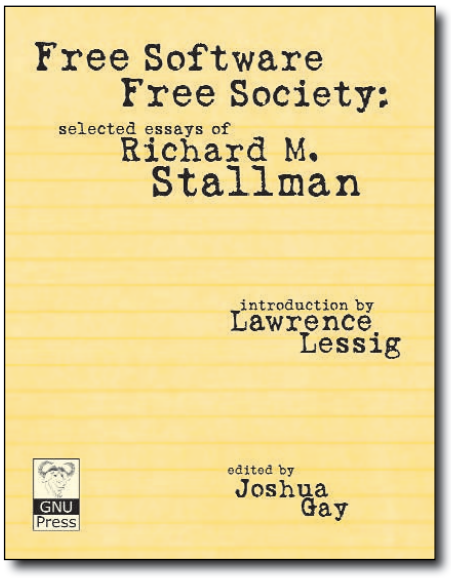

Free Software Free Society:

selected essays of Richard M. Stallman

Introduction by
Lawrence Lessig
Edited by Joshua Gay

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GNU Press

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

The intersection of ethics, law, business, and computer software is the subject of this collection of 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. 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.

About the Author:

Creator of the Free Software Movement—a progressive worldwide movement to make software code freely available so as to improve its development and accessibility—Richard M. Stallman is an internationally recognized computer scientist, author, and speaker. He has received a host of scientific awards, ranging from a 1990 MacArthur Foundation "Genius Grant" Fellowship in Computer Science, to his election to the American National Academy of Engineering in 2002.

In 1984 Stallman resigned from M.I.T.'s AI Lab in protest of its increasingly restrictive copyright policy. He countered with the GNU Project, a revolutionary concept at the time. GNU with Linux was the first freely distributable operating system with source code protected by the GNU GPL.

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 that is widely seen as "inevitable".

Simson L. Garfinkel
computer science author and columnist

For the first time this book collects the writing and lectures of Richard Stallman in a manner that will make their subtlety and power clear. The essays span a wide range, from copyright to the history of the free software movement. They include many arguments not well known, and...will serve as a resource for those who seek to understand the thought of this most powerful man . . . .

Lawrence Lessig, Stanford University Law School professor and expert on cyberlaw

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, MIT

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