

Name \_\_\_\_\_

## Silk Road: The Dark Web's Underground Marketplace and the Story of Ross Ulbricht

### Open-Ended Response Answer Key

1. The Silk Road had a significant impact on the dark web and online privacy. It sparked debates about internet freedom and government surveillance. Some argued that it provided a platform for individuals to exercise their rights to privacy and free trade, while others contended that it facilitated illegal activities and endangered public safety. The Silk Road's takedown raised questions about the limits of online anonymity and the ability of law enforcement to police the dark web.
2. Ethical and legal dilemmas surrounding the Silk Road revolved around conflicting values. Supporters saw it as a beacon of internet freedom, challenging the control of centralized authorities. Critics, on the other hand, pointed to the marketplace's role in illegal drug trade and other illicit activities. The Silk Road forced a reevaluation of traditional notions of online commerce, leading to discussions about responsible online conduct and the regulation of dark web spaces.
3. The Silk Road's legacy endures in the dark web's evolution and the broader use of cryptocurrencies. While the original Silk Road was taken down, numerous successor marketplaces have emerged, and cryptocurrencies like Bitcoin continue to play a role in online transactions. The Silk Road's rise and fall served as a case study for both cybersecurity experts and law enforcement agencies, influencing their strategies in navigating the dark web landscape.
4. The sentencing of Ross Ulbricht to life in prison without parole remains a subject of debate. Some argue that the punishment was justifiable given the scale and nature of the illegal activities facilitated by the Silk Road. Others contend that it was overly harsh, considering Ulbricht's age and the absence of physical harm to individuals resulting directly from his actions. The case highlights broader questions about sentencing practices, especially in cases involving the dark web and digital crimes.

