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English 1121 Section D439

*Unit 3 was a learning experience. I found new ways of learning how to conduct research. This approach felt like I was actually doing research. I felt good about my findings, and I Think that my writing expresses that.*

It has come to my attention that the society that we live in does not fully understand the significance of Computer Science. It’s not that we are taking it for granted, but rather we do not know enough about it to make justified conclusions about what Computer Science actually is. Like many things in our culture that are misinterpreted or misunderstood, Computer Science falls right into that category. As someone who programs as a hobby (and in the future a career, so long as I pass English 1121), I would love to change the current stigma around Computer Science. I shouldn’t be hearing that CS is not for me, because in a society where we are basically being taken over by technology, how can an individual possibly say that CS isn’t for them.

The people who feel this way about computer science are all around us. I was talking with my Hispanic colleague at work recently and I asked him what he thinks about CS. “This a White and Asian man’s world, what’s the point of even doing this anymore,” he said to me. Now, I know that he was joking, but there is a bit of realism in there. For starters, the first thing that came into his mind when he talked about CS was the stigma. Now he works at this organization called Computer Science for All, which is trying to promote CS in NYC public schools by the year 2025. So, for him to address the stigma of Computer Science in this matter is not entirely surprising. What is surprising is how he is able to easily identify the “CS stereotype.” This means that there is a high chance that there are other people in the world who think just like him. And that’s a big problem. We need a more diverse CS community. If people keep thinking like my colleague, then we will never achieve the diversity that I strive for.

Looking at forums like reddit (yes, reddit has answers too), there are a couple of users who address the crisis of motivation in CS. Reddit user fibtokin (this is obviously not their real name) says, “It's hard to keep oneself busy and motivated if the only projects you're working on are your own. In other words, it's not easy to keep a fire lit under one's own ass.” Computer Science is great and all, but a lot of the structure around CS is built on creativity. What happens if you’re not as creative as you thought you were? If there is no drive in you, what do expect to produce? Computer Science is like sex, if there’s no drive, then why do it. Many people in our society feel like this and turn away because they cannot find the motivation to get into or find sustainability in the field. Another Reddit user bbnett36 (again, not their real name) says, “I actually get motivated more by working on personal projects because they are usually helping me with a problem I have.” This person is the perfect role model that our society needs. Did he bail out? No. Did he loose hope? No. Did he gave up? No. Instead, he found his motivation. This just one of the many solutions that will help lift the stigma of CS.

On May 29th, 2017, Dan Wang published an article entitled, “Why do so few people major in Computer Science?”, where he states reasons why people haven’t started the Computer Science epidemic yet. Some of his notable reasons include CS being too hard, immigrants taking our jobs, and how the CS culture is anti-women. All are valid problems that need to be addressed. Leaving things the way they are now would mean a total monopoly and isolation on CS careers, potentially bottle-necking the potential growth of Computer Science.