

draft-association update

Joseph Lorenzo Hall (CDT)
Stéphane Couture (York U)

IETF 105, HRPC RG, 23 July 2019

Background

- draft-association is one of the specific rights drafts after 8280, specific to rights of association and assembly
- Joe/Stéphane took editorial role after Neils and Gisela handed off at IETF104
- It feels like it is maybe 75% done... we have not yet peeled off a new draft, but hope to after our discussion today within about a month after IETF.
- **Today: we'd like to run a few of the bigger thoughts we had by you and discuss**

<https://datatracker.ietf.org/doc/draft-irtf-hrpc-association/>

Summary of the Draft

- RQ: “How does the architecture of the internet enable and/or inhibit the right to freedom of assembly and association?”
- Methodology: “test the causal relationship” [protocols -> associate, assembly] through a case selection
- 7 “protocol cases”

Table of Contents

| | | |
|--------|---------------------------------------|-----------|
| 1. | Introduction | |
| 2. | Vocabulary used | |
| 3. | Research question | |
| 4. | Methodology | |
| 5. | Literature Review | |
| 6. | Cases and examples | |
| 6.1. | Conversing | |
| 6.1.1. | Mailing Lists | |
| 6.1.2. | Multi-party video conferencing | |
| 6.1.3. | Internet Relay Chat | |
| 6.2. | Peer-to-peer networks and systems | |
| 6.2.1. | Peer-to-peer system architectures | |
| 6.2.2. | Version control | |
| 6.3. | Grouping together (identities) | |
| 6.3.1. | DNS | |
| 6.3.2. | Autonomous Systems | |
| 7. | Discussion: Establishing the relation | |
| 8. | Discussion: Protocols and Platforms | |
| 9. | Conclusions | |
| 10. | Acknowledgements | |
| 11. | Security Considerations | |
| 12. | IANA Considerations | |
| 13. | Research Group Information | |
| 14. | References | |
| 14.1. | Informative References | |
| 14.2. | URIs | |
| | Authors' Addresses | |

Question #1 : Causality

- Causality is difficult to establish; we don't think the draft or 8280 has done so.
- What's more, causality is an increasingly narrow way to substantiate/examine complex sociotechnical relationships, as fields like STS have studied.
- Draft-feminism, for instance, use “may impact”
- We don't see causality as a major element of 8280 so we would like to propose that we drop this entirely from the draft and merely allow the description of relationships here to stand on their own.

Question #2 : which cases?

- Are existing cases the best (“typical and paradigmatic”)?:
 - Conversing : IRC, Mailing lists, WebRTC
 - Peer-To-Peer: P2P, Versioning
 - DNS, Autonomous Systems
- If not, what else?
 - Gatekeepers? E.g., AppStore can remove FB, Twitter (but not IETF-relevant?)
 - SMS (non-authenticated, non-confidential), add Signal (proprietary and non-interoperable).
- Should we start with a section on “social case” (on top of “tech case”)
 - Case in Turkey: DNS Spoofing, and user reconfiguration, higher level (BGP).
 - Continuing use of mailing list.

Question #3 : Association on proprietary platforms

- The draft is implicitly critical of large, proprietary, and non-interoperable platforms, such as major social media platforms.
- This is both correct but also doesn't recognize the variety of associational affordances that these platforms have allowed (e.g., the various "Twitter revolutions"; Facebook use by social movements).
- **We'd like to propose softening this a bit to highlight that humans have shown great ingenuity in adapting platforms for their own assoc. needs**
 - Instead of "forced association", can we talk about "freedom of disassociation"?

Question #4 : Who is our audience(s)?

- HRPC aims at convincing engineers.
- But it also attracts social activists and social science academic who gets interested by IETF (and might later influence it)
- While using RFC format, should our language should be convene for both audience?
 - *This might apply to all HRPC work*

Minor changes

- After each case, there is a dashed list of 8280 considerations that can be a bit mysterious for the reader. Can we improve that?
 - Add a sentence at the end of each of the cases to explain relation to freedom of association
- We would like to explain how, or why, each of these cases were chosen
 - Need a better explanation on the "typicality and paradigmatic nature" of each of the cases
- The draft talks about legal limitations on rights and that only “lawful limitations on the rights are allowed”
 - But this of course applies to State entities who are signatories to treaties (e.g., in the USA you can't bring a first amendment-based suit against a non-governmental entity).
 - make Section 7 a bit less of a legal and non-normative, potentially point to corporate responsibility to better honor and support human rights?