

challenging the U.S. law that protects DRM. Cory says his political work doesn't directly make him money, but if he gave it up, he thinks he would lose credibility and, more importantly, lose the drive that propels him to create. "My political work is a different expression of the same artistic-political urge," he said. "I have this suspicion that if I gave up the things that didn't make me money, the genuineness would leach out of what I do, and the quality that causes people to like what I do would be gone."

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Cory has been financially successful, but money is not his primary motivation. At the start of his book *Information Doesn't Want to Be Free*, he stresses how important it is not to become an artist if your goal is to get rich. "Entering the arts because you want to get rich is like buying lottery tickets because you want to get rich," he wrote. "It might work, but it almost certainly won't. Though, of course, someone always wins the lottery." He acknowledges that he is one of the lucky few to "make it," but he says he would be writing no matter what. "I am *compelled* to write," he wrote. "Long before I wrote to keep myself fed and sheltered, I was writing to keep myself sane."

Just as money is not his primary motivation to create, money is not his primary motivation to share. For Cory, sharing his work with Creative Commons is a moral imperative. "It felt morally right," he said of his decision to adopt Creative Commons licenses. "I felt like I wasn't contributing to the culture of surveillance and censorship that has been created to try to stop copying." In other words, using CC licenses symbolizes his worldview.

He also feels like there is a solid commercial basis for licensing his work with Creative Commons. While he acknowledges he hasn't been able to do a controlled experiment to compare the commercial benefits of licensing with CC against reserving all rights, he thinks he has sold more books using a CC license than he would have without it. Cory says his goal is to

convince people they should pay him for his work. "I started by not calling them thieves," he said.

Cory started using CC licenses soon after they were first created. At the time his first novel came out, he says the science fiction genre was overrun with people scanning and downloading books without permission. When he and his publisher took a closer look at who was doing that sort of thing online, they realized it looked a lot like book promotion. "I knew there was a relationship between having enthusiastic readers and having a successful career as a writer," he said. "At the time, it took eighty hours to OCR a book, which is a big effort. I decided to spare them the time and energy, and give them the book for free in a format destined to spread."

Cory admits the stakes were pretty low for him when he first adopted Creative Commons licenses. He only had to sell two thousand copies of his book to break even. People often said he was only able to use CC licenses successfully at that time because he was just starting out. Now they say he can only do it because he is an established author.

The bottom line, Cory says, is that no one has found a way to prevent people from copying the stuff they like. Rather than fighting the tide, Cory makes his work intrinsically shareable. "Getting the hell out of the way for people who want to share their love of you with other people sounds obvious, but it's remarkable how many people don't do it," he said.

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Making his work available under Creative Commons licenses enables him to view his biggest fans as his ambassadors. "Being open to fan activity makes you part of the conversation about what fans do with your work and how they interact with it," he said. Cory's own website routinely highlights cool things his audience has done with his work. Unlike corporations like Disney that tend to have a hands-off relationship with their fan activity, he has a symbiotic relationship with his audience. "En-