Some of Berry’s main concerns regarding the advancement of technology through use of a computer stem out of the belief that such technology would cost him more than he would gain in terms of interpersonal relationships, environmental conservation, and economic standing. Though Berry exposes some arguments that hold weight and value, we cannot ignore that his point of view is limited due to his deliberate refusal to expose his person to and in turn interact with the device he so strongly criticizes.

Comparing his wife’s use of a Royal standard typewriter to the usage of a computer is a major component throughout Wendell Berry’s article. Berry argues that his wife is his “best critic” and is the one most familiar with his habitual errors and weaknesses due to their close marital relationship and her role as editor. This is high praise for his wife’s skills but not necessarily for the typewriter itself. Having not tried using a word processor on a computer, neither Berry nor his wife would be aware that her editing skills and knowledge would be equally applicable on a computer. The computer is clearly faster and more efficient than a typewriter, but Berry sees this as a problem because he values his wife’s extensive contributions to his manuscripts, when in fact her contribution would remain equal, if not greater, with a computer.

Sentiment may also be a key factor in Berry’s clouded judgement. When discussing the result of “discarding the old model,” he not only refers to the typewriter but also to his wife. This sentimental tie between his wife and the typewriter obscures the fact that it is a machine like a computer, but less advanced. This limits him from testing a computer’s performance and reaping the benefits of a faster and more efficient editing process. Berry wants proof that using a computer is better, yet is not willing to personally seek out that proof. Instead he stands behind the belief that such action is detrimental to his wallet and the environment. Maintenance for the typewriter also generates these costs, being that ink and paper are required for every draft. Due to virtual editing and typing tools available, computers allow for less printed copies with ink when used for writing. This in turn would prove healthier for Berry’s wallet and planet.

On page 32 of the article, Berry introduces a list of standards that he uses to judge the technological advances. An advancement that comes to mind is a calculator. Going through each of the standards, a calculator is cheaper than tuition for higher education in math courses, is smaller than working through an entire graph paper, more trustworthy and accurate with calculations than those done mentally or by hand, able to be run on solar power, affordable to replace at many accessible stores, can be repaired, and is not deliberately eliminating the need for paper.

There are costs and benefits to each device, but if indisputable reasons are presented then benefits outweigh the costs.