WHY WE PROTEST.ORG background

In February 2008 while our (Interbulation ?? ) website was down, a couple of guys and I started WhyWeProtest.net as a sister site, just to explain our group’s actions towards Scientology and to describe our movement in general. There was a globe in the middle and a “Who we are” nav on the left, explaining our group’s makeup and motives. On the right nav was a “Who are they?” section, describing the Scientologists and what had occurred to date. We created it as a site where we could direct the public, as people were beginning to sit up and take notice and want to understand what was going on. We wanted to offer a place for laymen to get background information and as a general link to the press and to tahe public, instead of people coming into the channels and having to wade through all kinds of other stuff. We did the site in 12 languages because Scientology was global and the demand for information was there. Even after the forums were back up “why we protest” became even more of a public information space for press and interested people.

JENNIFER EMICK background

A little after that, a “Scientology Exposed” site went up and we weren’t sure why. It appeared that they just wanted some of our traffic, and honestly didn’t know, we wondered if maybe they were going to sell ads there for profit, weren’t sure what their angle was for attempting to divert traffic from our “Why We Protest” site. Then we saw discussions that they were talking about ways to harm our “Why We Protest site”, even spreading disinformation that we had actually taken our database and sold it to Scientology for $5000.00 – which of course never happened, we were activists – but trying to scare off our user base. One of the leaders of the group appeared to be Jennifer Emick along with some other guys. As soon as we heard and saw this, we went to them very nicely and asked them to stop attacking us, but the disinformation campaign continued. This went on for several months and they still didn’t stop – to this day I do not know why. Finally, some of our site admins (not me) decided to go on the attack, since asking nicely hadn’t seemed to work. They went after one of the main admins of the site (it was a guy, not Jennifer Emick) and doxed him quite completely, all about his military service, his family, down to his social security number, posting all of his personal information online in an attempt to get their attention. I saw it happen but didn’t participate in that doxing. They did back off of their online rumor mill at that point.

Then, about 8 months to a year after that, the rival “Scientology Exposed” group – minus their original main admin guy who had been doxed pretty badly – started at it again. They were doing Skype conference calls among a group that we jokingly called “The Treehouse,” trash-talking me, saying that I was controlling everything for some other mysterious, evil, nefarious agenda, etc. when in fact I no longer was involved on a day-to-day basis with “Why We Protest.” This was mid-2009 and another group was more hands-on with the site at that point than I was. Anyway, once that current “Why We Protest” group saw the rumor-mongering going on again about our site, they identified Jennifer Emick as the one behind it and set about doxing her – pretty completely at that point. Jennifer blamed me for that – still does, even though I wasn’t really involved – and just took it up as a personal vendetta against me from that point on, then everything with her was about me. When the “fakegregghoush” Twitter account went up, I tried to tell everyone that it was her – I recognized her nutty style by that point – but she denied it, both to me and to the people in her own group. But by the 2011 DefCon hacker conference in Las Vegas when she was up on stage with her new “security” group, she had finally acknowledged to everyone that it was indeed her behind the “fakegregghoush” Tweets that continue on, still at the date of this writing. Because she had been so dishonest with even her own group, she had a lot of fall-out from that, losing a lot of whatever credibility she had left, even among allies who had supported her and her site from early on. She continues to spout conspiracy theories about me and a group that included this guy from L.A. and a few others that I created some cabal years ago – even before the Scientology protests began – with weird long-term goals along mysterious lines, even now claiming widely that I had changed my name to Gregg Housh from “Felix Bernardino” for some reason. I have been to prison under my real name “Gregg Housh” years back, for goodness sakes, and it’s not heard to check legal records and prove who I am, for goodness sakes. So not even is she a little nutty in my opinion, but she hasn’t even done very accurate research. Upon a little investigation, it turns out that a “Felix Bernardino” now owns a domain that I used to have. So now there’s this poor guy named Felix Bernardino out there being continually maligned online by Jennifer Emick, among her other questionable pursuits. Some of our people went into her “Treehouse” chats and recorded her statements about this.

**Ryan Cleary**

Ryan was an interesting character, I had interacted with him a few times before he went down. I had no problem with him, but many people he had rubbed the wrong way. Maybe he had pissed off so many other people that he was afraid of pissing off me, too. He had this sense that anon ops and a lot of the operators there were getting too powerful, that some were moving in on his space – that he ran everything and felt threatened. When they got rid of him, that was the last straw. He definitely had this sense of being the guy who ran everything. When really, most people didn’t even know who he was.

So Ryan decides to take out anonops and ddos the living shit out of them. Another thing was all the threats against grrrl vinyl and the people at Encyclopeida Dramatica got him… There were a lot of threats against grrl vinyl from all kinds of people. E.D. was same genre as 4chan. When he ended up actually with the site, there were a million more threats from ryan to grrl vinyl (spelling?) – you can’t put your site E.D. back up now, now that we’ve got the traffic. I am good friends with grrl vinyl so I thought that all sucked. This was after he launched the raid on anonops. I thought that raid was stupid and misplaced, it was a power grab by him. He said he was trying to stop them, was complete bs. Ryan was a douchebag and got what he deserved. That was stupid to attack people who had his personal info. What did he think was going to happen? Of course everyone was going to dox him. No idea why he would put himself in that situation. So why did he do it? Did he just not believe someone was going to arrest him over it? My personal opinion is that he was stupid, he made a big mistake. I am happy that some of his work at E.D. survived, give him some credit for that, am glad it is a resource that should have stayed alive. Garrett also gets credit for creating that. During all of that mess with anonops, I was asked by Ryan if I wanted to come over there at E.D. and help run it. That was last conversation he and I had before he was arrested.

He was a power-hungry nut job who thought others were getting too powerful, was making a power play by saying “I will stop them for you.”

**Q (spelling?)**

I know as much about Q as you do. We’ve had a few conversations, he has just been around. He was one of the ops for anon ops, was in some of those channels that helped operate anon ops, was very useful for all that stuff, was trusted by all those people, the Sabus, etc. , was very diplomatic, well-spoken, able to talk to just about anyone. Even in those times when other people were mad at me, and people were mad at each other, Q would reach out and talk to people, very useful. Seemed very intelligent. For the most part Q was organizational at heart, in helping to keep anon ops operational, like an Owen, very much working on the network side of things. Trying to avoid any major inovolvement in an op itself.

**Owen**

Owen was an interesting character, wanted to keep anon ops operation, keep servers working, that we needed to divorce ourselves from the actual ops themselves, and just run the network. And anything he did himself was just to join the channel to help moderate things on server so it didn’t go down. Just like the people who run Facebook should go to prison for something someone says on Facebook, in that same regard, Owen did not want to accept that liability, wanted to watch that we need to disconnect operators of network from the ops themselves, from the various missions and whatnot, to protect them from getting arrested. One thing that was difficult made him though, join channels that he didn’t have anything to do with it, just to enforce the rules – which made people think he did have something to do with the ops., or that he had power in the hierarchy, so I think he got the raw end of the deal. I think he was trying to accomplish was the right way to go, but he ended up looking like this guy who was acting powerful and trying to control shit, but that wasn’t the case, it was just the way things looked, and the way anons are. I think he got a raw deal, I think all the people who disliked him had it wrong, didn’t understand his true role.

**Topiary**

Topiary was awesome. Of all the people I talked to there, from early on, before anyone got arrested, he was the most fun. He was easy to get along with. I don’t think anyone had a major problem with him, We were in various skype chats together, various irc channels together, and it was a real bother to me to know that he was going to almost surely be arrested because of how public he was making himself, especially in some of the skype chats where people were talking to him, using his real name. Many anons had his name, so you know the feds probably had his name. Watching it all go down, it was like watching a movie or something, you know, you just want to tell him hey don’t do that if you’re also going to do the things, be a part of the bad stuff – don’t be so public. In the end, he seems to want to end up how he ended up. He seemed t o see it coming. And went full-forward at it. He seemed to be like, if I’m going to get arrested, then I want to actually be arrested for actually doing something. Did all that tweeting with lulz security, like he knew it was coming so went harder than he possibly would have. That’s how I saw it. Knowing him a little earlier, I never thought he would do the things he ended up doing. When he started saying this is topiary on lulz security twitter fed. Nice, easy to get along with, super-intelligent, clever, creative, sad to see someone so obviously bright and personable end up getting arrested like that.

**Base (spelling?)**

I love the man, he is awesome, we hung out multiple times, he’s visited in Boston. Don’t know much about his background.

**Commissary (spelling?)**

Commissary is a really good writer, a good idea man, is super intelligent. Most of what he’s done has been on the right side of things. Integral in the writing on the first few videos., first few press releases in 2008, now kind of randomly around since then , months without hearing from him, then he shows back up on various things. Nice guy, easy to get along with. Everyone seemed to like him, very personable. One of the best writers anonymous ever had.

**Prison**

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**Operation Sony**

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**HB Gary**

So, I am on Skype and Topiary asks me in text if I remember an article from a few days ago from The Financial Times, and I said that one with that aaron barr guy? And he says yeah, well, stuff is going down and you need to see what’s going to happen because the press is going to be all over you. I said what do you mean? He said we’re in irc, I told him I was over there and they he could invite me wherever he wanted, and he brought me into a channel and I saw what they were doing, they were talking about that they had done to hb gary, that they had gotten into the network. Not topiary himself, but the other hackers who had, but they had gotten into the emails, gotten al this other stuff, they were deciding what to do. So people were arguing ……. Some were saying we should do a full release of everything, others were saying only a partial release, just to show that we had something.

Others were saying let’s dump all of it right now in a torrent, there was all of this talk about what to do, and they decided to actually tell the world what they had done, then hb gary would respond, aaron barr would respond. So they told everyone what they had done.

And instantly the press is… I started getting phone calls and emails. And the channel in irc starts to fill up with users because of the basebin of the few posts on a few other sites (?) telling each other where to go, the hb gary channel (?)

During this whole thing I am just sitting there thinking oh my god, this is big, this is wow. Everyone had only looked a t a few of the emails but a lot of interesting stuff was in there. Aaron barr was watching most of this happen, because they knew his handle on irc, what he was hanging out under, and , had invited him to watch it.

While all that is going on, the argument about what to do is still going on, what are we going to do? Dump it all in a torrent, put it up on a website? They ended up deciding to make a little search engine for it, to make all the emails searchable, and some then got it work on that. But they were just going to release aaron barrr’s emails and hadn’t made a final decision about releasing any others.

Then Penny shows up in irc, she is greg hoglunds’ wife, a co-owner of hb gary, and one of the investors in hggary federal. She starts talking about how they have other employees, lots of other peoples’ lives are on the line, says that there is millions of dollars on the line, says that they aren’t even the same company, she convinces everybody that there is a big divide there -- that they don’t want their hbgary tools and software to ever get classified so they can’t be used for more public clients. But the hbgary federal is more classified for the \_\_\_\_clients (?) That’s why they made the divide so they could have both sides of this. And they had allowed aaron barr to use the hbgary name, to get a foot up in the world, but that it was all his company, not theirs.

As she was speaking in this thick corporate speak, a lot of people weren’t fully understanding what she was trying to say. Then a lot of anons are people for whom English wasn’t their first language, and they were having trouble convincing her of things, it seemed they were arguing for hours with penny about things they were all already in agreement on.

This was evening time, about 7 and 11 at night when this all went down. I was watching, barely chiming in, d idn’t want to stick my neck out, because I didn’t do any of the hacks, I was one of the first to know about hacks, but wasn’t involved in actual hacks. But I couldn’t take it anymore, I was getting sick of these people arguing in circles. So I started talking to her, my handle was COS and it was a big percentage of the conversation. I responded with, “here’s what they are trying to say, here’s what you are saying.”

She hadn’t understood exactly– they were asking for donations to the Bradley manning defense fund, then people were talking about \_\_\_\_\_ extortion , saying things like “we won’t release your emails if you donate money to this cause.” So I really didn’t want to stick my neck out for that.

We ended up in private messages, and I told her that I wasn’t involved in the attack but the media wants to hear from me. I told her, “You’re shooting yourself in the foot.” She had convinced me, too, that they were really not connected.

Then she lets Greg hoglund take over the conversation.

He reinforces what she has said, says they are not going to press charges, not going to the feds. All of the anons involved in the attack had pretty much agreed to just release aaron barr’s emails and not Greg and peggy’s or any other emails. Greg and peggy agreed to that.

But by the next mid-afternoon, a lot of anons had gone thru some of those emails and had found out that penny was lying and that greg was lying and that a lot of these emails proved that they owned a much bigger percentage of it and were the investors. And greg and penny had known about what aaron was doing all along and in fact were cheering him along, saying that what he was doing was so awesome.

So everything they had said the night before to get them not to release their emails was a complete lie. Then news reports starts hitting with quotes form greg hoglund saying he was going to get revenge. So everything in chat channels was about getting revenge, about setting up a good solid search engine, talk about getting a team to really review all of those emails and review everything.

What’s funny about this, penny was the one who came and lied about it, so everyone got mad at all of them. They were really going to, from what I could tell, release only aaron’s emails. But all that lying and everything she did that night, made it that everything would have to come out, too. That’s kind of what happened.

I reached out to find out if there was another email address or phone number for aaron barr, somewhere he could be reached, as his main contacts were being bombarded and he wasn’t answering. Parmy olson from forbes gave me his me.com address, adbarr@me.com, which was an email address that hadn’t shown up in any other press releases that I could see, or any other doxes.

So I emailed him and he responded back, so we ended up talking online and on the phone a little that night, about what was going on and why. I was just getting him to understand that he had really brought this on himself. And he was trying to talk about all these points that he really wasn’t going to the feds with this data, athat it was just research data, that he had been just trying to format this plan, and didn’t I at least agree that his methodology was good.

I said that It didn’t matter, they had invited you in and you were going to give it to them. You did it and you were going to give it to them. Same result either way, you are still a douchebag. We ended up agreeing to disagree on every point. I was just hoping that he would have a slightly better understanding of what he had done wrong so he could stop shooting himself in the foot that we would at least agree.

 Instead, he became very defensive those next few days about how it was all wrong, then went on the attack, so that only made the anons involved want to go deeper, they began to really dig more, realized there was a lot more there than had first been seen.

I think it ended up being a good thing, because – a lot of stuff has been uncovered, how deep does the rabbit hole go, basically what you (barrett) and everyone has been working on ever since.

**Op Tunisia**

I was in irc channels for op Tunisia and you know at that time, op Algeria was trying to go side by side, I and a few others were already talking about Egypt and everything else, just trying to see if I could add anything to the conversation, I had definitely taken part in the others, but most of my effort but when the press caught on to what was going, on, trying to get them to cover it. We had had so little press coverage in the U.S. for the first few weeks it was going on, they were almost blacking it out, so I reached out to all my press contacts, and media, found surprisingly it was amazingly easy to get on al jazeera, or to get on Russia today, on these places I could get on same day to cover, but American outlets I had to fight tooth and nail to get them to do anything (coverage) on it, and a few others made the effort, too, and slowly the u.s. media started covering it, and when it actually looked like the tunisians were going to win, then they really started covering it but it took a lot of effort on a lot of people’s part, and that’s what I spent most of my time doing, just getting the press to cover it.

But I thought it was important, letting people know this was happening. People putting their lives on the line for this and our press didn’t seem to care too much. I think we were effective though.

I spent a good chunk of my time in those days in interviews with everything from little blogs and college students writing papers to going on tv and talking to al jazeera and cnn and all those other outlets. There was a lot of value to be had, and we can all hate on the mass media, the mainstream media, and rightfully so – they are a big part of the problem, but by the end if we want to reach general public right now, that’s how you get to them. But I feel like what I did was important, I was happy to know that I got involved in that.

**Other ops**

The one that stood out to me as the dumbest at the time, was going after the world bank and imf with that group that was esr 99 or something like that? They wanted to attack the world bank, put out a bunch of stuff as anonymous, tried to set up a channel at anon ops, everyone pretty much told them to go the fuck away -- that’s just not a target that’s appropriate right now. I agree that there’s a lot of problems there, but I don’t see what could be done other than minor hacking and exposing of things, but it won’t change who they are. The op was laughed out of the building if you will.

Then there was op facebook and I found that hilarious because when it was suggested they set up an irc channel and put out a press release, but everyone told the people who suggested it that they were fucking morons, that it wasn’t going to happen, that yeah, yeah privacy blah blah blah but they said it’s not going to happen. The channel basically shut down the same day, there was an average of 2 or 3 people there at any time, and most of them were waiting there to tell others coming in that it was stupid and wasn’t going to happen. But the press found out about it and every time they wanted to talk about anything related, they kept stating that anonymous was going to attack facebook on November 5th, 2011, and I would have to say I really don’t think so, and no matter how many times you guys print that, it’s not going to happen. And you know what? The 5th came and went but up to the day before, they kept talking about how anonymous is going to attack. And (we?) kept telling them it looked like a failed attempt at getting anonymous to do something . Then afterwards, they all ran stories about how anonymous failed to do anything to facebook. I was like, this is the real problem with our media today – they don’t really care about the facts or what is really going on. Just what will get them readers and page views.

**Occupy movement**

I think occupy movement was and still is important. I was there early on at Occupy Wall Street in new York and I was upset about the way the first couple of days went. They weren’t as organized as I would have hoped, being that they had had meetings beforehand and had had time to get it together. But it only took a few days for things to start to pan out properly after that and to get the proper structure in place to start moving in the right directions. And right after OWS, people includng me came up to Boston, you know a (d.a. ?) was called for and all of that. I put most of my efforts for two months solid into being there almost every day all day, getting stuff done, or dealing with the local govt and local police and everything else and as you know as big cities go, boston was really the last one fully standing without the cops attempting to come in yet. We did try to keep the city out. But the movement was important in that a lof of the activities by activists these days had largely been ignored and/or not reached the general public. A lot of the more recent activity hadn’t been centered out in the real world – it had been online or just people talking in forums, definitely you can get things done that way like anonymous, but in the end if you want real major change you are going to need people in the streets. One of the first things you have to accomplish is getting good percent of people who might be willing to actually do it, getting them in the streets and proving that is a viable option and that there are enough people out there involved that you can start to really work on things. I think if anything the occupy movement brought a lot of people to the streets that wouldn’t have gone to the streets otherwise and got them thinking more along paths of actually getting out there and doing things. Now (at time of this writing) they’re doing the occupy congress thing, down in washington d.c. It’s still going on, and a lot of movements that have lost their own home bases -- their actual protest sites, are now working online to organize meetings to rebuild and use the existing structures, the websites, the communication channels, the people, to do a lot more work. But in the very end what it accomplished was to convince a lot of people that physical, real world action should be done, and that they could go to the streets and now that a lot more with the idea, next time something like this is organized where going to the streets is going to be necessary, instead of small amounts of people who helped organize before, there will be a lot more people organizing which will make it a lot bigger. For future, the more of this that happens, the more people we will be able to convince that going outside is a good idea, the more successful each successive operation will be. So I think it was important in convincing people not just in America but everywhere that street action is necessary and can help.

**Lulz Sec**

The tart of lulz sec really just seemed to be the group of people that came together in the payback ops and the hbgary op, and kind of partitioned themselves off, once they got used to each other and thought they were a good team. They ended up over on ryan’s server and became lulzsez. Not because ryan had anything to do with it, but think it was because the anon ops servers were down and up and down and up because of ryan’s attacks and what not, so they went over there as lulz sec and started doing what they did. And I think what they did was absolutely necessary. For 50 days of lulz security that was awesome, I was a huge fan. And then you know, the method at which they got a lot more of the anons and the people who had been more uninvolved originally into this anti sec thing, it got a lot more militant. There were a lot of people who showed up to do antisec stuff who had not done anonymous stuff before. The lulz sec brought them around. But all the stuff they were doing I saw as necessary. Authority needs to be attacked not revered, you shouldn’t be scared of people in power – they should be scared of you. For the ones in control – we are paying their salaries. And flaunting it in front of their faces, I enjoyed it because I don’t really see another way to get people to start acting properly. Getting their governments to change without first convincing them that the power structures in place are not as powerful as they might assume and are vulnerable to attack. What I saw ant isec and lulz sec doing I see as being very important. I was happy to see it all happen.

**Future**

Predict for next few years – general direction – people are going to start getting involved to legislate more, like Lamar Smith here, more work on global laws with America’s hand really behind it all, much like you see in spain where they’re trying to pass more stringent laws for copyright and stuff. \_\_\_\_\_? being at those wonderful lists of evil countries because they won’t implement stronger laws than the u.s. wants – that’s going to continue to get worse to the point that the u.s. will try to impose its laws on many other nations and they begin to get pissed about it, one of factors keeping it from being implemented properly and actually we make it a waste of their time, is actions like what anti-sec do. Like what all those people have been inspired by this do. Not only protests and blackouts like with SOPA are very legitimate but the real attacks that lulz sec and anti sec made against police officers who were violent in the occupy movements, getting their names and info out there, making it where you can’t get away with this type of stuff, is only going to get worse, but to know that you will be exposed, to the point of your home address, everything about you, being put out there. Hopefully help convince to think twice before they do these things. That’s definitely what I am hoping for. Is that it has effect of not thinking they can get away with, maybe won’t change their minds, but will deter.