

# [***Sound Of Freedom Inspiration Tim Ballard And Film Producer Face Allegations Of Sexual Impropriety***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:6973-2WD1-JBCM-F00M-00000-00&context=1516831)

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**Length:** 795 words

**Byline:** Conor Murray, Forbes Staff

**Highlight:** The allegations, reported by Vice, are the latest in a series of controversies for the divisive film.

**Body**

**Topline**

Tim Ballard, the real-life inspiration for the controversial film**Sound of Freedom**, was reportedly investigated for sexual misconduct while leading anti-sex-trafficking organization Operation Underground Railroad, and producer Paul Hutchinson reportedly felt the breasts of an underage sex-trafficking victim, according to**Vice**.

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Tim Ballard, a former government agent, is the real-life inspiration for Sound of Freedom.

Alan Espinosa/Getty Images

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**Key Facts**

Ballard, the founder and former CEO of Operation Underground Railroad,reportedlyresigned from the organization soon after an independent law firm investigated claims made by seven women. (OUR declined to comment on the outcome of the investigation to**Vice**.)

Sources close to OURtold Ballard would encourage women to act as his wife on undercover rescue missions, urging them to share a bed and shower with him in order to fool traffickers.

The sources told**Vice** Ballard sent a picture in his underwear to at least one woman and asked another how far she was willing to go to save children from traffickers.

Ballarddeniedthe allegations in a statement, calling them baseless inventions designed to destroy me, and maintained that sexual contact was forbidden on sex-trafficking missions.

Hutchinson, an executive producer and investor for**Sound of Freedom** and an anti-trafficking activist, allegedly touched the naked breasts of a girl who was believed to be 16 years old during a 2016 undercover mission in Cabo San Lucas, Mexico, according to anotherreport.

**Vice** obtained transcripts of footage of the incident, written by investigator Bryan Purdy of the Davis County Attorney s Office, which details Hutchinson lifting the girl s shirt, touching her breasts and kissing her on the cheek, before she pushed his hands away and pulled her shirt down.

Hutchinson reportedly asked an OUR operative if he would get in big trouble from the Mexican authority for touching a 16-year-old on film, according to another transcript of footage.

When contacted by**Vice**, Hutchinson did not dispute he felt the victim s breasts, but he did claim to have an affidavit from Mexican federal police identifying her as 18 years old, though he did not provide the document to**Vice** when asked.

**Surprising Fact**

Ballard and OUR operatives followed the guidance of Janet Russon, a psychic medium from Utah, on some missions,**Vice** reportedWednesday. In one mission in February 2016, Ballard and his team followed Russon s visions to locate Gardy Mardy, a Haitian boy they believed to be held on the border of Haiti and the Dominican Republic. Mardy was never found, and Dave Lopez, a former OUR official who oversaw its work in Haiti, reportedly told the FBI in October 2020 Russon s visions were the only form of intelligence they were using to locate Gardy. Russon was reportedly paid a monthly consultant fee of approximately $5,000 with an hourly/operational readings contract of approximately $1,560, an investigator wrote in documents obtained by**Vice**.

**Key Background**

**Sound of Freedom** has faced a storm of controversy and politically charged division since its release on July 4. Championed by right-wing pundits and conservative politicians, it has been fiercely criticized by the left for alleged ties to conspiracy theories. Jim Caviezel, who stars as Ballard, has reportedly spoken at multiple events hosted by QAnon theconspiracy theorythat Satan-worshipping global elite pedophiles control the world and run a global child sex-trafficking ring. Caviezel voiced support for the baseless adrenochrome theory, which posits child traffickers drain the blood of children to harvest a chemical they ingest to stay young. Ballard has also previously suggested support for the false conspiracytheorythat retailer Wayfair was selling children online. The film s distributor, Angel Studios, hasdeniedthe film is connected to conspiracy theories and maintains it is not about ***politics***.

**Tangent**

Ballardsaidhe is very seriously considering a Senate run to succeed Sen. Mitt Romney (R-Utah), who will not seek reelection.

**Big Number**

$183,234,204. That s how much**Sound of Freedom** hasgrossedat the U.S. box office to date, making it the tenth-highest-grossing film of the year. It has outgrossed films with much bigger budgets at the domestic box office, like**Indiana Jones and the Dial of Destiny**,**Mission: Impossible Dead Reckoning Part One**and**Elemental**.

**Further Reading**

Tim Ballard s Departure From Operation Underground Railroad Followed Sexual Misconduct Investigation(Vice)

Sound of Freedom Producer Felt the Naked Breasts of Apparently Underage Trafficking Victim(Vice)

Box Office Hit Sound Of Freedom Controversy Including QAnon Ties And False Claims Theaters Are Sabotaging Screenings Explained(Forbes)

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