



Code: And Other Laws of Cyberspace, Version 2.0

By Lawrence Lessig

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There's a common belief that cyberspace cannot be regulated—that it is, in its very essence, immune from the government's (or anyone else's) control. *Code*, first published in 2000, argues that this belief is wrong. It is not in the nature of cyberspace to be unregulable; cyberspace has no “nature.” It only has code—the software and hardware that make cyberspace what it is. That code can create a place of freedom—as the original architecture of the Net did—or a place of oppressive control. Under the influence of commerce, cyberspace is becoming a highly regulable space, where behavior is much more tightly controlled than in real space. But that's not inevitable either. We can—we must—choose what kind of cyberspace we want and what freedoms we will guarantee. These choices are all about architecture: about what kind of code will govern cyberspace, and who will control it. In this realm, code is the most significant form of law, and it is up to lawyers, policymakers, and especially citizens to decide what values that code embodies. Since its original publication, this seminal book has earned the status of a minor classic. This second edition, or Version 2.0, has been prepared through the author's wiki, a web site that allows readers to edit the text, making this the first reader-edited revision of a popular book.

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Editorial Review

Review

"[Lessig] is fast emerging as the nation's most original thinker in the new field of cyberspace."

"A book that's sometimes as brilliant as the best teacher you ever had, sometimes as pretentious as a deconstructionists' conference."

"In this remarkably clear and elegantly written book, [Lessig] takes apart many myths about cyberspace and analyzes its underlying architecture."

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About the Author

LAWRENCE LESSIG is the C. Wendell and Edith M. Carlsmith Professor of Law at Stanford Law School and founder of the school's Center for the Internet and Society. After clerking for Judge Richard Posner on the Seventh Circuit Court of Appeals and for Justice Antonin Scalia on the US Supreme Court, he taught at The University of Chicago, Yale Law School, and Harvard Law School before moving to Stanford. His other books are Free Culture and The Future of Ideas. In 2002 he was named one of Scientific American's Top 50 Visionaries. He lives in San Francisco, California.

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From reader reviews:

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