Bryce Loftin

Analyze This

My initial expectations for this course were that we would learn a lot about computers and learn how to code programs and websites. If I were writing this essay maybe a month prior to today I might have said that my expectations were not met. I expected us to jump right into coding websites early on, simply because I did not understand the concept of coding a program. Now that I have learned C and HTML I understand that learning a language like C was essential to understanding how programs are created and run to go on to use the more abstracted HTML language.

Defender of the Web was a writing problem that I really did not enjoy. I did not like Defender of the Web because it seemed like an arbitrary essay thrown in between practicing C and learning HTML which had little relevance to the overall flow of the CS50 course. I did, however, enjoy Homepage because there was some kind of finished product, something more tangible. Even though in all of the previous problem sets, our finished products were functional and something to take pride in, there was a line crossed, so to speak, when creating a website for the first time. After that point we could all create something very familiar to us, something that everyone uses on a daily basis. My habits as a programmer have certainly improved since week one. Counting from 0 to 1 has become second nature, I find myself automatically using cd to go into my current folders, and I have become a much better typist. Also, now that I am learning series in calculus, I find it much easier to understand the concept of a counter. I have also found that I understand a lot more about all of the devices I use on a day to day basis in this technology driven world we line in.

I feel that I learn the most from watching the videos on the CS50 website over anything else because I can pause and rewind if needed so that I can write code as I am learning from David or Doug. If not for these intuitive videos I would have had a much harder time sifting through pages upon pages of resources, slides, and CS50 notes, then going back an attempting to complete the problem sets. I expect to become more and more used to the incredibly abstracted languages we have been learning recently. I believe that using python will begin to set in as second nature, similar to how C did in the past months. I expect to lend this course having mastered the basics of coding in C, Python, Javascript and HTML/CSS. When we first learned to use command line arguments for user input, I really struggled with the conceptual understanding of what argc and argv[] meant in the context of the types of variable we had learned up until that point. However, after completing the first problem that implemented this new main() input, I suddenly realized what it meant. Argc was the number of inputted arguments and argv[] was an array storing a pointer to each of the arguments.

When I compared experiences with a fellow student both of us have had trouble in this class given that we do not have a teacher certified to teach computer science, but in spite of this, we have learned a lot and come a long way from where we started back in august.