1. What was the point made by Bill Gates in his Open Letter to Hobbyists?

Gates argued about the fairly new concept of proprietary software, where before, computer users had been free to pass around software with no thought given to its ownership. He claimed the fact that Hobbyists stole software instead of getting them from a reliable source, and the money received from sales “makes the time spent on Altair BASIC worth less than 2 dollars an hour.” He also said that stealing software prevents good software to be written since the owners were not getting any revenues.

1. What did Richard Stallman describe as an ethical dilemma?

The dilemma began when the outside world pressured them to have passwords. Stallman said that “passwords were a way the administrators could control all the users.” He proceeded to hack into certain computers to prove that the security was very weak. For Stallman, restricting the access to others meant cutting himself off from society and from a cooperating community. He knew what not being able to access information felt like as he experienced it before will working with people who signed these contracts and it hurt his whole lab. In the end, he decided to create another operating system where everyone can share it and create another community without betraying others.

1. What are the freedoms that enable people to form a community?

The debut of proprietary operating systems restricted users to access computers controlled by the administrator, and for Stallman, it signified the loss of freedom. He conceived GNU to repel proprietary operating systems like Unix. Stallman stated that “the crucial thing about GNU is that it’s free software, and free software refers not to price, but to freedom”. The freedoms that enable people to form a community are the freedoms to implement changes if you want to or hire someone else to make changes for you if you are using a software for your business. It is also to redistribute copies, to share with others, and to make enhancements and publish them so that other users can benefit from them.