Colin Quinn

Professor Huggins

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The History of Tor

The Tor browser is one of the most renowned of its kind. The goal of Tor browser is to supply their users with free access to anonymity as technology continues to threaten individual privacy, according to their mission statement (“The Tor Project Elects…”).

Tor originally started as a project through the United States’ government, more specifically for the Office of Naval Research and Defense Advanced Research Projects Agency. This aspect of Tor should raise some questions to those who have not given the concept very much thought, the most common one being why people would trust a product of the government to hide their personal information. When Michael Reed, one of the original team members was asked about this potential fault, his answer seems to satisfy those curious. Reed claims that they knew it would be an issue going into the project for government, as well as the repercussions of releasing their best technology for anonymity to the public, but it was all by design. He mentions that the main purpose for the project was to allow the government to anonymously gain intelligence or keep their paths hidden, and that the other uses of onion routing are merely side effects of them doing their job correctly (Smith). This interestingly makes all users of Tor safer, as it can be described as if one of two people were doing something suspicious, it would stand out much more than if one out of ten-thousand people, making the network trails harder to trace for all users.

The Tor browser, which is short for “The Onion Router”,