

Foreword

It has been said that a cynic is an individual who knows the price of everything and the value of nothing. Cyberbullying is in part a form of cynicism. But the victim or the critic of cyberbullying might well ask the cyberbully if the assertion he or she made is true, real, or valuable or not. It is a social nuisance that can be used in many ways and in many walks of life.

In the generation before ours, traditional bullying took the form of open verbal or even physical abuse. At present, however, it consists mostly of hostile electronic communication of one sort or another that can be subject to criminal or civil suits. It has become a tool for misguided individuals to vent their spleen against others. In fact, students of social pathology believe it is a major source of disharmony within the American borders and outside them as well. Cyberbullying's unsavory reputation is due to its use in spreading untruths or malicious propaganda about others.

During the previous generation, a bully could function on a preschool playground and the teacher in charge could easily identify and discipline the bully. Of course, with contemporary cyberbullying, this is no longer true in most instances unless the cyberbully can be identified through failure to conceal his or her location.

What are the causes of cyberbullying other than availability of the necessary technology and access to it? In short, what is the nature of the social order and pathologies responsible for cyberbullying? Society can often alter such behavior, but it still requires explanation if it is to be outlawed and a stop put to it.

Legal statements resemble philosophical ones in that both have a basis in theory in the final analysis. In the case of the former, it consists of three claims: that it is empirical, ontological, and axiological, meaning that it is true, real, and valuable

or not. Much the same should be asked of a cyberbully. Unfortunately, most of them do not aim at philosophical coherence, but at humiliating or degrading their target.

The reader will find the meaning, identity, and consequences of cyberbullying inside the covers of this book, *Cyberbullying Law*. The American legal system can cease to be obscure and will be illuminated by the skill and knowledge of its author as shown here.

—Dr. Rick Tilman