Graduate Blog

Rantings of a semi-conscious graduate student -- take with a grain of salt.

What does it mean to make something?

Posted by chathaway on April 21, 2017, 6:48 p.m.

At what point can I say "Yeah, I made that thing" and claim ownership over something I did?It seems like a simple problem, but I keep getting caught in a (metaphorical) recursion loop whenever I try to answer it; if I take a video from youtube and play it fast, did I make it? What if I take a hundred videos, and play them faster then stickem together? What if I take the source material (3d models, Flash files, etc), and re-render them? What if I modify the source files by changing a color?

And so on and so on.What really gets me is that eventually, you get at the quesiton "If I use Photoshop, did I really make this picture?".As a software engineer, I know that the engineers who made Photoshop have spent FAR longer making it than I did learning to use it; so should they get credit for my photo? Should I at least mention them?

Should they mention the guy who wrote the compiler they used?Should that guy mention the engineers who made the assembly language he is using to write the compiler?Should those engineers mention the people who created the components they use in their chips?Should they mention.... whom ever created the universe?