



Written by [C. Mitchell Shaw](#) on May 16, 2017

Was Murdered DNC Staffer WikiLeaks' Source of Leaked DNC E-mails?

When 27-year-old Democratic National Committee (DNC) staffer Seth Rich was shot dead in Washington, D.C., on July 8, 2016 — just as the news of WikiLeaks publishing a trove of damning DNC e-mails was rocking the establishment — there were rumors and suggestions that Rich may have been the source of the leaked e-mails. Now, a private investigator says there is evidence that shows he was.



Police said the death of Rich was the result of a robbery in an area of the city with escalating levels of crime, including armed robbery. But when Rich was found shot twice in the back at 4:20 a.m., nothing was missing: He still had his watch, phone, and wallet. His father said, “If it was a robbery — it failed because he still has his watch, he still has his money — he still has his credit cards, still had his phone so it was a wasted effort except we lost a life.”

Many speculated at the time that Rich may have been involved in leaking the DNC e-mails to WikiLeaks and may have been on his way to the FBI office to blow an even bigger whistle when he was killed. Then, one month after Rich’s murder, Julian Assange, the founder and editor-in-chief of WikiLeaks, [appeared on the Dutch television program *Nieuwsuur*](#) to discuss the DNC leaks and said:

Whistleblowers go to significant efforts to get us material and often very significant risks. As a 27 year-old, works for the DNC, was shot in the back, murdered just a few weeks ago for unknown reasons as he was walking down the street in Washington.

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When asked to clarify, Assange said, “So... I’m suggesting that our sources take risks and they become concerned to see things occurring like that.” Pressed as to whether he was saying Rich was the source, Assange answered, “We don’t comment on who our sources are.” When asked why he would “make the suggestion” about Rich, Assange came closer than ever to implying that there was a connection. “Because we have to understand how high the stakes are in the United States and that our sources are — our sources face serious risks,” Assange said, adding, “That’s why they come to us, so we can protect their anonymity.”

WikiLeaks also offered a \$20,000 reward for information leading to a conviction in the Seth Rich case. When Fox News reported on the private investigator’s claims Monday, Julian Assange retweeted the story.

The establishment, major media, and Rich’s family dismissed the possibility of a connection. When The Gateway Pundit [reported](#) on Assange’s statement above, the family reached out through a spokesperson to ask that a statement be added to the article. After expressing that the “Rich family is so heartened by the outpouring of support and love that they have felt over the past few weeks as they continue to come to terms with this terrible tragedy,” the statement says:



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The family welcomes any and all information that could lead to the identification of the individuals responsible, and certainly welcomes contributions that could lead to new avenues of investigation. That said, some are attempting to politicize this horrible tragedy, and in their attempts to do so, are actually causing more harm than good and impeding on the ability for law enforcement to properly do their job. For the sake of finding Seth's killer, and for the sake of giving the family the space they need at this terrible time, they are asking for the public to refrain from pushing unproven and harmful theories about Seth's murder.

Of course, the idea that Rich's murder was a way of both silencing him and sending a message to anyone else who may consider opening the Pandora's box of evil DNC secrets would only be at odds with the goal of "finding Seth's killer" if it is a wild goose chase. If it is true, it is the surest path to solving his murder.

Monday, Fox News [reported](#) that Rod Wheeler, a private investigator working for the Rich family, has said that the laptop computer belonging to Seth Rich shows that he had been in contact with WikiLeaks. Wheeler is a former D.C. police homicide detective who claims that "there is a cover-up and the police department has been told to back down from the investigation," according to Fox News.

Citing an unnamed source "inside the police department," Wheeler — who has been investigating for the family and was paid by an unnamed third party — claims that the laptop "absolutely" shows communications between Rich and WikiLeaks. He also said his source at the police department told him that there is an active effort to avoid following the evidence:

I have a source inside the police department that has looked at me straight in the eye and said, "Rod, we were told to stand down on this case and I can't share any information with you." Now, that is highly unusual for a murder investigation, especially from a police department. Again, I don't think it comes from the chief's office, but I do believe there is a correlation between the mayor's office and the DNC and that is the information that will come out [Tuesday].

Wheeler has not been allowed to examine the laptop. In fact, he hasn't even seen it. As part of the "cover up" he alleges, the FBI tells him the D.C. police have the laptop and the D.C. police tell him the FBI has it.

The Rich family did not respond to Fox News. Instead, the family provided a [statement](#) to BuzzFeed, saying:

As we've seen through the past year of unsubstantiated claims, we see no facts, we have seen no evidence, we have been approached with no emails and only learned about this when contacted by the press. Even if tomorrow, an email was found, it is not a high enough bar of evidence to prove any interactions as emails can be altered and we've seen that those interested in pushing conspiracies will stop at nothing to do so. We are a family who is committed to facts, not fake evidence that surfaces every few months to fill the void and distract law enforcement and the general public from finding Seth's murderers. The services of the private investigator who spoke to the press [were] offered to the Rich family and paid for by a third party, and contractually [the investigator] was barred from speaking to press or anyone outside of law enforcement or the family unless explicitly authorized by the family.

While one can certainly understand the family's position, it does not necessarily follow that they are correct. On one hand, the statement from the family dismisses as "fake evidence" — driven by "those interested in pushing conspiracies" — even the possibility that Rich's murder was related to the



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WikiLeaks disclosures. On the other hand, the statement asserts that “even if tomorrow, an email was found” showing communication between Rich and WikiLeaks, they would dismiss its evidentiary value because “emails can be altered” and “those interested in pushing conspiracies will stop at nothing to do so.” To dispute what they see as one conspiracy theory, the family is promoting another conspiracy theory: that someone would tamper with e-mails to create “fake evidence” pointing to someone in the DNC as Rich’s murderer.

The liberal establishment press will likely make more out of the family’s statement than they will out of the investigator’s claims. And while — in the absence of evidence — that is fair game, what is not fair game is the idea that any evidence that points to someone at the DNC should be dismissed as “fake.”

If it does turn out that Seth Rich was the source of the DNC leaks, that piece of evidence would certainly point to the DNC. Besides, it would not be the first time someone who crossed the DNC or the Clintons died under suspicious circumstances. Perhaps the most famous example is longtime Hillary Clinton confidant and attorney Vince Foster, whose name is now used as a [verb](#) to refer to someone whose murder is made to look like a suicide.

Image of WikiLeaks’ logo: [Wikileaks’ website](#)



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