Free Software and the Environment

Ben O'Neill

What makes free software good?

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- Secure

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- Ethical

- Collaborative

- Secure

- Helps the environment

Free software vs. proprietary software

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Free

- Users can maintain and port the software

- Users have good documentation generally

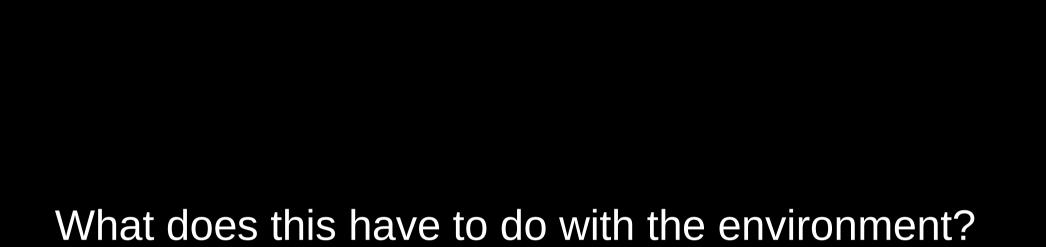- Users have the four essential freedoms and control over the software

Free software vs. proprietary software

Free

- Users can maintain and port the software

- Users have good documentation generally

- Users have the four essential freedoms and control over the software

Proprietary

- Users cannot maintain nor port the software

- Documentation hides things from the users

- The software has control over the users

What does this have to do with the environment?

Using free software to refurbish

- Ethical
  - Prevens excess waste
  - Not mistreating users

Using free software to refurbish

- Cheap
  - Most GNU/Linux distributions are provided free of charge.
  - If it's not free of charge, you can still copy the software.

Using free software to refurbish

- Reliable
  - You can maintain the software yourself or let the community do it.
  - Most computers run GNU/Linux with little to no difficulty nowadays.

Using free software to refurbish

- Ethical
- Cheap
- Reliable

Real-world examples of where free software is/could've been used

- Arch GNU/Linux 32 continues 32-bit support after mainline Arch maintainers halted support.

- Eric Lundgren sold MS system repair discs for use with refurbished machines, went to prison.

- Older computers that do not receive system updates anymore on the original OS are likely to be thrown away or not be used anymore at least.

Projects using free software for environmental sustainability

- EOMA68
  - A modular computer architecture
- Coreboot and Libreboot
  - Free BIOS alternative
  - Works on many older machines
- FreeGeek
  - Refurbishes and repairs computers
  - Installs GNU/Linux on them

What Do They Have In Common?

- They believe in the sustainable use (and reuse) of computers

- They believe in the <u>right to repair</u>
    - This should apply to software too, right?

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- Prevents excess waste

But I don't know how to install a free operating system on my computer!

How to get a freed computer

- Have someone install a free OS on your computer for you

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- Have someone install a free OS on your computer for you

- Donate or sell your computer and buy another refurbished one with a free OS pre-installed

Thank you!

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