

Counterintelligence drugs: case study development research papers examples

[Law](#), [Criminal Justice](#)



Introduction

The task of this report requires the development and analysis of a counterintelligence activity, which specializes in the involvement of drugs, pertaining to an operation conducted by the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI). A plethora of counterintelligence sectors exist including matters involving illegal drug activities, terrorism, child pornography rings, money laundering, Internet scams, corporate security, and more. In general, counterintelligence competes with these aforementioned areas sometimes in ways that overlap. For example, an Internet scam may involve theft of consumer credit card information - as well as running illegal or non-existent gambling websites. The chosen case study to be developed concerns the individual perpetrator Ross William Ulbricht, recently captured by the FBI for a variety of illegal activities centered around an "online marketplace for drugs" ("FBI Busts \$1.2 Billion Silk Road"). One main reason this case delivers powerful insight to the counterintelligence industry in terms of an example case study, is due to its contemporary nature that holds a multiplicity of complex elements. The Ulbricht counterintelligence drugs case study presents an ideal framework for lessons in the evaluation of assessing threats, indicators, operation details, and the role counterintelligence agents played in the outcome of its operations.

Body

One important caveat at the outset of this report demands that the reader understands no counterintelligence operation or methodology formula may ever fully be disclosed, obviously, due to the nature of guarding their

secrets. Nevertheless we begin with a discussion on the threats. The threats of drug abuse and illegal worldwide sales have never been greater. The reason is because today's modern society deals with easy access to electronic communications and money transfers of all kinds globally. The strong threat assessment has demonstrated longevity since the 1990s. One government report discusses the ' Drug Enforcement Agency' (DEA) operational strategies to investigate and target " international drug traffickers" while cracking down on community violence correlated to the situation (3). The government report announces the financial cost of such illegal worldwide drug operations hitting American society with an annual bill of \$110 billion. Funding to fight the problem has also risen.

Two DEA programs began functioning in Asia and Latin America during the 1990s, beginning a high-level screening for the introduction of counterintelligence agents to comb the world for targets from its foreign bases. The mission's top priority: to bring global drug traffickers to justice. The background of the case study of Ross William Ulbricht distributed the efforts of a team of special FBI and DEA agents. These included Brian R. Crowell, from the New York field office division branch and Toni Weirauch representing the IRS (Internal Revenue Service) enterprise. Obviously, you can perceive the vast complexity and different areas of crime the case covers despite the fact of its classification as a counterintelligence drug case. The main pivotal cause for the counterintelligence bust occurred around the seizure of over \$33. 6 million" in " bitcoins in connection with the Silk Road case," (" Manhattan U. S. Attorney FBI Report Seizure"). Ulbricht grew up a fairly normal kid in Austin, Texas but at some point made the

felonious decision to open a website known as the Silk Road.

The Silk Road operated as an anonymous website and in reality served as a front for selling heroin, LSD, methamphetamines and cocaine. As any intelligence agent would ascertain, this activity requires further illegal cover-ups to maintain such operations. Lorek explains that such provisions of electronic software platforms included tampering with “malicious software designed for computer hacking, such as password stealers, key loggers, and remote access tools” (“FBI Busts \$1.2 Billion Silk Road”). The 29-year-old subject of the counterintelligence case, Ulbricht, was brazen enough to brag about his crazy-hat partying, dancing and yoga on his Facebook page. The drug crimes could have escalated to murder, when Ulbricht allegedly had been confronted by a user who threatened to expose “the identities of thousands of users of the site” Loren reports (“FBI Busts \$1.2 Billion Silk Road”). The length of the investigation reflects indicators of a 2-year investigation held under the auspices of Special Agent Tarbell of the FBI. Due to the extensive nature of the drug crimes, the investigation also included a multi-agency effort of Homeland Security, Internal Revenue Service, and the DEA.

So how elaborate and sophisticated was Ulbricht’s ‘Silk Road’ website?

Common sense dictates that the operational Internet gateway generated a level of expertise that was most advanced. For example, the Bitcoins aspect according to Lorek represented an “extensive criminal marketplace” wherein Bitcoin commissions were collected anonymously by the millions creating channels for the unlawful transactions to be sold in both “individual dosages and bulk orders” (“FBI Busts \$1.2 Billion Silk Road”). Beyond these

operational details the unassuming boyish international culprit of pandering dangerous drugs illegally, and worldwide, was found sitting in front of his laptop computer in a “ branch of the San Francisco Public Library” when caught (“ How the feds took down Dread Pirate Roberts”). Nearly a dozen FBI agents surrounded the college physics student, marching him out of the public “ library without incident” (“ How the feds took down Dread Pirate Roberts”). The operational details involve more than international drug smuggling and sales, by way of monetary profit via Bitcoins.

According to a Federal Bureau of Investigation report on Ulbricht’s case and capture, law enforcement was able to connect these drug crimes to major money laundering. This could not have been accomplished without the intricate teamwork of all the counterintelligence agencies involved. The indicators of the case and role of special counterintelligence agents invaluable contributed to the arrest of Ross William Ulbricht. The FBI source report states that millions were produced in “ dirty profits,” and “ during its approximately two-and-a-half years in operation, Silk Road was used by several thousand drug dealers” unlawfully distributing drugs nationwide (“ Manhattan U. S. Attorney FBI Report Seizure”). The illegal cyberspace aspect adds another heinous layer to the implications. Federal charges filed against Ulbricht, the FBI report explains, included a panoply of cross-elements of crime like computer hacking and narcotics conspiracy (“ Manhattan U. S. Attorney FBI Report Seizure”). The arms of the DEA control agency stretch from international borders down to the local level.

According to a federal government report entitled ‘ Drug Control - DEA Strategies and Operations in the 1990s’ the role of the counterintelligence

agency involves a myriad of functions such as seizure of physical laboratories, cooperation with other law enforcement agencies, and assemblage of task forces to target traffickers and mitigate “ associated violence” (38). Although Ulbricht did not operate on the ‘ ground-level’ in terms of street-drug trafficking, his illegal activities certainly hurt many people who obtained their illegal fare from his website. Who knows exactly how many acts of violence, or even murder, that his efforts cost members of the public who otherwise would not have been able to gain easy access to harmful substances? In addition, when drugs are sold digitally in a manner which must remain concealed, this increases the propensity for online forgeries. The FBI explains that such forgery includes “ fake driver’s licenses, passports, Social Security cards, utility bills, credit card statements, car insurance records, and other forms of false identification documents” (“ Manhattan U. S. Attorney FBI Report Seizure”). To top off the factor of adding insult to injury, Ulbricht embraced a wise-cracking attitude by usage of an Internet moniker of ‘ Dread Pirate Roberts,’ which in a way, demonstrated a braggadocios and haughty manner towards law enforcement. According to FBI records concerning the case, clear evidence exposed the fact that Ulbricht would willingly murder the person masquerading as the ‘ Friendly Chemist.’ Ulbricht reacted by saying ““ I would like to put a bounty on his head if it’s not too much trouble for you. What would be an adequate amount to motivate you to find him? Necessities like this do happen from time to time for a person in my position” (“ Manhattan U. S. Attorney FBI Report Seizure”). The would-be extortionist (Friendly Chemist) sought a payoff of half a million to keep Ulbricht’s secrecy.

In conclusion, law enforcement agents who are privy to the ruined lives that illegal drugs impose despise criminals like Ross William Ulbricht. Obviously and of course, the multiplicity of the drug crimes are terrible, but the conspiracy charges and cocky attitude of Ulbricht makes the counterintelligence forces more determined to snag these kinds of criminals. It is amazing that the counterintelligence efforts involved Homeland Security, the New York State Police, U. S. Marshalls, Office of Foreign Assets Control, Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives, New York Department of Taxation, and the United States Secret Service (“ Manhattan U. S. Attorney FBI Report Seizure”). The case study also demonstrates that better controls and methods in counterintelligence might have prevented Ulbricht’s operation from lasting as long as it did. However, an eventual success in solving the crime is encouraging. The formal indictment of Ross Ulbricht was announced by the U. S. Attorney’s Office in 2014.

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