Week 9

Artifact 1

This week I put something up on my website (it doesn't have a url, but you can put this into the url bar (ignore the warning, it's cause I don't have a signed ssl certificate yet): https://216.128.138.184/
Currently it is just links to my socials, but I plan to soon put up portfolio work and personal projects

Artifact 2

I'm thinking of switching my computer's operating system (os). I currently run Windows 10 Pro on my main work/gaming PC and it's been causing headaches and grievances. Firstly, I don't like Microsoft as a company. They have a monopoly on desktop operating systems (around 90% of people use Windows, I believe). The UI is crap, the push for Windows 11 is annoying. Having to restart whenever they give you an update, and then seeing that they've worsened the experience is aggravating, and Bill Gates is a thing. A lot of people like him because of his donations to charity, and - while I think that is admirable and worth appreciating - he's not some martyr how people treat him. He owns a large portion of farmland in the U.S. for some reason, he's worked with the government to implement backdoors for spying purposes as shown by Edward Snowden and those like him, etc... etc.

I've been looking at switching to Linux. You might have heard of it, and it isn't actually an OS. It's a kernel, the part of your computer that runs programs and talks to hardware, and there are a multitude of OS's (called 'distros') built on top of Linux. The most popular/worst one you might have heard of is Ubuntu, it's crap.

The reason I chose Linux and not, let's say Mac, is a few-fold. Firstly I play/make video games, and Mac is not designed for this. I can't simply put MacOS on my computer, MacOS is limited to Mac devices, which I do not own. Secondly, if I were to buy a Mac, it wouldn't do anything I want anyway, the games would run slow, I wouldn't be able to put any software I want on there, etc. Lastly, I have some experience with Linux, and the environment for programming is actually very well supported. I actually prefer Linux in a productivity sense.

Linux has a lot of benefits. It is almost fully customizable. Almost every program that can be customized has a file in a few folders that you can tinker with to your heart's content. Secondly, most of the software built for Linux is what's called FOSS (Free(as in freedom) and Open Source Software). This means that anyone can view and contribute to the code online, meaning few bugs, lots of security (you don't really need antivirus on linux), and no scams or viruses on your computer. You can always know what your computer is doing, as opposed to Windows in which if you go to Task Manager, you see so many programs that you do not recognize. To that end, I think I will choose a more lightweight distro, with less software already built in so that I can fully customize my machine and know what it is doing at all times. Oh, yeah, there's also a program called Wine that lets you run Windows programs and games on Linux, so I'm covered there.

Artifact 3

Caught some very pastel-looking clouds:
https://photos.app.goo.gl/XFAuctZmBk1B9MFZ9

Week 11

Artifact 1

Went to an aviary:
https://photos.app.goo.gl/V4pPqY7rdPdoUAJb6

Artifact 2

I love snow:
https://photos.app.goo.gl/1TQmQDUmGaz4nB238

Artifact 3

I started reading again! I was reading a bunch toward the end of the summer before this school semester (as a had a job with a lot of down time), so I read a fantasy book and a comedy-sci-fi book.

I've been looking into philosophy more as I've been considering doing that is my minor, or at least using some elective classes on it (I'm doing one next semester). So I decided to pick up a philosophy related book. A controversial one in particular for a spicy start. I decided on Atlas Shrugged by Ayn Rand.

I'm surprised to say that nothing in the book is that out there to me at all, It just presents a reasonable world view that several characters use in different ways to achieve what they want in life. What Rand has to say about the qualities and/or maybe detriments of the world view she presents are is mostly unclear, but so far it seems mostly positive.

She presents a world a lot like (arguably exaggerated today) ours in which the average person has slowly become more afraid in life. They are more evasive, don't interact positively with their fellow countrymen, and are somewhat lazy. Everything is talk and nothing actually gets done. The main 'setting' of the story is around a dying railroad company, whose fathered-in president and ineffective board are simply waiting for delays while they could be enacting changes and fixing issues they know are present. In contrast, the main characters being the president's sister, childhood friend, and long time adversary, are the ones who keep their word, do what they set out to do, and make plans to enact what needs to be done. The president's sister who works in the operations division, simply goes against company policy and acts out of line for her place in the hierarchy, doing what needs doing for the company and keeping it from dying. The childhood friend is doing something similar. The president's adversary, a steel and metal manufacturing tycoon, is creating the next generation of metal called Rearden metal, which is going to be used by Taggart Transcontinental against the president's wishes (his sister decided on the metal deal for the railroads). This man spent ten years of his life toiling and struggling against his peers until he finally succeeds. This is a backdrop as the man, Hank Rearden, returns home to a less than stellar family, who don't see the triumph the man has achieved, and instead complain that his success has led to the family's 'enslavement', stuck to the man who provides for them due to his insane wealth (which is obviously an extremely rude outlook).

I have to say, so far I definitely agree with Rand's idea of the 'Man of Action' where Man is as a God when compared to nature. The idea defines it as one who sets out to achieve goals, plans them, and enacts them. Whether it be creating the next generation of steel for the world, or simply getting a stubborn train conductor to go past the broken stop light, this outlook on how to interact with, and view the world is definitely a novel one, at least to me, but a surprisingly optimistic and impactful one that I may have to integrate somewhat into my worldview.

Week 15

Artifact 1

I did finally switch to Linux! Although I still have Windows running on another hard drive for the occasional program that doesn't run on this device, although I soon plan to run a

virtual machine containing Windows from within Linux to minimize the computer rebooting. If you are confused, refer to my entry for [Week 9 Artifact 2](#Artifact 2). I put Endeavor OS onto my new M.2 Solid State Drive and have been running it for a bit now. I'm actually writing this artifact on that very machine! Here's a picture:

https://photos.app.goo.gl/tuD4JQF8×3hqVaMo8

Artifact 2

I decided to invest into cryptocurrency. I know it's a hot and controversial topic, but I have invested before and gained/lost some capital. Edward Snowden even recommended it recently which I thought was pretty funny. I decided to put some money into Monero (XMR) in particular thorugh an exchange called Kraken. I decided on Monero for a few reasons: firstly its price just dipped from the recent implosion of the FTX exchange. Secondly, it's been in a bear market (actually all of crypto has) for the past year or so, and that is finally starting to tick back up. Thirdly, I chose it for the perks it has. It is mined on CPU's rather than the traditional GPUs and ASICs, which reduces its environmental impact substantially. It is also completely private, unlike most blockchains in which all transactions can be seen by anyone. You can't see the sender, receiver, amount, or time of any transaction so It is completely private and safe. No company can use your spending habits through VISA or whatnot to influence you to purchase things.

Artifact 3

I was talking with my buddy/roommate about creating a first-person melee brawler style video game. It would use various ways to block, directional attacks, and states you can put your enemy in like stun, knocking them into the air, etc. It would also use environmental props like maybe chairs, pool cues, bottles, etc. to fight with. I was thinking we could put this together in maybe a month or two, polish it up and throw it out their for a few bucks and make some money, and have a good time in the process.