The first chapter of Internet Concepts with HTML covers the history of the Internet and the structures and technologies involved in computer networks. Prior to studying this material, I had a very rudimentary understanding of some of these technologies and no experience with others. For example, I knew about IP addresses and how they are basically a device’s identifier. Most privacy conscious computer users are familiar with how and why it can be a good idea to obscure your device’s IP address, especially when engaged in activities such as downloading copyrighted material, not that I’ve ever done that. I was also familiar with the concept of a LAN, as most of the school computer labs I’ve visited were outfitted with such a network. I was not as familiar with the concept of domain names. I didn’t know that the addresses we type are converted to a series of numbers, I suppose I should’ve known since computers don’t actually understand languages that don’t involve numbers.

What I found most interesting was the history of the Internet. I was only vaguely aware of the involvement of the Department of Defense in its creation, and the implications of this fact have led me to pursue more information related to this historical accomplishment. There are more questions I have involving topics like data mining, privacy abuses, and the wealth and political power of tech companies, which all lead back to the DOD. It’s just very interesting that we now live in a world devoid of privacy, where our inner thoughts, social connections, and financial dealings are being monitored by private corporations, then fed back to various National Security agencies, and that may have been funded in part by public funds. Overall, I enjoyed learning about the basics of computer networks and look forward to learning more.