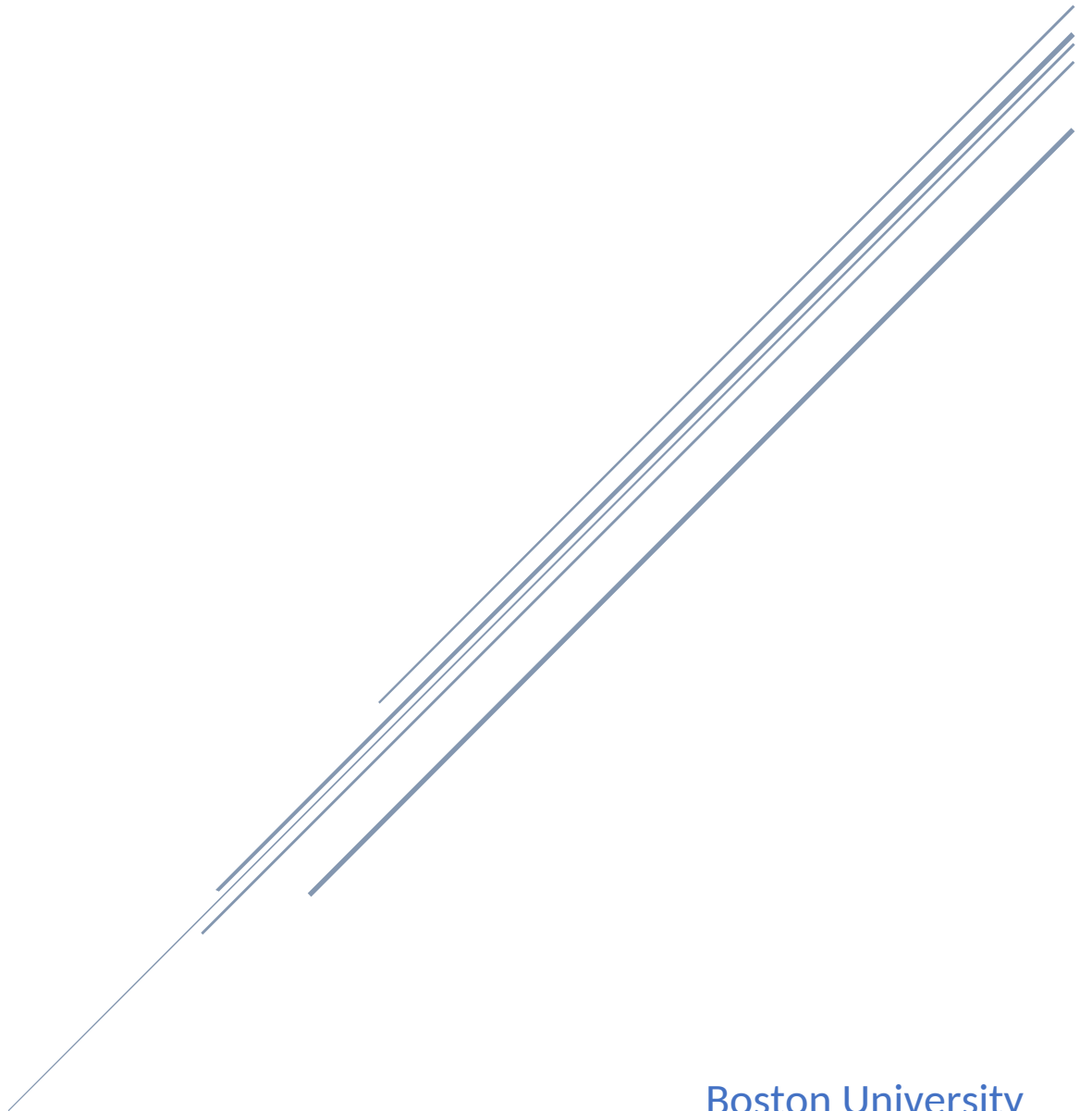


THE SILK ROAD CASE

By: Katie Barnes

February 8, 2021



Boston University
MET CJ 710 01

NAME: Katie Barnes _____

BU ID #: U27651676 _____

AO 93 (Rev. 11/13) Search and Seizure Warrant

UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT

for the

Southern District of New York

In the Matter of the Search of
 (Briefly describe the property to be searched
 or identify the person by name and address)

ROSS WILLIAM ULBRICHT
 a/k/a "Silk Road,"

Case No. XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX

SEARCH AND SEIZURE WARRANT

To: Any authorized law enforcement officer

An application by a federal law enforcement officer or an attorney for the government requests the search of the following person or property located in the District of (identify the person or describe the property to be searched and give its location):

SKIP THIS SECTION

I find that the affidavit(s), or any recorded testimony, establish probable cause to search and seize the person or property described above, and that such search will reveal (identify the person or describe the property to be seized):

- A. On January 27, 2011, a user with the name "Altoid" made a post on a forum for users of magic mushrooms (Hume, 2013). The post indicated that a website existed under the name Silk Road. The user "Altoid" wrote, "came across this website called Silk Road, it's a Tor hidden service that claims to allow you to buy and sell anything online anonymously." I'm thinking of buying it off it... Let me know what you think, (Hume, 2013)". This post shared a link to access Silk Road. I believe that the pseudonym "Altoid" belongs to Ross William Ulbricht the username that is on the website shroomery.org where he attempted to elicit responses from online markets within the online community. At approximately 6:28 pm on January 11, 2011 he directed the online community of shroomery.org to check out the website he found through a TOR browser at <http://tydgccykixpbu6uz.onion> which would direct users to the real Silk Road website (Altoid, 2011).
- B. Silk Road used a TOR Network (TOR) to protect the identity of their users. A TOR User's traffic is routed through a worldwide network of volunteer computers to conceal the user's location and internet usage (*U.S. v. Ulbricht*, MD. 2013). Communications via Tor are also encrypted to again "conceal" the contents of communications to all parties except for the intended recipient (*U.S. v. Ulbricht*, MD. 2013).

- C. Since Bitcoin is a digital currency that has no association with a national government it is often used because it is difficult to track and easy to move online (*U.S. v. Ulbricht*, MD. 2013).
- D. On January 29, 2011, a similar post was created on BitcoinTalk.org with the username “Altoid” who was looking to persuade users to gain interest in the same website (O'Neill, 2020). This discussion thread appeared to have been initiated by other users of Bitcoin who were participating in a conversation concerning the possibility of operating a Bitcoin-based “heroin store” where Ross William Ulbricht urged users to access silkroad420.wordpress.com for instructions on how to access the onion site (*United States vs. Ulbricht*, NY. 2013).
- E. On October 11, 2011, 8 months after the Silk Road post took place. Another unrelated online post was created where the user “Altoid” was looking for an IP professional to hire through the Bitcoin community. The pseudonym “Altoid” directed responses to the email address rossulbricht@gmail.com in which this email address is registered a “Ross Ulbricht” (*United States vs. Ulbricht*, NY. 2013). It appears that Ross William Ulbricht was attempting to start up his company using Bitcoin Currency for the use of anonymous transactions. Ross William Ulbricht needed an IT or Bitcoin Professional to assist with his plan. The Gmail account registered to a Ross Ulbricht indicates that Ross William Ulbricht has a Goggle + account which has a picture of him identical to the picture on the LinkedIn profile for “Ross Ulbricht” (*United States vs. Ulbricht*, NY. 2013). On Ross Ulbricht’s LinkedIn account, he stated on his profile that he was interested in a free market economy. Specifically, he states “Now, my goals have shifted. I want to use economic theory as a measure to abolish the use of coercion and aggression among mankind (*The Hidden Life Story*, 2015)”.
- F. On March 5, 2012, Ulbricht opened an account on stackoverflow.com where he posted 12 lines of computer coding and asked for help in fixing this code (ROCIC, 2013). After realizing that he created this account under his real name he then proceeded to delete his real name immediately after and switched his username to “frosty” and his e-mail from rossulbricht@gmail.com to frosty@frosty.com instead (ROCIC, 2013). This shows that Ulbricht is attempting to conceal his true identity. I do not think it is a coincidence that the username “frosty” created by Ross Ulbricht is also the name the Silk Road server’s login system, whose encryption keys all end with frosty@frosty (Bilton, 2015). I believe the alias’s “Altoid”, and “Frosty” belong to Ross William Ulbricht, among other usernames such as “Dread Pirate Roberts or DPR” which is the administrator name of the Silk Road website (*The Hidden Life Story*, 2015).
- G. Starting on or about November 2012, an employee by the name of Dread Pirate Roberts Aka DPR aka Ross William Ulbricht responded to questions, complaints from buyers and sellers, resolving disputes and investigating possible law enforcement activity on the Silk Road server (*U.S. v. Ulbricht*, MD. 2013).

- H. Starting on or about April 2012, a federal agent in Maryland, acting in undercover capacity began communicating with Ross William Ulbricht aka DPR aka Dread Pirate Roberts about selling drugs on Silk Road (*U.S. v. Ulbricht*, MD. 2013).
- I. In March and April of 2013, Ross William Ulbricht solicited a murder-for-hire of a Silk Road employee with the username "FriendlyChemist," who was threatening to reveal the identities of the users of Silk Road unless the administrator (Ross William Ulbricht aka Dread Pirate Roberts) pays him \$500,000 dollars (U.S. Dept of Justice, 2013).
- J. From January 2011- October 2013, the website "Silk Road was used by several thousand drug dealers and other unlawful vendors to distribute hundreds of kilograms of illegal drugs and other illicit goods and services to well over a hundred thousand buyers, and to launder hundreds of millions of dollars deriving from these unlawful transactions (U.S. Dept of Justice, 2013)". With assistance of a small staff Ross William Ulbricht ran the Silk Road Website.
- K. Ross William Ulbricht paid the sites administrators and forum moderators salaries ranging from approximately \$50,000 to approximately \$75,000 per year for their services (U.S. Dept of Justice, 2013).
- L. All transactions and interaction with the Tor Network can be traced back to Ross William Ulbricht via his Samsung Laptop as the administer from Silk Road that ultimately traces back to his personal IP address. Utilizing the assumed personas of Ross William Ulbricht, Dread Pirate Roberts, DPR, Frosty, and Altoid his device (Samsung laptop) would possibly (more than likely) carry all information used against him such as his google email, HTML documents either in temporary internet files or drive space, cached files to the local hard drive as a webpage, web-based accounts can be traced back to the originated ISP (Internet Service Provider)' (Choi 2015).
- M. About Mid-June 2013, Homeland security seized a package with nine Fake ID's at the Canadian Border, addressed to Ross William Ulbricht's apartment in San Francisco (Popper, 2015). When Ross William Ulbricht answered his door in his San Francisco apartment agents identified him as the face on the ID's, without having idea of his potential links to Silk Road (Popper, 2015). Without the mentioning of Silk Road, Ross William Ulbricht told the homeland security agents that "hypothetically" anyone could go on a site called Silk Road and purchase fake ID's (Popper, 2015). When Ross William Ulbricht's home address was typed into the computer a few hundred yards from Ulbricht's home was a café where Dread Pirate Roberts had signed into Silk Road (Popper, 2015).

YOU ARE COMMANDED to execute this warrant on or before _____ *(not to exceed 14 days)*
☐ in the daytime 6:00 a.m. to 10:00 p.m. ☐ at any time in the day or night because good cause has been established.

Unless delayed notice is authorized below, you must give a copy of the warrant and a receipt for the property taken to the person from whom, or from whose premises, the property was taken, or leave the copy and receipt at the place where the property was taken.

The officer executing this warrant, or an officer present during the execution of the warrant, must prepare an inventory as required by law and promptly return this warrant and inventory to _____
(United States Magistrate Judge)

☐ Pursuant to 18 U.S.C. § 3103a(b), I find that immediate notification may have an adverse result listed in 18 U.S.C. § 2705 (except for delay of trial), and authorize the officer executing this warrant to delay notice to the person who, or whose property, will be searched or seized *(check the appropriate box)*

☐ for _____ days *(not to exceed 30)* ☐ until, the facts justifying, the later specific date of _____.

Date and time issued: _____
Judge's signature

City and state: _____
Printed name and title

LEAVE BLANK ABOVE.

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Return		
Case No.: XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX	Date and time warrant executed:	Copy of warrant and inventory left with:
Inventory made in the presence of :		
Inventory of the property taken and name of any person(s) seized:		

LEAVE BLANK ABOVE.**DESCRIPTION OF ITEMS TO BE SEARCHED FOR AND SEIZED:**

- a. All Personal computers, web servers, messenger servers, game servers, file servers, database servers, and email addresses.
- b. All electronic messages, emails (deleted emails, drafts, saved emails, spam folders)
- c. All social media accounts, all social media communications, or networking
- d. All Data storage Devices HDD, FD, CD, DVD, ZIP, TAPE, Memory stick. Hard disk drives, floppy disks, compact disks, CD-ROMs, external hard drives, USB storage devices also known as "thumb drives" or "flash drives".
- e. Any Network Devices or operating devices of any kind such as routers, Switch, Firewall, IOS, IPS, modems, scanners, software
- f. Other Digital Devices
Cellular phones, PDA's, GPS, Mp3 players, digital cameras
- g. Any written or printed documents, diaries, notebooks, notes, passwords, computer codes, access codes, instructions, messages, journals, books.

Certification	
I declare under penalty of perjury that this inventory is correct and was returned along with the original warrant to the designated judge.	
Date: <div></div>	<div></div> <div>Executing officer's signature</div> <div></div> <div>Printed name and title</div>

LEAVE BLANK ABOVE.

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