Chapter 2
The Deep Web and Children Cyber Exploitation:
Criminal Activities and Methods – Challenges of Investigation: Solutions

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ABSTRACT

The deep web has been announced by some as the last bastion of internet anonymity in an increasingly oppressive period, although others find it one of the worst sites on the internet. There are number of instances that have confirmed the misuse of deep web for conducting criminal and illegal practices in a secret way. This chapter provides a description of deep web and the different plugins used to navigate deep web pages. A summary of the different types of online child sexual exploitation that take place across the deep web is explored, as well as the complexities of investigation and response being discussed so that readers can become conscious of this form of sexual abuse.

INTRODUCTION

Dark Web is depicted as a hub of secret and criminal activities, like illegal trading, forums, and media exchange for pedophiles and radicals. In October 2013, with the takedown of the Web's Biggest Anonymous Drug Black Market (*'Silk Road'*) by the FBI, the Dark Web came to the attention of the large proportion of the people

DOI: 10.4018/978-1-7998-2360-5.ch002

(Ulbricht, 2011).The FBI in February 2015 took the largest darknet child pornography website *'Playpen'*, which hosted more than 23,000 sexually abusive photographs and videos of young children and had over 215,000 users (Cyrus, 2017).Amid the bombings in Paris, November 2015, ISIS has switched to the Dark Web to spread misinformation and propaganda in an obvious attempt to shield the identity of members of the organization and to secure its content from hacktivists by using the software Tor with a ".onion" address (Weimann, 2016); while the weapon used in the shooting spree at a shopping center in Munich on July 2016 was also acquired over the Dark Web. In addition to drugs, guns and child pornography, different kinds of information are sold through the Dark Web marketplaces: from credit cards to personal information obtained through data breaches or hacking attacks. In order to shed some light on Dark Web, first we need to know what it is and how it differs from what other people mistakenly perceive the Internet to be.

STRUCTURE OF THE INTERNET

The internet is broadly classified into the two regions: The Clear Web and the Deep Web.

Clear Web

The Clear Web, also called Surface Web, Indexed Web, Visible Web, Indexable Web or Lightnet, is the region of the Internet that most of us are familiar with. This can be easily accessed from any browser and is regularly crawled and indexed by search engines including Bing, Google, and Yahoo. It can seem like a huge amount of information, but the Clear Web is just 4% of the total size of the World Wide Web (WWW).

Deep Web

The Deep Web, also called Invisible Web, Underground Web, Non-Indexable Web or Deepnet, whose contents are not indexed by search-engine and needs a specific encrypted browser, such as Tor (The Onion Router), I2P (Invisible Internet Project) and the Freenet-configured browsers or login details to access the sites. The substance is holed up behind HTML shapes. Many people don't realize that the Deep Web comprises mostly benign sites, like those of your password-protected email account, Twitter, Snapchat, or Facebook messenger, certain parts of paid subscription services like Netflix, and sites that can be accessed only through an online form as it can only be encrypted via application program interfaces. A significant part of Deep