

# Douse the online flamers summary essay



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In "Douse the Online Flamers" Andrew Keen writes about individuals who choose to hide behind a facade in cyber crime. He goes on to speak of the unlawful acts inflicted upon innocent individuals of cyber space. Keen reflects on three major cases where cyber criminals are protected under the freedom of speech act while the innocent are left vulnerable. In all three cases, the judges failed the victims of unidentified slander.

In his article, Keen forcefully expresses his opinion on why he believes we, as Americans, should take a stand against the anonymity of today's internet tormenters because too many innocent lives are destroyed due to the cruel intentions of anonymous speech. There are many cases of cyber crime committed daily, but one specific case of cyber bullying has brought to question if the laws of today are effectively in place for cyber citizens. However, due to the suicide in the Meier verses Drew case, it did lead the authorities to take certain precautions and counter measures.

Though the Meier suicide was unfortunate, the case shed light upon the issue and, as Keen put it, made "officials get more serious about holding anonymous internet users accountable." As we read on about the other two cases, Keen is very careful to point out that even though these innocent victims' reputations were destroyed completely out of spite, the anonymous were still protected under Section 230 of the 1996 Communications Decency Act.

Under this act, innocent victims of the unidentified slander are not able to sue the internet service providers to get the names of the anonymous who damaged their reputation. This act states that websites and internet service

providers are not held accountable for what their users post on the websites. So trying to find the identity of an anonymous user in a lawsuit without being able to go through the internet service provider is nearly impossible. Keen revisits his main point by saying sooner or later the “ United States Supreme court will have to rethink the value of anonymous speech.

He proposes to introduce more punishment to those who intentionally devastate the lives of other individuals. Cyber bullies are able to terrorize anyone and hide behind protection of various acts and amendments. Innocent victims are left vulnerable with no support from the justice system and little to no motive to move on with their lives. It is up to all of us American citizens to make sure that we, as internet users, protect each other and refrain from cyber bullying.