Chapter 2: Regulating the Net: Free Speech and Content Control
"The Laws of Cyberspace" (Larry Lessig)

Learning Expectations:

I expect to learn more about the regulating factors in the cyberspace.

Quote:

"This is the age of cyber-libertarian. It is a time when a certain hype about cyberspace has caught on. The hype goes like this: Cyberspace is unavoidable, and yet cyberspace is unregulable. No nation can live without it, yet no nation can control behavior in it. Cyberspace is that place where individuals are, inherently, free from the control of real space sovereigns. It is, in the words of James Boyle, the great techno-'gotcha'-nations of the world, you can't live without it, but nations of the world, when you've got it, you won't live long with it. "

Book Review:

Cyberspace created its own entity in the society. It is a space wherein technology is applied by its citizens, or netizens for that matter. Cyberspace has become a necessity for human activities. Cyberspace is a virtual setting in which individuals enjoy the benefits of socializing, transacting business, etc. The focus in this paper by Larry Lessig is to define what controlling variables manage the Cyberspace.

According to Lessig, behavior is regulated by four constraints namely, Laws, Norms, Markets and Nature. Law as a constraint refers to the rules constructed by lawmakers to facilitate if not limits certain acts. Norms are acts that turned into habits through time and cultural considerations. Markets refer to the accessibility of goods, for example, the pricing concept. And Nature refers to the natural flow of things. These four constraints regulate the behavior in the cyberspace, just like in real life.

The concept of internal passports reflects a limiting regulatory act. One cannot move freely wherever he wishes to, as the government decides on where one can only travel. Liberty in this system however, is inexistent. In my opinion, the government should just limit themselves of regulating the citizens' behavior. Men are born free and should be free at all times but keeping in mind ethical considerations.

Integrative Questions:

1. How can the government regulate human behavior without invading the citizens' privacy?

2. What factors should be considered first to allow liberty?