

Consider this ethical dilemma:

The summer camp you have attended since you were very young has just added a computer activity. You've been hired to be the camp's first "computer counselor." It's 1983. The computers are Apple IIe's. The web hasn't been invented yet. The machines have no Internet access. There is no LAN--software has to be loaded onto each machine individually from floppy disks.

You arrive two days before the campers, and between endless counselor training meetings you have a few hours to set up the computer lab. You discover that all the software you have is on floppies with hand-written labels, no documentation.

Suspicious, you approach the director of the camp, Lou: was the software purchased or just copied? Lou says it was just copied. You politely tell him that you need legal copies, and a license for each machine. He refuses, and tells you that you're being "uptight."

Campers arrive tomorrow. There's really nothing you can do with an Apple IIe without software. You don't have a development environment. You don't have money to buy software yourself. And you can't seek donations--the camp caters to well-off kids, not the underprivileged.

This is a true story. After the assignment is due, I'll tell you what the person in question did and what happened next.