

THE PERVERTED ELON MUSK FAMILY SEX CULT



[Elon Musk](#) has not been shy about putting much of his life on public display. The tech billionaire posts daily on his social network X, has cooperated with two biographies and often speaks on podcasts and at conferences.

But there is one part of his life that he has not revealed much about — his longtime estrangement from his father, [Errol Musk](#), who has become increasingly outspoken about his family and business ventures tied to the Musk name.

A New York Times investigation found that a significant factor in Elon Musk's rupture with his father stems from accusations against Errol Musk of child sex abuse. The allegations have repeatedly spilled over into Elon Musk's life as relatives have contacted him for help and he has sometimes taken action to intercede, according to personal letters, emails and interviews with family members.

The family's troubles have entangled Elon Musk in a painful three-decade multigenerational saga that continues to trail him. The fallout has kept the 54-year-old mogul tethered to South Africa, where he was born and where Errol Musk lives, even as he has built a business empire in the United States and briefly ascended to political power as a [close adviser to President Trump](#).

The allegations against Errol Musk involve five of his children and stepchildren, whom he was accused of abusing in South Africa and California, according to police and court records, personal correspondence, social workers and interviews with family members.

The earliest accusation was in 1993 when Errol Musk's stepdaughter, then 4 years old, told relatives he had touched her at the family house. A decade later, the stepdaughter said she caught him sniffing her dirty underwear. Some family members have also accused Errol Musk of abusing two of his daughters

and a stepson. And as recently as 2023, family members and a social worker attempted to intervene after his then 5-year-old son said his father had groped his buttocks.

Three separate police investigations were opened, according to police and court records, as well as family members. Two of the inquiries ended, while it's unclear what happened in the third. Errol Musk, 79, has not been convicted of any crime.

The abuse allegations have caused strife within the Musk family, with some relatives turning to Elon Musk — who is Errol Musk's eldest child — for help. Around 2010, one relative wrote Elon Musk a five-page letter about some of the accusations and implored him to intervene.

“We really need your advice, help and guidance in these matters because we daily see these children suffer,” the relative wrote in the letter, which was viewed by The Times.

It was unclear if Elon Musk read the letter. But an assistant for him messaged a family member after relatives wrote to him about the abuse allegations. The billionaire has also provided financial support for his stepfamily and siblings from his father's third marriage. He once tried to keep those family members in California, where they would be far from Errol Musk. He was not involved in the police investigations in South Africa.

Errol Musk, who has at least nine children and stepchildren and has been married to three women, maintains a powerful grip over much of the family. The former stepdaughter, whom he was accused of touching when she was 4, said she later had a child with him when she was in her 20s. She has struggled with drug use, while her mother — who married Errol Musk twice — has grappled with mental health issues.

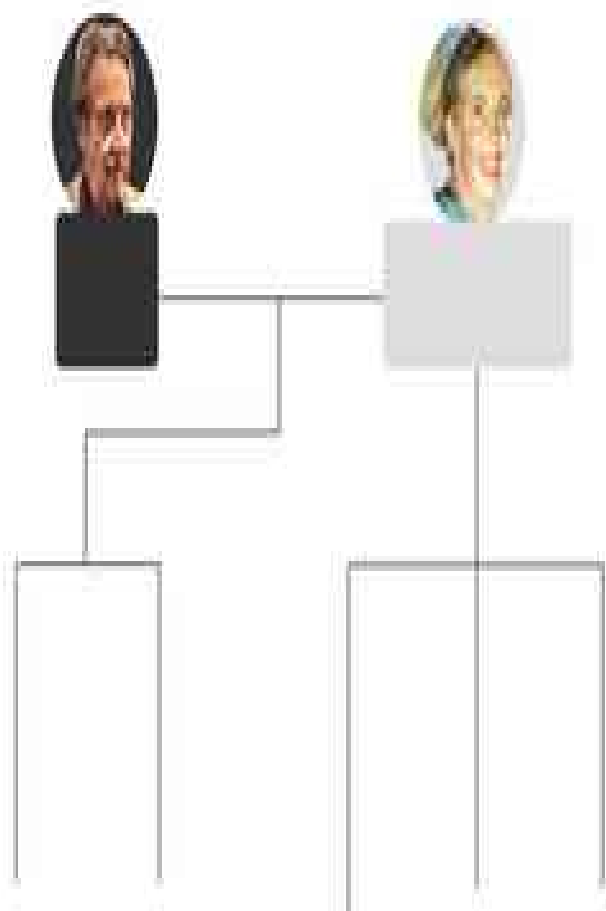
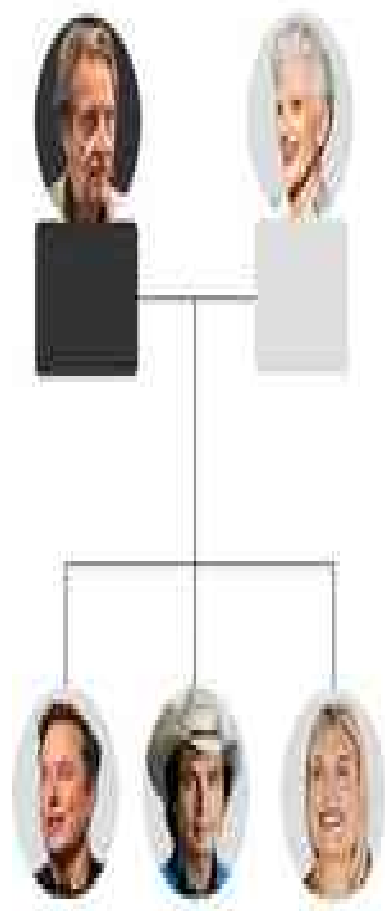
Errol Musk has “left a massive wound in our family,” Elmie Smit, whose sister was his third wife, said in her first on-the-record interview about the allegations. She said she has emailed Elon Musk about some of the allegations and sometimes heard from an assistant.

In response to questions from The Times, Errol Musk said “the reports are false and nonsense in the extreme.” He said that the accusations were concocted by family members who were “putting the children up to say false things” and that they were trying to get money from Elon Musk.

In one email to The Times, Errol Musk also claimed to be aware of only one abuse allegation, but in the same message offered explanations for the circumstances around two others.

He added that he has a good relationship with Elon Musk and they “are very close.”

Elon Musk and his personal lawyer did not respond to requests for comment. In 2017, the billionaire teared up when he told [Rolling Stone](#) magazine that his father had done “almost every evil thing you could possibly think of.” In a 2023 authorized biography written by Walter Isaacson, Elon Musk said he does not communicate with Errol Musk.



Stepson

By Ashley Wu

The Times reviewed court and police documents from jurisdictions in California and South Africa, as well as more than 50 emails, text messages, personal notes and letters, which detailed certain accusations more than others. The police and courts in South Africa and Los Angeles declined to release some records, citing children's privacy. Other records could not be located.

The Times also interviewed family members, social workers and people close to the Musks. Some requested anonymity because of the sensitive situations, while others feared retribution. Other family members declined to comment or did not respond to requests for comment. The Times does not name children in sexual abuse cases.

In recent months, some family members have been angered by Errol Musk's apparent attempts to capitalize on Elon Musk's fame. Errol Musk has [said](#) he worked on a meme coin called MuskIt and planned to build a Musk tower in Dubai. (He has since told The Times he was "not associated" with the projects.)

All the while, some family members said, he has papered over or lied about their family history. Ms. Smit said she decided to speak up after Errol Musk was [interviewed in February](#) on a South African podcast called "Wide Awake," during which he rambled about his life without mentioning any turmoil.

In June, [Ms. Smit spoke anonymously to the podcast](#) host, Joshua Rubin, describing some of the abuse allegations, including the 1993 incident with Errol Musk's 4-year-old stepdaughter.

The stepdaughter, who is now 37 and has several children, publicly addressed the situation for the first time with The Times. She did not respond to questions about the abuse allegations involving Errol Musk but said she and her children did not live with him.

"My kids are safe and looked after," she said.

She said her main financial support comes from Elon Musk, who sends money monthly and has bought her a car. "Elon has always been there," she said.



Elon Musk in Washington in March. He has said he does not communicate with his father. Haiyun Jiang for The New York Times

Three marriages

Errol Musk long seemed to be a man on the rise.

Born and raised in Pretoria, South Africa's executive capital, he gained prominence as a businessman in his 20s and 30s, including as a partner in an engineering company. At one point, he was a Pretoria City Council member.

In 1970, he married Maye Haldeman, a dietitian and model. They had three children: Elon; [Tosca Musk](#), who now runs a streaming service for romance films; and [Kimbal Musk](#), who became an entrepreneur.

In 1979, Errol Musk and [Maye Musk](#) divorced. She wrote in a 2019 memoir that he had physically and verbally abused her. Errol Musk denied the abuse to The Times.

Elon Musk, too, had a tense relationship with his father. In the 2023 authorized biography, he recounted how he had stood up to a school bully as a child and lost a fight, after which Errol Musk berated him for an hour.

"He lost it, went ballistic, as he often did," Elon Musk said. "He had zero compassion."

While he chose to live with Errol Musk through much of high school after his parents divorced, Elon Musk later told his biographer it had been a terrible idea. "I didn't yet know how horrible he was," he said.



Maye Musk at an event to celebrate Tosca Musk's streaming service in Los Angeles in 2022. In a 2019 memoir, Maye Musk wrote that Errol Musk had physically and verbally abused her. Mark Abramson for The New York Times

Errol Musk was briefly married a second time, to Sue Wilson, a model. In 1989, Elon Musk, then 17, left South Africa for North America. His brother and sister followed, as did Maye Musk.

Errol Musk wed a third time around 1992. His bride was Heide-Mari Bezuidenhout, who was about 19 years younger than he was. She had three young children — two boys and a girl — with her first husband, who had died in a car accident. Ms. Bezuidenhout struggled with her mental health, family members said. She and Errol Musk soon had a daughter.

In 1993, Ms. Bezuidenhout's 4-year-old daughter from her first marriage told her aunt, Ms. Smit, that Errol Musk had placed her on a row of trash cans at the family house in Pretoria and touched her. Ms. Smit said she and other relatives immediately contacted the authorities.

The police opened an investigation. Family members provided a case number for the incident that the South African police confirmed. The Times filed a public records request for the case file in July; the police have not decided on the request.

Ms. Bezuidenhout later withdrew charges against Errol Musk as part of a divorce settlement, which included a house, car and monthly allowance, according to family members and the 2010 letter from the relative seeking Elon Musk's help.

After the divorce, Errol Musk said that a judge had granted him custody of their young daughter and that two judges rejected the abuse allegations. Ms. Bezuidenhout could visit only with a social worker

present, he said. The Times searched for court records and the judges, but did not find records to verify Errol Musk's claims.

In 1996, Ms. Bezuidenhout briefly married and divorced a third husband. She then entered a psychiatric hospital after suffering from depression, family members said. Her three children from her first marriage went into an independent welfare home.

Around 1999, she remarried Errol Musk, who retained custody of their daughter. Her three other children left welfare care in 2000. The next year, Errol Musk and Ms. Bezuidenhout had another daughter.

Coming to Los Angeles

By 2002, Elon Musk was a millionaire after a Silicon Valley start-up he founded, which became PayPal, was bought by eBay. Then living in Los Angeles, he established the rocket maker [SpaceX](#).

That year, Errol Musk, Ms. Bezuidenhout and their family traveled to California to see Elon Musk, who bought them a \$2 million house in Malibu.

Within months, the situation unraveled.



SpaceX's offices in Hawthorne, Calif. Elon Musk's father, stepmother, step siblings and half sisters visited him in California in 2002. Daniel Cole/Reuters

One day, Errol Musk's family was heading to a movie when his stepdaughter, then 14, said she had forgotten her sweatshirt. She returned to her bedroom for it and found her stepfather sniffing her dirty

underwear, according to family members and personal notes. The family called the police. Elon Musk was also alerted.

Family members said they filed a complaint with child protective services in Los Angeles. A department spokeswoman, citing victim privacy, declined to comment. The Los Angeles Police Department also denied a records request, saying investigation records were exempt from disclosure.

A restraining order was issued against Errol Musk, three people with knowledge of the filing said. Ms. Bezuidenhout petitioned for divorce in Los Angeles Superior Court citing “irreconcilable differences” and requested custody of the children, according to the filing. The petition was dismissed in 2009 for inaction.

Errol Musk denied the accusation. He said he had been cleaning up his stepdaughter’s room after returning from a trip and had found the house “in a terrible state.”

The stepdaughter said while she was in Malibu, Elon Musk took her and her siblings on weekly outings if they performed well at school. He told them they needed to read a lot of books if they wanted to make it in life, she said.

After the abuse allegations, Elon Musk moved his father to a boat in Los Angeles and then back to South Africa. Errol Musk said he left the United States of his own accord and has said the estrangement from his eldest son began around then.

Elon Musk wanted to keep the children in California to protect them from his father, family members and friends said. He explored seeking legal guardianship of them, they said.

Back in South Africa, Errol Musk had become [financially reliant](#) on his eldest sons. He emailed Elon Musk asking for money.

“I am now totally dependent on your card here,” Errol Musk wrote in the email, which was obtained by The Times.

Kimbal Musk, who was copied, replied, “Financially, this has been horrible, but much worse for Elon than you. Not just in absolute dollars (which are considerable) but in the pain and frustration.”



Kimbal Musk, Elon Musk's brother and an entrepreneur, in 2017. Andrea Morales for The New York Times

The scariest thing that I've learned is that the kids preferred living in the children's home than with either you or Heide," Kimbal Musk added, referring to the independent welfare home.

In the 2023 biography, Elon Musk told his biographer that his father had been "uncomfortably attentive" to his stepdaughter at the time and that he was furious about Errol Musk's "inappropriate behavior."

'A very difficult situation'

In 2003, Ms. Bezuidenhout and four of her children voluntarily returned to South Africa, which they considered home, family members said. (Her eldest son followed later.) She then divorced Errol Musk for a second time, in 2005. The next year, her younger son, age 16, died in a car accident near Malmesbury, South Africa. She wrote to Elon Musk around 2007 that she was "in a very bad situation" and living in a house with no bathroom or kitchen.

Elon Musk, who became chief executive of the electric carmaker Tesla in 2008, paid a contractor to fix Ms. Bezuidenhout's house and build a fence around it, family members said. He also paid for private school for his half sisters, according to emails.

At the same time, the former stepdaughter was descending into drugs, which she said was fueled by anguish over her brother's death. She spent time in jail on charges that she stole jewelry from Errol Musk and Ms. Bezuidenhout to pay for drugs, according to family notes.

By 2009, Ms. Bezuidenhout had reconnected with Errol Musk, bringing her children back into his orbit. One night when the former stepdaughter, then 21, was home from college, Errol Musk kissed her and stuck his tongue into her mouth, she said in an application for an interim protection order.

“I don’t want him to be allowed to come close to me,” the former stepdaughter wrote in the interim protection order, which she was granted by the Magistrate’s Court for the district of Stellenbosch.

In his response to The Times, Errol Musk said his former stepdaughter pounced on him in a spare bedroom while he was sleeping. She “inappropriately kissed me,” he said.



Heide-Mari Bezuidenhout and Errol Musk around 2001. They were married and divorced twice.

In the interim protection order, the former stepdaughter also directly accused Errol Musk of sexually abusing his two daughters with Ms. Bezuidenhout and his stepson years before he had died, without providing details. The letter Ms. Bezuidenhout wrote to Elon Musk around 2007 also referenced abuse allegations by one of her two daughters with Errol Musk. The relative who wrote the letter to Elon Musk around 2010 noted the same allegations as the interim protection order.

Errol Musk called the accusations that he had abused his stepson “nonsense” and that he had abused his two daughters “absurd.”

The former stepdaughter dropped out of college and fell further into drugs, according to family members and family notes. She told The Times the trauma she experienced growing up led to her drug use.

In 2011, Ms. Smit, the sister of Ms. Bezuidenhout, wrote to Elon Musk for help. His assistant replied, saying she had spoken with the billionaire and “it goes without saying that you are all in a very difficult situation there.” The assistant called the circumstances of Errol Musk’s former stepdaughter “dire” and said Elon Musk would pay for her to stay in a rehabilitation clinic.

The former stepdaughter went to rehab for a week or two, family members said. For a time, she became homeless, they said.

30,000 rand

Errol Musk’s former stepdaughter later reached out to him for support. By then, she was about 29. They became intimate, Errol Musk said in a 2018 interview with [The Sunday Times](#).

He and his former stepdaughter were “lonely, lost people,” he said. “One thing led to another — you can call it God’s plan or nature’s plan.”

Errol Musk has said in interviews that he had not seen his former stepdaughter for years, which family members dispute. He has also said that he and his former stepdaughter had children together in 2017 and [2019](#), but told The Times it was “none of your business” how many children he had with her.

The former stepdaughter said she has one child with Errol Musk. She has been clean from drugs for several years, she added, with her life changing after having children. Family members said she has accepted some financial support from Errol Musk for their son.



Errol Musk in 2022. Elon Musk has posted on social media that he and his brother, Kimbal Musk, financially support their father. Gianluigi Guercia/Agence France-Presse — Getty Images

In 2022, their son — then about 5 — said he had been groped by his father, family members said.

“He said, ‘dad gropes his behind,’” Ms. Bezuidenhout, the boy’s grandmother, texted a relative around 2023. “He screamed, ‘no dad.’” Relatives contacted the police, including as recently as last year, according to text messages and emails.

A social worker who was involved said in an interview that she tried meeting with family members to discuss what happened, but they would not cooperate. The social worker called the police.

The police opened an investigation, said family members, who provided a case number. A police spokeswoman confirmed the case number was for an investigation into child sexual abuse allegations but declined to name those involved. Prosecutors dropped the case because of insufficient evidence, the spokeswoman said.

In response to The Times, Errol Musk said, “There was no evidence because this is nonsense.”

Around 2023, Elon Musk began paying 30,000 rand a month, about \$1,700, to support his former stepsister, family members said.

That year, he also made a rare comment about Errol Musk [on social media](#). In reply to a post about his financial background, Elon Musk said that one condition that he and Kimbal Musk had in supporting their father was that Errol Musk would not engage in bad behavior.

Their father “nonetheless did,” Elon Musk wrote.

Zimasa Matiwane contributed reporting from Pretoria, South Africa. Kirsten Noyes contributed research.

Elon Musk and Family

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[Sept. 5, 2025](#)

[On the Campaign Trail, Elon Musk Juggled Drugs and Family Drama](#)

[May 30, 2025](#)

[Do Elon Musk and His Father Get Along?](#)

[Feb. 21, 2025](#)

[Elon Musk Wants Big Families. He Bought a Secret Compound for His.](#)

[Oct. 29, 2024](#)

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