

Julian Assange is an Australian-Ecuadoran computer programmer and the founder of WikiLeaks.

In 1987, Assange began hacking under the name Mendax. He and two others—known as “Trax” and “Prime Suspect”—formed a hacking group they called the International Subversives. During this time, he hacked into the Pentagon and other U.S. Department of Defense facilities, the U.S. Navy, NASA, and Australia’s Overseas Telecommunications Commission; Citibank, Motorola, Panasonic, and Xerox; and the Australian National University, and Stanford University’s SRI International. He is thought to have been involved in the hack at NASA in 1989.

In September 1991, Assange was discovered hacking into the Melbourne master terminal of Nortel, a Canadian multinational telecommunications corporation and charged him in 1994 with thirty-one counts of hacking and related crimes.[19] In December 1996, he pleaded guilty to twenty-five charges (the other six were dropped), was ordered to pay reparations of A\$2,100.

In 1993, Assange gave technical advice to the Victoria Police Child Exploitation Unit and assisted with prosecutions. In the same year, he was involved in starting one of the first public Internet service providers in Australia, Suburbia Public Access Network.

After Assange began programming in 1994, he created countless softwares and websites. He programmed Surfraw, a command-line interface for web-based search engines. He contributed research to Suelette Dreyfus's Underground (1997), a book about Australian hackers, including the International Subversives. In 1998, he co-founded the company Earthmen Technology.

Assange registered the domain leaks.org in 1999, He also publicized a patent granted to the National Security Agency in August 1999, for voice-data harvesting technology.

After his period of study at the University of Melbourne In 2006 Assange and others established WikiLeaks. WikiLeaks publishes secret information, news leaks, and classified media from anonymous sources. By 2015, WikiLeaks had published more than 10 million documents and associated analyses. The published material between 2006 and 2009 attracted various degrees of publicity but it was only after it began publishing documents supplied by Chelsea Manning, that WikiLeaks became a household name. The Manning material included the Collateral Murdervideo (April 2010) which showed United States soldiers fatally shooting 18 people from a helicopter in Iraq, the Afghanistan war logs (July 2010), the Iraq war logs (October 2010), a quarter of a million diplomatic cables (November 2010), and the Guantánamo files (April 2011).

2010 was the year for Assange he received a lot of awards as well as “person of the year” titles, he received a deal for his autobiography worth at least US\$1.3 million, and selection by the Italian edition of Rolling Stone as “rockstar of the year”.

Assange announced that he would run for the Australian Senate in March 2012 under the new Wikileaks Party. In 2012, Assange hosted a television show on RT (formerly known as Russia Today), a network funded by the Russian government. In the same year, he analysed the Kissinger cables held at the U.S. National Archives and released them in searchable form. The following February, he won the Sydney Peace Foundation Gold Medal for Peace with Justice, previously awarded to only three people—Nelson Mandela, the Dalai Lama, and Buddhist spiritual leader Daisaku Ikeda.

The US enacted a warrant against Assange in 2012 which include espionage, conspiracy to commit espionage, theft or conversion of property belonging to the United States government, violation of the Computer Fraud and Abuse Act and general conspiracy. According to the statement by Wikileaks, the alleged offenses could add up to a total of 45 years of imprisonment each for Assange and other WikiLeaks staff.

On 19 June 2012, Assange was granted political asylum in the Ecuadorian Embassy in London and he has been there since.

Assange wrote on WikiLeaks in February 2016: "I have had years of experience in dealing with Hillary Clinton and have read thousands of her cables. Hillary lacks judgement and will push the United States into endless, stupid wars which spread terrorism. ... she certainly should not become president of the United States." [215] On 25 July, following the Republican National Convention (RNC), during an interview by Amy Goodman, Assange said that choosing between Hillary Clinton and Donald Trump is like choosing between cholera or gonorrhea. "Personally, I would prefer neither."

On 22 July 2016, WikiLeaks released emails and documents from the Democratic National Committee (DNC) seemingly presenting ways to undercut Bernie Sanders and showing apparent favouritism towards Clinton, leading to the resignation of party chairman Debbie Wasserman Schultz. [224] [225] The New York Times reported that "Assange accused Mrs. Clinton of having been among those pushing to indict him..." and that he had timed the release to coincide with the 2016 Democratic National Convention.

Wikileaks hasn't stopped publishing articles and one of the latest was for the 2016 election, on 7 October of 2016, Assange posted a press release on WikiLeaks exposing over 2,000 emails from Clinton campaign chairman John Podesta. The emails, ranging from 2007–2016, revealed excerpts of Clinton's paid Goldman Sachs speech in 2013. In the emails, she explained her relationship to Wall Street and how she had previously represented the community.