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Simple Efficiency

As with majority of the population, we have nothing against living a simple life. Often times, we wish we could grasp onto the simplicity that many frequently choose as they detach themselves from technology, and live like so for a short period of time or even in day-to-day life. However, we’d be deceiving ourselves by claiming that technological innovations, such as computers, do not create simple and effective solutions/approaches for many components of life, especially the workplace.

While Berry attempts to persuade his audience through a “subtle” description of his way of life, to say that it is the most efficient way of living would not be a valid statement, especially since many of his standards create multiple conflicts with increasing. For example, Berry’s demand on the technological innovation being cheaper than the previous is bound to give him a less effective tool as it would lessen room for improvements and helpful add-ons. On his farm, he produces crops with horses and sells them for a living. If he were to deny a tool that may be a bit more expensive, larger in size, and doesn’t come from a privately owned company but have more components that help produce more profitable crops in the long run, why wouldn’t he choose the obviously efficient way? Not only could these devices help create crops, but they could also help keep inventory and managing the crops so that Berry has more time to be out in the field with the tools or spending his time efficiently elsewhere.

These points also relate to Berry’s writing when it comes to the many positive, alternative outcome it could bring. With Berry being a writer and his wife being the one who types, it would not only save time to complete his writing with a tool that is a bit more expensive, like a computer, but the extra time gained could allow for more writing to be done. Although the computer and other technological innovations may replace the pen and pencil that Berry uses in his writing, to say that it would completely replace the need for his wife says less about his concern for technology but rather more about his concern for his marriage. As we understand the “need” for his wife to skim through his writing to ensure that mistakes are minimum and his words are well said, she can still complete all of these actions with a new tool while easily fixing mistakes and editing work.

To conclude, while Wendell Berry did have some good points about the repair of the innovations in case of damage or the amount of energy used, many of the new tools created are made to ensure that less energy is wasted, damage is uncommon, and efficiency is at an all-time high. Berry’s plead for there to not be a dependence on technology and innovations is admirable, but there comes a point where his hostility towards these devices can also be seen as unnecessary excuses that set him back further than if he did have the tools. Berry enjoys a simple life on his farm and in his writing, but simplicity and effectiveness go hand-in-hand, and his need to live without computers and technological innovations creates more complex situations that set him back further in the long run.