

The Psychology Of Materialism, And Why It's Making You Unhappy

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1 More money, more problems? It might just be true. Americans today, compared to
2 55 years ago, own twice as many cars and eat out twice as much per person, but we
3 don't seem to be any happier because of it. Rather than rising levels of well-being,
4 we've seen mounting credit card debt and increasing numbers of self-storage
5 facilities to house the things we compulsively buy.

6 The holidays in particular have become a time when consumer culture comes out in
7 full force. Black Friday, the annual post-Thanksgiving discount shopping spree,
8 results each year in multiple deaths and injuries of consumers trampled by crowds
9 in stores and shopping malls.

10 In a poignant, viral Huffington Post blog last month, "If You Shop On
11 Thanksgiving, You're Part Of The Problem," writer Matt Walsh cast a harsh light
12 on what the holiday shopping frenzy really says about our culture:

13 *That's our entire economic system: buy things. Everybody buy. It doesn't matter what*
14 *you buy. Just buy. It doesn't matter if you don't have money. Just buy. Our entire*
15 *civilization now rests on the assumption that, no matter what else happens, we will*
16 *all continue to buy lots and lots of things. Buy, buy, buy, buy, buy. And then buy a*
17 *little more. Don't create, or produce, or discover — just buy. Never save, never*
18 *invest, never cut back — just buy. Buy what you don't need with money you don't*
19 *have... Buy like you breathe, only more frequently.*

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1. In a short sentence describe the differences between consumer habits **at present time and** in the **1960s**. How much has consumerism changed since then?
Give two examples taken from the text.
 2. What are the direct consequences of **excessive** consumerism?
[give **3** of them]
 3. Typically the holiday season starts on November 1st and ends early January.
Why is this period also know as the "festive season" and the "holiday shopping season"?
 4. Give a definition of "**Shopping frenzy**"
 5. To what extent do you agree with Matt Walsh's Blog post (*in italic, from line 13 to line 19*)? Give examples based on your personal knowledge.
[60 words]