

An analysis of an article on virtual stealing by alex weiss essays example

[Law](#), [Criminal Justice](#)



Although many will be surprised to hear, it is a fact now that stealing claims in courts get sophisticated and can include virtual thefts. The article by a student at Arizona State University Alex Weiss gives us an unusual stealing report how stolen amulet and shield caused a court investigation. Weiss informs that the Dutch Supreme court pleaded guilty a teenage boy for stealing two virtual items from a computer game called RunSpace. Virtual words are not familiar to me personally however the issue with prosecution for stealing virtual objects caught my eye for its uniqueness.

RunSpace is a free massively played video game and piracy is not a new phenomenon for it. As it is clear from the text, these days it is possible to easily gain and lose ones virtual possessions. Even bribery happens there. The author confesses that he used to play another video game called EVE Online without any rules. As an experienced EVE-player he notes that in contrast to RunSpace, EVE allows thievery and other forbidden in real world actions. Therefore he does not agree with the decision of the Court. He argues that people should not be compensated for damage inflicted to their virtual world. Weiss adds that The developers of RuneScape didn't clearly state that the thief cannot steal those items as well as they did not refund the victim his item. Still, the author can see the point in this decision as he claims that many players' " hopes and dreams can be destroyed rapidly by another player who just wants to be a jerk"

The problem, as I can see it, is that the real and virtual laws conflicted in this case. The author is concerned about this and sees a danger in such course of events. He warns that video gaming might be completely controlled by a court soon.

In my opinion being judged for stealing an item in a video game is ridiculous and does not really make sense. Those games are not designed to teach morality. Also if the rules of the game are not clearly defined why one should be bothered with a stealing issue?! An online virtual world has its own rules and maybe soon there will be a separate branch of law dedicated to virtual prosecutions. But meanwhile a law suit that followed 13-years old boy's playing sounds a bit too harsh. Virtual items are not real life property, so there was no harm done to anybody in this case.

A catching attention moment is of the value of the stolen accessories. The court defined its value according to the time and energy spent to acquire it. But both of those are very relative characteristics and cannot be measured with money. If a person chooses to waste their time on a computer game it cannot be reimburse in case of a theft or other loss.