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Matthews Auditorium (Room 137), Kaneff Centre  
University of Toronto Mississauga, 3359 Mississauga Rd. N.

LECTURE: 5:00pm

Thursday, July 5, 2007

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**Richard Stallman**  
Founder of the Free Software Movement

## Copyright vs. Community in the Age of Computer Networks

### Abstract:

Copyright developed in the age of the printing press, and was designed to fit with the system of centralized copying imposed by the printing press. But the copyright system does not fit well with computer networks, and only draconian punishments can enforce it, Stallman says. The global corporations that profit from copyright are lobbying for draconian punishments, and to increase their copyright powers, while suppressing public access to technology, he notes. But if we seriously hope to serve the only legitimate purpose of copyright to promote progress for the benefit of the public then we must make changes in the other direction.

**RICHARD STALLMAN** While still a graduate student at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology during the fabled golden age of hacking in the 1980s, Stallman foresaw the growing centrality of software to society and culture, and in particular the importance of preserving software users rights and freedoms. In 1984, he drafted his now-famous GNU Manifesto, in which he laid out the ideals of free software that the user can freely use, copy, distribute and change and founded the Free Software Foundation to promote these ideas. His work led to the development of the GNU/Linux system, now in use on tens of millions of computers worldwide.

Stallman is author of the book *Free Software/Free Society* (GNU Press, 2002), and numerous papers. He has received many honours and awards including a MacArthur Foundation fellowship, the Grace Hopper Award of the Association of Computing Machinery, the Pioneer Award of the Electronic Frontier Foundation and the Takeda Award for Social/Economic Betterment. He also has several honorary degrees.

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