

Tools, Technology, and Human Experience

In this essay Wendell Berry presents a view of human experience, perhaps with implications for the design of tools and technologies:

Berry, W. (1987). Preserving wildness. *Home Economics* (pp. 137-151). New York: North Point Press.

Some questions to consider as you read and reflect on his essay: In your own words, what is his basic position? How does he construct it? What about his argument, if anything, appeals to you? What values does he work with? List as many as you can. Does he approve of some values and not others? Does he approve of some tools and technologies and not others? If so, what are his criteria? Do you see trade-offs, conflicts, or tensions among the values that he works with? How does he address tensions that may exist between values? What implications for the design of tools and technologies come from his position? Does Berry present advice for how we should design? If so, what do you think of his advice?

As you read this week, consider how Berry's ideas are related to the field of Human-Computer Interaction and how value sensitive design is related to HCI. Where do you see yourself in this mix of technology and human experience? As you consider how values are related to HCI, user-centered design, or human-centered design, the following two papers will be helpful:

Fischer, G. (2017). Exploring design trade-offs for quality of life in human-centered design. *interactions*, 25 (1), 26-33.

Bannon, L. (2011). Reimagining HCI: Toward a more human-centered perspective. *interactions* 18 (4), 50-57.

Your writing prompt. In about one page of writing, *first* carefully summarize some aspect of Wendell Berry's position. Try to focus in depth on a single idea or a small set of related ideas. *Second*, given your summary of his position, explore one or more substantial implications for the design of tools or technologies. In other words, if a designer were to treat Wendell Berry's position sincerely and intensely what would he or she do?

Focus. Your writing should engage Berry's essay closely. Provide evidence for your summary and implications.

Format. Your written response should be about 500-600 words (4-7 paragraphs) and must be formatted as a single-page PDF document. Please include your name in the header or footer. Your writing should be concise, clear, interesting, free of spelling and grammatical errors, and most of all engage Berry closely.

