

Wendell berry's- the art of a common place thesis statements examples

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Wendell Berry's ideas on what should constitute a healthy society are overlooked by the major stakeholders in society today. Berry, in his book talks about the life that he values and what constitutes a healthy society altogether. According to Wendell Berry, a good life entails having the right technologies, sustainable agriculture, fidelity, the miracle of life, good food among others. In the art of common place, Berry creates an understanding of his philosophy and why he treasure land so much. The philosophy requires a wealth of responsible behavior. However, in the twentieth century it has proven difficult to possess the responsible culture desired due to existent negative cultural influences.

Wendell Berry explains why it is crucial to have an ongoing relationship with the land. He further goes on to explain the source of his wonder and authenticity to be the relationship with the land. Most of Berry's opinion and view on life was picked up while growing up on a farm in Kentucky. He learnt the art of compassion and stubbornness among others values that he readily shares with his readers. This knowledge he says, is very vital while trying to create health for the earth and in the earth as a whole.

While building on his arguments on what constitutes a healthy life, Berry quotes an autobiography by one of the young Methodist ministers who assisted in the building of the road in the year 1797. The minister had claimed that the men undertaking this project were violent towards the land as well as towards each other. Berry uses this to his favor to assert that the American settlers during that time never learnt how to be part of the land, and they misused the available resources. He goes on to say that the trend goes on from generation to generation with Americans only using resources

for financial gain.

Modern agro-business people in this century would go ahead to critique Berry on the grounds of economic theories. Some people may argue that land and other resources are merely factors of production that should be utilized at an optimum in order to yield maximum yield. (Samuelson and Nordhaus 13). Money and profits are the main reason most people care about land anymore. People see a parcel of land and instantly start developing this land into luxury hotels and parking lots without even thinking of measures to conserve the surrounding land. People are also using harmful farming techniques in order to continue earning more yield.

Even though Berry's ancestors did not employ the best farming techniques, Berry uses this as an example of what should and should not be done while practicing healthy farming techniques. His ancestors took part in farming practices that eroded the soil and left the slopes bare. The land on the slopes should never have been plowed.

Berry further goes ahead to explain that what is good for us human beings may not necessarily be what is best for the land. His ancestors concentrated more on maximizing food production while completely ignoring the negative effects of plowing along the slope of the land. This however cannot entirely be blamed on them because, maybe they were not aware of the consequences of their actions. Berry describes the top soil to be Christ-like in nature because of its energy and also its peacefulness. Berry is irked by how people seem to impose their ideas as well as their wishes on the land, depleting its resources and then going on to the next piece of land. He urges his readers instead, to try and understand the fundamental nature of the

land.

In his speech at a conference in Kentucky, Berry tries to decipher the relationship between spirituality and healing. He describes our present age as one marred with isolation, suffering, and disintegration. There is no balance between education and experience and so the education we continually receive does not do us any good. Berry describes what we are suffering from as universal hypochondria where, for example, so much energy in the medical industry is devoted to tests and exams. He describes this as absurdity. He further goes on to relate spirituality and healing by saying that the only way to give religious respect to the body is by treating the body spiritually.

Consumerism is at the heart of every economy in the world. Berry speaks against the consumerist culture and industrial business practices where he goes on to say that our ancestors lived in unity with the land but in today's society, tension exists with the land. In his somewhat prophecies, Wendell Berry argues that the economy people use to justify their actions is merely a little economy. This little economy gives people a justification for their vices. It tries to show why these vices are necessary to ensure that the economy is competitive. He describes our economy to be turning in opposition with nature (Calder 55).

Berry further goes on to pose an important analogy on the logic behind clothes and cars that are haphazardly made, our toxic wastes and the fact that our defensive weapons are suicidal. It is for these reasons therefore that Berry argues that there should be a line to distinguish between the so-called free enterprise and crime. He goes ahead to reiterate that we should not act

surprised when the number of court cases by our corporations increase together with robbery levels because our economic ideals are based on maximum profits and minimum responsibility. On page 233 of his book, Berry is surprised that even the medicine industry has become exploitive and for profit making. He calls paying for shoddy services and products being robbed and calls them victims of theft (Angyal n. p).

Many scholars and economists will be in support of consumerism and free market operations. They argue that it is a necessary evil to ensure that the consumer's demands are constantly met. However, the mass production of goods will out rightly lead to a decline in the quality of goods produced. People have been filled with so much greed that all they care about is making money at the expense of other people.

In the 21st century, consumerism is all about identifying with a particular firm or brand. There have been extreme forms of consumerism where consumers sacrifice their time and resources not only to acquire a product but to support a particular brand. Consumerism has led many people into wanting to acquire unnecessary luxury items just to identify with a certain group of people (Swagler 166). Some people may also believe that having a relationship with a particular brand is a substitute for normal healthy relationships with other people.

Consumerism has also been seen to cause a lot of damage to the environment as well as global warming because of the rapid use of resources. Dr. Majfud gave an analogy of trying to curb drug trafficking while not necessarily reducing the level of drug addiction; it is fruitless. Therefore, it is pointless to try and end the rising pollution and environmental

degradation without first dealing with consumerism (Majfud 37).

In order to curb the negative effects caused by consumerism, however, there has been increasing promotion of green products and attempts to implement ethical consumerism. People have realized that there are other options that will allow them to conduct business without necessarily depleting the land and the environment.

Critics argue that due to the limited amount of information regarding the outcome of purchase of a product, consumers are prevented from making the necessary informed, ethical choices. Also, due to the uneven distribution of wealth, ethical consumerism is inhibited. This means that it therefore, does not fulfill its expected democratic potential. According to a recent study, buying greens has been seen to cause unethical behavior (Mazar and Zhong 496). Therefore, consumerism, green or otherwise will still cause unethical behavior.

Healthy living entails being in co-existence with the environment and the land. As earlier stipulated by Berry, this requires discipline and a high sense of responsibility that many people in the 21st-century lack. Businesses are all about attracting wealthy customers who are the most attractive targets for marketing. Starting in the 1990s, people give reasons for wanting to go to college as wanting to earn more money. This has outranked other important motives such as wanting to assist people in difficulty or wanting to become an authority figure which is extremely sad (Sullivan and Sheffrin 79).

The hindrances to a healthy society, as established by Wendell Berry, are the industrialization of life, ignorance, greed and industrialized farming among others. Consumerism and the theories of economics also play a great role in

the negative issue in society. Wendell Barry tries to show that the contemporary industrial economy is to blame for the issues that are wrong with the world. The industrial economy has led to capitalism which has in turn led to a system where efficiency is all about low quality and greater profits. Capitalism has also compelled leaders in business to defy what is legal.

Capitalism is the reason why it is no surprise to see people breaking the law and destroying other people while at it. Berry continues to say that a society continues to depend on an industrial economy while at the same time creating a civilization that cannot be able to sustain itself.

Berry says that not only don't most of us know how to produce the best food in the best way but, we don't also know how to produce any type of food.

This condition brings forth a desperate dependence on other people claiming it to be efficient and economic while in the real sense, it is madness (Angyal 95).

Wendell Barry could have been influenced by his upbringing on a farm, but his inferences and suggestions are plausible. It is very difficult to live a holistic and healthy life in this century. People need to focus more on forming a connection with the land and everything around them instead of just merely exploiting it. If people are not willing to do so by choice then, they should be able to deal with the adverse effects that come with not taking adequate care of the environment and the land that we have. If people choose to go towards consumerism and capitalism then, they should be ready to compromise on quality.

A renowned Nobel Prize laureate, Wangari Mathai once said that " If you do

not change, Change will Change you." I concur. If people continue with their extreme tendencies towards industrialized farming without putting the environment into consideration, dire consequences such as global warming will arise. These consequences go hand in hand with others such as theft and pilferage, and fraud. Land is not only a factor of production but also a natural resource that ought to be looked after.

In conclusion, one person cannot arrive at a healthy society on their own. People need to come together to achieve this objective. In order for this to happen therefore people and the society as a whole need to get rid of their selfish greed and get in touch with their moral side. This will in turn mean that people will not focus on getting rich quickly and making more profit but, will focus on quality service delivery and the good of a nation. The good life as stipulated by Berry will, therefore, be inclusive of good food, good works, fidelity, the miracle of life, husbandry among others. If people were to share the same mindset as Wendell Berry, then the society would be a healthy and different place. Wendell's ideas on a healthy society, therefore, would be viable in this 21st century.

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