

MOHAMMAD TANVIR HOSSAIN, CYBERCRIME: TECHNOLOGY TURNS INTO A CURSE (Mohammad Tanvir Hossain, 2015)

2014, Mohammad Tanvir Hossain  
ASIN: B00TJV360C  
Price: \$3.00  
Page Length: 30 Pages

Keywords: Cyber Crime, Criminal Law, Technology, Computers

Reviewed by Gabrielle King  
Journal of High Technology Law  
Suffolk University Law School

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### **Cybercrime: Technology Turns into a Curse**

*“Computer technology is at its peak this century. We can do anything with the computer and so can the cyber criminals.”*<sup>1</sup>

Technology has advanced drastically over the years. Specifically, computers continue to change and they are now more accessible to individuals than ever. Today, there are personal computers, tablets, and advanced cell phones that essentially function as computers. In addition, Internet speed is faster, making it easier for people to browse the Internet from any location with their personal computers and devices. In *Cybercrimes: Technology Turns into a Curse*, Mohammad Tanvir Hossain explores the use of advancing technology by cyber criminals and the numerous ways in which individuals can use technology to commit crimes. Hossain suggests that criminals have “made use of every technological development to achieve their targets” and therefore, all individuals must be cautious and aware while using technology.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> MOHAMMAD TANVIR HOSSAIN, CYBERCRIME: TECHNOLOGY TURNS INTO A CURSE loc. 140 (2014) (ebook).

<sup>2</sup> See HOSSAIN, *supra* note 1, at 140.

While Hossain generally focuses on criminal law, he specifically discusses crimes that are committed with computers or through the use of technology. He begins his book with a definition of cybercrime and the different ways that these crimes can be classified in Chapter One. He then moves into the history of cybercrime in Chapter Two, detailing the ways in which these crimes have changed over time. It can be inferred from his history descriptions that as technology has changed, cybercrimes have altered as well. For example, Hossain describes how in the 1970's, computer technology was being used in administration and business and this led to financial cybercrimes such as fraud.<sup>3</sup> Hossain ends this chapter with a section titled "The menace of cybercrime in the 21<sup>st</sup> century," where he asserts that cyber criminals are making "full use of the technological development."<sup>4</sup> This section sets the overall theme of his book, the idea that cybercrime has become more frequent, dominant, and easier to commit in today's society. Therefore, Hossain stresses the importance of being aware and cautious of these criminal activities.

Chapter Three focuses on the specific effects of cybercrime and the lasting impact that these crimes have on the lives of victims. Hossain highlights the danger of identity theft, the possibility of financial loss, and the potential for piracy. To illustrate this point, Hossain asserts that "[a] recent report says ... over 1.5 million individuals become the victim of cyber fraud every single day," resulting in financial loss.<sup>5</sup> In Chapter Four, Hossain lists the recent strategies used by criminals to successfully commit their crimes. Their main strategy is to take advantage of places in the cyber world that lack proper security but also provide an opportunity for a large profit.<sup>6</sup> These cyber "fields" include social networking, smart appliances, the cloud, android

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<sup>3</sup> See HOSSAIN, *supra* note 1, at 121.

<sup>4</sup> See HOSSAIN, *supra* note 1, at 140.

<sup>5</sup> See HOSSAIN, *supra* note 1, at 158.

<sup>6</sup> See HOSSAIN, *supra* note 1, at 172.

devices, Java, and small, vulnerable businesses.<sup>7</sup> Being aware of these strategies and types of devices or programs that are targeted more frequently by cyber criminals can aid in prevention.

In Chapter Five, Hossain describes the different types of cyber criminals and asserts that these individuals work together as part of a larger, criminal organization. For example, “money mules” are the ones responsible for managing bank accounts and wiring transfers.<sup>8</sup> Tellers transfer and launder illegal money using “digital and foreign exchange methods,” while there are also leaders of the organization who assemble teams of cyber criminals.<sup>9</sup> Furthermore, hackers are now considered a community, and different types of hackers, such as White Hat hackers and Grey Hat hackers, perform different roles in committing and preventing cybercrime.<sup>10</sup> In the next couple of chapters, the realities of cybercrime are discussed. Cybercrimes are unpredictable and typically go unreported, which only adds to the difficulty of locating these criminals.<sup>11</sup> Hossain also describes the possible punishments for committing certain types of cybercrime in Chapter Seven. The author also provides a chapters on “how to stay safe”, the potential benefits of cybercrime are explained, and Hossain finishes his book with a chapter on the future of cybercrime.

Hossain portrays the difficulties surrounding cybercrime and the exploitation of advancing technology to further the criminals’ activities. While technology has improved significantly, criminals can hack and steal from unsuspecting victims much easier than in the past. The difference between criminals and cyber criminals, who either target computers or use computers to commit illegal activity, is their unknown location and the way in which they

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<sup>7</sup> See HOSSAIN, *supra* note 1, at 172, 190.

<sup>8</sup> See HOSSAIN, *supra* note 1, at 207.

<sup>9</sup> See HOSSAIN, *supra* note 1, at 207.

<sup>10</sup> See HOSSAIN, *supra* note 1, at 241.

<sup>11</sup> See HOSSAIN, *supra* note 1, at 276.

manipulate innocent computer users who lack knowledge of these crimes.<sup>12</sup> Hossain's thesis is valid and his book is very informative. He describes the basics of cybercrime, the different types of cybercrime, the way in which these crimes are committed, and how to protect yourself when using the cyber world. He supports his thesis by explaining the history of cybercrime and how this area is vastly different in today's society with the daily use of computer technology and the Internet. Hossain further notes the ways in which criminals exploit new technology, devices, and programs because of their lack of proper security. This argument is given more validity because of the numerous data breaches and hacks that have occurred within the past few years.

This book is outlined with logical, clear chapters. Hossain starts at the beginning with definitions, the history, and proceeds to describe the world of cybercrime in a systematic way. While the book is short in length, it is concise. Furthermore, it is readable and provides helpful information. Hossain appears to be targeting a wide audience and successfully reaches individuals who do not have a lot of knowledge in computers and technology. He lists specific methods and steps people can take to protect themselves. He also makes readers aware of the tricks that cyber criminals use online and provides information on how to avoid falling for them. His book is more practical, providing an overall guide on cybercrimes while simultaneously stressing the importance of awareness in order to prevent crime and all of the damage and loss that these crimes can cause. He does not comment much about the law behind these crimes, other than describing the punishments of fines and imprisonment, depending on which crime was committed.

Although he provides a practical, concise guide on cybercrimes and the impact technology has had on this area, he does not provide many sources for his data. A couple of

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<sup>12</sup> See HOSSAIN, *supra* note 1, at 276.

times, Hossain relies on certain reports but does not cite these reports or mention where they have originated. While his assumptions and oversights appear to be innocent, his propositions are not well supported with statistical facts, data, or sources. Although he might lack support for some of his propositions, the book certainly provides helpful knowledge on this topic. It might not be an essential read for lawyers, however, prosecutors who are assigned to cybercrimes may find this book helpful in explaining the different types of crimes and how they are committed through, or with the use of computers. Hossain's *Cyber Crime: Technology Turns Into A Curse* successfully demonstrates the complexity of cybercrimes in a world with continuously advancing technology.