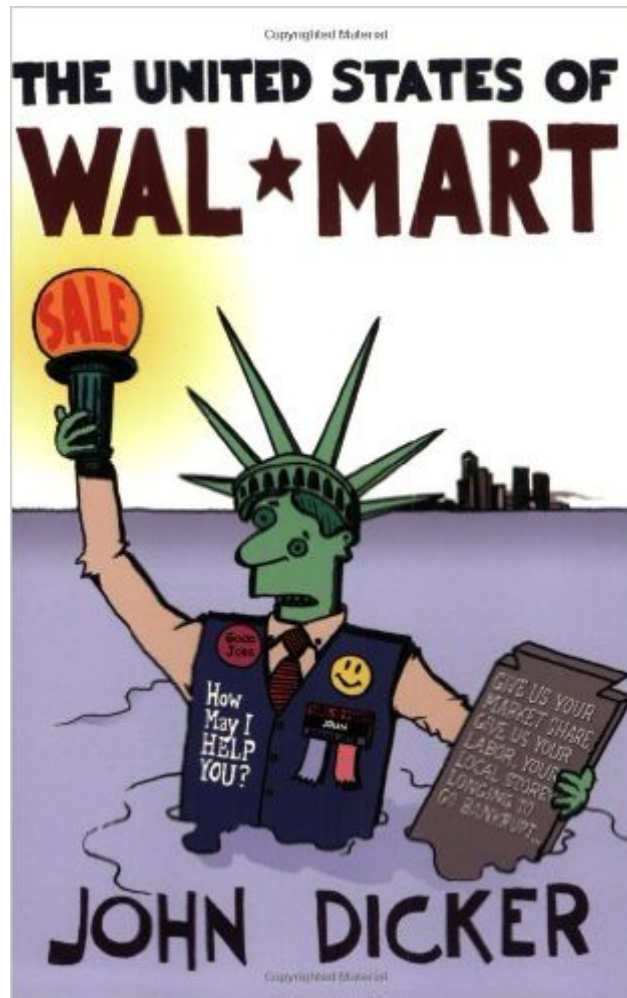


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The United States Of Wal-Mart



Synopsis

An irreverent, hard-hitting examination of the world's largest-and most reviled-corporation, which reveals that while Wal-Mart's dominance may be providing consumers with cheap goods and plentiful jobs, it may also be breeding a culture of discontent. It employs one of every 115 American workers. If it were a nation-state, it would be one of the world's top twenty economies. With yearly sales of nearly \$260 billion and an average wage of \$8 an hour, Wal-Mart represents an unprecedented-and perhaps unstoppable-force in capitalism. And there have been few corporations that have evoked the same levels of reverence and ire. The United States of Wal-Mart is a hard-hitting examination of how Sam Walton's empire has infiltrated not just the geography of America but also its consciousness. Peeling away layers of propaganda and politics, investigative journalist John Dicker reveals an American (and, increasingly, a global) story that has no clear-cut villains or heroes-one that could be the confused, complicated story of America itself. Pitched battles between economic progress and quality of life, between the preservation of regional identity and national homogeneity, and between low prices and the dignity of the American worker are beginning to coalesce into an all-out war to define our modern era. And, Dicker argues, Wal-Mart is winning. Revealing that the company's business practices have been shaping American culture, including the nation's social, political, and industrial policy, The United States of Wal-Mart provides fresh insight into a controversy that isn't going away.Â

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Customer Reviews

Though I'm not easily impressed by books, having been a reviewer for Choice, which is the premier university-libraries' reviewing service, I must say that Dicker's book is simply first class; it "has it all." Dicker describes Wal-Mart's history, blood-from-turnip buying practices, management practices, hiring-and-firing practices, insider personnel issues, supplier nightmares, promotion-and-demotion manipulations, regional and national sales and growth-rate figures, political maneuvering, foreign-intrigue issues, and more. And he does it with exceptionally intelligent and witty humor. What's especially fascinating is that he accomplishes the above while maintaining balance and sensibility. In other words, this isn't just a crass hatchet job; it is, instead, a highly competent analysis done in an engagingly entertaining way. To achieve that while laying out so many potentially dry facts and figures is a feat that only the most able writers can pull off. I honestly don't know how this book could have been better written, more credibly written, or more wittily written. To achieve all of that is quite an accomplishment. I had already written the above review, and then decided to edit it to add this comment: If you know anyone who is thinking of working for the Wal-Mart corporation, at any level from management to doorway greeter, be sure to have them read this eye-opening masterpiece. (In addition to which, it's just one hell of a lot of fun to read. Unexpected laughs pop up everywhere.)

If you don't know the answer to this question inform yourself through this painstakingly researched and thoughtful guide to one of the most influential companies in the world. Not only does Dicker recount the birth of Walmart, but also introduces you to the faces of the people behind this behemoth, whether a cashier or CEO. Dicker does a phenomenal job guiding you through the Walmart story. You learn of the technology that allows Walmart to squash their competitors, and how communities pull together in their fight against The Big-box and why. This book is not about bashing Walmart, it is trying to educate the public on who Walmart is, and what their impact is on our nation and the world.

The United States of Wal-Mart is a masterfully written saga of the extreme assault of human rights committed by the mega-giant corporation. A paragraph on China and Wal-Mart on page 118 speaks volumes: "So if an 800-pound gorilla can sit anywhere he wants at a dinner party, how does he behave when he's free of the constraints of polite society? If Wal-Mart is the gorilla, China is the jungle where cheap labor and government funded infrastructure abound in almost limitless supply. No nation is as essential to Wal-Mart's global designs. No free press, no independent labor unions, no pesky human rights organizations poking around factories, an almost eerie political stability-it's a

retail giant's wet dream."This incredibly well researched document reveals the history which led us to the horror of Wal-Mart policy on its numerous victims including but not limited to factory workers in the US and China and the million plus associates who work for the mega-chain. John Dicker's writing style somehow eases the reader's pain with sharp wit.This is a must read for anyone who is ever going to buy anything retail.

I write a weekly business columnist for the Richmond Register (you can check it out at [...]) and plan to devote a future column to this book. I have not figured out how to contact the author (he does not seem to have a web page) but once I can interview him, I consider it my public duty to let people know about the book.It is a masterpiece. Readable, well researched and gives all sides of the Wal Mart argument. Dicker's first book will not be his last. His writing style is entertaining but fact based.I've bought three copies of the book and will buy several more for my friends.Don McNay[...]

The reviewer suggesting activists stay away from The United States of Wal-Mart must be Al Norman, or a friend of his, because this book is doing more for the anti-Wal-Mart cause than any other book out there right now. Why? Because it's hitting the mainstream and getting into the hands of the people we need to get hip to the Wal-Mart problem: that is, the non-activists. Relying on what Wal-Mart loves to call the "small vocal minority" just isn't working. We need to get the word out, and get it out big. With Wal-Mart so overwhelmingly large, we need to leave our usual channels of activism and appeal to some of the 20 million people who walk into a Wal-Mart EACH DAY. Bravo to John Dicker for his insightful analysis, his refusal to let anyone off the hook, and his brilliant approach. This book will make a difference.

I loved this book. I think it's so engrossing because it gives you the straight dope on Wal-Mart as well as eye-opening analysis of why some opponents win and some lose. With a healthy sprinkle of good jokes along the way. If you want to really understand this issue, you'll be glad you read it.

A look at Wal-Mart that is not the usual hate it venom. The author lets the reader decide after showing the company spin and what the critics say. All based on verifiable documents. No matter if you like or dislike Wal-Mart this book is a must read to see beneath all the hype.

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