

John Gilmore (activist)

John Gilmore (born 1955) is one of the founders of the Electronic Frontier Foundation, the Cypherpunks mailing list, and Cygnus Solutions. He created the alt.* hierarchy in Usenet and is a major contributor to the GNU Project.

An outspoken civil libertarian, Gilmore has sued the Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Justice, and others. He was the plaintiff in the prominent case Gilmore v. Gonzales, challenging secret travel-restriction laws. He is also an advocate for drug policy reform.

He co-authored the Bootstrap Protocol in 1985, which evolved into Dynamic Host Configuration Protocol (DHCP), the primary way local networks assign an IP address to devices.

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Life and career

As the fifth employee of Sun Microsystems and founder of Cygnus Support, he became wealthy enough to retire early and pursue other interests.

He is a frequent contributor to free software, and worked on several GNU projects, including maintaining the GNU Debugger in the early 1990s, initiating GNU Radio in 1998, starting Gnash media player in December 2005 to create a free software player for Flash movies, and writing the pdtar program which became GNU tar. Outside of the GNU project he founded the FreeS/WAN project, an implementation of IPsec, to promote the encryption of Internet traffic. He sponsored the EFF's Deep Crack DES cracker, sponsored the Micropolis city building game based on SimCity, and is a proponent of opportunistic encryption.


Gilmore co-authored the Bootstrap Protocol (RFC 951) with Bill Croft in 1985. The Bootstrap Protocol evolved into DHCP, the method by which Ethernet and wireless networks typically assign devices an IP address.

Activism

John Gilmore



Gilmore in 2018

Born	1955 (age 65–66) ^{[1][2]} <div>York, Pennsylvania, U.S.</div>
Nationality	American
Known for	Co-Founder of the <u>EFF</u>
Website	<u>www.toad.com/gnu/</u> (<u>http://www.toad.com/gnu/</u>) 

Gilmore owns the domain name toad.com, which is one of the 100 oldest active .com domains. It was registered on August 18, 1987. He runs the mail server at toad.com as an open mail relay. In October 2002, Gilmore's ISP, Verio, cut off his Internet access for running an open relay, a violation of Verio's terms of service. Many people contend that open relays make it too easy to send spam. Gilmore protests that his mail server was programmed to be essentially useless to spammers and other senders of mass email and he argues that Verio's actions constitute censorship. He also notes that his configuration makes it easier for friends who travel to send email, although his critics counter that there are other mechanisms to accommodate people wanting to send email while traveling. The measures Gilmore took to make his server useless to spammers may or may not have helped, considering that in 2002, at least one mass-mailing worm that propagated through open relays — W32.Yaha — had been hard-coded to relay through the toad.com mail server.^[3]

Gilmore famously stated of Internet censorship that "The Net interprets censorship as damage and routes around it".^[4]

He unsuccessfully challenged the constitutionality of secret regulations regarding travel security policies in *Gilmore v. Gonzales*.^{[2][5]}

Gilmore is also an advocate for the relaxing of drug laws and has given financial support to Students for Sensible Drug Policy, the Marijuana Policy Project, Erowid, MAPS, Flex Your Rights, and various other organizations seeking to end the war on drugs. He is a member of the boards of directors of MAPS, the Marijuana Policy Project, and the Electronic Frontier Foundation.^[6]

Affiliations

Following the sale of AMPRNet address space in mid-2019, Gilmore, under amateur radio call sign WoGNU, was listed as a board member of Amateur Radio Digital Communications, Inc., a non-profit involved in the management of the 44.0.0.0/8 resources on behalf of the amateur radio community.^{[7][8]}

Honours


Gilmore has received the Free Software Foundation's Advancement of Free Software 2009 award.^[9]

References

1. *The Internet: A Historical Encyclopedia* (<https://books.google.com/books?id=qi-ltIG6QLwC&pg=PA115>). ABC-CLIO. 2005. p. 115. "John Gilmore (1955-)"
2. Willing, Richard (October 10, 2004). "Airline ID requirement faces legal challenge" (https://www.usatoday.com/news/nation/2004-10-10-privacy_x.htm). *USA Today*.
3. Douglas Knowles (February 13, 2007). "W32.Yaha@mm technical details" (https://www.symantec.com/security_response/writeup.jsp?docid=2002-021514-1810-99&tabid=2). Symantec. Retrieved September 26, 2016. "if it cannot connect to the email server listed in that registry key, it will use one of the following: [...21 domain names snipped...], toad.com, [...2 more...]"
4. "First Nation in Cyberspace" (<http://www.chemie.fu-berlin.de/outerspace/internet-article.html>). *Time*. December 6, 1993. Retrieved July 31, 2009.
5. Egelko, Bob (December 9, 2005). "Judges cool to ID complaint" (<http://www.sfgate.com/cgi-bin/article.cgi?f=/c/a/2005/12/09/BAGR9G53C01.DTL>). *San Francisco Chronicle*.
6. "Board" (<http://www.maps.org/about/board/>). Multidisciplinary Association for Psychedelic Studies. Retrieved 16 October 2014.

7. ~~ARDC~~ Board of Directors (2019-07-18). "AMPRNet Address Sale" (<https://dewaynenet.wordpress.com/2019/07/19/amprnet-address-sale/>). Archived from the original on 2019-07-19. Retrieved 2019-07-20. "The sale amounts to some millions of dollars, which will be used in the furtherance of ~~ARDC~~'s continuing public benefit purpose. ... The uppermost 1/4 of the former AMPRNet address space (*44.192.0.0/10*) has been ... sold to another owner ... over 12 million IPv4 addresses remain"
8. Kantor, Brian; Karn, Phil; Claffy, K. C.; Gilmore, John; Magnuski, Hank; Garbee, Bdale; Hansen, Skip; Horne, Bill; Ricketts, John; Trasczewski, Jann; Vixie, Paul (2019-07-20). "AMPRNet" (<http://www.ampr.org/amprnet/>). Amateur Radio Digital Communications. Retrieved 2019-07-20. "in mid-2019, a block of approximately four million consecutive AMPRNet addresses denoted as *44.192.0.0/10* was ... sold to the highest qualified bidder at the then-current **fair market value** ... leaves some twelve million addresses ... The ARDC Board of Directors ... John Gilmore, W0GNU"
9. "Free Software Awards Announced" (<https://web.archive.org/web/20150410125445/http://www.fsf.org/news/2009-free-software-awards>). Free Software Foundation. March 24, 2010. Archived from the original (<http://www.fsf.org/news/2009-free-software-awards>) on April 10, 2015. Retrieved March 24, 2010.

External links

- Official website (<http://www.toad.com/gnu/>) 
 - Gilmore v. Gonzales information (<http://www.papersplease.org/gilmore/>)
 - Verio censored John Gilmore's email under pressure from anti-spammers. (<https://web.archive.org/web/20120503021816/http://www.toad.com/gnu/verio-censorship.html>)
 - John Gilmore on inflight activism, spam and sarongs (<http://grep.law.harvard.edu/features/04/08/18/112237.shtml>); interview by Mikael Pawlo, August 18, 2004.
 - Gilmore on Secret Laws / Gonzales case (https://archive.org/details/john_gilmore_v_gonzales_interview_20061113); audio interview, 13 November 2006.
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