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Perhaps the most important part of *Color Monitors*, however, is the conclusion, in which Kevorkian presents readers with an analysis of the works of writers, musicians, and artists who are more tuned in to the racial coding embedded in their craftsmanship. Taking creative hints from the likes of Thomas Pynchon and Ralph Ellison, Kevorkian showcases a small sampling of creators who defy the trend he so carefully outlines in the preceding chapters.

With *Color Monitors*, Kevorkian gives us a germane, convincing, and provocative study of a severe glitch in our increasingly digital world, which many examine with idealistic eyes. The racial coding that he gleans from popular media and presents in this work will startle readers even though they are familiar with many of the scenes in question. Those who study race, media, economics, literature, sociology, or anything in the humanities and social sciences should connect deeply with *Color Monitors*. Indeed, this book provides insight for us all as we unconsciously absorb messages from the increasing presence of technological media in our daily lives.

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### Who Controls the Internet? Illusions of a Borderless World.

By Jack Goldsmith and Tim Wu. New York: Oxford University Press, 2006.  
Pp. xii+226. \$28.

Ten years ago, pundits and scholars tended to agree: the internet was becoming a global network, linking individual to individual in a playful democratic peerdom and corroding the oppressive authority of state and corporation alike. In this deceptively brief and exceptionally timely book, law professors Jack Goldsmith and Tim Wu put the lie to that consensus. The internet has neither destroyed the power of place, nor undermined the power of states; on the contrary, the authors show that it is increasingly enhancing the power of both.

As they acknowledge, Wu and Goldsmith are building on an analysis of the interaction of computer code, law, and social norms first outlined by Lawrence Lessig in his 1999 book *Code*. Yet they substantially extend that framework and give it real historical punch. They show that the internet has begun to fracture along national and cultural lines. Far from reaching across the ocean to invisible peers, users are turning more and more to internet services that are located within and regulated by the states in which they live. The forces driving this shift include the rise of new technologies that make it easy and cheap to identify the geographical location of inter-

net users; the rise of online commercial services such as eBay that depend on the coercive power of laws and nation states to safeguard their operations from fraud; the huge increase in non-U.S.-based internet users; and the ability of nation states ranging from China to Saudi Arabia to force internet service providers to limit consumers' access to information.

As the authors point out, the increasing power of place and state marks a defeat for the early engineers of the internet and for their ad-hoc style of government. Goldsmith and Wu briskly recount the several attempts of early internet engineers to assert control over the internet address naming and numbering process and, thus, the regulation of the net as a whole. At various points, for instance, Jon Postel sought to control the internet's core servers, while engineers such as Vinton Cerf sought to form extra-governmental committees to adjudicate standards for the net. For the engineers, the internet was both a creation and a reflection of the engineering community. Its norms were their norms, they believed, and its regulation, like its open protocols, should represent those norms. At each stage, however, the U.S. government reminded them that the system had been funded by the state and that it was hardly about to relinquish its stake in the proceedings.

Within the mythos of 1990s digital utopianism, the government's repeated assertion of a right to regulate the internet would be seen as antidemocratic and perhaps as a repudiation of the internet's "end-to-end" principle. As scholars such as Tarleton Gillespie have shown, that principle was to some degree always a fiction. Goldsmith and Wu agree and suggest that, in many cases, government's coercive power substantially benefits internet users. In a compelling and particularly well-researched chapter on eBay, for instance, they point out that without American regulations governing postal fraud, and the state's ability to enforce them, commerce on eBay would long ago have ground to a halt. Moreover, they remind readers that for all the rhetoric of disembodiment that has surrounded it, the internet still depends on human beings, brick-and-mortar intermediaries such as banks, and digital intermediaries such as computers—all of which take up real space in physical places and all of which are thus subject to control by the state.

For historians of technology, then, this book offers a welcome account of the ways in which the utopian aspirations that surround emerging technologies are made to disappear. As Goldsmith and Wu's examples suggest, they do not simply fade away as technologies stabilize; rather, they are worked away, as large institutions struggle to employ them for particular ends and at the very least, to preserve their interests under new technological conditions.

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