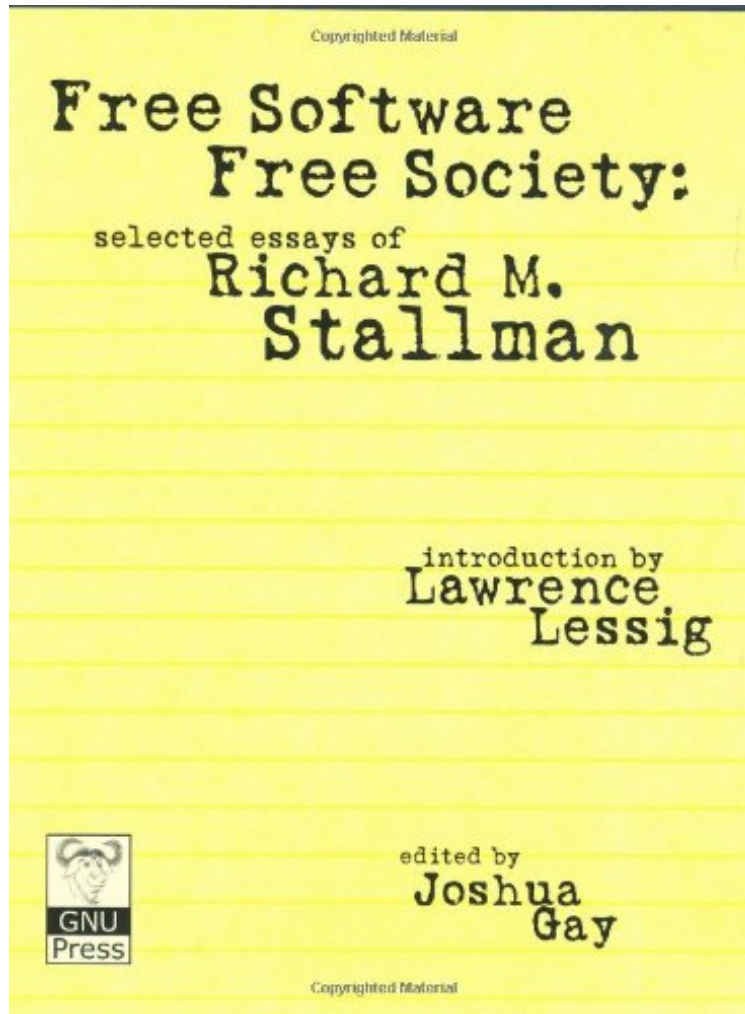


Free Software, Free Society: Selected Essays of Richard M. Stallman

Richard M. Stallman, Lawrence Lessig, Joshua Gay
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Richard M. Stallman, Lawrence Lessig, Joshua Gay : Free Software, Free Society: Selected Essays of Richard M. Stallman before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Free Software, Free Society: Selected Essays of Richard M. Stallman:

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Very positive!By apex-predatorGood condition and autographed by the author.0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Great book about Free SoftwareBy Miguel Luis BejaranoThis book is for those who seek what is behind the free software philosophy and why its so important for innovation and freedom.18 of 19 people found the following review helpful. Essential Reading for any Intelligent Adult Favoring Social ProgressBy Robert David STEELE VivasI bought this book at Hackers on Planet Earth 6, and

then after reading it in the morning, had the double benefit of hearing the author as keynote speaker in the afternoon. He is everything the book's contents suggest, and more. The author is one of the original MIT hackers (pick up a used copy of Shirley Turkle's "My Second Self, Computers and the Human Spirit" and/or Steven Levy's "Hacker's" which the author himself recommends. The author's brilliant bottom line is quite clear throughout the book: software copyright prevents people from improving or sharing the foundation for progress in the digital era. The author's social-technical innovation, which appears now to be acquiring tsunami force around the world, and is manifested in the Free/Open Source Software (F/OSS) movement that is being nurtured by governments worldwide from Brazil to China to Israel to the United Kingdom to Norway, is to modify copyright to a term he credits to another, copyleft, meaning that copyright in the new definition grants ALL permissions EXCEPT the permission to RESTRICT the enhancement and sharing of the software. The author is also very careful to define the term free as meaning freedom of movement and growth, not free of price. GNU, his invention, removes computational obstacles to competition, and levels the playing field for more important innovations. In his view, the core issue is not about price, but about eliminating restrictions to freedom of sharing and enhancement. On page 37 he sums up his life's purpose: "Proprietary and secret software is the moral equivalent of runners having a fist fight (during the race)" -- they all lose. The author carefully distinguishes between the free and open source software, citing the first as a movement with values, the second as a process. His candidacy for a Nobel Prize is captured in the sentence on page 61, "Free software contributes to human knowledge, non-free software does not." Across the book, a collection of essays put into a very well ordered (not necessarily chronological) form, this book is a history of GNU (not UNIX) by its creator and co-founder of the Free Software Foundation. It is replete with concise useful discussions of terms, conditions, and cultures relevant to the future of mankind as a thinking forward looking species. Section two, on copyright, copyleft, and patents is very helpful, and likely to become a standard in the field as the public fires elected representatives who sell out to Mickey Mouse copyright extenders, and demands a return to the original Constitutional limitation of copyright as an artifact of government, not a natural right, focused on nurturing knowledge. It means mention that Lawrence Lessig (see my reviews of his books) writes the introduction--the two authors together, along with Cass Sunstein, may be the most important trio of thinkers with respect to the future of man in the context of science, copyright, risk, and software as a human global contributor to sanity. The author's keynote address at HOPE 6 is discussed toward the end of the book, where he lists the Four Freedoms: Freedom 0: Run a program as you wish, for any purpose you wish, not limited to any narrowly defined application. Freedom 1: Help yourself by improving the program (which requires access to source code). Freedom 2: Help your neighbor by sharing a copy of the program with them. Freedom 3: Help community by sharing the improved copy at large. There is no question in my mind but that this manifesto of a single man's life's work is as important as Tom Paine's Common Sense treatises. There is a war now emergent between the classes (US elites bribing foreign elites, both screwing their publics over for private gain), and between corporations and the people, corporations long having abused the independent legal personality that was granted to promote business, and ended up being a legal barrier to holding corporate managers accountable for grand theft and social irresponsibility. Toward the end the author offers thoughtful suggestions on how to "drop out" of the proprietary software world, and his thinking resonates with "No Logo" and its recommendations on selective purchasing. This book is not a technical book although it offers up many understandable insights to technical matters underlying the social philosophy of the author. It is not a legal book either, but offers important informed commentary vital to getting the law focused again on human progress. Finally, in no way does the book dismiss the importance of capitalism--the author clearly states that it is entirely appropriate to charge a fee for one's contributions--this is about the "how" not the "how much. Absolutely superb collection of essays, extremely important to where we go in the future. The author is not only an original hacker, he represents hacking as it should be understood by the authorities (see my review of Bruce Sterling, Hackers at the Edge of the Electronic Frontier), and as I see them--as people who have the "right stuff" and are testing the edge, pushing the frontier. In a world of drones, these are the libertarian spirits that may well keep us out of perpetual prison. For reference: DARPA's STRONG ANGEL program, empowered now by DoD Directive 3000.cc. specifically seeks to create a suite of collaborative sharing and analytic tools that can be provided free to any non-governmental organization and any state and local government. Support costs have to be shared. It is now understood at the highest levels of the US military that we cannot make peace without sharing all information in all languages all the time (my third book), and this is progress.

The intersection of ethics, law, business and computer software is the subject of these essays and speeches by MacArthur Foundation Grant winner, Richard M. Stallman. This collection includes historical writings such as The GNU Manifesto, which defined and launched the activist Free Software Movement, along with new writings on hot topics in copyright, patent law, and the controversial issue of "trusted computing." Stallman takes a critical look at common abuses of copyright law and patents when applied to computer software programs, and how these abuses damage our entire society and remove our existing freedoms. He also discusses the social aspects of software and how free software can create community and social justice. Given the current turmoil in copyright and patent laws, including the DMCA and proposed CBDTPA, these essays are more relevant than ever. Stallman tackles head-on the

essential issues driving the current changes in copyright law. He argues that for creativity to flourish, software must be free of inappropriate and overly-broad legal constraints. Over the past twenty years his arguments and actions have changed the course of software history; this new book is sure to impact the future of software and legal policies in the years to come. Lawrence Lessig, the author of two well-known books on similar topics, writes the introduction. He is a noted legal expert on copyright law and a Stanford Law School professor.

From Library Journal Stallman is known internationally as the creator of the GNU operating system and cofounder of the Free Software Foundation. In this collection, he provides an accessible guide to the philosophy that inspired his cause. Stallman also takes a critical look at how businesses abuse copyright law and patents as they apply to computer software applications. He explains how these actions damage our society and encroach on our freedoms. Part 1, "The GNU Project and the Free Software Foundation," offers a historical perspective, as well as an introduction, to the philosophy of free software (i.e., free as in "free speech, not free beer"). Part 2, "Copyrights, Copyleft and Patents," explores the legal aspects of free software, laying out the mission of the free software movement and discussing its long-term goals. Part 3, "Creating a Free Society," focuses on the importance of free software in our society and presents helpful examples. Part 4 comprises licenses that developers will find useful in making the programs they create accessible to the widest possible audience, as free software that can be redistributed and changed legally under the terms presented. The text gives more insight into Stallman's thought processes than does Sam Williams's biography, *Free As in Freedom*, a complementary work that relies more on interviews with Stallman and his associates. This important collection by a software visionary is recommended for larger public and academic libraries. Joe J. Accardi, Harper Coll. Lib., Palatine, IL Copyright 2002 Reed Business Information, Inc. "...this collection presents some of his fervent thoughts about the intersection of ethics, copyright law and computer science." -- Harvard Magazine, Sept-Oct 2002...this collection presents some of his fervent thoughts about the intersection of ethics, copyright law and computer science. -- Harvard Magazine, Sept-Oct 2002 From the Inside Flap "Richard Stallman is the prophet of the free software movement. He understood the dangers of software patents years ago. Now that this has become a crucial issue in the world, buy this book and read what he said." Tim Berners-Lee - inventor of the World Wide Web. "Richard Stallman is the philosopher king of software. He single-handedly ignited what has become a world-wide movement to create software that is Free, with a capital F. He has toiled for years at a project that many once considered a fool's errand, and now widely see as inevitable." Simson L. Garfinkel - computer science author and columnist. "By his hugely successful efforts to establish the idea of 'free software' Stallman has made a massive contribution to the human condition. His contribution combines elements that have technical, social, political, and economic consequences." Gerald Jay Sussman - Matsushita Professor of Electrical Engineering, Massachusetts Institute of Technology. "'Free as in free speech, not as in free beer.' RMS is the leading philosopher of software. You may dislike some of his attitudes, but you cannot avoid his ideas. This slim volume will make those ideas readily accessible to those who are confused by the buzzwords of rampant commercialism. This book needs to be widely circulated and widely read." Peter H. Salus - computer science writer, book reviewer, and UNIX historian. Richard is the leading force of the free software movement. This book is very important to spread the key concepts of free software world-wide, so everyone can understand it. Free software gives people freedom to use their creativity." Masayuki Ida - Professor, Graduate School of International Management, Aoyama Gakuin University.