

Essay on wal mart vs. conscientious america

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Especially today, Americans this Christmas are out to save money, to receive value for their dollars, and to make a decision based on the greatest number of choices available, conveniently all at one place. This involves mega-monster stores, such as our titular popular national outlet, Wal Mart.

Americans also want to continue, if not start living “green” and make conscientious decisions based on their sound and decent morals, values, and spiritual knowledge that giving is good, helping our fellow man is great, and supporting small business owners is without question the motto.

Thus, the truly difficult conflict: do we shop easily and convenient spending less money at the big store in the mall just down the avenue, or, do we seek out separate small businesses, owned by members of our community, using more effort, less convenience, and probably lessen the balance on our credit card by more than we otherwise could?

“The concentration of ownership and power, along with treaties like GATT and NAFTA, means more and cruder exploitation of workers everywhere. Jobs flee America as manufacturing is done by people like Wendy Diaz in Honduras. Diaz told Kathie Lee Gifford what it was like to earn 31 cents an hour, allowed to go to the bathroom only twice a day, be cursed and screamed at, and be able to do nothing about it. There is one unionized Wal-Mart - it's in Ontario.” (2008) Such newsworthy findings takes a look far beyond the retail market façade. The international impact of stores such as Wal Mart and other corporate America businesses are staggering.

I've often wondered, *whatever happened* to all the orange, lemon, and avocado orchards in California? There used to be one on every fourth block

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or so in the cities I lived in; I used to walk through many on my way to school. They have been covered up by cement, underneath malls, underneath retail stores, underneath flooring where massive amounts of inventory are set; in other words, they've been *malled*. Is that the fate of our landscape?

Billy Quinn in his book about the destruction of America cites various studies done in the late 1990's about 50-80% losses within community retail stores in the Midwest in clothing, accessories, and other apparel. He advocates, ". . . watching for red flags in a given area where large quantities of land are being bought up from large companies for corporate profit with no conscientiousness for the community they would serve . . ." (1998)

What does one individual do? The desirable choice and therefore action would be to do what's best for the most. The individual especially in our latest economy needs to do what's best for himself and his family. Most individuals do not feel they alone can effect an impact on this issue, and probably choose money value and convenience as a means to an end. Few unique consumers stop and think, weigh, and choose with caution, prudence and spiritual conviction.

We are all thrust, knowingly but involuntarily into this dilemma of a situation, and many are left frustrated, confused and merely apologetic as they continue pushing their carts down the wide, white-tiled aisles of mega-department stores where everything is under the one roof and to be had cheaply, or at least cheaper than most other places.

How does one sleep at night--on a Posture Pedic Standard pillow purchased on a two-for-one weekend white sale, or on a hemp mat on a wooden floor inhaling the slightly sour aroma from the backyard compost pile? I suppose the fabric and odor is not quite the question, rather, how long can we continue to walk the wide path, down an aisle, down life? This country was founded on freedom of choice. Let each make his own.

Works Cited

<http://www.wakeupwalmart.com>

<http://www.walmartwatch.com>

Quinn, B. *How Wal-Mart is Destroying America, and What You Can Do About It*. 1998, Ten Cent Press, Berkeley, CA.