# Harmful Access to a Computer

Computer programmer Tim Endres worked for the General Motors Company. He graduated from the GM institute in Michigan. General Motors sold their IT enterprise to EDS ( A Ross Perrot company). Tim did not fit in at EDS because of his quirky personality and Ross Perrot’s “stepford approach to managing his employees”. He ended up working for EDS as an independent contractor. EDS sold some of Tim’s code as a commercial package without telling Tim. EDS did not have the right to sell this software. When Tim found out he released a virus through diskettes. The virus would search for the code he wrote. When that code was discovered, the program would freeze. The virus would also post his phone number and a request to contact him. This worked until a new version of the Mac OS was released, then the virus locked the infected computer. Tim was questioned by the [Federal Bureau of Investigation](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Federal_Bureau_of_Investigation) (FBI) soon after the virus was discovered. There were no federal laws with which to charge Tim, so he remains free to this day. This loophole resulted in the "Computer Virus Eradication Act of 1988". As a part of the plea deal, he was not allowed to touch a computer for five years.

Use the following to evaluate the situation.

1. Consult the list of fundamental principles and identify those that are relevant to the moral problem.

2. Search the list of clauses accompanying each of the relevant fundamental principles to see which speak most directly to the issue.

3. Determine whether the contemplated action aligns with or contradicts the statements in the clauses. If the action is in agreement with all the clauses that provides strong evidence, the action is moral. If the action is in disagreement with all the clauses, it is safe to say the action is immoral.