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### **Summary of doctoral dissertation**

#### ***Cyber violence against women. Legal and criminological issues***

The purpose of the dissertation is to analyze the legal and criminological aspects of cyber violence against women, taking into account the sociological, psychological and cultural context of the phenomenon. The thesis primarily deals with the new forms of gender-based violence online. The aim of the study was to present the current state of knowledge about the phenomenon, and examine it in the context of criminal law and selected theories of criminal behavior. The dissertation also presents the results of empirical research conducted by the author on the Internet discourse about women.

The thesis is divided into six chapters. Chapter I focuses on the terminology used to describe cyber violence against women. The goal of this part is the clarification of terminological confusion concerning the inconsistent use of terms describing the phenomenon. The first part of the work ends with a comprehensive definition of cyber violence against women, proposed by the author.

Chapter II presents the typology of the forms of online violence. They were divided into three groups: gender-based hate speech (verbal and graphic), individually targeted attacks of a sexual or pornographic nature, and Internet harassment. The Chapter contains a comprehensive description of behaviors that can be considered as cyber violence. Particular importance was attached to the description of new forms of such violence, the emergence of which is related to the dynamic development of the Internet. Among them there are acts qualified as crimes under Polish law, as well as other acts which are not punishable, yet are undesirable.

Chapter III contains a review of theories of crime and deviant behavior (sociological and psychological) which can be used to explain the causes of cyber violence against women. It focuses on the question whether the theses proposed by the authors of these theories can be applied directly to the deviant behavior on the Internet.

Chapter IV concentrates on an overview of the law provisions which can be applied in response to the acts of cyber violence, taking into account Polish and international law, as well as regulations in force in other selected countries. The activities of the UN, the Council of Europe and the European Union in the process of responding to cyber violence against women are presented in detail. The legal and non-legal initiatives that emerged in Great

Britain, France, Romania, Canada and Australia in response to the problem of online violence against women were presented and assessed. The description of the means of reaction available under Polish criminal law was supplemented with an analysis of the judicature of courts concerning the violent acts committed via Internet. The existing legislation gaps were indicated and *de lege ferenda* postulates were formulated, in particular regarding the modification of the legal provisions related to the so-called "hate crimes" described in articles 119, 256 and 257 of the Polish Criminal Code. When discussing the necessary reforms, the importance of implementing mechanisms ensuring the effective application of existing laws was also emphasized.

Chapter V describes the obligations of intermediary service providers related to the prevention of and reaction to cyber violence and contains the results of an empirical study - an analysis of the provisions of the Terms of Service governing the most popular social networking sites. The aim of this study was to verify whether these documents provide complete and adequate protection against attacks by other users. The challenges related to the process of identifying perpetrators of crimes committed via Internet were also indicated.

The dissertation ends with the description of the study carried out in order to analyze the violent Internet discourse on women, included in Chapter VI. The assumption was that the behavior of the perpetrator of online violence is determined by the fact that the victim is a woman, gender being a factor shaping the act of violence and influencing its course. These assumptions were verified through the analysis of Internet users' comments on the so-called "Women's Strike" of 2016 and the #MeToo campaign of 2017, as well as a comparative analysis of the content of internet memes about women, in opposition to the content of memes related to men.

The analysis of the phenomenon of cyber violence was carried out using an interdisciplinary approach. The achievements of Polish and foreign doctrine were taken into account, with particular emphasis on the publications of researchers from the United States, Great Britain and France.

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