

Leanne Suen Fa
DART449
Mar 14th 2022

Reflection 4

“The GNU manifesto” by Richard Stallman, written in 1985, aimed to gather monetary support and contributors to develop the GNU operating system, a Unix-compatible software system which he wanted to share freely with others. Through this piece of writing Stallman shares his ideals about a “postcarcity world”, “one where nobody will have to work very hard just to make a living” and the contribution of programmers to build this world and ultimately about how the GNU project he is pitching is an expression of this ideal (Stallman). “Everything is a remix” by Kirby Ferguson reflects on human creativity and the evolution of intellectual property rights and how both concepts ultimately ended up clashing with each other despite this legislation having been originally created to protect the inventor (Kirby Ferguson).

I would agree with Stallman that capitalism can be a hindrance to human progress through its stance to make profit before looking at the greater good for humanity. As seen in “Everything is a remix”, many modern inventions are the result of shared ideas through centuries and intellectual property rights have had a greater role at protecting capitalistic schemes than anything else. Surprisingly, the fact that many inventors have barely made it into history as otherwise, it could have been another person who happened to be working on the same exact concept at the same time who filed that patent is very interesting. This reminds me of the concept of convergent evolution according to which different species who are distantly related to each can evolve very similar mechanisms of survival if they happen to share similar environments. For example, birds and bats are biologically extremely different yet they can both fly. It makes you think that human beings are so intrinsically similar. So much that there might

be someone else in the world sharing similar ideas and that we might either compete with each other or collaborate if we ever meet. At the same time, if we want to get fresh ideas then looking into different cultures is a must. Ferguson gave cinema as an example of reused genres and stereotypes, yet Hollywood represents mainly western media and the world is much bigger than that. If we were to look at movies produced in other cultures, then different ideas and tropes would come up and give the opportunity to bring “new” ideas to the “remix”.

Works Cited

- Kirby Ferguson. *Everything Is a Remix Remastered (2015 HD)*. 2016. *YouTube*,
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nJPERZDfyWc>.
- Stallman, Richard. "The GNU Manifesto." *GNU Operating System*, 1985,
<http://www.gnu.org/gnu/manifesto.html>.