

Blaming wal-mart



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Blaming Wal-Mart The essay (Reich 2005) is about some problems Wal-Mart is facing. Some people don't like Wal-Mart because, they say, Wal-Mart does not pay workers a good wage, do not give them health care, and do not let them form a union. They attack Wal-Mart because they say it kills other shops everywhere it goes by offering low prices that the other shops cannot match.

But Reich also reminds us that there are two sides to any story, and that the hundreds of millions of American shoppers, which include myself, are part of the problem that Wal-Mart is facing. This also means that we may be part of the solution.

The essay explains that the problem can be solved if each side tries to understand the other. The two sides I see are this: on one side are workers at Wal-Mart and at other shops, both trying to earn an honest living; on the other side are shoppers like me, also trying to earn a living. The main problem is not that both sides like different things. The problem is that both sides do not have the complete picture, and unless we do, we may end up destroying each other.

I know what I like. I like lower prices so I can stretch every dollar and feed my three kids (and one more on the way). Every nickel or dime I save goes a long way in our household.

I also like the convenience that a one-stop shopping place like Wal-Mart offers me. Six days a week, I work like a slave, but on the day I shop at Wal-Mart, I feel like the Queen! I love their service with a smile and their clean stores. Most of all, searching for bargains and seeing so many beautiful things give me pure joy. I cannot buy everything I like, but seeing those colorful items on display gives me something to look forward to, something

to save for, a future treat to savor for myself, my kids, or for our home. A few hours shopping at Wal-Mart helps me rest and forget the many troubles in life. Walking through the shopping aisles of Wal-Mart is like a relaxing walk in the park, and this is what I want to continue enjoying, at least once a week. I understand that the other side likes to have better wages and jobs, just as the shops close to Wal-Mart do. So you see Wal-Mart is trapped in the middle and should not be blamed.

The essay made me think of how we can strike a balance between what each side wants. People who attack Wal-Mart want only one side to win and the other side (that's me) to lose. I don't like it, and it does not have to be that way. There must be a solution that is good for everyone. Perhaps, our side can think about paying a little bit more for the free "walk in the park" we enjoy when we shop. Or maybe, the other side can think about how lucky they are to get a job and that if they work a little bit harder they can earn more and get better health care.

I don't understand much about big business and government and all that, but I agree with Reich's suggestion that Wal-Mart, the government and other countries must talk about how to make everyone - workers and shop owners who want higher pay and jobs, and people like me who want lower prices - win instead of having to fight each other. One thing Wal-Mart can do is to find a way to split the everyday low savings between the workers and me. I learned that Wal-Mart saves me over a thousand dollars a year (Wal-Mart 2005), and I wouldn't mind giving part of that to Wal-Mart's workers who treat me very well and keep me happy. After all, I'm sure that if most of the Wal-Mart workers and shoppers are happy, Wal-Mart can save the money now being spent to fight lawsuits and defending itself from those who attack

it.

I hope this problem gets solved soon, because I would rather give part of my savings from everyday low prices to the workers at Wal-Mart, instead of handing them over to the bunch of lawyers Wal-Mart or their workers hire to defend them. Wal-Mart's workers let me taste heaven from time to time, and I'm sure if more customers were aware that we are part of the problem, many would be willing to give part of our savings back to those who make our lives pleasant. After all, what made this nation great is our willingness to sacrifice for the good of all.

Works Cited

Reich, Robert B. " Don't blame Wal-Mart." Op-Ed Contribution. February 28, 2005.

Wal-Mart. " Robert Greenwald to release another misleading video." Press Release. 25 October 2005. 19 February 2006.