June 10, 2014

Dear Mr. Berry,

I have recently read the article that you published a number of years ago entitled “Why I am not going to buy a computer”, and I can honestly say that it has changed my outlook on how technology affects my everyday routine, and I have come to agree quite wholly with your thoughts. Oblivious to the crippling effect technology had on me before I read your article, I found truth in your words by discovering that, although technology has advanced tremendously since that article was published, your argument is still applicable and relevant today.

The slow degradation of human interaction in the social environment has already occurred in my family. We cannot enjoy an activity together, no matter how small, without the interruption of a text message or social media notification. Each of us readily opens and responds to whatever message is received without a second thought given to how “rude” it may be to others. I now see this habit causes me (and the rest) to unknowingly misses out on valuable experiences which could have strengthen our relationships.

Beyond my living room, another aspect of society that has suffered from technological advances is the automotive area. Although the motors and fuel systems have become smaller, more powerful, and more efficient, the new cars have become so high-tech, involving many computers, that it is difficult for the average person to repair their own vehicle when it may become disabled. I can remember my grandfather changing his own oil. My father doesn’t have the ability to change a headlight (without taking off the tire!). Technology killed the shade tree mechanic. The same is true in the area of communication devices such as cell phones and computers. As the technology advances, the ability of the user to repair or service the device without the help of an expert decreases. People that own these devices become solely dependent on “experts” employed by large companies that have the knowledge and equipment to repair the product to working order. Many people, my family included, have become so reliant on devices to assist them that they would be crippled without them forcing the dependence to shift from the device to the inhuman corporation.

Modern day technology has been beneficial to the world’s population in numerous ways, whether that be life saving devices in the medical field or instantaneous news - that is obvious -, but as you pointed out in your essay, it can also be extremely harmful. Judging by the replies following your article, the majority of the (literate) population only sees the benefits of using the latest technology and do not realize that there are also many negative consequences associated with it, such as energy consumption, as you are well aware of. Your article has truly opened my eyes to the world of technology.

Regards,