

Legal Challenges in Assigning Criminal Liability to Digital Avatars for Sexual Offences in the Metaverse

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Abstract: *The rapid evolution of virtual reality (VR) and immersive digital environments, particularly the metaverse, is raising complex questions about law, liability, and the nature of personal identity in digital spaces. One of the most critical challenges is determining how to impose criminal liability for sexual crimes committed in the metaverse, where users interact through digital avatars. This issue requires grappling with the conceptual and legal challenges of according legal personality to avatars—representations of individuals in virtual environments—and establishing mechanisms for criminal responsibility. This article explores the multifaceted challenges posed by according legal personality to digital avatars for the purpose of imposing criminal liability for sexual crimes committed in the metaverse. The discussion will examine the legal, philosophical, technological, and practical issues surrounding the topic, providing an in-depth analysis of the challenges in regulating and enforcing criminal law in virtual worlds.*

Keywords: virtual reality