

PerlNomic: Rule Making and Enforcement in Digital Shared Spaces

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Outline

- Enforcing rules in the “Real World”
- Nomic as a model
- Enforcing rules in digital shared spaces
- PerlNomic
- Applying PerlNomic concepts to other situations

The “Real World”

Smith v. United States (113 SCt.1050 (1993))

- Tried to pay for drugs with a gun
- Does this count as “using a firearm” ?
- The judge decides...

Intent v. Letter of the Law

- What did the lawmakers intend?
 - + “The point” of the law
 - They didn't say what they intended
- What did they actually say?
 - + It is there, in the text
 - Often poorly written, and still open to interpretation

Nomic

- Peter Suber. *The Paradox of Self-Amendment*. 1990.
- “To play the game is to change the rules”
- Players propose rule-changes, then vote to approve them.
- You win by getting 100 points...
- ... or do you?

(More Nomic)

- Mutable and Immutable
- Scope of the game
- Invoking Judgment

Enforcement Online

- Dictatorship: Blogs, MMPORPGs
- Anarchy: USENET
- Democratic: Google's PageRank(TM)

“Owned Systems”

- (After Shirky <http://http://www.shirky.com/writings/nomic.html>)
- Most interaction on the Internet takes place in forums that users do not own
- Owners can do as they please – especially if it is a no-pay service

“Code is not elsewhere”

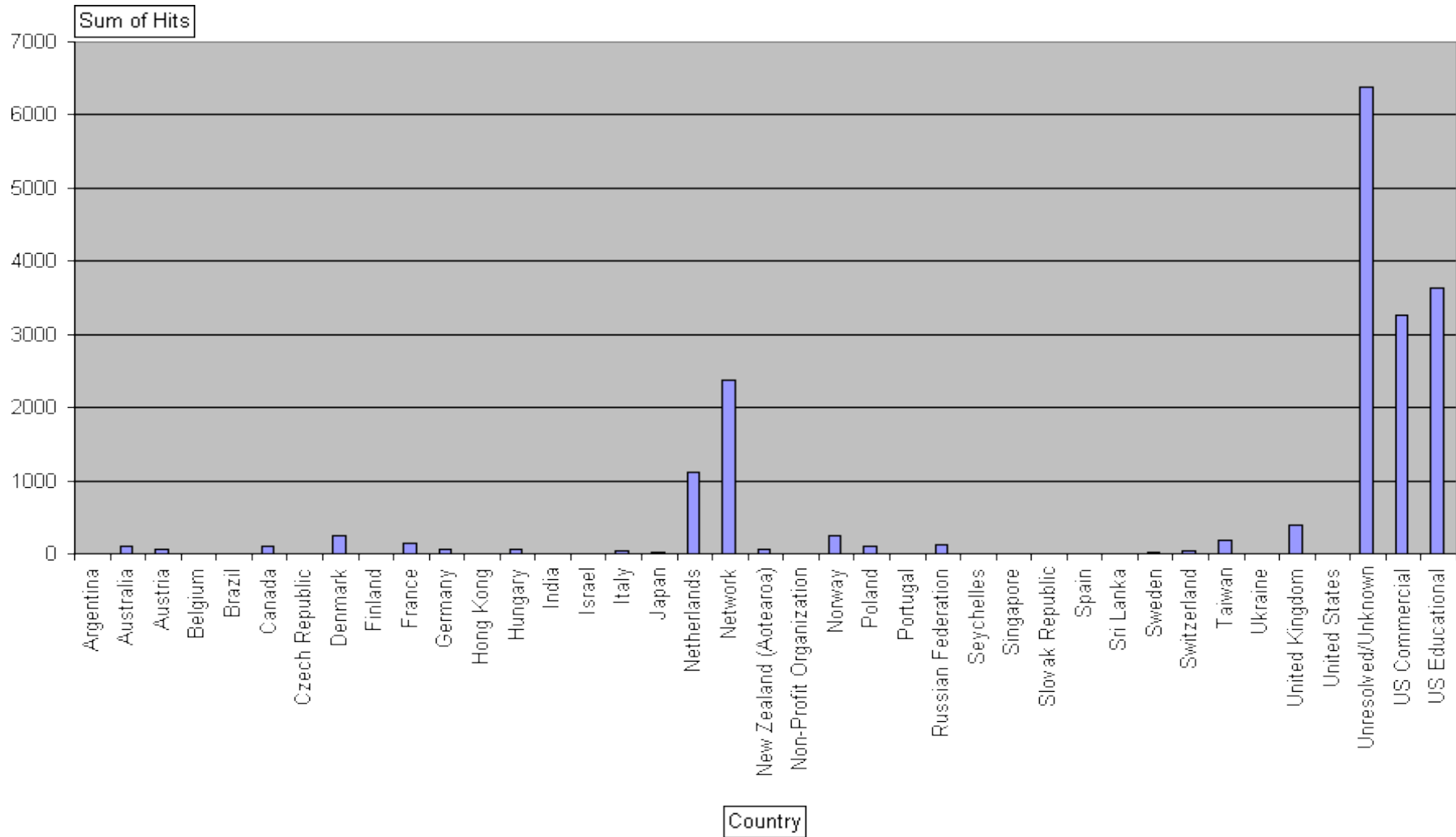
- (After Lessig 1999)
- “Code is not elsewhere, and we are not elsewhere when we feel its effects.”
- Example: Y2K Bug
- Bad regulations of code

We present.... PerlNomic

- The problem with human judges
- How PerlNomic works
- “Let the interpreter be the judge”

Anecdotes

International Appeal



Beyond PerlNomic

- When the players control the code, anything can happen
- Mutable versions of existing services
- Mutable virtual worlds?