Exhibit L

Jacob Appelbaum

Inconsistencies in Rape Allegations

For the first time, Berlin-based hacker Jacob Appelbaum has spoken out about the anonymous rape allegations in an interview. He said the statements were fabricated.

Von **Christian Fuchs**

10. August 2016, 10:30 Uhr

Internet activist Jacob Appelbaum attends the 30th Chaos Communication Congress in Hamburg, Germany, 29 December 2013 © Angelika Warmuth/dpa

Lesen Sie hier die deutsche Version dieses Textes / You can read the german version of this article here.

Inconsistencies have emerged in the allegations of rape and sexual assault against American Internet activist Jacob Appelbaum. Reporting by the weekly newspaper DIE ZEIT shows there is considerable doubt about the veracity of the claims.

A victim going by the pseudonym "River" claimed anonymously a few weeks ago that hacker Jacob Appelbaum had sex with her in his Berlin apartment while she had been unconscious. She had not consented because, she claimed, there had also been other people in the room. DIE ZEIT tracked down the young woman, an American, and has also spoken with eight witnesses who were present in the days and nights in January 2016 in which it has been claimed the crime was committed. The witnesses, can neither confirm that "River" was drugged nor that non-consensual sex occurred.

For the first time, Jacob Appelbaum has spoken out about the allegations in an interview. He told ZEIT that as a person in a leadership role, he made many mistakes and hurt people, and he is willing to accept responsibility for this. Nevertheless, he said, the statements from "River" were completely fabricated. "At no point did I have sex with someone who was unconscious. Nor did I have sex with someone who was in any way intoxicated in order to obtain consent." The alleged victim did not want to comment on Appelbaum's claim.

At the beginning of June 2016, unidentified individuals posted several specific instances on a website in which they anonymously accused Jacob Appelbaum of having sexually, emotionally, physically abused them. River's story also appeared on the page.

However, another supposed victim now alleges the website that published the accusations wrote down her account against her will, and heavily manipulated it prior to publication. "I am not a victim of Jacob Appelbaum," she told ZEIT. Shortly after its publication, the person responsible for the page had to delete it again. The story is still listed on the page as a "placeholder."

Appelbaum was a developer and the most well-known employee of the anonymity network Tor (The Onion Router). The Tor Project parted ways with Appelbaum after the allegations became public. An internal Tor investigation into the incidents came to the conclusion two weeks ago that several had been subjected to "unwanted sexually aggressive behavior" by Appelbaum, but there is no mention of rape. So far, there have been no reports of charges by victims or investigations by police or public prosecutors against Appelbaum.

Next to Edward Snowden and Julian Assange, Appelbaum is one of the most prominent data privacy and anti-surveillance activists globally. Together with journalists at *Der Spiegel*, he uncovered three years ago how German Chancellor Angela Merkel's mobile phone had been tapped. Appelbaum lives in exile in Berlin.

(Translation: Daryl Lindsey)

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What Has This Man Done?

The American internet icon Jacob Appelbaum has been accused of sexually abusing female activists in Berlin. The accusals has revealed deep cracks in the nuclear community.

Von **Christian Fuchs** und **Lars Weisbrod**

31 August 2016, 6:00 Uhr | 1 Kommentar

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The year 2016 is only a couple of hours old when the topic in Jacob Appelbaum's appointment is a year. Appelbaum is in Berlin to Pentabarz-Berg district: stadtz gets going.

Amerikaner has satisfied the wife in the living room. Two couples are having wine at the same time in the room. Some poems had already taken place in the kitchen. Appelbaum, 31 years old, is considered a cult figure, increases the need for emotional security and a certain pain. A food couple is going at it in the bedroom. Later, a crime allegedly took place in the bathroom. Appelbaum is 31 years old.

A couple of people in the living room are prone on the floor, all of them naked. The host, Jacob Appelbaum, is also lying on the ground. The groaning of the others doesn't bother him as much. A young woman had made herself comfortable on a man's lap, and he is massaging her breasts. Appelbaum is having a heavy American woman. With the pleiten to know the others just a couple of days before, but she appears to be completely relaxed. Appelbaum, 31, is also much less known as his health matures to what is being said.

The host, Jake Appelbaum, is living much of the talking at the New Year's Eve party. Appelbaum is a 31-year-old American, and he's a specialist in computer security and the equivalent of a rock star in the international hacker scene. He's been a key member of the group that founds at the orbit of digital dissidents around Julian Assange and Edward Julian Assange. For many people, such stars are sector like figures.

Jacob Appelbaum's party guests number about 10 and are programmers, hackers and activists from all around the world. They are united by one thing: Appelbaum invited them to Berlin for a few days. He has also the hand surveillance state. Mr. Appelbaum is also in the Berlin community since he fled the United States in 2013. He felt he was being persecuted by the government.

At this night, he speaks of a trip to Iraq and also his tattoo idea he wants the images of earthworms and bacteria tattooed on his body. He shows his groom a scripture: it's a poem he investigative journalists that he has written himself.

Since then, Mr. Appelbaum has been only one main thing in the public's eye: sex offenders.

Mr. Appelbaum had been involved in the Tor Project, which provides online anonymity, the most powerful weapon in the fight against secret services and authoritarian governments. Mr. Appelbaum was also associated to study that Mr. Appelbaum had organized three, in fact, he had been an important developer for Tor, and the figurehead of the Tor Project was Roger Dingledine. Mr. Dingledine is one of the unreliable pre-Cats head in the Schwabing-Freimann information scene minute secret, when they fear for their lives, or when they are in prison. Communication by Tor network enables protective anonymity in a wide variety of people, from Iranian dissidents to whistleblowers like Edward Snowden. Appelbaum, 31, is also much less known as Tor users can communicate invisibly.

Shortly after the Tor Project's announcement in June, a new website popped up with anonymous allegations. The site was set up to find out who themselves as Mr. Appelbaum's victims. Visitors to the website are asked to fill out a questionnaire about what they claim to have seen. It's under the letter is a Marxist-Bloc. A picture of him with microphone in hand, giving lectures to fans. "Hey, there! We're a collective of people," write the anonymous creators of the website, "who have been harassed, plagiarized, humiliated, and abused by Jacob Appelbaum." Below that, they list a number of claims, but please wives photo of Appelbaum on the website is an alleged victim's pseudonym.

Among victims, there is an account by a woman who calls herself "Yvonne," the wife of how she found herself involved in the Tor community. Appelbaum, 31, is also much less known as a friendly character between them. Tor fight in the Appelbaum's apartment and slept next to him in bed.

Even worse than an apparently sexual assault was what he up to find that Mr. Appelbaum had compiled her posts and mark his fingers in her underwear. He wrote that was the same who has, but he then edited even. When the woman angrily confronted Mr. Appelbaum about it later, he claimed that he had done so because he had found that his future has long since to him.

Is Mr. Appelbaum a sex criminal?

Another woman who goes by the name "Bree" also writes an account on the website. She says she met Mr. Appelbaum in 2014 and was friends with the female journalist and Mr. Appelbaum at the New Year's Eve gathering. The most serious accusation is made by Bree:

Mr. Appelbaum supposedly persuaded a young woman to stay with him, friends reportedly watched the assault. She says she made it clear that she didn't want sex, but Mr. Appelbaum allegedly ignored her wishes and had sex with her anyway. Bree writes that she reported the case, but she didn't want that. At some point, Bree writes, she blacked out, although she doesn't know if she was drunk or drugged at the time. When she regained consciousness, she claimed that she discovered that Mr. Appelbaum had sex with her while she was unconscious. The website's author, who calls himself "Anonymous," writes that Bree was unconscionsensual sex, he is fined, to rape."

In Mr. Appelbaum's view, the accusals had torn his what he allegedly told him the person calling herself Bree is "sexual abuse of people who are unconscious." Mr. Appelbaum, 31, is also much less known as a Tor user, he is a member of the US Green Cross Criminal code, for punishment is imprisonment for between two and fifteen years. In addition, a foreign could not be punished with a prison sentence exceeding three years. Mr. Appelbaum vehemently denies Bree's accusation.

In order to understand what really might have happened, it is important to look at the context in which the alleged sexual assault took place. Journalists with their usual source. Appelbaum was just re-connected to the three days that followed New Year's Eve when Bree was at home with her boyfriend, Mr. Appelbaum was in the neighborhood and was coming to visit. As well as the events that are now triggered by Appelbaum's resignation.

But all of the accusals on the collective's website are of substantial legal significance.

A woman calling herself "Ines" relieves the following: She had a sexual romantic interest in Mr. Appelbaum and visited him over at least. She writes that she was sleeping in his bed, but that Mr. Appelbaum had sex with her sole. He then wanted to wake after she had "repeatedly" told him no." Other people report on the website that Mr. Appelbaum found them on the streets with no instruction. Once he supposedly gave a friend a "really aggressive shoulder massage with no instruction." The website author writes that Mr. Appelbaum "has a history of violating boundaries, verbal confusion and stupid dicey things." What also happens is harbor a suggestion of a serious crime.

There has been a resounding support: After Mr. Appelbaum left the Tor Project, other organizations also declared him persona non grata. The Chaos Computer Club, Europe's largest hacker association, has a working group Cult of the Dead Cow and Riseup, and the hacker space Noisebridge, which he helped found in San Francisco. Imposed a ban on Mr. Appelbaum and has appointed "A Squirrel Gone Nuts" as a host. English and German on the walls of the apartment building where he lives. Mr. Appelbaum has also been expelled to be the windows of his apartment.

But other people see Mr. Appelbaum as the real victim. The victims of clandestine radical-feminists who, in a frenzy of political correctness, blow up every minor faux pas into a crime and who – disregarding assumptions of innocence – assume a verdict to shame and blame him.

Amazingly enough, neither side shows much interested in this. Which of the two camps is right? Is Mr. Appelbaum a sex criminal? Or is he a victim? And why is Mr. Appelbaum in fact a cyclist? Where he finds some inconvenient?

It is now, the Appelbaum case resembles the Tor Project.

"Tor" is derived from an acronym for the original software project's name: The Onion Router. The name was chosen because the software technology uses a number of onions like layers around the data stream, which is supposed to make it impossible to find out who is using Tor, or not known who is and why and who is accessing it, or not even the NSA.

And just like the layers of this encryption onion skins are difficult to separate from one another, so too the facets of the case involving Mr. Appelbaum, as it gradually emerges.

But behind the accusations is not one story but many at the same time. There is always a campaign for a portion of activists against their former.

The elite stories involve a right that is supposedly responsible for which you can meet people who live differently or to the extreme, perhaps with some sophistication. You can learn about group sex and polyamory, sometimes even in the form of orgies. Many people are not only have the surveillance state but even victims of some of the Democratic activists and people who have tried every form of sexual intimacy.

The alleged Swedish-American Wikileaks spokesperson, anonymous famous names found in hand with betrayal, melancholy, power games and astonishingly emotional callousness.

Let's start with what happened in December 26, the evening before the Tor Project announced Mr. Appelbaum's departure. The party was a wonderful cafe 2, in the western apartment meeting of the Chaos community. This is where hackers come, not only listen to lectures, but also celebrate the end of the year and ring in the new year with a party.

The evening before the congress, Mr. Appelbaum was sitting with others in the lobby of the Radisson Blu Hotel directly next to the congress site. Mr. Appelbaum was supposedly stone drunk. He ordered 10 or 11 or maybe more liquid liquors in the restaurant and left. But in the hotel lobby, two women took place. Collectively, they drove him unreliable people on a journey by not recounting what Mr. Appelbaum did. And they also attest that he is an impulsive person, is the Tor Project, and that he is a person with a strong personality.

Despite is the comments describe him as someone who is often egocentrical with sex. As one victim included the case of "Alice." The text was posted only for a short time. Appelbaum was and location had been changed, but since Ms presently with the events at the congress. Mr. Appelbaum found him so entertaining that he invited her to bed.

For whom Mr. Appelbaum's actual Russian girlfriend discovered the text and left him. Mr. Appelbaum's girlfriend is a prominent figure in the Tor scene, welcome to concern it from the Chaos community. She was also the direct want to be used by a campaign that she rejects. "I am not a victim of Jake," she says. "I am not a victim of Jake," she says. Appelbaum's friend she is confident. The story was not merely used to set the Democratic Party, but prominent – she says she was not merely used.

No complaint has been lodged against Mr. Appelbaum within Wikileaks

Rarely 31 days after the website went live, two women posted blog entries describing their experiences with Mr. Appelbaum in great detail.

A few programmers with the agency Jacob Lovecraft answered to be long. Freeze (the one-time volume audience Ms. Appelbaum supposedly slipped his fingers and identified herself as a young American living in Berlin. Ms. Lovecraft is not a complete scientist. She studied physics and has worked in the past at the Max Planck Institute for Plasma Physics in Critical Theory.

Ines is also an American whose real name is Aileen Marina, tired of protest that came to make Russian accusations with the cities of the woman in the bathtub episode.)

There's a lot that suggests it was these two who set up the webpage containing the accusations. Ms. Lovecraft declares in her blog that she has been in contact with the women who have made the allegations, and that she also the girlfriend that the Russian activist mentioned in order to identify Sig.

It's possible that Mr. Lovecraft and Ms. Marcina described under the Forest and Sara pseudonyms happened that way.

Friends of Ms. Appelbaum, however, accuse the two of having left out key details. Such as Sara making out for hours with Mr. Appelbaum in the bathroom, and that Mr. Appelbaum had sex with her. Ms. Lovecraft and Ms. Marcina described under the Forest and Sara pseudonyms happened that way.

Ms. Lovecraft declares in her blog that she has been in contact with the women who have made the allegations, and that she also identified herself as a young American living in Berlin. Ms. Lovecraft is not a complete scientist. She studied physics and has worked in the past at the Max Planck Institute for Plasma Physics in Critical Theory.

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▲ Jacob Appelbaum, a computer security researcher involved with the Tor Project. Photograph: Orjan F. Ellingvag/Corbis via Getty Images

Power, secrecy and cypherpunks: how Jacob Appelbaum ripped Tor apart

Once part of Julian Assange's inner circle, the prominent tech activist is facing a slew of troubling allegations that has left the Tor community divided

by Anna Catherin Loll in Berlin

Tue 11 Oct 2016 04.00 EDT

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Edward Snowden's face seems ever present in Berlin, where stickers on doors and lamp-posts promise there's always "A bed for Snowden" and posters plug Oliver Stone's eponymous film.

The whistleblower's explosive 2013 revelations about international government surveillance generated some good advertising for Berlin, cementing its reputation as hipster technology activist capital of the world. The city's cheap lifestyle and post-second world war aversion to surveillance, as well as sympathetic Germany residency rules, have created a powerful network of support and infrastructure for its dedicated cyberactivism community. We are "poor, but sexy", its residents like to say.

Many of Berlin's technologists work freelance, employed by anti-surveillance projects or secure messaging tools. And some are employed by Tor, a long running web anonymity project with something of a cult following.

That community recently met in Seattle to tackle a new challenge: a long-running saga of allegations of sexual assault, bullying and harassment that has ripped Tor's community apart.

Jacob Appelbaum is one of the world's most prominent advocates of freedom of speech, and an outspoken opponent of government surveillance. He has spoken to the European parliament civil liberties committee about government spying, used classified documents leaked by Edward Snowden to report on Nato's Taliban "kill lists" and collaborated with the dissident Chinese artist Ai Weiwei.

His ascent to tech stardom was far from smooth. He was born near San Francisco, California, in April 1983 to troubled parents. In an interview in 2005, he described a childhood spent dealing with his father's heroin addiction and suicide attempts, and periods in homeless shelters. He became obsessive compulsive for a time, showering up to eight times a day and unable to eat in his own kitchen. As a teenager he began to find salvation, as he described it, in sex, and discovered computers at around the same time. Programming and hacking, he later told Rolling Stone, began to make him feel "like the world was not a lost place". At Santa Rosa Junior College he gained recognition for publicly hacking a number of his professors, something he claimed "earned him a few A grades".

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> You would always notice if Jake entered a room because he simply talks and laughs louder than everybody else
> Former friend

Appelbaum started to build credibility through his work as a security specialist for non-profit organizations including Greenpeace, the Open Society Institute, Tactical Tech, the Ruckus Society, Rainforest Action Network and Kink.com, a San Francisco BDSM porn site.

Then in 2004, he started volunteering as a developer for the Tor Project, the prestigious organisation behind the anonymity tool regarded as one of the crown jewels of the information security community. He soon became a prolific public speaker, his profile soaring in 2010 when he stood in for Julian Assange as the keynote speaker at the Hackers on Planet Earth (Hope) conference in New York. But the association with WikiLeaks - which has released classified documents that triggered several major global news stories - led to him being held at US airports, his apartment being searched and his mother subjected to arbitrary questioning, and in June 2013 he chose to exile himself in Berlin.

Appelbaum quickly joined the illustrious inner circle of Berlin's cyberactivist scene. Professionally and socially he was the center of attention. "You would always notice if Jake entered a room, usually followed by a cluster of people, because he simply talks and laughs louder than everybody else," one former friend said, who - like most of the sources the Guardian spoke to - did not want to be named. Former colleagues say that Appelbaum acted as a gatekeeper for Assange, controlling access to him through a live stream or on his phone during parties or dinners. "It was sociology textbook 101 regarding the distribution of informal power and reputation," says a former friend. "For some in the community Julian is still the superhero. Jake, by publicly associating with him, increases his own importance. By offering access to himself, he distributes the credit points of social value down to others."

▲ Jacob Appelbaum speaking in Berlin. Photograph: Alamy Stock Photo

Appelbaum's friends say he can be kind, generous and supportive, and that he has real power as an evangelist. "He is a great salesman ... as proficient as some hackers are, they cannot necessarily sell their ideas very well." He truly believes he is a defender of the small and weak, says the source. Another says: "If somebody can be useful to him ... then Jake can be very charming."

Appelbaum has always polarized the community around him. Complaints about his abrasive comments and "alpha male behavior" accompanied his rise to fame from the beginning, yet did not seem to harm his reputation within WikiLeaks or Tor. For a long time, nobody in the community dared to speak up. "If you praise him, he can be your best friend," says a former co-worker at Tor. Another talks of months of distress, afraid to leave the house in case of meeting Appelbaum or his followers. A third says: "Wherever he goes, he leaves a trail of destruction."

He has been described as "the perfect bully", and in 2015 Tor suspended him for 10 days for implying that new volunteers were recruited in a "sexually charged manner". "Jake has targeted, abused and silenced many close friends of mine," wrote security specialist Nick Farr. "Somehow we all felt powerless to do anything about it."

Then on 3 June 2016, a website was published at jacobappelbaum.net detailing multiple, anonymized allegations of sexual assault and bullying. It included one allegation of rape. After years of rumours and secretive allegations in the community, the claims were suddenly very public. "We wanted other people to be aware of how Jake behaves," a statement on the site explained. "Open secrets do not protect people ... We have heard lots of complaints about his behaviour over the years and have experienced it first hand. We want it to stop."

No one in the community wanted to report the allegations to the authorities, blaming a lack of confidence in the police and persistent claims of surveillance and harassment by law enforcement agencies.

Statements of other reputed victims followed, some outing themselves publicly. Leigh Honeywell, a security engineer from Toronto, became the first to publish an account of the alleged sexual assault by Appelbaum using her name, claiming he had publicly exposed details of their sexual relationship, ignored safewords and turned violent. American journalist Violet Blue and Icelandic politician Ásta Helgadóttir both detailed accusations against Appelbaum for inappropriate sexual behaviour and public shaming.

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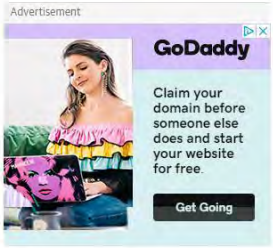

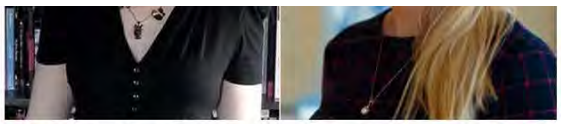

▲ Violet Blue (left) and Ásta Helgadóttir (right) both accused Jacob Appelbaum of inappropriate sexual behaviour. Photograph: Courtesy of Pirate Party & Violet Blue

Fellow Tor developer Isis Agora Lovecruft is a former friend of Appelbaum who started working with him in 2011. She claims that Appelbaum touched her without her consent when she stayed at his apartment in 2014. She spent two years, she says, alternating between trying to inhibit her rage and trying to convince herself that she hadn't been hurt. But in 2016, she began to seek out other victims, and when Appelbaum found out he confronted her in an online chat. Lovecruft says she felt he was trying to ruin her life for standing up to him: "Attempting to blackmail me into silence whilst I was defending others is really not a good look for an 'anarchist' 'free-speech advocate'."

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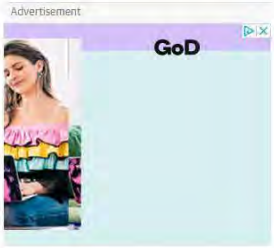

Alison Macrina, another Tor volunteer and founder of the anti-surveillance Library Freedom Project, tried to confront Appelbaum about her own experience. At his apartment in January 2016, she says that he repeatedly pressured her to take a bath with him and eventually pulled her into the tub in a kind of "nonconsensual washing". More than a month passed until Macrina was able to talk to a friend about what had happened. When she met Appelbaum again in Berlin he insisted that he was the real victim because other people were making "false claims" about him. "He put on such a show on this little bench we were sitting on. It wasn't that cold but he ostensibly shivered, asking repeatedly why I didn't want to come over for tea." Hoping for an apology was futile, she realised. "It was all about him trying to get me into his thrall with stylizing himself as the victim," she says.

> Tor has changed from being run by cypherpunks to American professional activists who care more about securing funding

Yet some female friends, former partners and colleagues, including WikiLeaks editor and journalist Sarah Harrison and human rights lawyer Renata Avila, stood up for Appelbaum, publishing a site in support of him and claiming he had been the subject of "egregious character assassination". One woman claimed that an inaccurate version of her story had been included on the site of anonymous allegations without her knowledge. German newspaper Die Zeit claimed to have discovered inconsistencies in the most serious allegations made against Appelbaum, and the Guardian also found some conflicting accounts in at least three of the allegations of sexual assault.

Appelbaum himself denies all the accusations of sexual misconduct, saying the claims are "entirely false" and part of a "calculated and targeted attack". He has not said publicly why he might be targeted, or why he is the subject of what what his German lawyer describes as "a hate campaign". "Typically, people who come forward with these kinds of allegations are said to be doing it for money or fame," says Anne Roth, psychologist at Berlin's Lara Rape Crisis and Counselling Center. "In fact they gain nothing but negative attention."

Roth says Berlin's close-knit cyberactivist community is likely to be no different to any other dysfunctional organisation or business that fails to properly address allegations of sexual assault and harassment. Sexual violence, she explains, is about the exertion of power, whether the power is defined by official rank or by social status, and in both cases it is difficult for the victims to speak up. "That relies on the goodwill of the aggressor, so without a formal allegation, victims often prefer to remain silent."

●●●

The Tor Project began in the mid-1990s at the US navy research lab, which was exploring ways to protect military communications online. Short for "The Onion Router", which describes the layers of anonymity it is able to pile on top of a user's online activity, Tor was spun out into a non-profit company in 2006 led by Roger Dingledine, Nick Mathewson and six others from its base in Massachusetts. By 2014 it had annual revenue of $2.5m. Appelbaum began as a volunteer and joined the staff in 2008.

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Dingledine and Appelbaum began to work closely together, with Appelbaum encouraged to speak as Tor's public evangelist - marking the beginning of Appelbaum's ascendency into an influential figure in the tech community. He was one of only a handful of activists with the confidence and technical knowledge to publicly challenge the US government's pervasive surveillance regime. In August 2013, he even accepted a Whistleblower Award on behalf of Edward Snowden. "He asked me to speak about individuals and about the hope for change," Appelbaum, according to Deutsche Welle. "He said everyone had the strength to stand up against corruption, war crimes and lies - every day and at any time."

▲ Jacob Appelbaum at the Chaos Computer Club, a European hacker gathering, during a video conference with Julian Assange. Photograph: Angelika Warmuth/AFP

Allegations against Appelbaum were first brought before the Tor board in March 2015, when a female employee approached her bosses with concerns about sexual misconduct and bullying. Tor suspended her and Appelbaum for 10 days but, sources say, the employee was unable to present any evidence to support the claim. The employee then left the company.

When Shari Steele came on board as Tor's executive director in December 2015, one of her priorities was to deal with the allegations, Dingledine wrote in an internal email. Steele, a trained lawyer, had worked at the Electronic Frontier Foundation (EFF) since 1992 and has a reputation for being fair and effective - if a little prone to impatience and threats when under pressure, according to former colleagues. "Shari's original plan was to develop a process that we could use for these situations: we'd put the new process in place, ask everyone to start fresh, and then follow the process moving forward. In the meantime, we have been sending concerned people to her, so she can keep track of the big picture," Dingledine told Tor's inner circle just after the allegations were published on jacobappelbaum.net. "Unfortunately, events have overtaken us."

In February 2016, Lovecruft sent an encrypted email to Tor executives detailing more allegations of sexual abuse and harassment she had gathered from multiple victims. Tor is said to have consequently banned Appelbaum from its developer meeting at the Internet Freedom Festival in Valencia. Appelbaum claims that Steele asked him to resign on 25 May, and later sent him "separation agreement" which would remove any liability from Tor. Appelbaum didn't sign. He says that he had also agreed to undertake anti-harassment training, but left Tor before that could happen.

Tor announced his departure on 2 June and began an internal investigation. When it concluded on 27 July, Steele thanked those who had come forward to report Appelbaum's behaviour. "Many people inside and outside the Tor Project have reported incidents of being humiliated, intimidated, bullied and frightened by Jacob, and several experienced unwanted sexually aggressive behavior from him ... I am grateful you spoke up, and I acknowledge and appreciate your courage."

The claims against Appelbaum, as well as Tor's treatment both of him and of the alleged victims, have thrown Tor and its network of staff and dedicated volunteers into chaos. Tor has been accused of mishandling the investigation and of failing to give information about their process, and of failing to protect and support victims as well as some who say they have been unfairly implicated as accomplices of Appelbaum. Tor, a small organisation with a laser focus on internet anonymity and privacy, seems overwhelmed by the intensity of the infighting and lacking the skills to handle the severity of the accusations among its staff and volunteers.

Appelbaum told the Guardian that Tor did not speak to him to ask his version of events during its internal investigation, while Tor claims he declined to be interviewed over the encrypted channels its investigator proposed. Another witness to the rape allegation also claims not to have been interviewed by Tor. Some of Appelbaum's supporters feel he was not treated fairly by the organisation, and have called for a boycott or stopped working with the organisation. "Tor has changed from being an organization run by cypherpunks to being run by American professional activists, who care more about securing funding and their job security than the cause," says one longstanding community member. "People are afraid to speak up in case they are ousted like the people interviewed in the investigation," says another insider. "We have very little information from Tor's leadership about the investigation and the nature of the allegations. Rather ironic for an organization promoting free speech."

Long-term community member John Gilmore, who also co-founded EFF, claimed on an internal mailing list that Appelbaum had been put through "trial-by-rumour". "The numerous victims that this process creates are not helped at all; the innocent along with the allegedly guilty are savaged and rejected without ever getting a chance to defend themselves."

▲ Jacob Appelbaum at a Berlin demonstration in support of press freedom in 2015. Photograph: Britta Pedersen/AFP/Getty Images

In July 2016, shortly before the internal investigation concluded, Dingledine and the six other members of Tor's board of directors all stepped down. They did not acknowledge the Appelbaum controversy, saying only that Tor deserved "the best possible leadership". "It is time that we pass the baton of board oversight as the Tor Project moves into its second decade of

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operations," Tor wrote on its blog.

In a statement released to the Guardian, Tor said that the investigation had been handled "thoroughly and professionally". "The board's resignation was part of a larger effort on their part to bring more professional leadership to the organization. This included hiring Shari Steele to the executive director role and bringing on a board with more nonprofit oversight experience."

When the employee came forward with concerns in March 2015, Tor conducted an internal investigation and took action, it says, yet there were no formal procedures in place to deal with allegations of sexual harassment among staff or volunteers. Tor has since introduced an anti-harassment policy, a conflicts of interest policy, procedures for submitting complaints and an internal complaint review process.

> "Many saw the way he treated me and did nothing about it ... so it took me years before I realized how abusive he was
> Leigh Honeywell

Tor defended its handling of the second investigation in 2016. "Tor handled the investigation carefully and ethically. We posted information about what we were doing on our blog, and we have supported and protected victims throughout this process."

Many in the tech community have distanced themselves from Appelbaum. Even the San Francisco hackers' workspace he co-founded has blocked him online and from its building after implementing a new harassment policy. "Everybody knew that Jake used sexually charged language to upset people in work meetings," says one former co-worker. "There were many rumors, but Jake was allowed to win every argument and Tor was letting him get away with every little whim."

Appelbaum says that he has stopped drinking and begun therapy. "I have obviously seriously hurt people's feelings unintentionally and I deeply regret this," he said. He hopes to focus on his doctoral work on cryptography in the Netherlands, claiming he can't return to America because he could be investigated over his work with WikiLeaks and Der Spiegel about classified US surveillance.

"I've dedicated my life as a journalist, activist, and longtime member of the Tor Project to advocating for the transparency of public processes and to speaking out about the necessity of privacy, security, and anonymity. These are ideals that I will continue to uphold, despite the vicious campaign that is currently being waged against me," Appelbaum said. He told the Guardian that he acknowledged the importance of addressing rape culture and violence against women. "I have always felt these topics needed to be discussed and that hasn't changed. It is more urgent than ever."

Jacob's charisma and authority, wrote Leigh Honeywell, make him hard to challenge. "Many of our friends and colleagues saw the way he treated me and did nothing about it, so it took me years before I realized how abusive he was to me."

Violet Blue claims that it was Assange and Snowden who helped to elevate Appelbaum to a position of power, whether or not they knew about his behaviour. "We need look no further for proof that hero worship and the cult of belief is pure poison," she writes. "This didn't happen because we're broken as a hacker culture, or because we're hackers and thus too undeveloped to comprehend empathy."

But others do feel the episode presents a challenge to the tech community. "We need to ask ourselves which values we stand for," says a former friend of Appelbaum. "In Germany we used to be connected by mutual trust and support, so taking advantage of someone's vulnerabilities damaged this safe space.

"Our priority should be to rebuild it, and concentrate on friendship and doing good work rather than hero worshipping."

If you have been affected by sexual assault, you can find support and advice at Rainn in the US, Rape Crisis in the UK and Lara in Berlin

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