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The Eyes of the Beholder

The debate on whether a society should entertain the use of technological advancements or maintain the use of contemporary technology has impacted the lives of people around the globe. Computers reside in the engineering and technology branch of the Fields of Science and Technology, a classification for statistics of branches of science. The Fields of Science and  Technology consist of many subdivisions that also include: natural sciences, medical and health sciences, agricultural sciences, social sciences, and humanities, all of which can be enhanced by computers in a numerous amount of ways. Although Wendell Berry’s argument could be appealing to an elite audience from a fortunate background, the belief that technology does not reach unrealistic requirements and computers are inefficient, is a perspective that is completely blind to a life of a lower class citizen.

    Wendell Berry’s standards to own any technological innovations are adapted to fit the needs of an individual who has yet to experience the needs of an invention that the computer was made to require. Berry’s social status positions him to be in a location in where the expensive prices of the once new computers would be considered foreign to normal purchases he made. He also states that products should be reduced in size compared to the items they are replacing. During this time, computers were made with substantial size and weight. For a person who mostly used handheld utensils for their writing, the computer seemed like a large, heavy trouble that was no more useful than the already used system for writing. Wendell Berry also does not consider the labor that is used to create the technology. He wished to have an invention that would be owned by a small, private business that would take it back for maintenance and repair. The computers at this time were a nation-wide innovation that were previously only used by government-related jobs. The education needed to repair these computers were advanced, rare, and expensive. A local company that repaired this at-the-time luxury was not a commodity to US citizens. Wendell Berry’s reason for the advancement in technology was not in his favor due to his conservative outlook to new inventions.

    Berry refused to believe the fact that computers are overall beneficial, time efficient and they economize resources. Berry ridicules computers and states that the ideal product uses less energy than the computers now. A computer saves energy exerted by consumers who, before, would work with typewriters or even use pen and paper. Along with human energy, computers preserve resources that are essential to our everyday life. Ironically, the 1990s highly contributed to the technological evolution, which majorly affected productivity. This rise in technology allowed for authority figures to set business goals realistically and efficiently, which lead to greater business productivity. Now, workers in every working environment were able to learn and work faster.

    Berry’s outlook not only consist of irrational data, but also in an aspect that technology should be an advantage to him and the people with the same lifestyle as him. In conclusion, his opinion that only technological innovations that he will invest in should reach certain guidelines pertaining his needs and on the efficiency of computers does not regard many variables and is only ideal in the eyes of the beholder, himself.