What is Free Software?

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- Software is knowledge

- Knowledge is information

- Information is science

Software is science

- Autodetermination

- Growth

- Evolution - Natural selection

- Cross-polinization, multiple influence

Science has always been free

The scientific process, up to ~1950

- A scientist researches on a subject, for himself, his sponsor, institution, monarch...

- The time he invested on his research is paid to him, and the work becomes property of mankind

- If somewants to build over his work, he can do it - Just credit his authorship

- "We are standing on the shoulders of giants" -Sir Isaac Newton

- # Corporativism
  - Big companies and large capitals have too high an influence over governments
  - Laws such as the patent or copyright law, created originally to protect the creative individual's rights and bring more innovation, have been ridiculously corrupted

- # Transition to the patenting process to the absurd
  - Anything is patentable
    - Patent to buy over a communications network - USPTO5960411, Peri Hartman et. al.
    - Patent for a circular device and apparatus for the facilitation of transport - John Keogh (Australia)
    - Patent over the process of making "cochinita pibil" - 433941 (31/3/1993, MØxico)
  - Many companies exist only in order to manage a patent portfolio and sell usage licenses
  - It is impossible to carry out an exhaustive investigation while developing a project, avoiding the infraction of any existing patent

Semieternal copyright

- Originally, the copyright law protection was for 28 years since the work's creation
- Because of the pressure made by the various copyright holding corporations (i.e. Sony, Disney, etc.), nowadays it reaches the natural lifeterm of the author plus 70 years, or 95 to 120 years for works made by contract

Intellectual property has magically appeared as part of the collective subconscious

- What is the logic behind this idea? Since when does knowledge have an owner? What does it need it for?
- What relation do the different part of the so-called intellectual property have with each other?
  - ‣ Copyright
  - ‣ Patents
  - ‣ Trademarks

- # Science held hostage
  - An international discussion regarding the legality of patents over ideas / algorithms / software
  - The (fortunately successful) race against having a patented human genoma (John Sulston+Sanger Centre vs. Celera Genomics)
  - The worries of a pure scientist: They need working implementations before publication, or else somebody can patent their work

- # Software in specific: The traditional licensing models
  - End User License Agreement: Is it legal?
  - Software renting: Is it ethical?
  - Closed file formats: What can they lead to?

- # Software patents
  - Patents should defend the lonely inventor
    - Directed towards industrial processes
  - Is it valid to patent a mathematical algorithm?
  - Is it valid to patent a nontangible idea?
  - Very recent decision regarding software patents in the European Union

- Software that keeps freedom, that keeps knowledge's characteristics

- Being concrete: Software that assures us:
  - Freedom of use
  - Freedom of learning
  - Freedom of improvement
  - Freedom of redistribution

- By 'Free', we are refering to freedom, not to price.
  - Free Speech, not Free Beer

- It is perfectly valid to make money off Free Software (most of us actually live off it)
  - Charging for development/adequation
  - Charging for consulting/configuration

- Many very successful companies live or earn from Free Software
  - Directly and as their main product: Progeny, Ubuntu, Cygnus, RedHat, Lindows, etc.
  - Indirectly and as an added value: IBM, Sun, HP, SGI, etc.

- Independent consulting
  - Independent professionals who give support to Free Software
  - Enough to cover any and every company's needs

Why do I want to develop Free Software for my client?

- **Ability to use code from my past developments or from other people**
  - Savings on development time
  - Reducing costs for the client

- **Peer review**
  - Ability to ask our friends for help on our implementation
  - Usually they will point us towards other projects with applicable ideas

- **Ability to collaborate with our past works in larger projects**
  - For the benefit of my friends and of the world
  - It brings you fame and recognition, and that leads us to participation in more projects, which in turn...

- **Encourages good programming practices**
  - The three great virtues of a programmer: Impatience, laziness, hubris

Why do I want my programmers to develop Free Software?

- It guarantees us our systems' maintainability

- Reduces costs, increases trust

- Avoids the dependence on a single provider

- Eases the creation of development groups, systems integration

- Gives recognition and publicity to my company

Why should we demand our government to adhere to Free Software?

- ## Information survival
  - Standard formats
  - Well documented systems and interfaces

- ## Responsability in the allocation of taxes
  - Pay for a development, not for individual licenses
  - Does not tie to a specific platform

- ## Technological independence
  - We will pay for development - Why don't we care for the money to stay in our country?

Conclusions

- Free Software is a radical departure from the knowledge production systems we have grown used to in the last decades

- It is nothing new: It leads us back to development as it has always been

- Free Software challennges the relation between knowledge producers and knowledge consumers

- Free Software will get you

Questions?

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