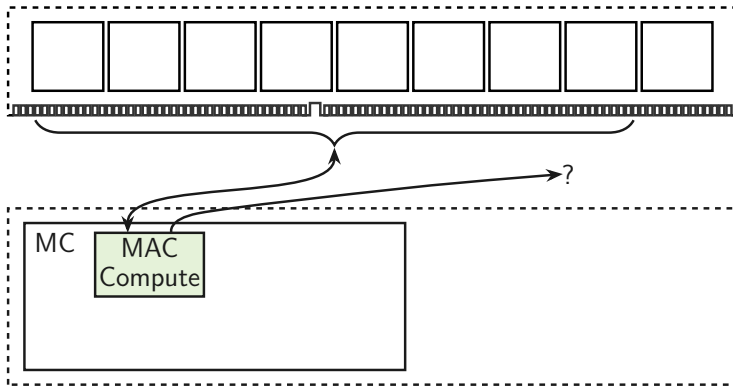


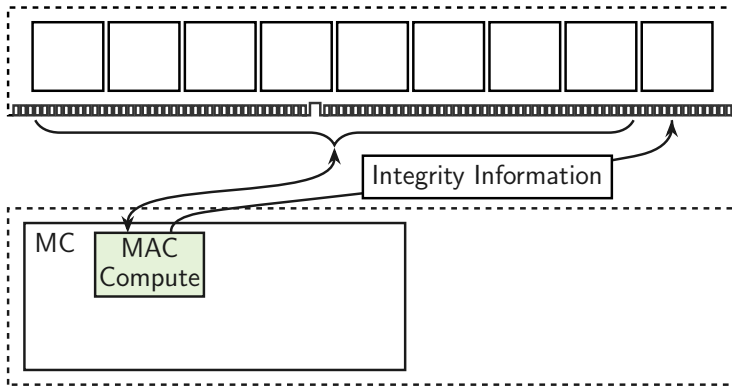


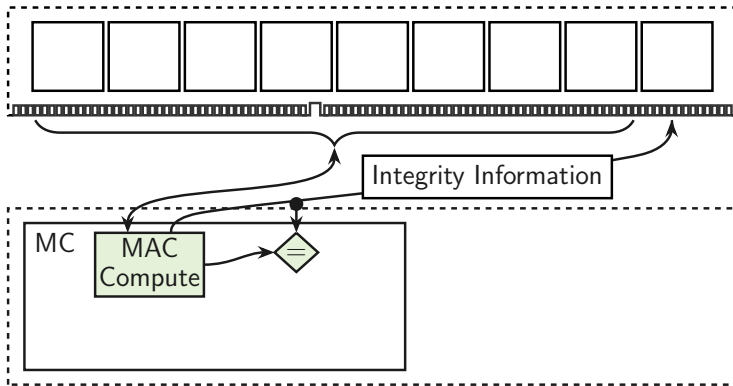


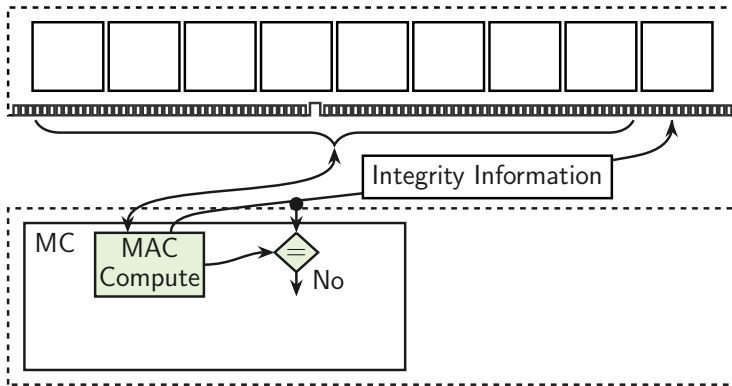


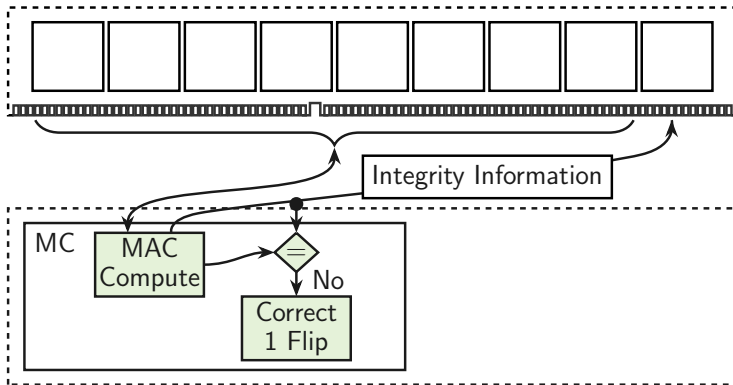


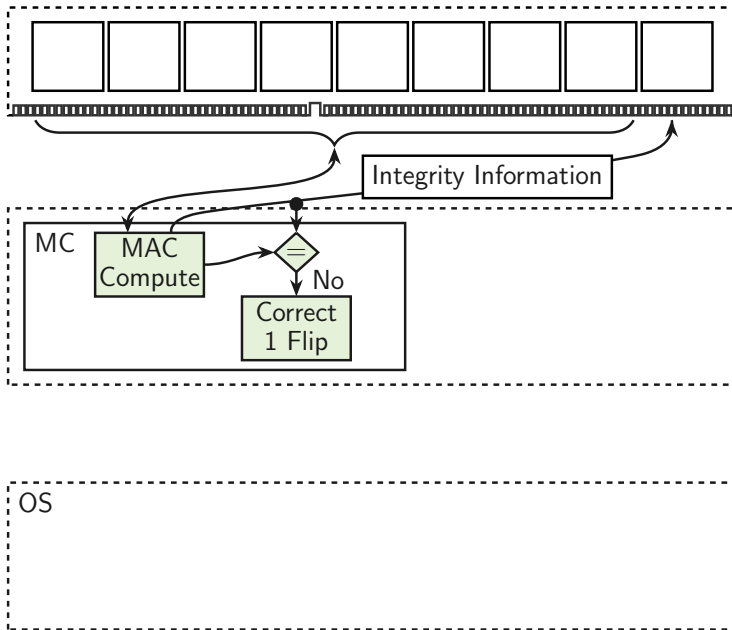


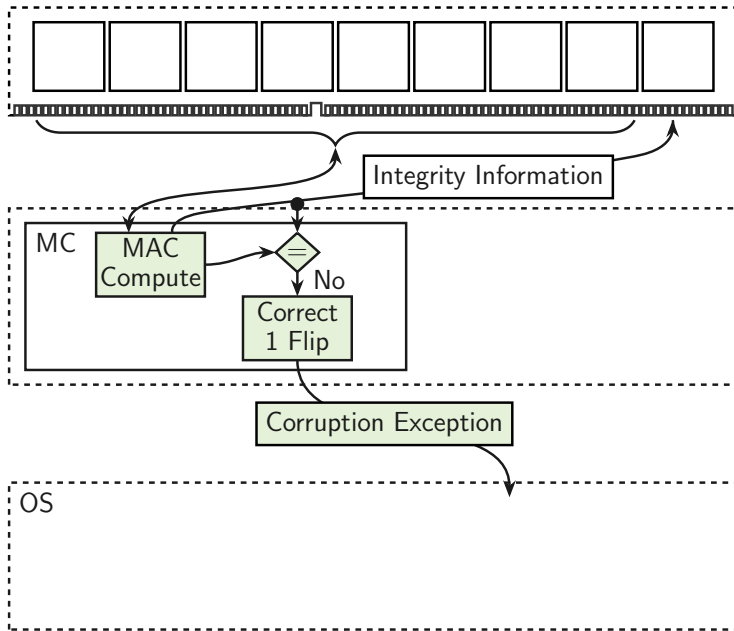


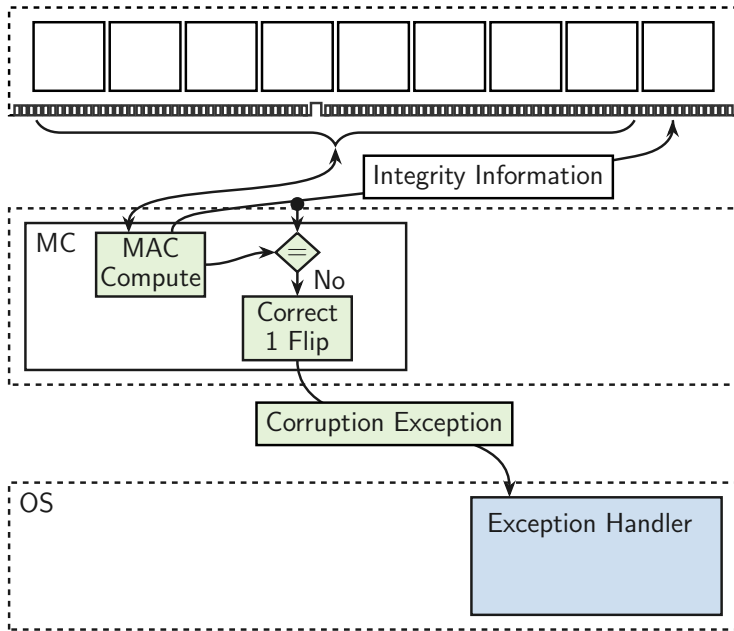


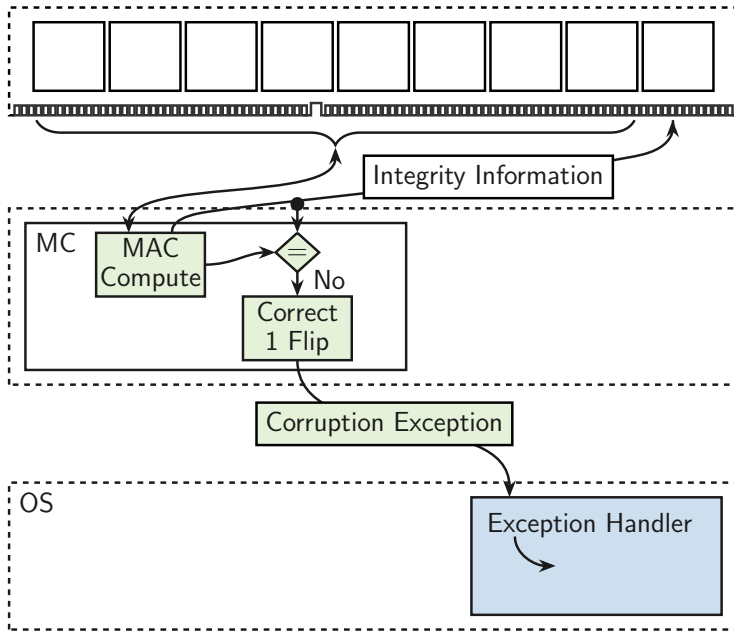


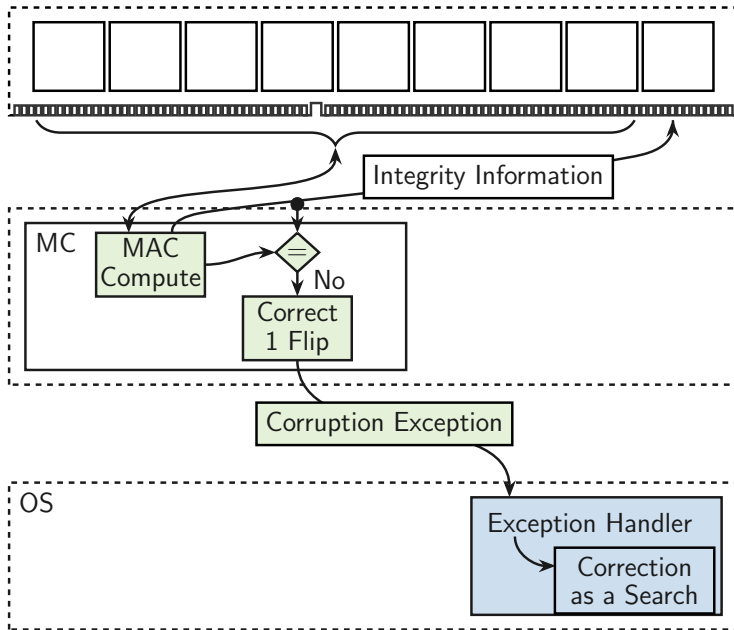


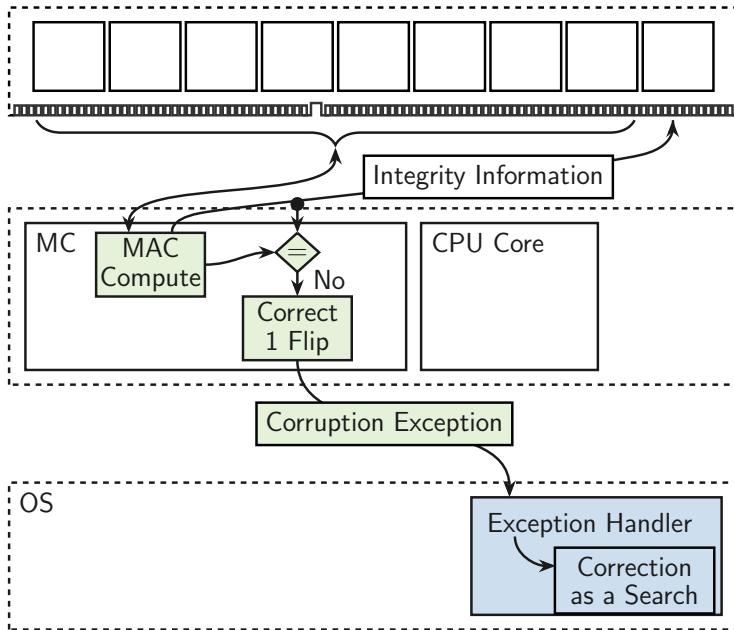


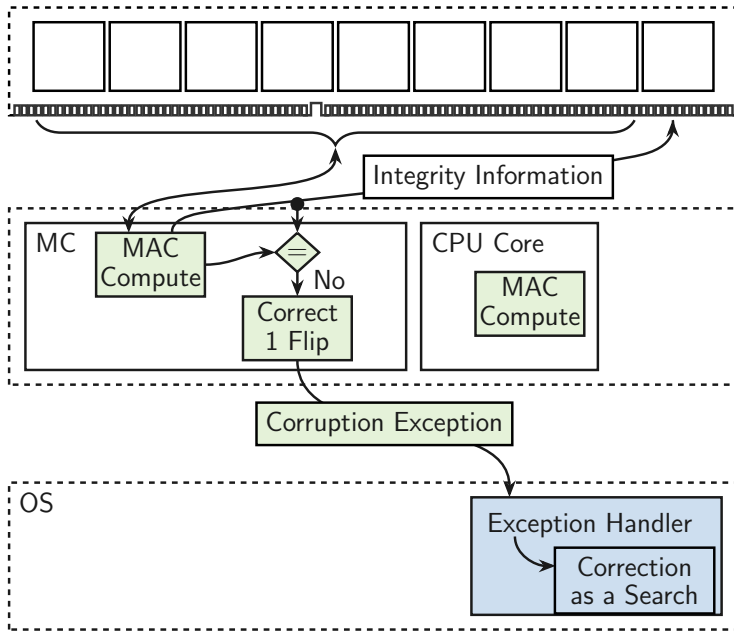


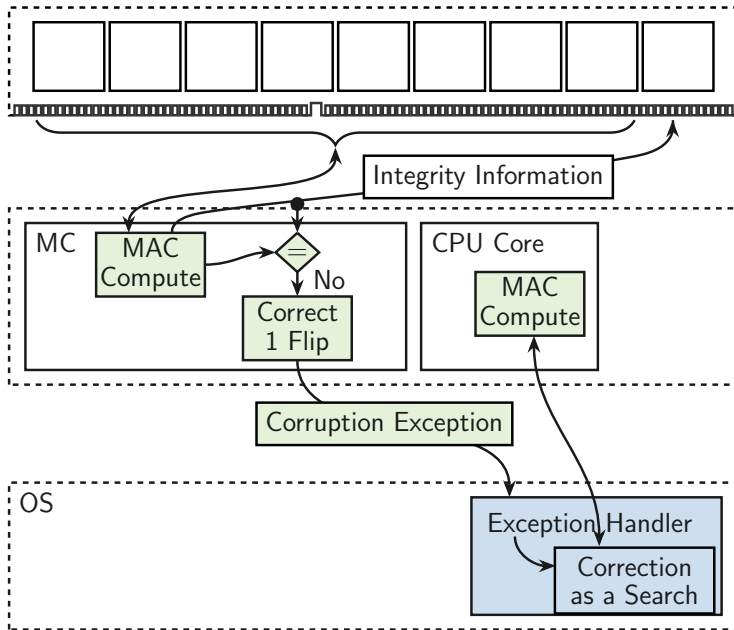


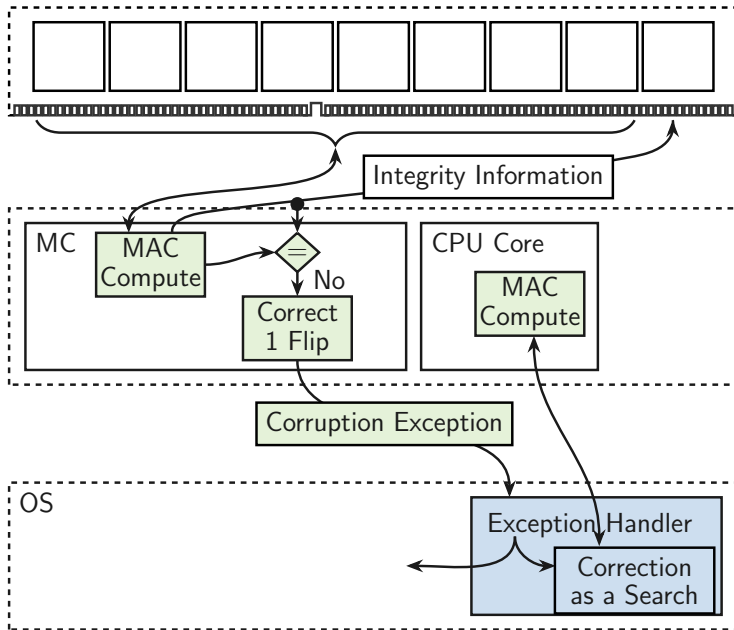


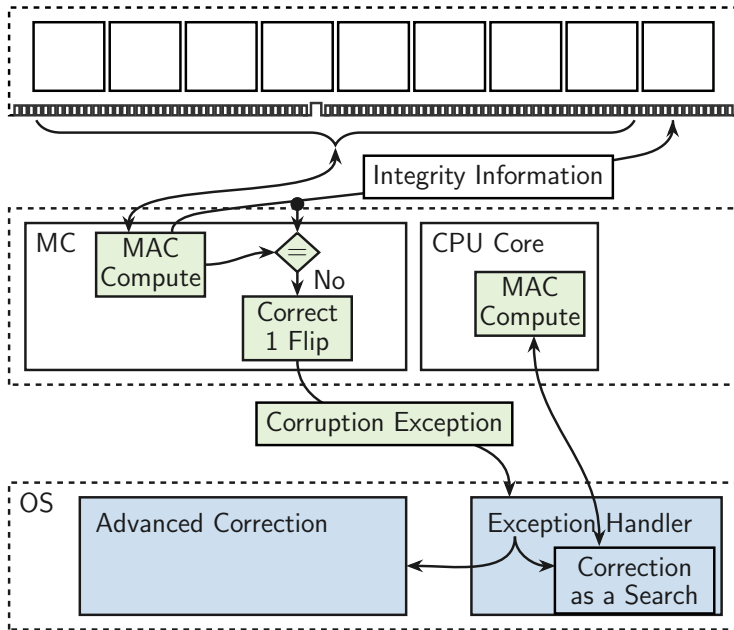


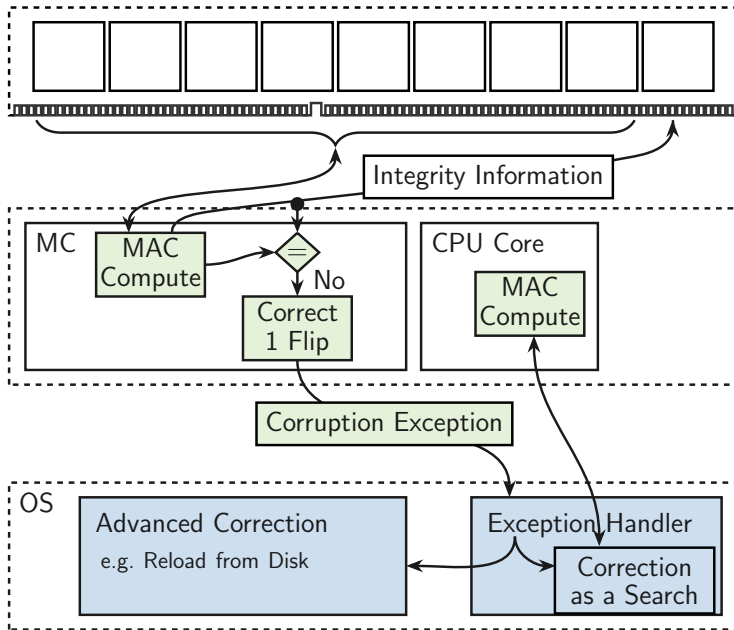


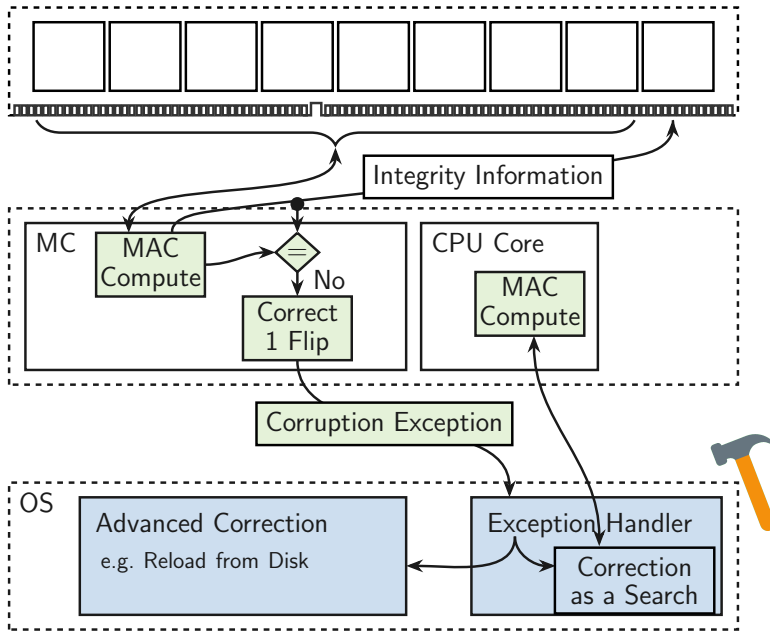


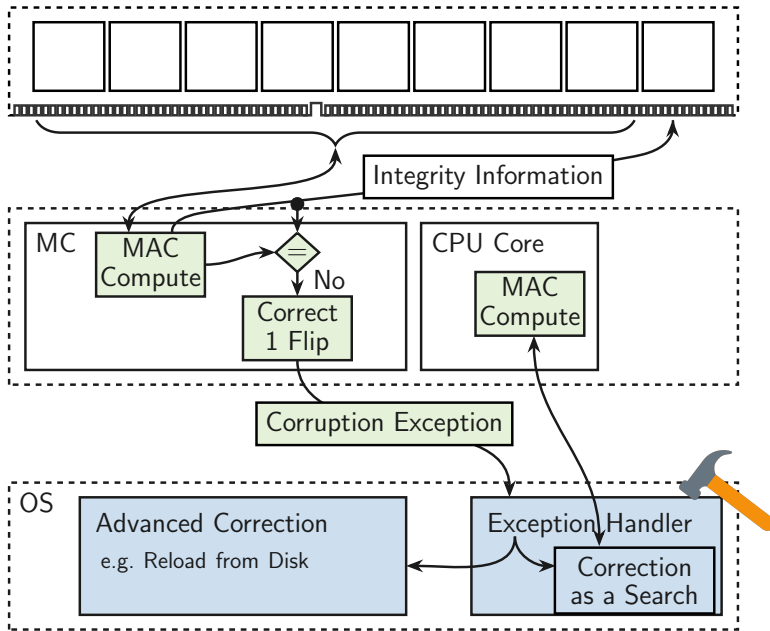


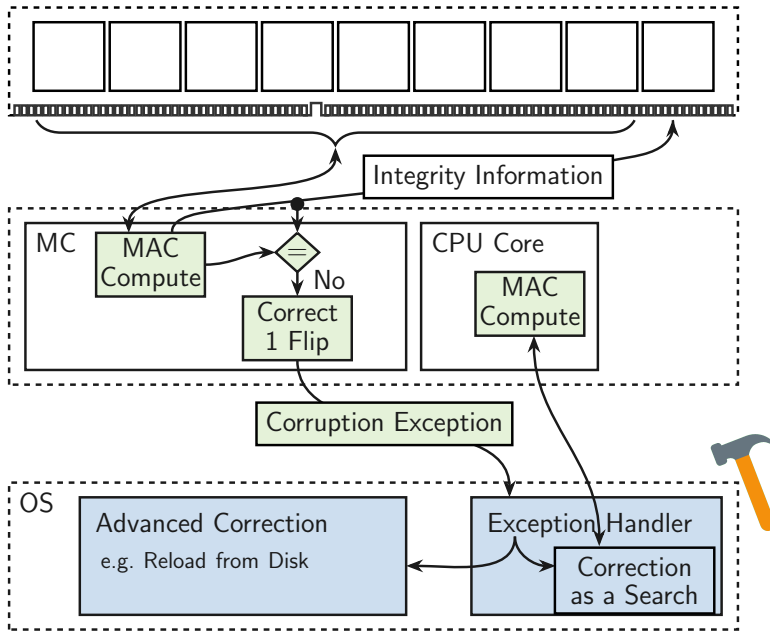


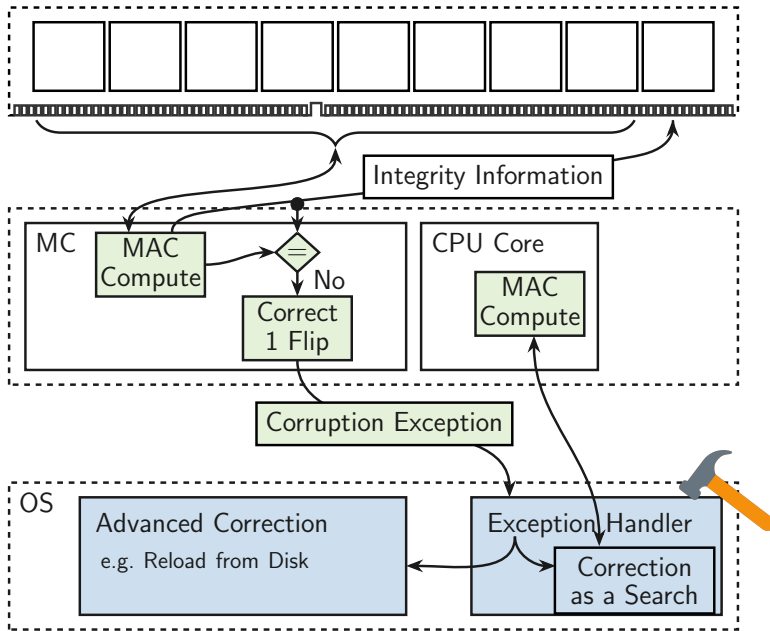


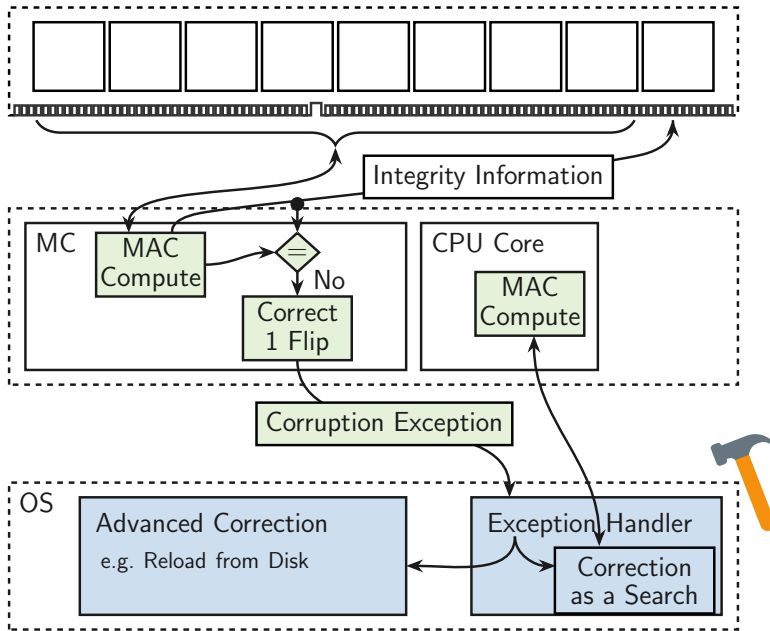


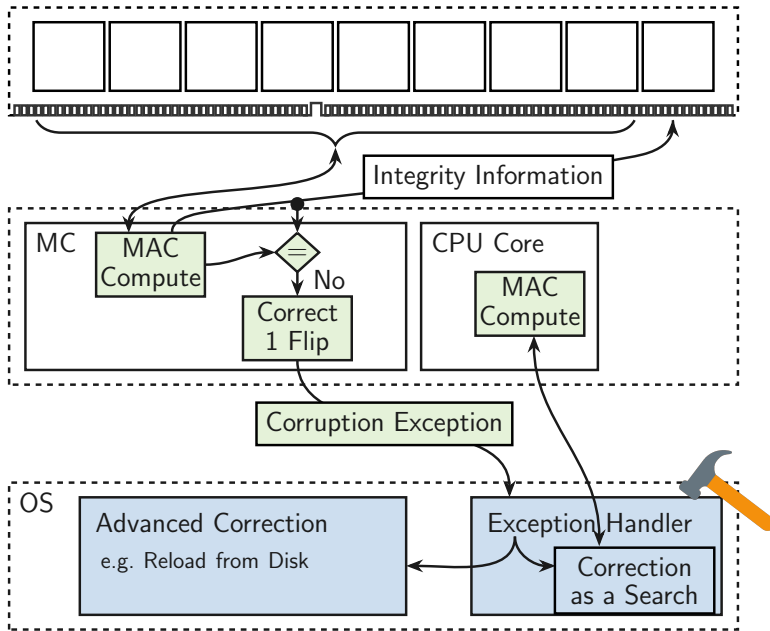


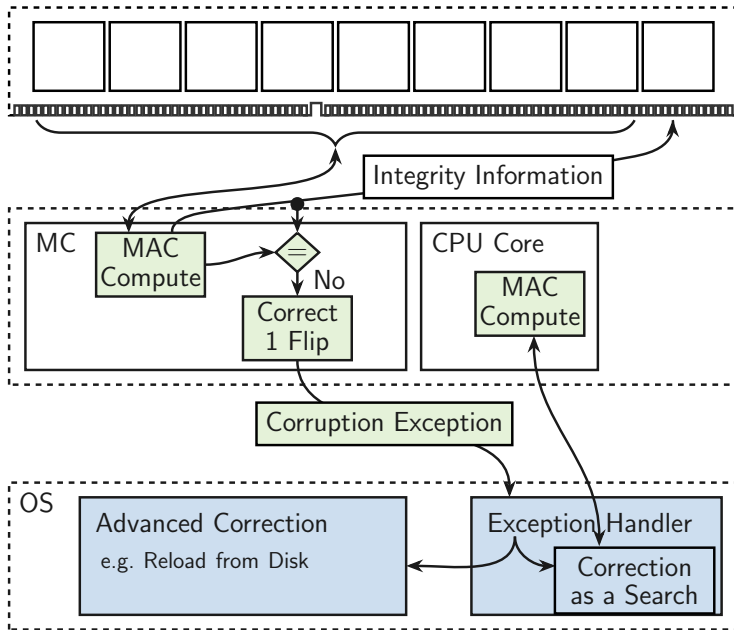


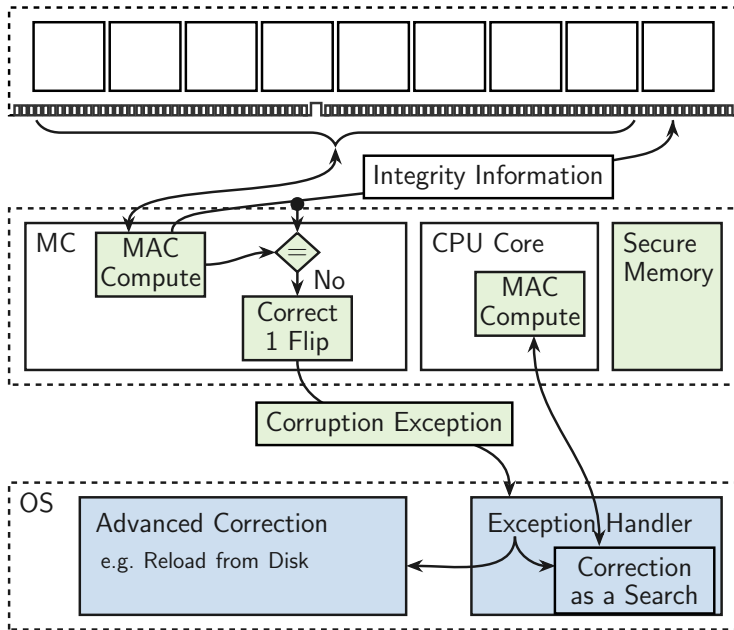


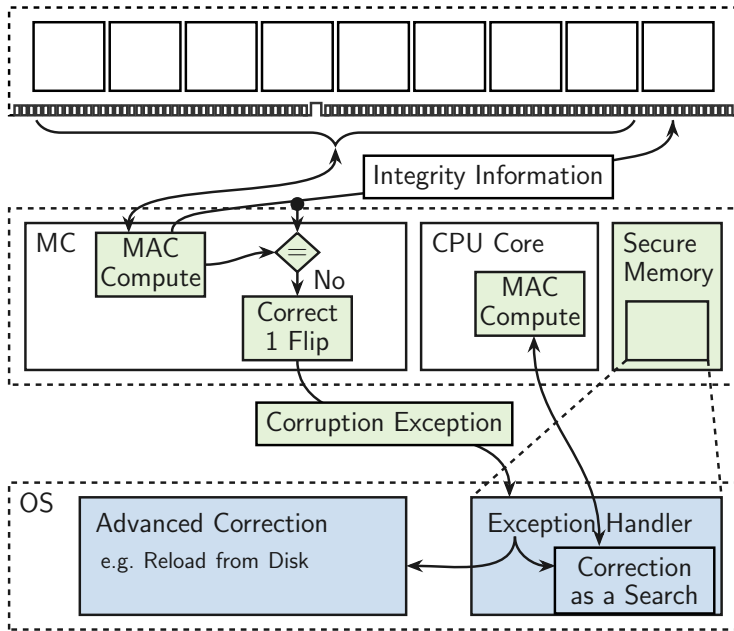


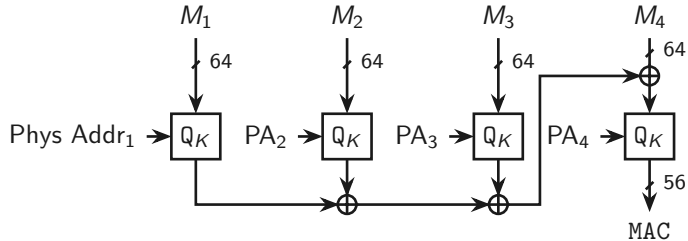


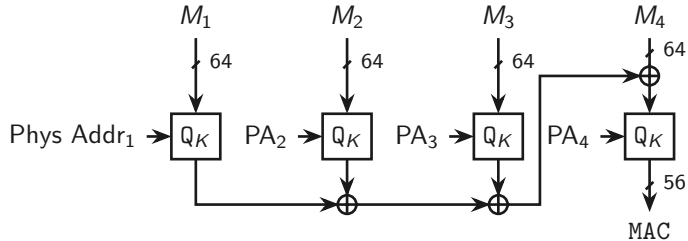




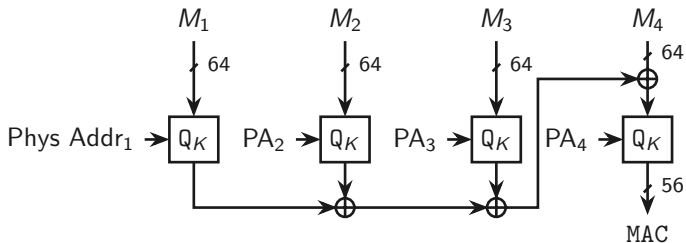




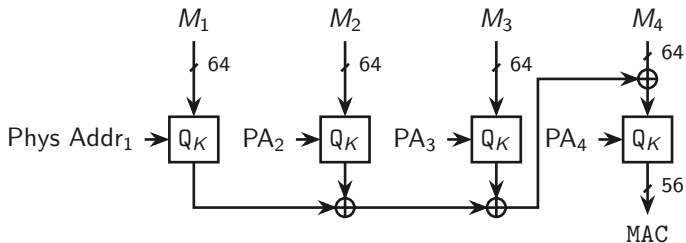




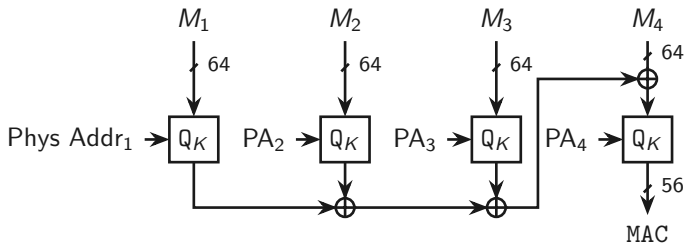
- PMAC construction



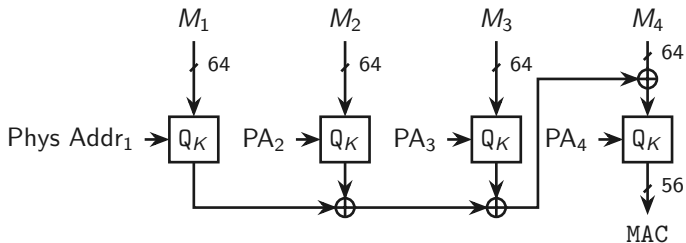
- PMAC construction
- QARMA₅-64- σ_0 block cipher [Ava17]



- PMAC construction
- QARMA₅-64- σ_0 block cipher [Ava17]
- Physical address as tag



- PMAC construction
- 5.13 ns 256-bit
- QARMA₅-64- σ_0 block cipher [Ava17]
- Physical address as tag



- PMAC construction
- QARMA₅-64- σ_0 block cipher [Ava17]
- Physical address as tag
- 5.13 ns 256-bit
- 6.60 ns 512-bit

Data Correction



- MACs **cannot** correct bit flips



- MACs **cannot** correct bit flips
- Brute force search with **approximate equality**



- MACs **cannot** correct bit flips
- Brute force search with **approximate equality**

0010110100101101 $\xrightarrow{\text{MAC}}$ 01011010



- MACs **cannot** correct bit flips
- Brute force search with **approximate equality**

0010110100101101 $\xrightarrow{\text{MAC}}$ 01011010

MAC from DRAM $\longrightarrow$ 01010010 ✓



- MACs **cannot** correct bit flips
- Brute force search with **approximate equality**

0010110100101101 $\xrightarrow{\text{MAC}}$ 01011010

MAC from DRAM $\longrightarrow$ 01010010 ✓

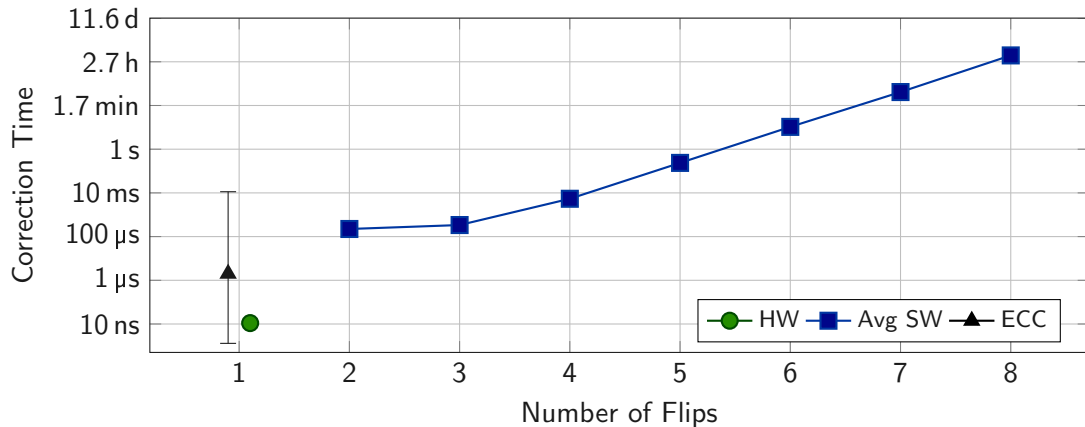


- MACs **cannot** correct bit flips
- Brute force search with **approximate equality**

0010110100101101 $\xrightarrow{\text{MAC}}$ 01011010

MAC from DRAM $\longrightarrow$ 01010010 ✓

- Parity bits to **shrink** search space







- OS has some **knowledge** about the corrupted data

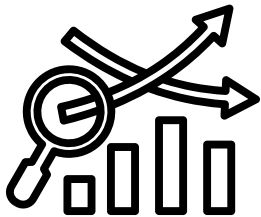


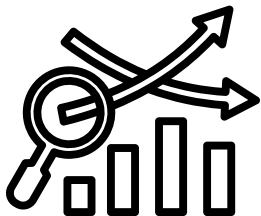
- OS has some **knowledge** about the corrupted data
- **Reload** disk backed data instead of correcting



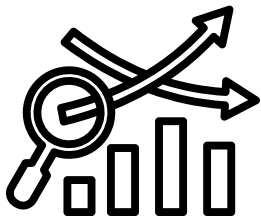
- OS has some **knowledge** about the corrupted data
- **Reload** disk backed data instead of correcting
- **Recompute** data (page tables)

Evaluation

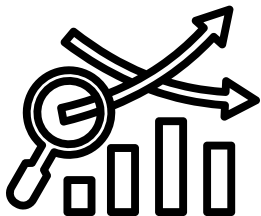




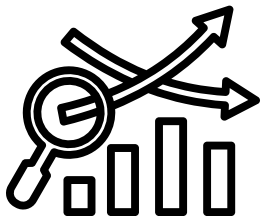
- Implemented CSI:Rowhammer in **gem5**



- Implemented CSI:Rowhammer in **gem5**
- Modified **Linux** kernel

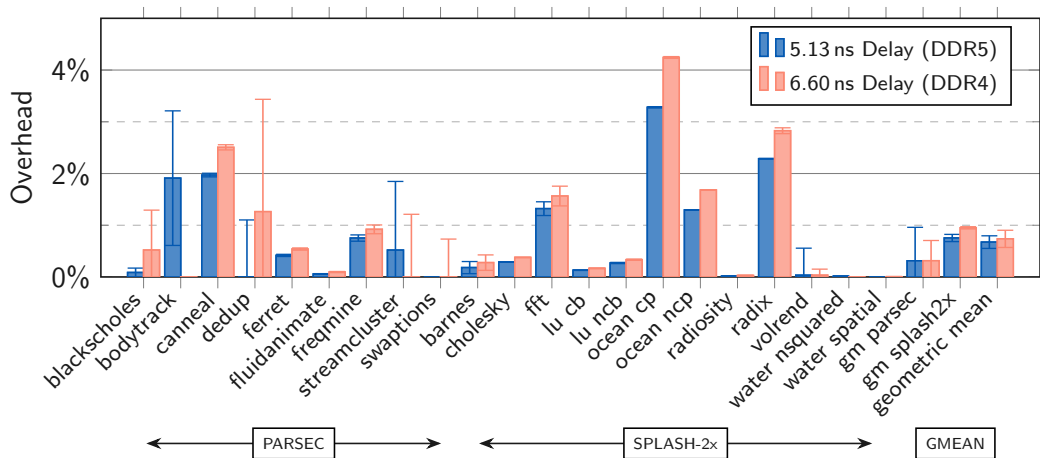


- Implemented CSI:Rowhammer in **gem5**
- Modified **Linux** kernel
- Evaluated **correct functionality**



- Implemented CSI:Rowhammer in **gem5**
- Modified **Linux** kernel
- Evaluated **correct functionality**
- Evaluated **performance overhead**

CSI:Rowhammer – Performance Overhead



- **Approximate Equality**

- **Approximate Equality**
- Rowhammer can induce bit flips in MAC

- **Approximate Equality**
- Rowhammer can induce bit flips in MAC
- Decreases MAC strength from initial 56 bit

- **Approximate Equality**
- Rowhammer can induce bit flips in MAC
- Decreases MAC strength from initial 56 bit

Data Flips	$\log_2(\# \text{ Correction Tries})$	Ignored Flips	MAC Strength
5	26.0	3	41.2
6	31.5	2	45.4
7	38.8	1	50.2
8	42.4	0	56.0

- **Approximate Equality**

Data Flips	$\log_2(\# \text{ Correction Tries})$	Ignored Flips	MAC Strength
5	26.0	3	41.2
6	31.5	2	45.4
7	38.8	1	50.2
8	42.4	0	56.0

- **Approximate Equality**
- Silent Data Corruption rate less than once per 10^9 billion years.

Data Flips	$\log_2(\# \text{ Correction Tries})$	Ignored Flips	MAC Strength
5	26.0	3	41.2
6	31.5	2	45.4
7	38.8	1	50.2
8	42.4	0	56.0

- **Approximate Equality**
- Silent Data Corruption rate less than once per 10^9 billion years.
- Rowhammer second preimage after one year: $9.75 \cdot 10^{-5} \%$

Data Flips	$\log_2(\# \text{ Correction Tries})$	Ignored Flips	MAC Strength
5	26.0	3	41.2
6	31.5	2	45.4
7	38.8	1	50.2
8	42.4	0	56.0





- Corruption exception **nesting detection**



- Corruption exception **nesting detection**
- **Virtualization** with or without guest support



- Corruption exception **nesting detection**
- **Virtualization** with or without guest support
- Many more interesting **implementation details**



- Corruption exception **nesting detection**
- **Virtualization** with or without guest support
- Many more interesting **implementation details**
- Detailed **security** evaluation

CSI:Rowhammer

Cryptographic Security and Integrity against Rowhammer

**Jonas Juffinger, Lukas Lamster, Andreas Kogler, Moritz Lipp,
Maria Eichlseder, Daniel Gruss**

2023-05-23

IEEE Symposium on Security and Privacy 2023

✉ jonas.juffinger@iaik.tugraz.at [@notimaginary_](https://twitter.com/notimaginary_) www.jonasjuffinger.com
PoC: github.com/CSIRowhammer/CSIRowhammerPoC

- [Ava17] Roberto Avanzi. The QARMA Block Cipher Family: Almost MDS Matrices Over Rings With Zero Divisors, Nearly Symmetric Even-Mansour Constructions With Non-Involutory Central Rounds, and Search Heuristics for Low-Latency S-Boxes. In: IACR Transactions on Symmetric Cryptology 2017.1 (2017), pp. 4–44.
- [Gru+18] Daniel Gruss et al. Another Flip in the Wall of Rowhammer Defenses. In: S&P. 2018.
- [Kim+14] Yoongu Kim et al. Flipping bits in memory without accessing them: An experimental study of DRAM disturbance errors. In: ACM SIGARCH Computer Architecture News 42.3 (2014), pp. 361–372.
- [Kog+22] Andreas Kogler et al. Half-Double: Hammering From the Next Row Over. In: USENIX Security Symposium. 2022.