

SETTLERS OF THE NEW VIRTUAL WORLDS

THINK YOU OWN YOUR AVATAR? SHOULD YOU?

With record-breaking populations established in *World of Warcraft* (10.7 million recorded as of July 2008) and new MMOs showing signs of similar paradigm-breaking populations (1 million copies of *Age of Conan* sold as of July 2008), MMOs and virtual worlds are here to stay -- but the laws that govern them remain hotly contested. Do players own their virtual assets? Are the modern EULAs attached to online games and virtual worlds sufficient to protect their creators OR their inhabitants? Are they even legal?

Settlers of the New Virtual Worlds brings together some of the finest minds in virtual worlds analysis to address these issues and the Wild West of virtual space from the perspective of developers, lawyers, explorers, and players, confronting emergent issues in the new virtual worlds including taxation, player governments, social design, player-generated content, and more.



Introduction: An Open Letter to Virtual World Builders

I. PRESENT

1. Why Build a Better EULA?: Origins—Erik Bethke
2. Eve Online's Council of Stellar Management: Past, Present & Future—Pétur Jóhannes Óskarsson
3. Virtual Property, Real Law—Sean F. Kane
4. Dragon Slayers or Tax Evaders?—Julian Dibbell
5. Death of a Gold Spammer—Andres Guadamuz
6. Someone Stole My Magic Sword: A Story of Impermanence—Erin Hoffman
7. We are the Pirates: Virtual Pirates, Real Emotions—Susan & Heather Logas

Interlude: Player Experiences

II. PAST

8. A Virtual Worlds Retrospective: Declaring the Rights of Players—Raph Koster
9. From God to Customer Service—Cat Rambo
10. Safety in Numbers: The Genesis of Exodus in Virtual Worlds—Russ Pitts
11. Griefing for the Greater Good: Player-Generated Content & Terrorism in A Tale in the Desert—Laura Genender
12. Meaning in the Machine: Collaborative Roleplaying in The Matrix Online—Link Hughes

III. FUTURE

13. Hands Off MY Avatar: Issues with Claims of Virtual Property and Identity—Ren Reynolds
14. Kids and Digital Ownership—Chris Rettstatt
15. Player-Run Governments in the 21st Century—Allen Varney
16. We're Not Ready for Virtual Worlds—Bill Fulton
17. Why Build a Better EULA?: Vision—Erik Bethke

Conclusion: Gay Marriage, User Rights, and You

Afterword: Preliminary Findings of the BetterEULA Project

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AUSTIN GAME DEVELOPERS CONFERENCE SEPTEMBER
2008 IN AUSTIN, TX, USA.

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