Cryptome

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This heavily revised page has been overloaded with negative items and should not remain published until counterbalancing items are added.

Cryptome is a pro-transparency publishing platform and an anonymous drop-box for whistleblowers created in 1996 by architects John Young and Deborah Natsios. [1][2][3] The site aggregates information about freedom of information, cryptography, spying, and surveillance.[4] The website is best known for exposing the CIA analyst who found Osama Bin Laden.[5][6]

Cryptome	
Web address	cryptome.org (https://cryptome.org/)
Commercial?	Yes
Registration	None
Owners	John Young, Deborah Natsios
Editors	John Young, Deborah Natsios
Launched	June 1996
Current status	Active

Contents

People

Cryptome was created by John Young and Deborah Natsios, architects. The two share editorial duties.

John Young

John Young was born in 1935. He grew up in West Texas and attended Rice University before joining the Army Corps of Engineers. He went on to receive his graduate degree in architecture from Columbia University. Before creating Cryptome, he helped create community service group Urban Deadline in 1968.[7]

Deborah Natsios

Like her husband, Deborah Natsios is a successful architect. She is responsible for Cryptome projects like Cartome, which uses Google Maps and other public resources to document sensitive areas. She is the daughter of Nicholas Natsios, a career officer in the Central Intelligence Agency.[8] He was the CIA station chief for Greece, Vietnam, France, Korea, Argentina, The Netherlands and Iran.[9][10] Nicholas Natsios was the station chief in Vietnam during the arrest and assassination of Ngo Dinh Diem. During this time, his

deputy was William Colby, the future Director of Central Intelligence.[11] Her cousin is Andrew Natsios, former administrator for the U.S. Agency for International Development and U.S. Special Envoy to Sudan[12]

Hosted documents

Cryptome hosts over 98,000 reprinted news articles, Google Maps images and other public documents including a list of Stasi workers at the time of its dissolution on December 8, 1989.[13] According to the website, "Documents are removed from this site only by order served directly by a US court having jurisdiction. No court order has ever been served; any order served will be published here – or elsewhere if gagged by order."[4] Documents are removed at the request of law enforcement as well as individuals. [14][15][16]

Editorial policy

In a 2013 Associated Press article, John Young explained that "we have an editorial role in selecting files, but we don't tell people what to think about them."[17] Earlier that year, Cryptome said that "if a document will annoy, and best, deeply anger, believers in authority then it gets published."[18]

In a separate interview, John Young declared that "Facts are not a trustworthy source of knowledge. Cryptome is not an authoritative source. It's a source of imaginatory material. Don't trust Cryptome, we lie to you helplessly. Don't believe anything you see there."[19] Later in the same interview he added, "Cryptome is not trustworthy, and lies."[20] When asked about providing context for material, Cryptome said "we do not believe in 'context.' That is authoritarian nonsense. For the same reason, we do not believe in verification, authentication, background."[21]

History

This history is biased with mostly negative items, should not be published without addition of counterbalancing items.

2007

On April 20, 2007, the website received notice from its hosting company, Verio, that it would be evicted on May 4 for unspecified breaches of their acceptable use policy.[22][23]

2010

In 2010, Cryptome was hacked, exposing the identities of whistleblowers and confidential sources.[24] In February 2010, Cryptome was briefly shut down by Network Solutions for alleged DMCA violations after it posted a "Microsoft legal spy manual".[25][26][27] Microsoft withdrew the complaint 3 days later and the website was restored.[28] In March 2010, PayPal stopped processing donations to Cryptome and froze the account's funds.[29][30]

2012-2014

In 2012, Cryptome was hacked to infect visitors with malware.[31] In February 2013, Cryptome's website, email and twitter were hacked, exposing whistleblowers and sources again. Cryptome blamed hackers Ruxpin and Sabu for the cyber attack.[32][33] In August 2013, the website was briefly taken down over Japanese terror files.[34] In 2014, Cryptome attempted to raise $100,000.[35] Later that year, Cryptome was

pulled offline again when it was found that malware infecting its visitors.[36]

2015

In September 2015, Cryptome's encryption keys were stolen.[37] In October 2015, it was discovered that Cryptome had been leaking months of its server logs, revealing users information. The logs had been mailed out to users who ordered the site's archive since 2013.[38] Cryptome's privacy policy at the time said that "No user data is collected by Cryptome. Logs are deleted several times a day."[39] Shortly before the leak was discovered, Cryptome revealed that they have detailed logs going back to the site's creation.[40][41][42]

Governmental investigation

John Young, the creator of Cryptome, claims that the website has attracted the attention of various government agencies.[43]

In December 2002, the Attorney General issued a subpoena requiring that John Young appear before a Grand Jury and turn over "all logs recording the I.P. addresses and/or users" who visited Cryptome. John Young posted a notice online declaring that visitor logs are deleted daily.[44] He later revealed that they have detailed logs going back to the site's creation.[40][45][46]

He reports being visited by two FBI agents from a counter-terrorism office.[47] He claims that on another occasion, two FBI agents spoke with him on the phone.[48] In June 2013, two US Secret Service agents visited Cryptome to request removal of a former presidential Bush family email allegedly hacked by Guccifer.[30] In September 2015, a GCHQ slide leaked by Edward Snowden revealed that the agency was monitoring Cryptome's visitors.[49]

Criticism

This section is biased with negative items. Should not be published without counterbalancing items.

According to an article written by John Cook in *Radar*, "the closest Young comes to explaining to me why he created Cryptome is this: 'I'm a pretty fucking angry guy'."[50]

A 2004 *New York Times* article said Cryptome was advising the public and tipping off terrorists. John Young acknowledged that New York City had to take down warning signs around gas mains after Cryptome posted pictures of their locations because they thought someone would blow them up.[51] The March 2005 issue of *Reader's Digest* focused on Cryptome in its regular "That's Outrageous" feature, relying on an interview with Young. It was highly critical of the site, asserting that it is an "invitation to terrorists" and that Young "may well have put lives at risk".[52][53]

In July 2010, Wikileaks accused Cryptome of carrying out a smear campaign against them.[54]

In 2014, Glenn Greenwald criticized Cryptome for posting a copy of his copyrighted book and doing "some repellent and demented things".[55]

See also

- Open government
- WikiLeaks

References

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3. "A Radical Pro-Transparency Website Is Raising Money To Annoy Glenn Greenwald".
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6. "How a White House Flickr Fail Outed Bin Laden Hunter 'CIA John' ".
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External links

- Official website (http://cryptome.org)
- LEAKSWIKI CONTINUES AND CRYPTOME INTERVIEW (https://civic.mit.edu/blog/shidash/leakswiki-continues-and-cryptome-interview)
- Why All the Snowden Docs Should Be Public: An Interview with Cryptome (Cox, Joseph, Vice/Motherboard, July 16, 2014) (http://motherboard.vice.com/read/cryptome-is-pushing-for-all-of-the-snowden-docs-to-be-made-public)
- Gawker Interview: John Young & Deborah Natsios – A Discussion With Cryptome (Adrian Chen, Gawker, June 19, 2013) (http://gawker.com/a-discussion-with-cryptome-514154708)
- Older, quieter than WikiLeaks, Cryptome perseveres (Associated Press, Mar. 9, 2013 (http://bigstory.ap.org/article/older-quieter-wikileaks-cryptome-perseveres)
- Young and Natsios radio interview (http://www.2600.com/offthehook/2012/0212.html) with Emmanuel Goldstein on *Off The Hook*. (February 2012, WBAI)
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- An Excerpt From 'This Machine Kills Secrets': Meet The 'Spiritual Godfather Of Online Leaking' (http://www.forbes.com/sites/andygreenberg/2012/09/17/an-excerpt-from-this-machine-kills-secrets-meet-the-spiritual-godfather-of-online-leaking/) (Greenberg, Andy, September 17, 2012)

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Categories: Technology websites │ Cypherpunks │ Internet properties established in 1996
│ 1996 establishments in the United States