

More than 'Revenge Porn': Image-Based Sexual Abuse and the Reform of Irish Law

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Summary: In the past few years, there have been a worrying number of press reports detailing the extent and harms of 'revenge porn'. In response, governments across the world have begun to take action, often adopting new criminal laws. However, both the term 'revenge porn' and many of these new laws are limited and fail to cover the nature and breadth of this growing phenomenon. Accordingly, the current law reform discussions in Ireland are taking place at an opportune moment. Ireland has a real opportunity to learn from the mistakes of other jurisdictions and to introduce an effective package of measures to reduce the prevalence of these pernicious practices. But in doing so, it will be vital that law and policy looks beyond the paradigmatic example of 'revenge porn', where a vengeful ex-partner shares private sexual images without consent. To be truly comprehensive, and to 'future-proof' legislation in a context of rapidly changing technology, the legislation must encompass the range of activities increasingly understood and conceptualised as 'image-based sexual abuse'.

Keywords: Revenge porn, image-based sexual abuse, non-consensual pornography, online abuse, digital abuse.