

Reponse to: *The GNU Manifesto* by Richard Stallman

Charly Yan Miller

In my FFAR class we are currently in a unit on modernism and modernity, and consequently we have been reading a lot of manifestos which attempted to consolidate and unify political, artistic, philosophical... movements. I was honestly surprised that GNU had such a similarly clear and simultaneously sophisticated political and philosophical origins (I was surprised that there was a manifesto at all).

I found the metaphysical distinction between “open-software” and “free-software” particularly interesting: the former being an amoral economic philosophy focused on the increase in efficiency and productivity which would result from freer markets, the latter being an ethical philosophy based upon ideals of Kant and utilitarianism.

Finally, I completely agree with the manifesto’s identification of a closed-world (to adopt vernacular from Vannevar Bush) society as one of the principal barriers to achieving a post-scarcity society in which increases in production proportionately lead to increases in leisure time.