Cyber-Delinquency: The Study of Juvenile Hackers*

By: Don Rambus Jr., Thomas McMahon, Tyler Sepcoski, and Eric Meriesky

Scope and Hypothesis

The purpose of this research is to define the relatively new realm of criminal/delinquent activity in order to develop an accurate and detailed profile of hackers– both juvenile and adult– in the ultimate pursuit of proper justice across the globe.

Our hypothesis is that an accurate profile will yield that hackers begin their careers between the ages of 13 and 15, and only a small percentage go on to become serious criminal hackers in later (adult) life, honing their peak skill by age 26. We also believe that we will find that, although males make up the majority of the hacker population, it is not overwhelmingly so; we believe the ratio will not be far off from 55:45 (male to female, respectively).

Figure 1. Live Attacks via Map.Norsecorp.com Details attempts from all over the world from their origins to their targets to hack into the computer systems of various entities; from small computer networks to large corporations and government agencies.

QUESTIONNAIRE

We sent out surveys to known hackers, and we looked through forums known to have hackers that actively participate to build a profile for young hackers. The main things we were looking at were the ages that they started to get into hacking, why they started hacking, education, and the situation their home life was in.

We focused on questions that would give us answers about these so that we could see if any criminological theories could apply to them and so that we could build a profile of what a typical young hacker would be like.

Figure 2. These logos represent infamous hacker groups suspected of some of the greatest criminal activity across he world. There is, however a degree of debate as to whether their exposition and exploitation of other entities is ethical or not– that is, aside from their supposed commission of purely criminal acts, such as theft.

PROFILE OF HACKERS

We found that the typical young hacker has grown up with either average or above average intelligence. We did not find any results of young hackers with mental disabilities, but we did find evidence that there is a link between hacking and sociological disorders. The economic status of the hackers varied to the point that the only status that was not represented was those in poverty.
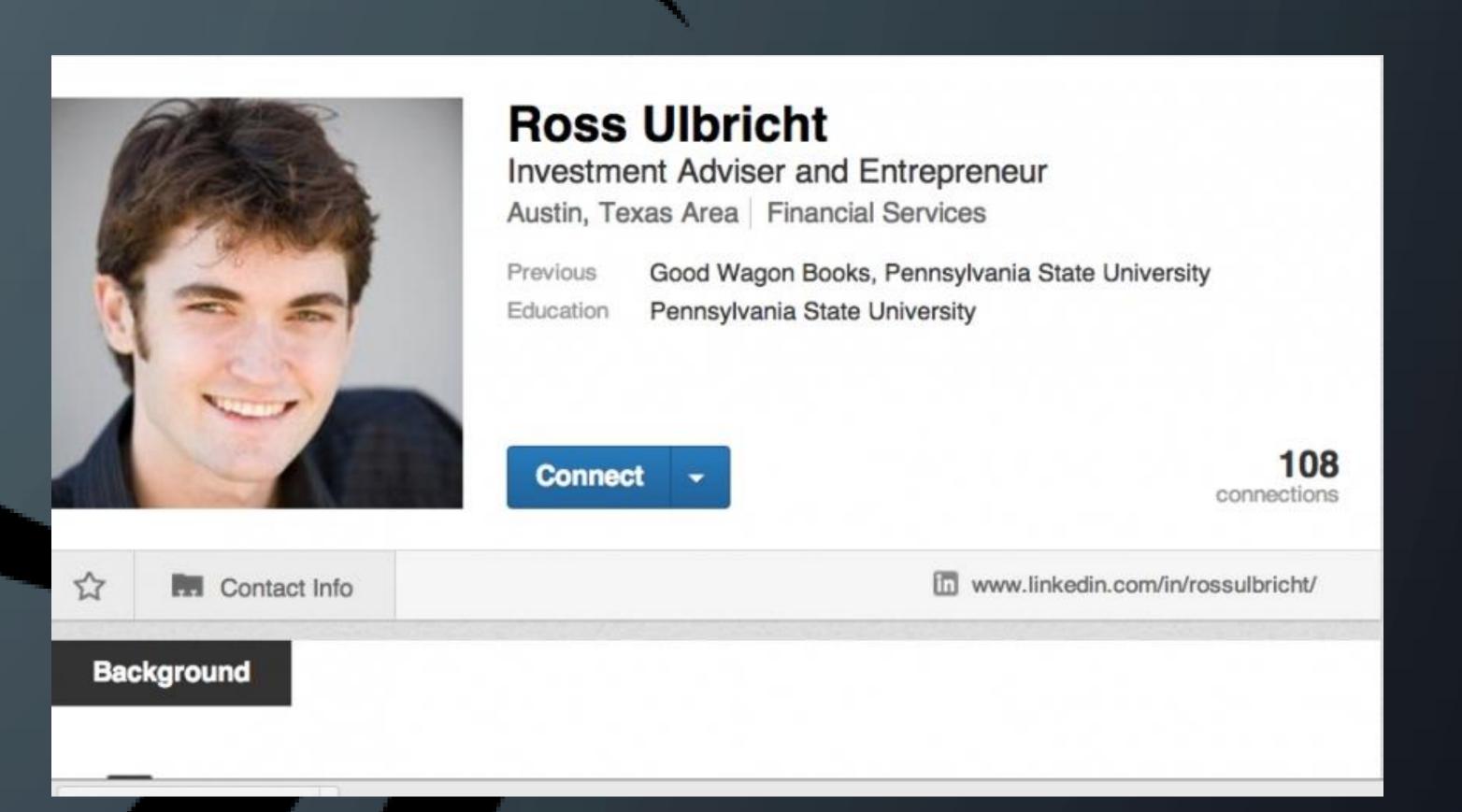

Figure 3. Pictured above, is Ross Ulbricht, the suspected creator of the notorious "dark web" site, SilkRoad, who, supposedly was known by the handles "DreadPirateRoberts" and "Altoid".
He was sentenced to life in prison without parole in Early 2015 under the conviction of money laundering, conspiracy to traffic narcotics, and computer hacking.
He earned his Master's Degree in Materials Science and Engineering at Penn State. He is also suspected of arranging the murder of a former SilkRoad partner. There is, and has been, gathering skepticism in Ulbricht's case, as there is no definitive proof of the true identity of "DreadPirate Roberts" and "Altoid".

PENN STATE
Wilkes-Barre

*Note that the profile does not necessarily cover juveniles only. This is a representation of a paper we wrote, which has a wider scope, though focused on juveniles.

References

Map.norsecorp.com
www.linkedin.com

www.FreeRoss.org

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