

An Examination of Cyber-libel in the Philippines: A Study of the Current State of Online Defamation

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While it is admitted that technological innovations have made communications easier than the time when the Internet was virtually inexistent, this Article discusses one of the consequences of having a means of communication that is very convenient and accessible to practically anyone.

Traditionally, the publication of offensive words could constitute a criminal offense if it falls within the ambit of the meaning of the Philippines' penal laws. Due to technological progress, libel can now be committed through the Internet and aptly denominated as "cyber-libel."

The Authors analyze in this Article the notable cases that may or may not have reached the Supreme Court but necessarily revolve around the issue of cyber-libel. Basically, the Authors examine the seemingly inconsistent treatment of the Philippine courts regarding this form of libel.

Moreover, the Authors also examined how foreign jurisdictions like the United States, United Kingdom, and Japan treat libel of this nature.

Ultimately, with or without a special penal law such as the Cybercrime Prevention Act of 2012, the Authors declare that cyber-libel is here to stay and actionable against those who take advantage of cyberspace to publish materials that are injurious to natural and juridical persons alike.