Free/Libre software and freedom in the digital society

DR. RICHARD STALLMAN

Founder of the Free Software Foundation,
Founder and development leader of the GNU operating system

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Aula Magna – Free University of Bozen–Bolzano
Universitätsplatz 1, Piazza Università 1, Bozen–Bolzano

Registration: https://fuss.bz.it/rms

Abstract:
There are many threats to freedom in the digital society. They include nonfree software, massive surveillance, and censorship.
Nonfree programs are often designed to restrict users, control users or manipulate users. The War on Sharing aims to stop users from sharing copies of published works. Computers for voting make election results untrustworthy.
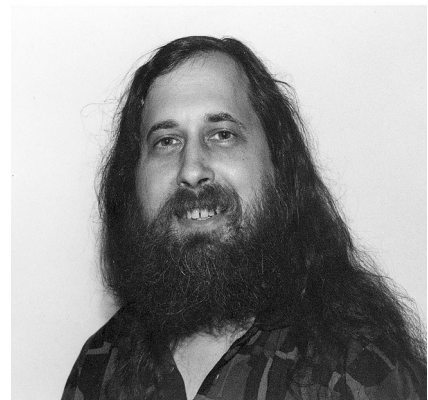Other threats come from use of web services, implemented by companies that can impose any conditions whatsoever.
Finally, most internet activities (aside from those which existed before 2000) are precarious, dependent on permission from one company.
All of these threats originate more or less in the use of nonfree software. That is why free software is the first battle in the liberation of the digital society.

Biography:
Dr. Richard Stallman launched the free software movement in 1983 and started the development of the GNU operating system (see www.gnu.org) in 1984. GNU is free software: everyone has the freedom to copy it and redistribute it, with or without changes. The GNU/Linux system, basically the GNU operating system with Linux as the kernel, is used on tens of millions of computers today. Stallman has received the ACM Grace Hopper Award and the ACM Software and Systems Award, a MacArthur Foundation fellowship, the Electronic Frontier Foundation's Pioneer Award, and the the Takeda Award for Social/Economic Betterment, as well as many doctorates honoris causa, and has been inducted into the Internet Hall of Fame.

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