Computers and the Environment

“Computers are an invaluable tool in the fight to protect our environment” according to Nathaniel S. Borenstein in response to Wendell Berry’s claim that he will not purchase a computer. We however, even in this modern age, feel that Borenstein makes a false assumption. How can a computer help our environment? This topic is debatable and many people take one side without considering the other. Wendell Berry disagrees that computers will help the environment and his article received a big response from the opposition. Fewer technology improvements and less energy consumption will cause less harm on the environment. Mr. Berry argues that it is more energy efficient to not use computers and new technology innovations and we agree.

In his opposing argument, Mr. Borenstein claims that up-to-the-minute reports on the EPA and nuclear technology will help the environment but these don’t help in a quick and timely fashion. If humans weren’t over consuming energy then there wouldn’t be any need for these reports. Computers are helpful for obtaining information perhaps, but as for the environment, computers only contribute to the downfall of our environmental conditions. If people took the initiative, like Mr. Berry, to conserve energy in small ways then the environment wouldn’t be so bad, and conditions would improve in a shorter amount of time.

Mr. Berry also states that while he is hooked to energy corporations he wishes to be less dependent. We too desire to be less dependent on energy corporations. Mr. Borenstein sarcastically suggests the quill pen is energy efficient. We understand opposing opinions but those who try to improve technology, the environment, or anything for that matter, for the good of EVERYTHING must truly have a grasp of the true meaning of improve. Many modern day technologies don’t have any built in solar energy or energy conservation system. Companies create new computers and devices, with the intent to improve people’s lives without realizing the environmental impacts that will eventually catch up to us.

In Mr. Berry’s argument of why he will not purchase a computer he mentions how new innovations “should use less energy than the one it replaces” and “if possible, it should use some form of solar energy.” We agree with him. So we ask why corporations can’t make a computer run solely on solar energy. He questions, “Why then is not my first duty to reduce, so far as I can, my own consumption”. His articles have enlightened us on a new perspective on technology. We hope to now reduce our own consumption of energy and improve the environment through the reduction of our dependence on technology. We would like to thank Wendell Berry for writing his articles and having them published, for we have learned a lot from them.