

NOTES

Chapter 1

- 1 **Forced to back off:** “After a Grim Forecast, Trump Extends Limits,” *New York Times*, March 30, 2020. **Hadn’t even hit:** There were 7,129 COVID-19-related deaths in the US from Jan.–March 2020, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. **Had yet to recommend:** “CDC Recommends Wearing Face Masks During Coronavirus Pandemic,” *Los Angeles Times*, April 3, 2020.
- 1 **The session:** “Leading and Learning in a Time of Crisis: Webinar on the Corporate Response to COVID-19,” FSG, March 30, 2020. **“Businesses shuttered”:** “After a Grim Forecast, Trump Extends Limits,” *New York Times*, March 30, 2020.
- 2 **By comparison:** Figures are from company news releases, websites, and federal filings.
- 2 **Emergency leave policy:** For details, see “COVID-19 Absences and Emergency Leave” at one.walmart.com/content/dam/us-wire-wm1/documents/company/community/emergency-disaster-preparedness/covid-19/Emergency_Leave_FAQ.pdf. **Free telemedicine:** See “Walmart Continues Focus on Health

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and Safety,” corporate news release, March 24, 2020. **Trimmed its shopping hours:** “Latest Walmart Store Changes to Support Associates and Customers,” corporate news release, March 18, 2020. **5,000 US locations:** This includes three different Walmart formats—Supercenters, discount stores, and Neighborhood Markets—as well as Sam’s Club warehouse-style stores. **“Sneeze guards”:** “Walmart Continues Focus on Health and Safety,” corporate news release, March 24, 2020.

- 3 **In bonuses:** This included more than \$365 million in bonuses to recognize hourly employees “for their hard work and dedication to serving customers in a time of an unprecedented national health crisis,” as well as \$180 million in an accelerated payout of their next scheduled quarterly bonus. See “Walmart Announces Special Cash Bonus and Early Payment of Q1 Bonuses Totaling Nearly \$550 Million for Hourly Associates,” corporate news release, March 19, 2020. **Would eventually total:** “Walmart Announces More Than \$700 Million in Additional Associate Bonuses, Tops \$2.8 Billion in Total Cash Bonuses to Associates in 2020,” corporate news release, Dec. 3, 2020. **To backfill:** See *Square Box* interview with Walmart CEO Doug McMillon, CNBC, May 20, 2020; interview with Drew Holler, Walmart senior vice president, by the author. **150,000:** “Walmart to Hire 150,000 Workers as Shoppers Surge on Coronavirus Fears,” Reuters, March 19, 2020. **50,000 more:** “Walmart Meets Commitment to Hire 150,000 Associates, Pledges to Hire 50,000 More,” corporate news release, April 17, 2020.
- 4 **Op-ed:** “At Walmart, the Coronavirus Makes It Feel Like Black Friday,” *New York Times*, March 26, 2020.
- 4 **After four years:** All details on Love that are not in the op-ed are from interviews with her by the author. **Her pandemic bonus:** “Walmart Announces Special Cash Bonus and Early Payment of Q1 Bonuses Totaling Nearly \$550 Million for Hourly Associates,” corporate news release, March 19, 2020. **At Disneyland:** All Disney parks across the globe were shut down as of March 16, 2020; Disneyland reopened April 30, 2021. **One of**

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- the millions:** “Job Losses Soar; U.S. Virus Cases Top the World,” *New York Times*, March 27, 2020.
- 5 **“Want to scare”:** “The Wal-Mart Effect: Poison or Antidote for Local Communities?” by Terry J. Fitzgerald and Ron Wirtz, *fedgazette*, Federal Reserve Bank of Minneapolis, Jan. 1, 2008.
- 5 **“Unfettered capitalism”:** “Imagining Wal-Mart: New Musical to Open off Broadway,” *Women’s Wear Daily*, Aug. 31, 2007. **Widely perceived:** See Nelson Lichtenstein’s essay “Wal-Mart: A Template for Twenty-First-Century Capitalism” in Lichtenstein, *Wal-Mart: The Face of Twenty-First-Century Capitalism*, 25–28; Wartzman, *The End of Loyalty*, 329–332. **Largest corporation:** As measured by annual revenue and reported by *Fortune* magazine. General Motors topped the Fortune 500 list from its debut in 1955 to 1975, when it was eclipsed by Exxon Mobil. Walmart ascended to No. 1 in 2002. It would dip to second a couple of times in subsequent years, but it regained the top position in 2013 and has remained there since. **“Low prices are great”:** This is the subheading of “Is Wal-Mart Too Powerful?,” *BusinessWeek*, Oct. 6, 2003.
- 6 **At very low prices:** Some economists have long pointed to the low prices offered by Walmart as a big social benefit. See, for instance, “Wal-Mart: A Progressive Success Story” by Jason Furman, Nov. 28, 2005; “The Low Prices Are Good News” by Jason Furman, *Slate*, June 26, 2006; “Consumer Benefits from Increased Competition in Shopping Outlets: Measuring the Effect of Wal-Mart” by Jerry Hausman and Ephraim Leibtag, National Bureau of Economic Research, Working Paper 11809, Dec. 2005. **“Tell people all the time”:** Interview with Morial by the author. **“I’d rather have”:** “Grocery Unions Battle to Stop Invasion of the Giant Stores,” *Los Angeles Times*, Nov. 25, 2003. Also quoted in Wartzman, 339. **Came up through:** See corporate.walmart.com/newsroom/company-facts. This refers to salaried store operations management, not hourly positions that may have “management” in the title. Of course, the chances of landing one of these top store jobs—when there are a million

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frontline workers spread across about 5,300 Walmart and Sam's Club locations—are akin to winning the lottery. On this point, see Reich and Bearman, *Working for Respect*, 76–77. **Been incarcerated:** “Banning the Box: The Labor Market Consequences of Bans on Criminal Record Screening in Employment Applications,” a 2016 working paper by Daniel Shoag of Harvard University and Stan Veuger of the American Enterprise Institute, notes that Walmart in 2010 stopped asking for information about an individual's criminal history when hiring. The flip side is that having a criminal record “can compel one to stay at a job one hates” and “scare people into silence at work,” as noted in Reich and Bearman, 81. **Guaranteed a job:** “Today Walmart Launches Veterans Commitment and Plans to Hire 100,000 Over the Next Five Years,” corporate news release, May 27, 2013. In July 2020, the company announced that it had hired more than 265,000 veterans since the program's inception.

- 7 **“Saved them from situations”:** Reich and Bearman, 67. **“Associates are not choosing”:** Reich and Bearman, 65. **Opened two stores:** Reich and Bearman, 65.
- 7 **Government food stamps:** “Millions of Full-Time Workers Rely on Federal Health Care and Food Assistance Programs,” US Government Accountability Office, Oct. 2020. Also see “Walmart on Tax Day: How Taxpayers Subsidize America's Biggest Employer and Richest Family,” Americans for Tax Fairness, April 2014; “The Wal-Mart Tax: Shifting Health Care Costs to Taxpayers,” AFL-CIO, March 2006; Featherstone, *Selling Women Short*, 239–242. Walmart disputed the methodology used in the Americans for Tax Fairness study, which extrapolated data from a single state, Wisconsin. A company spokesman called its conclusions “inaccurate and misleading.” **“In orientation, we learned”:** Ehrenreich, *Nickel and Dimed*, 175. Also quoted in Wartzman, 332–333. **Walmarts in Kentucky:** “In-House Audit Says Wal-Mart Violated Labor Laws,” *New York Times*, Jan. 13, 2004. **“I would call”:** “Is Wal-Mart Good for America?,” *Frontline*, Nov. 16, 2004. After Lehman left the

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- company, he went to work for the United Food and Commercial Workers union.
- 8 **That zeroed in:** “Arcing Toward Justice: The Evolution of the Living Wage Movement,” Tides Foundation, 2005.
- 8 **Caused a stir:** All details are drawn from “Is Walmart’s Request of Associates to Help Provide Thanksgiving Dinner for Co-Workers Proof of Low Wages?,” *Cleveland Plain Dealer*, Nov. 18, 2013. **Ashton Kutcher:** Nov. 19, 2013, tweet.
- 9 **“Part of the company’s culture”:** “Is Walmart’s Request of Associates to Help Provide Thanksgiving Dinner for Co-Workers Proof of Low Wages?,” *Cleveland Plain Dealer*, Nov. 18, 2013. **“Act of human kindness”:** Nov. 19, 2013, tweet from the Walmart newsroom to Ashton Kutcher. **“Wouldn’t be necessary”:** Reich and Bearman, 118.
- 9 **Upped its lowest hourly wage:** “Walmart to Increase Wages for Current U.S. Workers to \$10 an Hour or Higher, Launches New Skills-Based Training for Associates,” corporate news release, Feb. 19, 2015. **“Got our associates”:** Interview with McMillon by the author.
- 10 **“Always prided themselves”:** “Walmart—Yes, Walmart—Is Making Changes That Could Help Solve America’s Wealth Inequality Problem,” *Quartz*, Oct. 16, 2017. **Had branded Walmart:** “How McDonald’s and Wal-Mart Became Welfare Queens,” Bloomberg, Nov. 13, 2013. **“Not minor adjustments”:** “Walmart Learns to Live Without Everyday Poverty Wages,” Bloomberg, June 11, 2015.
- 10 **Another in 2018:** “Walmart to Raise U.S. Wages, Provide One-Time Bonus and Expand Hourly Maternity and Parental Leave,” corporate news release, Jan. 11, 2018. **“A decade ago”:** “When Did Walmart Grow a Conscience?,” *Boston Globe*, Sept. 26, 2019.
- 10 **Into small teams:** “Investing in Our Associates and Roles of the Future,” corporate news release, Sept. 17, 2020. **Complete autonomy:** Interview with Bursey by the author.
- 11 **Department managers:** Details on the shift in roles were supplied by the Walmart communications team. Starting pay for a

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- “team lead” ranges from \$18 to \$21 an hour; starting pay for a department manager ranged from \$12 to \$15 an hour. **“Unlocking the potential”**: Interview with Holler by the author. **Doubled the number**: “This Is One of the Fastest Growing Jobs at Walmart,” CNN Business, Feb. 12, 2021.
- 11 **The first move**: “Walmart U.S. CEO John Furner to Associates: ‘A Memorable Year ...and an Investment in You,’” corporate news release, Feb. 18, 2021; “Walmart to Hike Wages for 425,000 Workers to Average Above \$15 an Hour,” CNBC, Feb. 18, 2021; Walmart’s environmental, social, and governance report for 2021. **The second**: “Walmart Will Raise Hourly Pay for 565,000 Workers,” *New York Times*, Sept. 2, 2021. The company also raised the minimum wage at its Sam’s Club unit to \$15 an hour from \$11. See “Walmart-Owned Sam’s Club Raises Minimum Wage to \$15, as Retailers and Restaurants Compete for Talent,” CNBC, Sept. 14, 2021. At the same time, Walmart scrapped its long-standing quarterly bonus system for hourly workers, called MyShare. The company said that workers would still come out ahead—though, in many cases, by only a small amount. A Brookings Institute analysis found that those bonuses averaged \$1,400 in 2020. Accounting for the \$1,400 in lost bonuses, the adjusted real pay increase for a full-time Walmart employee working 36 hours per week for 52 weeks a year would be just 2%, compared to 9% without adjusting for the lost bonuses. See “Walmart to End Quarterly Bonuses for Store Workers,” *Wall Street Journal*, Sept. 9, 2021; “With Inflation Surging, Big Companies’ Wage Upticks Aren’t Nearly Enough” by Molly Kinder, Katie Bach, and Laura Stateler, Brookings Institution, Dec. 13, 2021. **More full-time jobs**: “Emphasizing Opportunity, Walmart Moves More Associates to Full Time,” corporate news release, April 14, 2021. **“Part of the solution”**: “Walmart Is Adopting Socially Responsible Policies. ESG Funds Are Taking Notice,” *Barron’s*, Jan. 8, 2021.
- 12 **Exponent of the viewpoint**: See, for example, “A List to Change the World,” Brunswick Group, Jan. 22, 2020; “Society’s Problems Need Our Best Business Minds,” *Fortune*, July 27, 2020;

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- “Business’s Social Goals Are Not a Passing Political Play,” *Fortune*, Feb. 8, 2021; “Confronting the Critics of Stakeholder Capitalism,” *Fortune*, May 10, 2022. **“Walton famously paid”**: “Investors Are Punishing Walmart for Raising Workers’ Pay” by Alan Murray and David Meyer, *Fortune*, Feb. 19, 2021. Also see “Here’s What Walmart CEO Doug McMillon Thinks of the Pushback Against Stakeholder Capitalism” by Alan Murray and David Meyer, *Fortune*, June 7, 2022.
- 12 **Although Walton died**: See “Sam Walton Is Dead at 74; the Founder of Wal-Mart Stores,” *New York Times*, April 6, 1992.
- 12 **Turn his wisdom back**: In “From Affective Shareholding to OUR Walmart: Organizing Labor in a Post-Union World,” *New American Notes Online*, Dec. 2015, Christine Labuski and Nick Copeland write: “OUR Walmart has strategically reappropriated Sam Walton’s concept of respect for the individual in order to publicly shame the company into improving the material conditions of its workers....By showing how Sam Walton’s family values and discourses of respect are meaningless without material rights and collective worker solidarity, OUR Walmart uses shame to reformulate labor norms...and establish a novel space for worker action.” **“Sam’s Rules”**: The 10 rules can be found in Walton, *Made in America*, 246–249. **Liked to invoke**: United for Respect was known previously as the Organization United for Respect at Walmart, or OUR Walmart. Its Declaration of Respect quotes Sam Walton several times and ends this way: “And finally, we close with one more rule from Mr. Sam: ‘Share your profits with all your Associates, and treat them as partners.’”
- 13 **He knew how**: See Walton, 34–35.
- 13 **“We never thought”**: Walton, 4. **Out of college**: Walton went to the University of Missouri. **Joined J. C. Penney**: Ortega, *In Sam We Trust*, 22; Walton, 17; Lichtenstein, *The Retail Revolution*, 20; Vance and Scott, *Wal-Mart: A History of Sam Walton’s Retail Phenomenon*, 2–3. **18 months**: Ortega, 23; Walton 18; Lichtenstein, *The Retail Revolution*, 20.
- 13 **“It was at Penney”**: Ortega, 22.

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- 14 **Walton snapped up:** Walton, 21–22; Ortega, 25; Lichtenstein, *The Retail Revolution*, 21–22; Vance and Scott, 5. **Pecan and cotton farms:** Ortega, 25. **The most profitable:** Walton, 22.
- 14 **“They had their own”:** Walton, 23.
- 14 **From his competitors:** Walton, 22–23; Ortega, 26; Vance and Scott, 8. This was a practice that Sam Walton first began when he was a J. C. Penney trainee, when he’d go to visit the nearby Sears and other retailers. “On family trips, too, he’d habitually wander off to visit Woolworths, or Kresges, or whatever other stores he might find of interest,” Ortega writes. **Popcorn maker:** Walton, 26; Ortega, 28.
- 15 **End run:** Walton, 25; Ortega, 27; Lichtenstein, *The Retail Revolution*, 23; Vance and Scott, 8. **Parent company’s:** The parent of Ben Franklin was Butler Brothers. **“Got me thinking”:** Walton, 25. **“Where it started”:** Walton, 28.
- 15 **Was the largest:** Walton, 29; Vance and Scott, 9. **Botched his lease:** Walton, 30; Ortega, 29; Lichtenstein, *The Retail Revolution*, 23–24; Vance and Scott, 9. **“The low point”:** Walton, 30.
- 16 **Moved to Bentonville:** Walton, 32; Ortega, 29; Lichtenstein, *The Retail Revolution*, 24; Vance and Scott, 9. **Its virtues:** Walton, 31. **Walton’s Five and Dime:** Technically, this was a Ben Franklin franchise.
- 16 **“Thinking up new things”:** Walton, 34.
- 16 **He opened:** Lichtenstein, *The Retail Revolution*, 24. **One of the first retailers:** Walton, 33–34. **“Gather your choices”:** Vance and Scott, 12; Ortega, 30. **Get away with:** Ortega, 30; Lichtenstein, *The Retail Revolution*, 25.
- 17 **The biggest:** Ortega, 32. This was in partnership with his brother, Bud, and his in-laws. **Tri-Pacer:** Ortega, 54. This had replaced Walton’s original Air Coupe. **New crop of competitors:** Ortega, 46–48; Lichtenstein, *The Retail Revolution*, 26–31; Vance and Scott, 30–38. **“Buy it low”:** Walton, 42; Vance and Scott, 40; Ortega, 48.
- 17 **“Knew the discount idea”:** Walton, 42. **Into the instincts:** Walton, 35; Ortega, 48. **Got nowhere:** Walton, 43; Vance and Scott, 42–43; Ortega, 49–51; Lichtenstein, *The Retail Revolution*, 31.

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- 18 **Pledged to provide:** Ortega, 55. **“From day one”:** Walton, 47. **Something to behold:** All figures are from Vance and Scott, 44–45. They are also quoted in Ortega, 56.
- 18 **Bug bit others:** Vance and Scott, 45; Walton, 49; Ortega, 47; Moreton, *To Serve God and Wal-Mart*, 28; Fishman, *The Wal-Mart Effect*, 8.
- 18 **Only into towns:** Ortega, 57; Vance and Scott, 49. **Far fewer:** Lichtenstein, *The Retail Revolution*, 32. **But Walton deduced:** Ortega, 57; Moreton, 27–28; Lichtenstein, *The Retail Revolution*, 32–33.
- 19 **Walton owned:** Vance and Scott, 47; Ortega, 57. In addition, he had 14 variety stores, including nine Ben Franklin franchises. **Walton would insist:** Walton, 177. **“Break him!”:** Lichtenstein, *The Retail Revolution*, 32. **“One-legged man”:** Fishman, 31.
- 19 **Weren’t terribly advanced:** Ortega, 58; Vance and Scott, 48. **“We didn’t have”:** Walton, 50–51.
- 19 **Knocking off:** Lichtenstein, *The Retail Revolution*, 25. **“What the heck”:** Walton, 48. This took place in 1964.
- 20 **Reluctantly:** Ortega, 64–67. **Take Walmart public:** Vance and Scott, 54; Ortega, 71; Moreton, 29. It listed on the New York Stock Exchange in 1972. **Four biggest discounters:** Lichtenstein, *The Retail Revolution*, 32. He notes that in 1981, Walmart was No. 4. **Remain concentrated:** Lichtenstein, *The Retail Revolution*, 34. **“Miracle decade”:** Lichtenstein, *The Retail Revolution*, 32. Also see Ortega, 108–111; Vance and Scott, 90. **Four to five times:** Lichtenstein, *The Retail Revolution*, 33. **“For most discounters”:** Lichtenstein, *The Retail Revolution*, 33.
- 21 **50 new stores:** Lichtenstein, *The Retail Revolution*, 32. The company opened 258 stores in all during the ’70s, according to its 1980 annual report. **Almost 100:** Ortega, 84. **21,000 people:** Ortega, 84; Lichtenstein, *The Retail Revolution*, 32.
- 21 **With an assist:** Walton, 129; Ortega, 87. **In 1971:** Walton, 132; Ortega, 90. **Was reduced:** Ortega, 93; Vance and Scott, 74. **Seven years:** Lichtenstein, *The Retail Revolution*, 126. **Mostly in Walmart stock:** Walton, 132. Lichtenstein (in *The Retail Revolution*, 125–126) notes: the plan “was not actually a profit-sharing program per se.

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- Rather the company contributed about 6% of an employee's earnings to the plan dependent upon the degree to which Wal-Mart hit certain predetermined earnings and profit targets."
- 21 **Tacked on:** Ortega, 90; Walton, 134–135; Vance and Scott, 75. **Circumvent:** Walton had set up his stores as separate corporate structures—all linked back to a single financial partnership that he and his family controlled—so that revenues would come in at less than \$1 million apiece, a threshold that permitted each location under government rules to pay less than the minimum wage. See *W. W. West et al. v. Wal-Mart Inc., Wal-Mart of Springdale Inc., and Wal-Mart of Harrison Inc.*, Civil Action No. 575, District Court of the United States for Western District of Arkansas, Fayetteville Division, 1967; Thomas Jessen Adams's essay "Making the New Shop Floor: Wal-Mart, Labor Control, and the History of the Postwar Discount Retail Industry in America" in Lichtenstein, *Wal-Mart: The Face of Twenty-First-Century Capitalism*, 218. Also see Greenhouse, *The Big Squeeze*, 141; Wartzman, 331; Lichtenstein, *The Retail Revolution*, 89; Humes, *Force of Nature*, 37; Jaffe, *Necessary Trouble*, 78; Rosenfeld, *You're Paid What You're Worth*, 115. **"Chintzy":** Walton, 127. **Paid poorly:** Moreton, 70. **Stave off:** Walton, 129; Ortega, 87–90.
- 22 **"A definite plus":** "All About Your Profit Sharing," *Wal-Mart World*, Nov. 1980. **"The associates worried":** Bergdahl, *The 10 Rules of Sam Walton*, 205. **"The move we made":** Walton, 132.
- 23 **Employee turnover:** Ortega, 90. **Wasn't unheard of:** See Walton, 132–134; Vance and Scott, 74–75. **Became millionaires:** Bergdahl, 56; Humes, 39–40. **"Made it worthwhile":** Moreton, 70. **"Willing to work":** Quoted in Lichtenstein, *The Retail Revolution*, 126.
- 23 **Interact with Walton:** Vance and Scott, 78–79. **In verse:** Quoted in Lichtenstein, *The Retail Revolution*, 65. This was from 1989.
- 23 **Plastic name tag:** Ortega, 193. **Company cheer:** Ortega, 91–92; Lichtenstein, *The Retail Revolution*, 56–57; Walton, 156–158; Vance and Scott, 68, 78. **"In headquarters":** Ortega, 193. **"All ways so nice":** *Wal-Mart World*, Dec. 2015.

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- 24 **Organized labor at bay:** Ortega, 89–90; Lichtenstein, *The Retail Revolution*, 124–125. **“Listen aggressively”:** “Message from Sam Walton,” *Wal-Mart World*, June 1978. **“We Care”:** Walton, 131; Ortega, 90; Lichtenstein, *The Retail Revolution*, 124–125. **“Say they need a union”:** Walton, 130.
- 25 **Began publishing:** Vance and Scott, 74. **“I’ve been repeatedly asked”:** All the editions of *Wal-Mart World* that are cited can be found through the Walmart Digital Museum at walmartmuseum.com/content/walmartmuseum/en_us.html.
- 25 **Annual meeting:** Walton, 167–169; Ortega, 190; “How the Walmart Shareholders Meeting Went from a Few Guys in a Coffee Shop to a 14,000-Person, Star-Studded Celebration,” *Business Insider*, June 2, 2017; Lichtenstein, *The Retail Revolution*, 67. **“It’s a revival”:** Ortega, 190–191.
- 26 **Logistics and distribution:** Ortega, 129–132; Lichtenstein, *The Retail Revolution*, 35–44; Vance and Scott, 70–73, 93–95. **For every dollar:** Ortega, 130. These figures are for 1983.
- 26 **Rocketed ever further:** All figures in this paragraph are from the retailer’s annual reports for 1980 and 1990. As the company entered the 1980s, there were 1,402 Walmarts and 123 Sam’s Wholesale Club units, to be precise—up from 276 Walmarts in 1970. **Appropriated the concept:** Walton, 200; Ortega, 140–148.
- 26 **“Restless and evangelical”:** “Make That Sale, Mr. Sam,” *Time*, May 18, 1987.
- 27 **Handed the reins:** Ortega, 136; Vance and Scott, 99. Glass beat out another executive, Jack Shewmaker, for the top job. **“An American original”:** “Sam Walton Is Dead at 74; the Founder of Wal-Mart Stores,” *New York Times*, April 6, 1992.
- 27 **Lured away:** Ortega, 95. **“Lion’s share”:** Walton, 207. **Plain-spoken:** For background on Glass, see Ortega, 95–99; Lichtenstein, *The Retail Revolution*, 167–168. **Unfailingly humble:** See “David Glass, the Man Who Took Sam Walton’s Job at Walmart, Dies at 84,” *Forbes*, Jan. 18, 2020. **Hang out in stores:** Vance and Scott, 100–101; “David Glass Won’t Crack Under Fire,” *Fortune*, Feb. 8, 1993; “The 25 Top Executives of the Year;

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- David D. Glass: Second Wind for Wal-Mart,” *BusinessWeek*, Jan. 11, 1999. “A bit of a stiff”: Ortega, 96. Also see Vance and Scott, 99–100.
- 28 **Some questioned:** “Can Wal-Mart Get Back the Magic?,” *Fortune*, April 29, 1996. “**One-stop shopping**”: “The Most Under-rated CEO Ever,” *Fortune*, April 5, 2004.
- 28 **Two Supercenters:** All figures in this paragraph are from the retailer’s annual reports for 1989 and 2000. For more background on the origins of the Supercenter, see Vance and Scott, 129–135. Also see Humes, 42. “**The most under-appreciated**”: “David Glass, the Man Who Took Sam Walton’s Job at Walmart, Dies at 84,” *Forbes*, Jan. 18, 2020.
- 28 **By the end of 2003:** That figure is from the 2004 annual report. **Largest purveyor:** “An Empire Built on Bargains Remakes the Working World,” *Los Angeles Times*, Nov. 23, 2003. **Into bankruptcy:** Fishman, 4; Lichtenstein, *The Retail Revolution*, 135.
- 28 **Also America’s largest seller:** “An Empire Built on Bargains Remakes the Working World,” *Los Angeles Times*, Nov. 23, 2003. Also see Fishman, 233–234. **Having eclipsed:** Walmart took the top spot on the Fortune 500 list in 2002 and remained there in 2003. “**Refused to acknowledge**”: “One Nation Under Wal-Mart: How Retailing’s Superpower—and Our Biggest Most Admired Company—Is Changing the Rules for Corporate America,” *Fortune*, March 3, 2003.
- 29 **Main Street merchants:** See “Make That Sale, Mr. Sam,” *Time*, May 18, 1987. **Overseas to lower costs:** “An Empire Built on Bargains Remakes the Working World,” *Los Angeles Times*, Nov. 23, 2003; “Scouring the Globe to Give Shoppers an \$8.63 Polo Shirt,” *Los Angeles Times*, Nov. 24, 2003. **Hard evidence:** Humes, 42–45; “David Glass Won’t Crack Under Fire,” *Fortune*, Feb. 8, 1993; Ortega, 223–227; Lichtenstein, *The Retail Revolution*, 167.
- 29 **Walmart assailed Dateline:** Ortega, 241–246. “**Size and success**”: Soderquist, *The Wal-Mart Way*, 211.
- 30 **Good to them:** See Humes, 33. “**Financial discipline**”: Fishman, 27.

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- 30 **Dozens of stores:** See “Wal-Mart Settles 63 Lawsuits Over Wages,” *New York Times*, Nov. 24, 2008. “**Get in a pinch**”: “Against the Wal,” *Minnesota Monthly*, Nov. 14, 2007. Also see Humes, 38.
- 31 **The same dynamic:** This is based on the author’s review of some of the key wage-and-hour cases, including the judges’ findings. Also see Humes, 38–39. “**A rogue manager**”: Interview with Parritz by the author. **Class-action lawsuit:** “Wal-Mart to Pay \$54.25 Million to Settle Minn. Lawsuit,” Minnesota Public Radio, Dec. 9, 2008; “Updated: Joint Statement from Walmart and Counsel for Plaintiffs Regarding Wage and Hour Class Action Case of Braun v. Walmart,” corporate news release, Jan. 14, 2009.
- 31 “**The day Sam died**”: Featherstone, 86–87. “**Know your name**”: “Sam Walton Made Us a Promise,” *Fortune*, March 18, 2002.
- 31 “**Cultlike proportions**”: Vance and Scott, 163. “**Half of us**”: “Sam’s Dream,” *Washington Post Magazine*, Oct. 6, 2002. **The vest:** Featherstone, 87; “Sam’s Dream,” *Washington Post Magazine*, Oct. 6, 2002; “Sam Walton Made Us a Promise,” *Fortune*, March 18, 2002.
- 32 “**Walmart gives**”: “An Empire Built on Bargains Remakes the Working World,” *Los Angeles Times*, Nov. 23, 2003.
- 32 “**Walmart’s astonishing success**”: “An Empire Built on Bargains Remakes the Working World,” *Los Angeles Times*, Nov. 23, 2003. “**Path to impoverishment**”: Wartzman, 330.
- 33 **Lifelong learning system:** For more, go to drucker.institute/programs/bendable/. Also see “Bendable, with the Help of Pete Buttigieg, Wants to Create an Educational Marketplace,” *Fortune*, June 11, 2020; “How Community Plays a Critical Role in Fostering Lifelong Learning,” *Forbes*, Sept. 8, 2020; “Focus on South Bend: Making Skills Building Available to the Entire Community,” *WorkingNation*, March 17, 2021.
- 33 **Had melted away:** “Better Training and Better Jobs,” Center for American Progress, Feb. 22, 2018; “What the Forgotten Americans Really Want—and How to Give It to Them” by Isabell Sawhill, Brookings Institution, Oct. 2018.

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- 34 **“Why should”:** Ortega, 374. **Similar resistance:** Fishman, 263.
- 35 **Introduced a bill:** Sanders unveiled the legislation with Rep. Ro Khanna. The full name of the bill is the Stop Welfare for Any Large Monopoly Amassing Revenue from Taxpayers Act, the implication being that if workers make less than \$15 an hour, they’re forced to rely on the public safety net—an indirect taxpayer subsidy to a company like Walmart. See “Sanders Wants to Penalize Walmart’s Owners Unless They Pay Their Workers \$15 an Hour,” *Washington Post*, Nov. 14, 2018.
- 35 **Guns:** See “McMillon to Associates: Our Next Steps in Response to the Tragedies in El Paso and Southaven,” corporate news release, Sept. 3, 2019. **Opioids:** See “Walmart Was Almost Charged Criminally Over Opioids. Trump Appointees Killed the Indictment,” ProPublica, March 25, 2020; “U.S. Sues Walmart, Alleging Role in Fueling Opioid Crisis,” *Wall Street Journal*, Dec. 22, 2020; “A Misguided Department of Justice Lawsuit Forces Pharmacists Between Patients and Their Doctors,” corporate news release, Dec. 22, 2020; “Walmart Lawsuit Against U.S. Over Opioids Is Dismissed,” Reuters, Feb. 5, 2021; “Walmart to Appeal Federal Verdict in Opioid Accountability Lawsuit,” *Talk Business & Politics*, Nov. 24, 2021; “CVS, Walgreens and Walmart Must Pay \$650.5 Million in Ohio Opioids Case,” *New York Times*, Aug. 17, 2022. **Injection of money:** See “Walmart Joins Companies Suspending Donations to Lawmakers Who Voted Against Certifying the Election,” *New York Times*, Jan. 12, 2021; “Big Companies Break Donation Pledge After Capitol Insurrection,” *Christian Science Monitor*, July 6, 2021.
- 36 **A small dinner:** See “America’s CEOs Seek a New Purpose for the Corporation,” *Fortune*, Aug. 19, 2019. **Professional noodges:** The others were journalists Steven Pearlstein and Joe Nocera and the Aspen Institute’s Judy Samuelson. **Essay denouncing:** “It’s Time for Top CEOs to Realign Their Interests—Beyond Those of Elevating Shareholders Above All” by Rick Wartzman, *Fast Company*, June 28, 2018. **It proclaimed:** “Statement on the Purpose of a Corporation,” Business Roundtable, Aug. 19, 2019; “America’s Top CEOs Say They Are No Longer

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- Putting Shareholders Before Everyone Else” by Rick Wartzman, *Fast Company*, Aug. 19, 2019. **Most famously:** See “The Social Responsibility of Business Is to Increase Its Profits” by Milton Friedman, *New York Times Magazine*, Sept. 13, 1970. For additional context and history, see Wartzman, 265–269.
- 36 **Calls upon companies:** See “Creating Shared Value” by Michael E. Porter and Mark R. Kramer, *Harvard Business Review*, Jan.–Feb. 2011. For additional resources, go to sharedvalue.org. **“An early mover”:** Interview with Porter by the author. **“Forward-looking leader”:** Business Roundtable news release, Sept. 19, 2019.
- 37 **Would probably go:** “Walmart’s Hourly Wages for Employees ‘Will Go Beyond [\$15] Probably Over Time’: CEO Doug McMillon,” Yahoo Finance, May 16, 2019. **Stuck at \$7.25:** See “The Value of the Federal Minimum Wage Is at Its Lowest Point in 66 Years” by Ben Zipperer, Economic Policy Institute, July 14, 2022. **“Do I think”:** Interview with McMillon by the author. **“The right pace”:** “Walmart CEO Says Wage Hike Should Consider Regional Economics,” Bloomberg, Jan. 19, 2021.
- 37 **Sparked:** Rolf, *The Fight for \$15*, 91. **It isn’t 2012:** Soaring inflation became of particular concern in 2021 and 2022—so much so that the American Staffing Association reported in June 2022 that nearly 6 in 10 US workers were concerned that their paycheck was not enough to support themselves or their families in the face of the rising cost of living. **Median sales price:** Second-quarter 2012 and 2022 data from the Median Sales Price of Houses Sold for the United States, FRED, Federal Reserve Bank of St. Louis. **On its healthcare:** Data on a worker’s contribution to employer-provided family health coverage for 2012 and 2021 from Employer Health Benefits Survey, Kaiser Family Foundation. **Cost of a four-year college:** Average total tuition, fees, and room and board rates charged for full-time undergraduate students in all four-year degree-granting institutions for 2012–13 and 2019–20 from the National Center for Education Statistics. **Enough work hours:** See “A Little-Noticed Reason Workers Quit: Too Little Work,” *Wall Street Journal*, Feb. 28, 2022.

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- 38 “Not only to mold”: Dauvergne and LeBaron, *Protest Inc.*, 4–5.
“Mute calls”: Dauvergne and LeBaron, 151.
- 39 **Into New York City**: See “Fighting Back: What the Unions Have Learned—and What They May Still Need to Learn—About Fighting Wal-Mart’s Expansion,” *The American Prospect*, April 13, 2011. **“Cynical ploy”**: Interview with Warren by the author. Also see “Wal-Mart’s Honest Graft” by Peter Dreier and Donald Cohen, *Dissent*, June 21, 2012; Fisher, *Big Hunger: The Unholy Alliance Between Corporate America and Anti-Hunger Groups*, 89–96. In 2015, a group of 13 community and labor activists went so far as to ask the Internal Revenue Service to investigate whether the Walmart Foundation “has acted contrary” to its tax-exempt status “by engaging in activities designed to advance the private business interests of its non-exempt corporate sponsor.” A copy of their letter to the IRS can be found at consumerist.com/consumermediallc.files.wordpress.com/2015/06/walmart-foundation-irs-complaint-cover-letter-6-12-15-final2.pdf.
- 39 **“Are we not saying”**: Interview with Kinder by the author. **“Have the means”**: “Amazon and Walmart Have Raked in Billions in Additional Profits During the Pandemic, and Shared Almost None of It with Their Workers” by Molly Kinder and Laura Stateler, Brookings Institution, Dec. 22, 2020.
- 40 **“Social ecologist”**: Drucker, *The Ecological Vision*, 441. **“Representative social institution”**: Drucker, *Concept of the Corporation*, 2.
- 40 **“The most private”**: Drucker, *The Practice of Management*, 381. **“First responsibility”**: Drucker, *The Practice of Management*, 386.
- 40 **“Supply the consumer”**: Drucker, *The Practice of Management*, 37. **“Class hatred”**: Drucker, *The Practice of Management*, 16. **“Most important”**: Drucker, *The Practice of Management*, 388.
- 41 **Drucker counted**: Drucker, *Concept of the Corporation*, x. **“Workers’ desire”**: Drucker, *Concept of the Corporation*, 298. Drucker, *Concept of the Corporation*, 294.
- 42 **“Is messy”**: “Obama on Call-Out Culture: ‘That’s Not Activism,’” *New York Times*, Oct. 31, 2019.

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- 43 **News photograph:** The original news photo was taken by Nicholas Kamm of Agence France-Presse about 30 miles west of New Orleans on Sept. 1, 2005.
- 44 **"A lot of you":** As quoted by Jason Jackson, who ran Walmart's emergency operations center, in "Wal-Mart's Response to Hurricane Katrina: Striving for a Public-Private Partnership" by Susan Rosegrant and Dutch Leonard, Harvard Kennedy School, 2007.
- 44 **1,800 people:** "Katrina Impacts," the University of Rhode Island Graduate School of Oceanography. **Bottles of water:** This scene, including the quotes by Scott, was recounted by McMillon in his Nov. 4, 2016, speech to the Net Impact Conference.
- 45 **"We saw it":** From McMillon's May 27, 2021, speech to the graduates of Harvard Business School.
- 45 **Used a forklift:** "Hurricane Katrina," *Wal-Mart World*, Oct. 2005; "The Only Lifeline Was the Wal-Mart," *Fortune*, Oct. 3, 2005; Humes, 99. **Drove a bulldozer:** "The Only Lifeline Was the Wal-Mart," *Fortune*, Oct. 3, 2005; Humes, 99. **Truck driver:** "Hurricane Katrina," *Wal-Mart World*, Oct. 2005.
- 45 **2,000 truckloads:** Humes, 98. The company also donated \$17 million to the Red Cross and other relief efforts. Also see Lichtenstein, *The Retail Revolution*, 212–214. **Weather data:** "The Only Lifeline Was the Wal-Mart," *Fortune*, Oct. 3, 2005; "Wal-Mart's Response to Hurricane Katrina: Striving for a Public-Private Partnership" by Susan Rosegrant and Dutch Leonard, Harvard Kennedy School, 2007. **Meals and medication:** Humes, 98. **Won plaudits:** Brinkley, *The Great Deluge*, 252; Humes, 98. **"If American government":** *Meet the Press*, NBC, Sept. 4, 2005. Also see "Wal-Mart at Forefront of Hurricane Relief," *Washington Post*, Sept. 6, 2005. **"Our FEMA":** Brinkley, *The Great Deluge*, 251–252.
- 46 **"Money-grubbing monolith":** Brinkley, *The Great Deluge*, 252. **What counted:** See Humes, 99.

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- 46 **“Started this conversation”**: Interview with O’Connell by the author. **In 1999**: “Walart” by Susan Orlean, *The New Yorker*, Feb. 4, 2013. **Been compared**: “He’s Got His Eyes on the Aisles,” *Boston Globe*, Sept. 26, 2010. **Walmart attracts**: See corporate .walmart.com/our-story.
- 47 **No Walmart CEO**: Humes, 100. **“Not the smartest guy”**: “Someday, Lee, Wal-Mart May All Be Yours,” *BusinessWeek*, Nov. 14, 1999. Also quoted in Humes, 28. Also see “Wal-Mart Boss’s Unlikely Role: Corporate Defender-in-Chief,” *Wall Street Journal*, July 26, 2005.
- 48 **Scott had**: Biographical details on Scott are drawn from “Wal-Mart CEO Scott, on the Hot Seat, Navigates New Course,” *Women’s Wear Daily*, May 24, 2005; “Someday, Lee, Wal-Mart May All Be Yours,” *BusinessWeek*, Nov. 14, 1999; “Wal-Mart Boss’s Unlikely Role: Corporate Defender-in-Chief,” *Wall Street Journal*, July 26, 2005; Humes, 26–29.
- 48 **Lapel pins**: “Wal-Mart CEO Scott, on the Hot Seat, Navigates New Course,” *Women’s Wear Daily*, May 24, 2005.
- 48 **The subject of**: “Wal-Mart Boss’s Unlikely Role: Corporate Defender-in-Chief,” *Wall Street Journal*, July 26, 2005. **Confidential survey**: The survey results came from a 2004 McKinsey & Co. report prepared for the company. See “Green-Light Specials, Now at Wal-Mart,” *New York Times*, Jan. 24, 2009. **“Over the years”**: “Wal-Mart Boss’s Unlikely Role: Corporate Defender-in-Chief,” *Wall Street Journal*, July 26, 2005.
- 49 **“Were so busy”**: “Wal-Mart Boss’s Unlikely Role: Corporate Defender-in-Chief,” *Wall Street Journal*, July 26, 2005.
- 49 **“Hang on”**: As recounted by Mars in an interview with the author. **“Harsh critics”**: “Lee Scott’s 10 Steps to Leadership Success,” *RetailWire*, Aug. 26, 2009.
- 50 **In 2003**: Walton put the date in late 2002 or early 2003 at the Fortune Brainstorm Green Conference. See corporate.walmart.com/_news_/executive-viewpoints/how-we-came-to-embrace-sustainability. **“The significance”**: Interview with Seligmann by the author.

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- 50 **Not long after:** All of the details and quotes from the trip to Costa Rica are as recounted by Seligmann in an interview with the author. Rob Walton declined to be interviewed for this book. Also see Humes, 76–77; “The Green Machine,” *Fortune*, July 31, 2006. At the Fortune Brainstorm Green Conference in 2012, Walton offered a slightly different account, recalling that Seligmann had first pitched Lee Scott, the CEO, during the initial meeting with E. O. Wilson. See corporate.walmart.com/_news_/executive-viewpoints/how-we-came-to-embrace-sustainability.
- 51 **For the kill:** At this time, Seligmann also asked Rob Walton to join the Conservation International board, which he did.
- 52 **His first granddaughter:** As recounted by Seligmann in a note to the author.
- 52 **“With all due respect”:** As recounted by Ellison in an interview with the author.
- 52 **“I spent weeks”:** Interview with Ruben by the author. **“Tell me why”:** Humes, 81. Also see “Green-Light Specials, Now at Wal-Mart,” *New York Times*, Jan. 24, 2009. **Could make money:** Humes 81–82.
- 52 **“Faced a decision”:** Humes, 82.
- 53 **When Scott asked:** This scene, including all of the quotes, is as recounted by Ruben in an interview with the author.
- 53 **Every area of the business:** Humes, 86. **“Collaborating with”:** Humes, 83.
- 54 **The company discovered:** Humes, 86–88. **“The wins”:** Interview with Ruben by the author. **“Little by little”:** Humes, 89.
- 54 **Ellison arranged:** Humes, 84. **Hamburg began:** This scene, including the quotes by Scott, is as recounted by Hamburg in an interview with the author. Hamburg would later become the Environmental Defense Fund’s chief scientist.
- 55 **But exceed:** Humes, 150. The company wound up selling 137 million compact fluorescent light bulbs. **“Wildly ambitious”:** “Wal-Mart Puts Some Muscle Behind Power-Sipping Bulbs,” *New York Times*, Jan. 2, 2007. **By 2011:** Calculation provided by

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- Hamburg to the author. Also see “Attention, Wal-Mart Shoppers,” *Brown Alumni Magazine*, March–April 2007.
- 55 **Having taken over:** See “Planning for ‘the Next Economy’: Paul Hawken’s Provocative Approach to Corporate Strategy Is More Than Just Small Talk,” *Inc.*, June 1, 1984. **Cofounded:** See “After 30 Years, Smith & Hawken to Close,” *San Francisco Chronicle*, July 10, 2009.
- 55 **After reading:** Humes, 79; interview with Ruben by the author. **“Some observers”:** Hawken, *The Ecology of Commerce*, 92. **“Enormity”:** Hawken, 102. **“Business can provide”:** Hawken, 136.
- 56 **“If we were not”:** Interview with Ruben by the author.
- 56 **“Lee called me up”:** From an email that Hawken sent to the author.
- 56 **“From an Arkansas company”:** Interview with Ruben by the author.
- 57 **“Feared to go”:** The full text of Scott’s speech, “Twenty-First Century Leadership,” can be found at corporate.walmart.com/_news_/executive-viewpoints/twenty-first-century-leadership.
- 59 **Judge had granted:** “Judge Certifies Suit Accusing Wal-Mart of Sex Discrimination,” *New York Times*, June 22, 2004.
- 59 **Been languishing:** The minimum wage had been at \$5.15 an hour since September 1997. **The headlines:** See, for example, “Wal-Mart Urges Congress to Raise Minimum Wage,” *Wall Street Journal*, Oct. 25, 2005; “Wal-Mart Supports Federal Wage Increase,” *Los Angeles Times*, Oct. 25, 2005; “Wal-Mart Calls for Minimum Wage Hike,” CNN Money, Oct. 25, 2005. Also see “The Trouble in Wal-Mart’s America” by Harold Meyerson, *Washington Post*, Oct. 26, 2005. The *New York Times* did take a different tack. The headline on its Oct. 25 story read, “Wal-Mart to Seek Savings in Energy.”
- 60 **“Resent outsiders”:** Lichtenstein, *The Retail Revolution*, 118. Also see “How Wal-Mart Fights Unions” by Nelson Lichtenstein, *Minnesota Law Review*, 2008.
- 60 **Conked on the head:** Ortega, 87–88; Lichtenstein, *The Retail Revolution*, 121. **“Hate unions”:** Lichtenstein, *The Retail*

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- Revolution*, 121. **Fight for “freedom”**: Lichtenstein, *The Retail Revolution*, 122. **Bag of tricks**: Ortega, 88; Lichtenstein, *The Retail Revolution*, 122.
- 61 **Should fire them**: Lichtenstein, *The Retail Revolution*, 123. **“Would be closed”**: Ortega, 107; Lichtenstein, *The Retail Revolution*, 129. **“Bless them all”**: Lichtenstein, *The Retail Revolution*, 129.
- 62 **“Going to be wealthy”**: Interview with O’Neill by the author.
- 62 **“Started to blow up”**: Interview with Lind by the author. **“Think your job”**: This was the subtitle of a May 17, 2004, piece headlined “Up Against the Wal-Mart.”
- 62 **“If you tried”**: Interview with Fiedler by the author. **“Pure delusion”**: From “A Wal-Mart Workers Association? An Organizing Plan” by Wade Rathke in Lichtenstein, *Wal-Mart: The Face of Twenty-First-Century Capitalism*, 270. **Several fronts**: Rathke, the founder of ACORN (Association of Community Organizations for Reform Now) and Service Employees International Union Local 100, ran a pilot program in 2005 that aimed for workers to gain power by joining an organization in which, together, they could actively engage management on important issues without winning a union contract or going through the traditional collective bargaining process. This became the Wal-Mart Workers’ Association, and it signed up about 1,000 workers in Central Florida over the course of about nine months. In the meantime, Rathke also helped lead resistance to Walmart’s expansion into India. See Rathke, *Nuts & Bolts*, 478–490; Rathke, *Citizen Wealth*, 74–77; “Wal-Mart Workers Are Finding a Voice Without a Union,” *New York Times*, Sept. 3, 2005. **Resistance to the opening**: Rathke (*Nuts & Bolts*, 484) says that “through a combination of strategies and tactics we were able to prevent the construction and permitting of 32 consecutive applications to build new Walmart stores.”
- 63 **“Never seen a company”**: “Up Against Wal-Mart,” *Mother Jones*, March/April 2003. Also cited in Wartzman, 355. **Union Probability Index**: Lichtenstein, *The Retail Revolution*, 141. UPI

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- eventually came to stand for the more benign Unaddressed People Issues. Also see “A Wal-Mart Workers Association? An Organizing Plan” by Wade Rathke in Lichtenstein, *Wal-Mart: The Face of Twenty-First-Century Capitalism*, 269, in which the UPI is said to stand for “Union Prevention Index.” **“The commitment”**: This document is accessible at reclaimdemocracy.org/wordpress/wp-content/uploads/2012/08/distribctr6022manual.pdf. It is also cited in “How Wal-Mart Fights Unions” by Nelson Lichtenstein, *University of Minnesota Law Review*, May 2008; Lichtenstein, *The Retail Revolution*, 132; “How Walmart Persuades Its Workers Not to Unionize” by Steven Greenhouse, *The Atlantic*, June 8, 2015. **Special hotline**: Lichtenstein, *The Retail Revolution*, 142–143.
- 63 **“Basically spies”**: Lichtenstein, *The Retail Revolution*, 145. **Was dispatched**: Lichtenstein, *The Retail Revolution*, 143–147. **Unfair labor practice charges**: Lichtenstein, *The Retail Revolution*, 142–143. In all, 94% of the charges filed “were weighty enough” to generate a formal National Labor Relations Board complaint against the company. Also cited in Wartzman, 335.
- 64 **Except for once**: For details of what unfolded in Jacksonville, see “Pro-Union Butchers at Wal-Mart Win a Battle, but Lose the War,” *Wall Street Journal*, April 11, 2000; *United Food and Commercial Workers Local 540 v. National Labor Relations Board*, Nos. 06-1358, 07-1060, 07-1087 (2008).
- 64 **“Blood-sucking parasites”**: Lichtenstein, *The Retail Revolution*, 147–148. **More than a third**: The highest mark, reached in 1953, was 35.7%, according to Troy and Sheflin, *Union Sourcebook*, Appendix A, Historical Statistics, 1897–1983. **Fewer than 10 percent**: The figure that Tate cited was 9%. US Bureau of Labor Statistics data for 2004, released several months after he spoke, put it at 7.9%.
- 65 **Seeded a nonprofit**: Records show that the Center for Community and Corporate Ethics received its tax-exempt status as a nonprofit in January 2005. **Christened Walmart Watch**: Although the UFCW and SEIU campaigns would turn rivalrous,

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the SEIU actually purchased use of the domain name “Wal-Mart Watch” from the UFCW, which owned it but had allowed it to go dormant.

- 65 **“As an air war”**: Interview with Shenk by the author.
- 65 **“Are screwing America”**: Interview with Stern by the author.
- 66 **“Make other businesses”**: July 12, 2005, memo from Andrew Grossman to Andy Stern titled “Wal-Mart Watch and UFCW,” Service Employees International Union records, Walter P. Reuther Library, Wayne State University. **“It was never”**: Interview with Shenk by the author.
- 66 **Off the ground**: See “Opponents of Wal-Mart to Coordinate Efforts,” *New York Times*, April 3, 2005. **Unveiled an analogous**: “UFCW Launches New Campaign to ‘Wake Up Wal-Mart,’” UFCW news release, April 5, 2005. **“Some people thought”**: Interview with Hansen by the author.
- 66 **Were at odds**: See “In Wal-Mart’s Case, Its Enemies Aren’t Terribly Good Friends,” *Wall Street Journal*, Jan. 11, 2006. **“Took our idea”**: From a brief phone conversation between the author and McDonough. **Longing to encroach**: From an interview by the author with former UFCW Executive Vice President Pat O’Neill.
- 67 **“Told at least one”**: July 12, 2005, memo from Andrew Grossman to Andy Stern titled “Wal-Mart Watch and UFCW,” Service Employees International Union records, Walter P. Reuther Library, Wayne State University.
- 67 **“We cannot directly”**: Draft campaign plan, dated April 23, 2007, and provided to the author by David Nassar, former Walmart Watch executive director.
- 67 **“I felt like Walmart”**: Interview with Grossman by the author. **“With the reelection”**: Interview with Seff by the author.
- 68 **Several dozen staff**: “In Wal-Mart’s Case, Its Enemies Aren’t Terribly Good Friends,” *Wall Street Journal*, Jan. 11, 2006. **\$3 million**: As reflected in Form 990 federal filings for tax-exempt organizations made by Five Stones for 2005, 2006, and 2007. **Sent a petition**: “Bankers Oppose Wal-Mart as Rival,” *New*

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- York Times*, Oct. 15, 2005. **To quash:** “Wal-Mart Abandons Bank Plans,” *New York Times*, March 17, 2007. **It teamed up:** “Groups Opposing Wal-Mart Get Help from New Web Site,” *New York Times*, May 1, 2006. **Helped to push legislation:** See “The New War Over Wal-Mart,” *The Atlantic*, June 2006. The Maryland bill was enacted after lawmakers overrode the governor’s veto, but the measure was subsequently overturned in the courts. See “Court Rules for Wal-Mart in Maryland Suit,” *New York Times*, Jan. 17, 2007. In the meantime, lawmakers in 30 states, seizing on momentum from the Maryland bill, introduced legislation that would require lawmakers to increase spending on employee health insurance. See “Wal-Mart in Their Sights, States Press for Health Benefits,” *New York Times*, Jan. 5, 2006.
- 68 **Thousands of showings:** “Films Battle Over Wal-Mart’s Public Image,” NPR, Nov. 28, 2005. **Tried to recoup:** See “Accident Victims Face Grab for Legal Winnings,” *Wall Street Journal*, Nov. 20, 2007. **A donation page:** As seen on showmeprogress.com under the headline “From the Dept. of Unbelievable—Walmart Seizes an Employee’s Medical Settlement, and It’s Legal.” The company eventually backed off its efforts to recover the money. See “Wal-Mart Drops Bid to Sue Brain-Damaged Former Shelf-Stacker,” *The Guardian*, April 2, 2008.
- 69 **Splashy ads:** See, for example, “It’s Time to Rollback Wal-Mart,” *New York Times* ad, April 20, 2005. **A Handshake:** “A Handshake with Sam,” *New York Times* ad, May 23, 2006. Also see “Group’s Ad Seeks Changes by Wal-Mart,” *Los Angeles Times*, May 24, 2006.
- 69 **Automated phone system:** “A New Weapon for Wal-Mart: A War Room,” *New York Times*, Nov. 1, 2005.
- 69 **The package landed:** As recounted by Grossman in an interview with the author. Also see “Wal-Mart Hits the Wall,” *Newsweek*, Nov. 13, 2005.
- 70 **“Bold steps”:** What had been sent to Walmart Watch was an earlier draft. After the *New York Times* contacted Walmart

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about the memo, the company made available to the newspaper the final version that was sent to the board. It is available at nytimes.com/packages/pdf/business/26walmart.pdf. Also see “Wal-Mart Memo Suggests Ways to Cut Employee Benefit Costs,” *New York Times*, Oct. 26, 2005.

- 71 **The next morning:** This scene, including all quotes from Grossman and Seff, is based on interviews with the two of them by the author.
- 71 **Chambers defended:** “Wal-Mart Memo Suggests Ways to Cut Employee Benefit Costs,” *New York Times*, Oct. 26, 2005.
- 72 **“Appears to contradict”:** “Wal-Mart Memo Raises Image Issues,” MarketWatch, Oct. 26, 2005. **“Has talked a lot”:** “Wal-Mart’s Memo Blurs Its Message on Benefits,” *Los Angeles Times*, Oct. 27, 2005. **“A great job”:** “Health Care Memo Further Tarnishes Wal-Mart,” NPR, Oct. 26, 2005.
- 72 **“Young and scrappy”:** Interview with Wicks by the author. Also see “Logging On with a New Campaign,” *Washington Post*, May 31, 2005; “Big Names Enlist in Campaign Against Wal-Mart,” NBC News, April 23, 2006. “Attack of the Wal-Martys,” *Fortune*, Nov. 28, 2006. **“Walmart Slayer”:** This is according to Ron Galloway, who became a close ally of the company after making a pro-Walmart film, in an interview with the author. Also see “Buffy the Hillary Slayer,” *Huffington Post*, Jan. 28, 2008. **From the Dean camp:** They included Paul Blank, who had been political director for the Dean campaign, and Jeremy Bird. **A top adviser:** This was Chris Kofinis, who served as Wake Up Walmart’s communications director. **Digital operations:** This was Brendan Bush.
- 73 **“Righteous cause”:** Interview with Wicks by the author. **Harvard Divinity School:** Bird would later achieve great prominence as national field director for Barack Obama’s 2012 campaign. See “Flying High,” Harvard Divinity School, March 20, 2013; “Trailer Park to Harvard Put Bird on Course to Change U.S.,” Bloomberg, April 25, 2013. **“Treated my mom”:** Interview with Bird by the author.

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- 73 **“Good at what I did”:** Interview with Debbie Bird by the author. **“A bad taste”:** Interview with Bird by the author.
- 74 **Newspaper and TV ads:** “Wal-Mart vs. America Newspaper Ad Officially Launches WakeUpWalmart.com’s Efforts During National Week of Action,” UFCW news release, Nov. 15, 2005; “Union Uses Wal-Mart Workers in TV Ad,” NBC News, Nov. 29, 2006; “WakeUpWalmart.com Runs a Full-Page Ad with an Open Letter to Shareholders Stating,” UFCW news release, June 5, 2006. **Publicize and screen:** “WakeUpWalMart.com Launches Nation’s First Campaign About the Movie & Secret Memo Walmart Does Not Want You to See,” UFCW news release, Oct. 31, 2005. **“Their fair share”:** “WakeUpWalmart.com Announces Aggressive Effort to Introduce Fair Share Health Care Bills in 30 States,” UFCW news release, Jan. 6, 2006. **A corporate document:** “Critics, Wal-Mart Spar over Leaked Memo on Worker Hours,” MarketWatch, Jan. 30, 2007. The company said that the briefing paper was from the pilot phase of a new scheduling program, and that in the time since the new system had actually been rolled out to all cashiers and customer service staff, experience had shown that employees were not losing hours. **More than 200,000:** “WakeUpWalmart.com Celebrates 1 Year Anniversary,” UFCW news release, April 5, 2006. **“Fastest growing”:** “WakeUpWalMart.com Reaches Record Milestone of American Support,” UFCW news release, Sept. 7, 2005.
- 74 **22,000 people:** This and the other details in this paragraph are from “WakeUpWalmart.com Launches Mother’s Day Campaign Against Wal-Mart,” UFCW news release, April 20, 2005; “America’s Teachers & WakeUpWalmart.com Officially Launch National ‘Send Wal-Mart Back-to-School’ Campaign,” UFCW news release, Aug. 10, 2005; “WakeUpWalmart.com Celebrates 1 Year Anniversary,” UFCW news release, April 5, 2006.
- 75 **For 35 days:** “WakeUpWalmart.com Launches 2006 ‘Change Wal-Mart, Change America’ Cross-Country Bus Tour,” UFCW news release, July 31, 2006. **Two of the crew:** Interview with

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- Laura Tatum, one of the Wake Up Walmart staffers on the bus, by the author. **"Trying to do a lot":** Interview with Bird by the author. **"He'd driven":** Interview with Wicks by the author.
- 75 **"A Costly Truth":** "WakeUpWalmart.com Launches 2006 'Change Wal-Mart, Change America' Cross-Country Bus Tour," UFCW news release, July 31, 2006; "Live from Town Hall: A Costly Truth," *The Cascadia Advocate*, Sept. 4, 2006. **Recently released:** The Gore film opened in New York and Los Angeles in May 2006. **Who took part:** "Congressional Candidates Take a Swing at Wal-Mart," NPR, Sept. 3, 2006.
- 76 **"As you might tell":** "On Wal-Mart, Lieberman and Challenger Can Agree," *Washington Post*, Aug. 3, 2006. **"It's not right":** "Guerrilla Vlogger: WakeUp Wal-Mart Assignment," *Daily Kos*, Aug. 10, 2006.
- 76 **"Publicity stunt":** "Unions Launch Bus Tour Against Wal-Mart," CNN Money, Aug. 2, 2006. **"Nearly as infamous":** "Wal-Mart's P.R. War" by Liza Featherstone, *Salon*, Aug. 2, 2005. **"One of the most organized":** "Wal-Mart Ready to Fight," *Tampa Bay Times*, Aug. 25, 2005. **The week before:** "Leslie Dach Joins Wal-Mart as Executive Vice President of Corporate Affairs and Government Relations," corporate news release, July 24, 2006.

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- 77 **Led the Walmart account:** "Public Relations Consultant Joins Wal-Mart," *New York Times*, July 25, 2006.
- 77 **Born and raised:** Biographical details on Dach are from an interview with him by the author; "Selling Wal-Mart" by Jeffrey Goldberg, *The New Yorker*, March 26, 2007; "Behind the Scenes, PR Firm Remakes Wal-Mart's Image," *Wall Street Journal*, Dec. 7, 2006.
- 78 **"I'm a troublemaker":** This and the other quote in this paragraph by Dach are from an interview with him by the author.
- 78 **"Thank God":** From an interview with Dach by the author. **Union officials:** From interviews by the author. **"The only**

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- thing**”: “Wal-Mart’s \$3 Million Man: Leslie Dach,” *Ad Age*, Oct. 4, 2006. **Who had produced**: “Wal-Mart Critics Launch National Ad Campaign,” *Progressive Grocer*, Nov. 1, 2005. Also see “Union-Backed Critics Plan Steps That May Hurt Retailer’s Holiday,” *Wall Street Journal*, Nov. 14, 2006.
- 79 **Worth \$3 million**: “Wal-Mart Hires Clinton Aide to Handle Criticism,” *Los Angeles Times*, Aug. 30, 2006; “Wal-Mart’s \$3 Million Man: Leslie Dach,” *Ad Age*, Oct. 4, 2006. **It was more**”: Interview with Dach by the author. **I’m convinced**”: “Behind the Scenes, PR Firm Remakes Wal-Mart’s Image,” *Wall Street Journal*, Dec. 7, 2006.
- 79 **Working Families for Walmart**: Details on the organization are from “Selling Wal-Mart” by Jeffrey Goldberg, *The New Yorker*, March 26, 2007; “Behind the Scenes, PR Firm Remakes Wal-Mart’s Image,” *Wall Street Journal*, Dec. 7, 2006. Also see “Wal-Mart Tries to Enlist Image Help,” *New York Times*, May 12, 2006.
- 79 **The company set up**: “A New Weapon for Wal-Mart: A War Room,” *New York Times*, Nov. 1, 2005. Also see “Selling Wal-Mart” by Jeffrey Goldberg, *The New Yorker*, March 26, 2007. **TV ads**: “Wal-Mart Counters Criticism with a Political-Style Ad Campaign,” *New York Times*, Aug. 29, 2006. **Paidcritics.com**: “Wal-Mart, Critics Slam Each Other on Web,” *Washington Post*, July 18, 2006.
- 80 **Be a better company**”: Interview with Dach by the author. Also see “Don’t Spin a Better Story. Be a Better Company” by Leslie Dach, *Harvard Business Review*, Oct. 2013. **Newspaper ads**: “Wal-Mart’s CEO on the Offensive,” NBC News, Jan. 13, 2005. **Charm offensive**”: “The 2005 Time 100: Lee Scott,” *Time*, April 18, 2005. **Hurts our feelings**”: “60 Seconds with Mona Williams,” *Fast Company*, Aug. 1, 2004.
- 81 **Were said to have**: See “The Big Tech Antitrust Report Has One Big Conclusion: Amazon, Apple, Facebook, and Google Are Anti-Competitive,” *Vox*, Oct. 6, 2020. **Curse of Bigness**”: This is the title of a chapter in Brandeis’s 1914 book, *Other*

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People's Money and How the Bankers Use It. **Celebrated this building up:** Wu, *The Curse of Bigness*, 26–28. **Stifling innovation:** Brandeis, *Other People's Money*, 149–152. **“Extortionate prices”:** Brandeis, 152. **“Excessive profits”:** Brandeis, 47. **“A certain inhumanity,”** Wu, 41. In 2021, Wu took a leave from Columbia to serve on the National Economic Council as a special assistant to the president for technology and competition policy.

- 81 **“Chain store menace”:** Moreton, 18. In the 1920s and ’30s, lawmakers tried to tax chain stores and take other actions that would protect mom-and-pop retailers and their suppliers. The major piece of federal legislation that took aim at the chains was the Robinson-Patman Act of 1936. By requiring a business to sell its products at the same price regardless of who the buyer was, it sought to combat unfair trade practices that allowed chain stores to purchase goods at lower prices than other retailers. **“Bloodsucker”:** Levinson, *The Great A&P and the Struggle for Small Business in America*, 9. **Found guilty:** Levinson, 4. More specifically, US District Judge Walter Lindley found that the company and its top executives, including its president and chairman, had conspired to violate the Sherman Antitrust Act. **“Rather sell”:** Levinson, 4. **“A&P was Walmart”:** “When Creative Destruction Visited the Mom-and-Pops” by Marc Levinson, *Wall Street Journal*, Oct. 11, 2013.
- 82 **47 percent:** “Impact of the Wal-Mart Phenomenon on Rural Communities” by Kenneth E. Stone, Staff General Research Papers Archive, Iowa State University, Department of Economics, 1998. **Decreasing profit margins:** “Entry of Wal-Mart Supercenters and Supermarkets’ Profit Margins” by Xiaouu Liu and Rigoberto A. Lopez, Zwick Center for Food and Resource Policy, University of Connecticut, 2011. **Retail employment:** “The Effects of Wal-Mart on Local Labor Markets” by David Neumark, Junfu Zhang, and Stephen Ciccarella, National Bureau of Economic Research, Working Paper 11782, Nov. 2005. **Lower-paying jobs:** “A Downward Push: The Impact of

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Wal-Mart Stores on Retail Wages and Benefits” by Arindrajit Dube, T. William Lester, and Barry Eidlin, UC Berkeley Labor Center, Dec. 2007. For a summary of more research that found Walmart had negative effects on local economies, see “The Wal-Mart Effect,” *In These Times*, June 10, 2004. For a more recent study that found the entry of a Supercenter into a community causes “large and significant declines in overall employment, earnings, and labor force participation,” see “Walmart Supercenters and Monopsony Power: How a Large, Low-Wage Employer Impacts Local Labor Markets” by Justin C. Wiltshire, UC Davis, November 2021. **“Positive effect:** See “Wal-Mart and Local Economic Development: A Survey” by Alessandro Bonanno and Stephan J. Goetz, *Economic Development Quarterly*, Nov. 2012. **Was negligible:** “The Wal-Mart Effect: Poison or Antidote for Local Communities?” by Terry J. Fitzgerald and Ron Wirtz, *fedgazette*, Federal Reserve Bank of Minneapolis, Jan. 1, 2008.

- 82 **“Had their feet”:** Interview with Dach by the author.
- 83 **Cut the price:** “Wal-Mart’s \$4 Generics Program Launched in Final 11 States,” corporate news release, Nov. 27, 2006. **“Positive business move”:** “Wal-Mart Cuts Prices for Many Generic Drugs to \$4,” *Wall Street Journal*, Sept. 22, 2006. Critics noted that the program covered a relatively small number of medications. By late 2007, the \$4 generic plan applied to 361 prescriptions. Because those included different formulations of the same compound, the number of different drugs in the program was actually less than 160. See “Wal-Mart Adds Drugs to \$4 Program,” *New York Times*, Sept. 27, 2007. **A study:** “Can Walmart Make Us Healthier? Prescription Drug Prices and Health Care Utilization” by Florencia Borrescio-Higa, *Journal of Health Economics*, Dec. 2015. **From millions of pounds:** The company took on hunger as a cause in 2005, distributing about 10 million pounds of food to food banks that year. By 2020, it had made more than 4.6 billion pounds of food donations, according to Feeding America. **“Hunger is just”:** “Wal-Mart

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- Gives \$2 Billion to Fight Hunger,” *New York Times*, May 12, 2010. A very different take is that Walmart has donated food as a way to win over, or at least silence criticism from, community organizations and help gain entrance to more urban markets. See Fisher, 89–96. **“Quick wins”**: Humes, 120. Humes, 109–155, describes in detail this process used by Walmart’s “Sustainable Value Networks.” Also see “The Green Machine,” *Fortune*, July 31, 2006.
- 83 **Become the youngest**: “Sierra Club Gets a Young New Face,” *New York Times*, June 2, 1996. **“New breed”**: Werbach, *Act Now, Apologize Later*, 248. Also see “Werbach at Wal-Mart?,” *San Francisco Chronicle*, Jan. 6, 2008; Humes, 91. **Agreed to consult**: “Wal-Mart Effort on Health and Environment Is Seen,” *New York Times*, June 22, 2006; Humes, 90–91. **“Wholeheartedly believe”**: “Working with the Enemy,” *Fast Company*, Sept. 1, 2007. **“Love or hate”**: “Werbach at Wal-Mart?,” *San Francisco Chronicle*, Jan. 6, 2008.
- 84 **“Hell would freeze”**: “Strange Bedfellows?,” jeffreyhollender.com blog, Oct. 6, 2008; “Adversary’s Clean Start with Wal-Mart,” *Wall Street Journal*, July 26, 2010. **“We might sell”**: “The Green Machine,” *Fortune*, July 31, 2006. **“Tattered relationship”**: “Strange Bedfellows?,” jeffreyhollender.com blog, Oct. 6, 2008. **“You can’t produce”**: Hollender, *What Matters Most*, 65. **On his desk**: “Observer from Bentonville,” *Financial Times*, April 10, 2005.
- 84 **Late 2005**: As recounted in “Lee & Me, Meeting with the World’s Most Powerful Business Man,” jeffreyhollender.com blog, Jan. 1, 2006. **“Quite amazed”**: Interview with Hollender by the author.
- 85 **“Far from unblemished”**: “Strange Bedfellows?,” jeffreyhollender.com blog, Oct. 6, 2008. Seventh Generation began to sell to Walmart on a limited basis in 2008 and expanded over time. **Seventh Generation analysis**: Hollender supplied a copy to the author. **“It didn’t mean”**: Interview with Hollender by the author. **“Putting increasing distance”**: “Some Big Steps Yield a

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- Small One of Our Own,” jeffreyhollender.com blog, May 28, 2010.
- 85 **In the summer:** Details on Al Gore’s visit are drawn from “Al Gore Takes His Green Message to Wal-Mart Headquarters,” *Grist*, July 20, 2006; “Gore Praises Wal-Mart for Sustainability Plans,” *The Retail Bulletin*, July 14, 2006; “Gore Watch: Wal-Mart Edition,” *The American Prospect*, July 24, 2006; Humes, 151.
- 86 **Planned to introduce:** “Walmart Announces Sustainable Product Index,” corporate news release, July 16, 2009; “At Wal-Mart, Labeling to Reflect Green Intent,” *New York Times*, July 15, 2009; Humes, 181–186. **“A blockbuster”:** “The Age of Eco-Angst” by Daniel Goleman, *New York Times*, Sept. 27, 2009. **“Change the face”:** Humes, 197, quoting Brian Merchant at TreeHugger.com. **Built out extensively:** For details, go to sustainabilityconsortium.org. **“Not a priority”:** Interview with Johnson by the author.
- 86 **Has identified:** “12 Major Companies Responsible for Deforestation,” Earth.org, Aug. 17, 2021. **Greenpeace has:** This was drawn from an analysis of Walmart’s sustainability practices that the organization prepared for the author in Dec. 2020. **“Cannot be dismissed”:** “The Impossibility of a Green Wal-Mart” by Stacy Mitchell, *Grist*, March 29, 2007.
- 87 **“Objectively impressive”:** Interview with Krupp by the author. **Opened an office:** “Environmental Defense Will Add Staff Position in Bentonville, Arkansas,” EDF news release, July 12, 2006. **What it has done:** See “Our Partnership with Walmart Brings Big Change,” Environmental Defense Fund, July 27, 2019. **“They are far from”:** Interview with Sturcken by the author. Also see “Why Walmart’s Quest to Be a Regenerative Farming Pioneer Is Falling Short,” *Fortune*, April 4, 2022.
- 88 **Which prompted people:** See “Hurricane Katrina Damage Just a Dose of What’s to Come,” Carnegie Institution, Sept. 21, 2005; “The Storm Next Time” by Nicholas D. Kristof, *New York Times*, Sept. 11, 2005; “10 Years on from Hurricane Katrina:

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- What Have We Learned?," Carbon Brief, Aug. 19, 2015. **"Traces directly back":** Interview with Prickett by the author.
- 89 **"Once-implacable foes":** "Wal-Mart, Union Join Forces on Health Care," *Washington Post*, Feb. 8, 2007. Also see "Wal-Mart and a Union Unite, at Least on Health Policy," *New York Times*, Feb. 7, 2007. Walmart and the SEIU were joined by AT&T, Intel, the Communications Workers of America, and others. **"Equivalent in my view":** "Business, Labor Aligning on Health Care," NPR, Feb. 10, 2007.
- 89 **"Achieving a new":** "AT&T, Baker Center, Center for American Progress, CED, CWA, Intel, Kelly Services, SEIU and Wal-Mart Launch 'Better Health Care Together' Campaign," Walmart corporate news release, Feb. 7, 2007. **In urban areas:** See "Seeking Expansion in Urban Areas, Wal-Mart Stores Gets Cold Shoulder," *Wall Street Journal*, Sept. 25, 2006; "Wal-Mart's Limited Growth in Urban Retail Markets: The Cost of Low Labor Investment" by Anthony Roberts, UCLA Institute for Research on Labor and Employment, 2015. **More affluent shoppers:** "Wal-Mart CEO Says Retailer Should Court Upscale Shoppers," *Wall Street Journal*, June 3, 2005; "Wal-Mart Offers Strategy to Move Upscale," NBC News, April 18, 2006. **20 percent:** "A New Commitment for America," remarks as prepared by Lee Scott for the National Governors Association Winter Meeting, Feb. 26, 2006. More specifically, Scott said that the company's healthcare costs had risen 19% in each of the previous three years. **Caught Stern's attention:** "Wal-Mart, Union Join Forces on Health Care," *Washington Post*, Feb. 8, 2007. **"A lot of business sense":** "Wal-Mart, Union Join Forces on Health Care," *Washington Post*, Feb. 8, 2007.
- 90 **In the 1960s:** See "Walter P. Reuther on National Healthcare," Walter P. Reuther Library, Wayne State University, May 2, 2012. **"Might still be here":** Stern, *Raising the Floor*, 21. **"Employer-based system":** "Horse-and-Buggy Health Coverage" by Andy Stern, *Wall Street Journal*, July 17, 2006. **It was time:** Stern had followed up his op-ed with a letter to every CEO of a Fortune 500 company.

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- 91 **After graduating:** Biographical details on Stern are drawn from Stern, 15–17; “Andy Stern to Step Down as Chief of Politically Active Union,” *New York Times*, April 13, 2010; “At the Peak of His Influence, SEIU Chief Set to Leave a Mixed Legacy,” *Washington Post*, April 14, 2010; “SEIU Head Andy Stern to Step Down, Say Reports,” *Philadelphia Inquirer*, April 14, 2010. **“Whole categories”:** “Andy Stern: A Union Maverick Clocks Out” by Harold Meyerson, *Washington Post*, April 14, 2010.
- 91 **Trade ideas:** “The New Face of Labor,” *Fortune*, Oct. 10, 2006. **Cut deals:** See “The SEIU Andy Stern Leaves Behind” by Max Fraser, *The Nation*, June 16, 2010. **“The question is”:** “Does Andy Stern Talk His Walk,” *In These Times*, Jan. 5, 2007. **“My daughter’s death”:** “The New Face of Labor,” *Fortune*, Oct. 10, 2006. Also see “Love, Labor, Loss: A Child’s Death Stirred Andrew Stern to Challenge Himself—and Unionism,” *Washington Post*, Jan. 3, 2006.
- 92 **Rankled many:** This portrait is drawn from “Andy Stern: Savior or Sellout” by Liza Featherstone, *The Nation*, June 27, 2007; “The SEIU Andy Stern Leaves Behind” by Max Fraser, *The Nation*, June 16, 2010; “Andy Stern: A Union Maverick Clocks Out” by Harold Meyerson, *Washington Post*, April 14, 2010. **SEIU split off:** See “Breakaway Unions Start New Federation,” *New York Times*, Sept. 28, 2005. **“Those who left”:** “4 Major Unions Plan to Boycott A.F.L.-C.I.O. Event,” *New York Times*, July 25, 2005. **“Never got over it”:** Interview with Hansen by the author.
- 92 **“Really pissed”:** Interview with Hansen by the author. For a more complete account of the blowup between the SEIU and UFCW, see Rathke, *Nuts & Bolts*, 488–490. **“Why anybody would”:** “Wal-Mart, Union Join Forces on Health Care,” *Washington Post*, Feb. 8, 2007. Also see “Wal-Mart Joins Health-Care Call,” *Wall Street Journal*, Feb. 8, 2007. **Protesting outside:** “Andy Stern: Savior or Sellout” by Liza Featherstone, *The Nation*, June 27, 2007.
- 93 **“I won’t shop there”:** “Obama Clear: He’s Pro-Union,” *Chicago Sun-Times*, May 15, 2007; “Sen. Obama Seeks Union Workers,”

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- NPR, May 30, 2007. **"To do better"**: "Obama Says Wal-Mart Is Part of Necessary Debate on Pay and Benefits," *USA Today*, Nov. 16, 2006. **Been a member**: "As a Director, Clinton Moved Wal-Mart Board, but Only So Far," *New York Times*, May 20, 2007. **"Walmart's policies"**: "Clinton Remained Silent as Wal-Mart Fought Unions," ABC News, Jan. 31, 2008.
- 94 **Arranged the rendezvous**: From interviews with Villarreal and Adams by the author. **Villarreal was**: Biographical details are from an interview with Villarreal by the author and his "notable alumni" profile from Indiana University's Maurer School of Law. **"Talk about poverty"**: From an interview with Villarreal by the author.
- 94 **"Really curious"**: This and all other quotes in this paragraph are from an interview with Villarreal by the author. Walmart, it appears, also had another motivation for making Villarreal a director. In 1995, the company had been sued by a group of Mexicans who had been escorted out of a Walmart in Amory, Mississippi, by a security guard. The men said they were guilty of nothing more than being Mexican. (See "The Mainstreaming of Hate: A Report on Latinos and Harassment, Hate Violence, and Law Enforcement Abuse in the '90s," National Council of La Raza, Nov. 1999.) In responding to the case, the National Council of La Raza pressed Walmart to add a Latino to its board, and Lee Scott agreed to do so, according to Charles Kamasaki, then a vice president at La Raza, in an interview with the author.
- 95 **"Just sank"**: This and all other quotes in this paragraph are from an interview with Villarreal by the author.
- 95 **Villarreal contacted**: From interviews with Villarreal and Cisneros by the author. **As a cabinet member**: Details on Cisneros, and all of his quotes, are from an interview with him by the author.
- 96 **"Cloak-and-dagger"**: Interview with Cisneros by the author.
- 96 **"Banging our way"**: Interview with Hyde by the author.
- 97 **"Worry about you"**: As recounted by Cisneros in an interview with the author.
- 97 **"Eye-awakening"**: As shared by Scott with the author. **Eight weeks later**: The timing was confirmed through campaign records.

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- Asked both men: Interview with Stern by the author. “I’m not here”: As recounted by Stern in an interview with the author.
- 98 “Very honorable”: Interview with Adams by the author. “Been an officer”: Interview with Hyde by the author. “Three roads”: Interview with Adams by the author.
- 98 “A lot of overlap”: Interview with Dillman by the author.
- 98 “There was no way”: This and the other quote in this paragraph by Dillman are from an interview with her by the author. “When you oppose”: Interview with Glantz by the author.
- 99 “An ombudsperson”: Interview with Stern by the author. “Compliance code”: Interview with Adams by the author.
- 99 On wages: From interviews with Adams and Stern by the author.
- 99 Kept Joe Hansen apprised: From an interview with Hansen by the author. He said that Stern “was optimistic that a meeting could be set up” between the UFCW and Walmart. “We even talked about possible dates,” but in the end a sit-down with the company never came together. Separately, Hillary Clinton reportedly arranged a meeting between UFCW leaders and Walmart’s Leslie Dach “to tamp down the rancor between the company and the union.” See “As a Director, Clinton Moved Wal-Mart Board, but Only So Far,” *New York Times*, May 20, 2007. “Like Switzerland”: Interview with Stern by the author.
- 100 “Bang on the door”: Interview with Nassar by the author. Criticized for: See “Wal-Mart and SEIU: Who Drank the Kool-Aid?,” *HealthBlawg*, Feb. 9, 2007; “Real Health Reform Help, or Lip Service?,” *Tampa Bay Times*, Feb. 8, 2007; “Wal-Mart, Union Join Forces on Health Care,” *Washington Post*, Feb. 8, 2007. “Appropriately share costs”: All of the alliance’s principles can be found at betterhealthcaretogether.org. “At the Brookings Institution”: “Andy Stern: Savior or Sellout” by Liza Featherstone, *The Nation*, June 27, 2007.
- 100 Came out in favor: “Wal-Mart Backs Drive to Make Companies Pay for Health Coverage,” *Wall Street Journal*, July 1, 2009. All details in this paragraph and the quote from the National

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- Retail Federation are from that article. Also see “Wal-Mart Says It Backs a Mandate on Insurance,” *New York Times*, June 30, 2009; “Wal-Mart Allies with the Left,” *Forbes*, July 1, 2009. “Selling out”: “Everyday Low Politics,” *Wall Street Journal*, July 3, 2009.
- 101 **Faded away:** In July 2009, the UFCW and SEIU announced that Wake Up Walmart and Walmart Watch would merge into a single organization under the UFCW’s control, but at this point neither organization was very active. **“Can’t keep up”:** “Wal-Mart’s Detractors Come in from the Cold,” *New York Times*, June 5, 2008. **Had departed:** Blank had gone to work for the Edwards campaign, Wicks for Obama. **Higher enrollment:** “Wal-Mart Says Health Plan Is Covering More Workers,” *New York Times*, Jan. 11, 2007. **“Is now easier”:** “A Health Plan for Wal-Mart: Less Stinginess,” *New York Times*, Nov. 13, 2007. **“Of fatigue”:** “Wal-Mart’s Detractors Come in from the Cold,” *New York Times*, June 5, 2008.
- 101 **A new CEO:** See “Wal-Mart’s Scott Surprises with Plan to Retire as CEO,” *Wall Street Journal*, Nov. 22, 2008; “Changing of the Guard at Wal-Mart,” *Fortune*, Feb. 18, 2009. **“As a Gorbachev”:** “Wal-Mart CEO Stepping Down After 9 Years,” NPR, Jan. 30, 2009. **“Cowering”:** “Wal-Mart Embraces Controversial Causes,” National Legal and Policy Center, May 2009.
- 102 **“Lee Scott never”:** “Wal-Mart CEO Stepping Down After 9 Years,” NPR, Jan. 30, 2009.
- 102 **“I can remember”:** Interview with Adams by the author.
- 102 **Voting Rights Act:** See “Voting Rights Act Renewed with Help of Big Business,” NPR, July 27, 2006. **Immigration reform:** “Wal-Mart CEO and Al Sharpton Unlikely Allies in Immigration Debate,” *Progressive Grocer*, July 26, 2007. **“Well-meaning critics”:** “Wal-Mart’s Chief Calls Its Critics Unrealistic,” *New York Times*, April 6, 2005.
- 103 **End profit sharing:** “Wal-Mart to End Profit-Sharing in Benefits Switch,” Reuters, Oct. 8, 2010. **“Contemporary”:** “Wal-Mart Overhauls 1.4 Million Workers’ Benefits,” CNN Money,

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Oct. 12, 2010. Steve Reinemund, a Walmart board member, also made the case that the profit-sharing system had outlived its usefulness because profit growth at Walmart had slowed over time. “Legendary stories of the greeter who retires as a millionaire work when the stock price is going through the roof because of the growth,” he said in an interview with the author. “When that slows down, those systems don’t have the same motivating factor.... If the profits are slowing down, the formula just doesn’t work the same for associates.” **Cut expenses:** See “Wal-Mart to End Worker Profit-Sharing Contributions in February,” Bloomberg, Oct. 8, 2010. In addition to the 401(k) match, Walmart said that it was increasing quarterly and annual cash bonuses. But all told, analysts said, this package was still cheaper for the company than the old arrangement had been. **“The beauty”:** “Walmart’s Short-Sighted Cost Cut: Profit-Sharing for Workers” by Carol Tice, CBS MoneyWatch, Oct. 11, 2010. **“Ebenezer makes”:** “Moving the Goal Posts on Pay,” *New York Times*, May 7, 2011.

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- 105 Hundreds of people:** When the protest began on Sept. 17, it was estimated that about 1,000 people gathered in downtown Manhattan and walked up and down Wall Street before settling into Zuccotti Park. On Oct. 5, dozens of organizations, including labor unions and MoveOn.org, joined Occupy Wall Street for a march through the financial district. More than 10,000 people participated. See “Occupy Wall Street: A Protest Timeline,” *The Week*, Nov. 21, 2011. **Orange tents:** “Occupy Wall Street Erects a Tent City in Zuccotti Park, with Little Reaction from NYPD,” *Huffington Post*, Oct. 26, 2011. **“Diffuse and leaderless”:** “Gunning for Wall Street, with Faulty Aim,” *New York Times*, Sept. 23, 2011. **Guy Fawkes masks:** “Occupy Wall Street: Vendetta Masks Become Symbol of the Movement,” *Huffington Post*, Nov. 4, 2011. **“Protest movement”:** “‘Occupy Wall Street’ Protests Gain Steam, but Movement’s Goals Remain Unclear,” *Washington Post*, Oct. 3,

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2011. Many experts pointed out that, despite being criticized as amorphous, Occupy Wall Street was actually intentional about its organizational structure and tactics. (See “What Is Occupy Wall Street? The History of Leaderless Movements,” *Washington Post*, Oct. 10, 2011; “Understanding the Theory Behind Occupy Wall Street’s Approach” by Mike Konczal, *Rortybomb*, Sept. 30, 2011.) Others have noted that Occupy Wall Street made important and lasting contributions to the American Left. (See “We Are [Still] the 99 Percent,” *Vox*, April 30, 2019.)
- 106 **“We’re here today”:** “Walmart Critics Team Up with Occupy Wall Street,” *Crain’s New York Business*, Oct. 20, 2011. **The company:** The details on Green’s experience at Walmart are drawn from Orleck, “*We Are All Fast-Food Workers Now*,” 102–106; “LA Walmart Employee, Girshriela Green, Tells Her Story of Poverty and Injury,” *Huffington Post*, March 23, 2012; “Wal-Mart Punishes Its Workers,” *Salon*, July 26, 2012.
- 106 **Relatively silent:** WakeUpWalmart.com was still drawing more than 65,000 visitors a month in the summer of 2010. But this marked “a downward trend continuous over the last few years, hitting its highest point in the summer of ’08,” according to an internal memo from July 14, 2010. In addition, the UFCW launched a new Walmart Watch website in January 2011. But the group didn’t generate anywhere near the level of media attention that it had four or five years earlier. **“Never gave up”:** O’Neill’s quotes in this paragraph are from an interview with him by the author. Also see “Walmart Organizing Comes of Age: An Interview with UFCW Organizing Director Pat O’Neill,” *Truthout*, Nov. 21, 2012. **Officially:** See “Walmart Workers Get Organized—Just Don’t Say the U-Word,” *Mother Jones*, March–April 2013.
- 107 **“Mini Manhattan Project”:** Interview with Schlademan by the author. **A fresh approach:** Schlademan was hired under a new union banner, Making Change at Walmart.
- 107 **“Perspective shift”:** Interview with Young by the author. **UFCW had engaged:** Part of the UFCW’s original charge for

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- Young and his firm, Chicago-based ASGK Public Strategies, was to figure out how to harmonize the union's different Walmart-focused campaigns, including Wake Up Walmart and Walmart Watch, which had joined together to form a single organization in 2009. OUR Walmart emerged out of this work. **"Age-old idea":** "Proposal Presented to United Food and Commercial Workers International Union/WakeUp Walmart," ASGK Public Strategies, Aug. 13, 2010.
- 108 **Briefly experimented:** "Walmart Workers Get Organized—Just Don't Say the U-Word," *Mother Jones*, March–April 2013. **Had signed up:** Rathke, *Nuts & Bolts*, 478–486. Also see Rathke, *Citizen Wealth*, 74–77. **"Push and shove":** Rathke, *Nuts & Bolts*, 481. **"Building something":** "Wal-Mart Workers Are Finding a Voice Without a Union," *New York Times*, Sept. 3, 2005. **Weren't interested:** Rathke, *Nuts & Bolts*, 490.
- 108 **"Fought in every way":** "Store Workers Say: Whose Walmart? OUR Walmart!," *Labor Notes*, Aug. 28, 2011. **"Connect more directly":** "Who Really Works for the Walmart Worker?," *BuzzFeed News*, Sept. 18, 2015. **The firm divided:** "Draft Messages & Brands for OUR Walmart," ASGK Public Strategies, Sept. 22, 2010.
- 109 **"How do you organize":** Interview with Young by the author.
- 109 **Less than \$20,000:** "Stolen Wages and Death Sentences: Stories from the Wal-Mart Worker Tour," *In These Times*, March 29, 2011. **"People at Walmart":** This and the other quotes in this paragraph by Murray are from an interview with her by the author. Also see "Walmart vs. Union-Backed OUR Walmart," *Bloomberg Businessweek*, Dec. 13, 2012; Jaffe, 71–74.
- 110 **A vocal presence:** See "Wal-Mart's Sustainability Initiative: A Civil Society Critique," edited by Sarah Anderson, Institute for Policy Studies, Sept. 11, 2007; "Union Uses Wal-Mart Workers in TV Ad," NBC News, Nov. 29, 2006; "WakeUpWalmart.com Celebrates 1 Year Anniversary," UFCW news release, April 5, 2006. **"Become silent":** Interview with Murray by the author.

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- 110 **“Courageous people”**: Interview with Schlademan by the author. **Warehouse Workers United**: History of the group can be found at warehouseworkers.org/warehouseworkersunited/. **Seeking to recover**: The workers would ultimately prevail. See “Inland Warehouse Workers Sue Walmart Distribution Center,” KPCC, Oct. 18, 2011; “Workers Reach \$21-Million Settlement Against Wal-Mart, Warehouses,” *Los Angeles Times*, May 14, 2014. The suit had been brought against Schneider Logistics, a third-party contractor; Walmart was later added as a defendant. Also see “Chain of Greed: How Walmart’s Domestic Outsourcing Produces Everyday Low Wages and Poor Working Conditions for Warehouse Workers,” National Employment Law Project, June 2012.
- 111 **Ernestine Bassett**: “Workplace Injustice at Walmart,” Alliance for Justice, Aug. 16, 2012. **Girshriela Green**: Orleck, 102–106, 110. **Maggie Van Ness**: “Walmart vs. Union-Backed OUR Walmart,” *Bloomberg Businessweek*, Dec. 13, 2012. **Evelin Cruz, Denise Barlage, and Venanzi Luna**: Orleck, 29–32, 107–116; Jaffe, 71–74; Reich and Bearman, 165–172 (though in this account they are given pseudonyms); “Labor Takes Aim at Walmart—Again,” *The Nation*, Jan. 4, 2012. **Mary Pat Tift**: “Walmart vs. Union-Backed OUR Walmart,” *Bloomberg Businessweek*, Dec. 13, 2012; Walmart Workers Get Organized—Just Don’t Say the U-Word,” *Mother Jones*, March–April 2013. **Angela Williamson, Wessa Milien**: National Labor Relations Board decision, Walmart Stores Inc. and the Organization United for Respect at Walmart (OUR Walmart), 16-CA-096240, Jan. 21, 2016. **Gloria Taylor**: “Walmart Associates Sought, Got Walmart Executives’ Attention Over a Lack of Respectful Treatment,” OUR Walmart news release, June 17, 2011. **Janet Sparks**: “Scraping By at Walmart,” *USA Today*, June 7, 2012; “Walmart Activism Is Effecting Change at World’s Largest Retailer, Organizers Say,” *Huffington Post*, June 7, 2013. **Patricia Scott**: Jaffe, 94–95. **“Each company newsletter”**: Moreton, 56–57. **Wives and mothers**: Others who were “less than breadwinners,” according to Moreton, were adolescents and

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- retirees. **Women made up:** Data are from Walmart's "Workforce Diversity" report.
- 111 **"First thing we did":** Interview with Dehlendorf by the author. **Through ads aimed:** "OUR Walmart Launch," ASGK Public Strategies, April 27, 2011. **"Hopeful, positive":** "Social Media Memo," ASGK Public Strategies, Aug. 15, 2011. **\$5 a month:** "Wal-Mart Workers Try the Nonunion Route," *New York Times*, June 14, 2011; "Wal-Mart Is Facing Latest Salvo from Union," *Wall Street Journal*, June 16, 2011. **"Our schedules":** As seen in the UFCW's Walmart campaign report for January–June 2011.
- 112 **Some 65,000 people:** UFCW's Walmart campaign report for January–June 2011. **Several dozen stores:** "Store Workers Say: Whose Walmart? OUR Walmart!," *Labor Notes*, Aug. 28, 2011. **"Someone has to stand up":** "Wal-Mart Workers Try the Nonunion Route," *New York Times*, June 14, 2011.
- 112 **97 OUR Walmart members:** "How Walmart Keeps an Eye on Its Massive Workforce," *Bloomberg Businessweek*, Nov. 24, 2015. **"Declaration of Respect":** The text can be found in National Labor Relations Board decision, Walmart Stores Inc. and the Organization United for Respect at Walmart (OUR Walmart), 16-CA-096240, Jan. 21, 2016.
- 113 **12-point manifesto:** The Declaration of Respect lays out these items in a different order than they are presented here.
- 113 **"Nice to meet you":** A video of the exchange between Casey and OUR Walmart can be found at [youtube.com/watch?v=0sAVwQnqrEw](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0sAVwQnqrEw).
- 114 **Misty Tanner:** See "The Walmart Black Friday Protests," *In These Times*, Nov. 26, 2012.
- 115 **The last time:** In May 2012, OUR Walmart representatives followed up with Karen Casey by delivering to her 23 signed letters, which read in part: "Last June many members of OUR Walmart had the opportunity to meet with you and hear your commitment to ensure that there would be no retaliation against associates who participate in OUR Walmart and that

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- our freedom to associate will be respected by Walmart and Walmart managers. However, I wanted to let you know that I have experienced or witnessed retaliation in my store. Many other members of OUR Walmart report the same.” As a result, Walmart officials conducted 19 individual “open door” meetings with OUR Walmart members to hear their concerns.
- 115 **Betty Dukes:** Details on her work history are from Featherstone, 2–3; “Meet Betty Dukes, the Black Woman Who’s Taking on Walmart,” IMDiversity.com, 2012. “**Was her family**”: “Betty Dukes, Greeter Whose Walmart Lawsuit Went to Supreme Court, Dies at 67,” *New York Times*, July 18, 2017.
- 116 “**I was victimized**”: “Pittsburg Woman Back at Work After Star Turn at U.S. Supreme Court,” *East Bay Times*, April 21, 2011. “**David versus Goliath**”: Featherstone, 5.
- 116 **Supreme Court found:** *Walmart Stores Inc. v. Dukes et al.*, Supreme Court of the United States, No. 10-277; “Justices Curb Class Actions,” *Wall Street Journal*, June 21, 2011; “Opinion Analysis: Wal-Mart’s Two Messages,” *SCOTUSblog*, June 20, 2011. The court also ruled, in a separate but related 9–0 decision, that the women could not bring a claim for backpay as a remedy for discrimination under the legal theory their lawyers had introduced.
- 117 “**The most important**”: “Justices Rule for Wal-Mart in Class-Action Bias Case,” *New York Times*, June 20, 2011. “**Tipped the balance**”: “How Goliath Won: The Future Implications of *Dukes v. Walmart*,” *Northwestern University Law Review Colloquy*, 2011. At the time she wrote this, Malveaux was a law professor at Catholic University. Also see “The Impact and Echoes of the Wal-Mart Discrimination Case,” *ProPublica*, Sept. 27, 2013.
- 117 “**As the majority**”: This and the Ruiz quote are from “Updated Walmart Statements Regarding Supreme Court Ruling in *Dukes Case*,” corporate news release, June 20, 2011.
- 117 **5 to 15 percent less:** This statistic and the quotes from the female employees’ declarations are from “*Wal-Mart v. Dukes—Why*

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- the Supreme Court Should Stand with Working Women,” National Women’s Law Center, March 2011. Also see Featherstone, 128–130; “Report Warned Wal-Mart of Risks Before Bias Suit,” *New York Times*, June 3, 2010.
- 118 **“Few bad apples”:** Interview with Oliver by the author. Also see “More HR in Store at Wal-Mart: A Q&A with Sue Oliver,” *Workforce.com*, Aug. 15, 2006.
- 118 **Familiar refrain:** For instance, when Walmart settled a slew of wage-and-hour cases in 2008, the company’s general counsel said, “Many of these lawsuits were filed years ago, and the allegations are not representative of the company we are today.”
- 119 **Released a poll:** “Walmart Employees Release First-Ever Survey of Current Employees’ Opinions,” OUR Walmart news release, July 6, 2011. Lake’s quote is from the news release. Also see “New Poll Supports Female Workers’ Discrimination Claims, as ‘OUR Walmart’ Pushes for Change,” *In These Times*, July 13, 2011.
- 119 **Bribery scandal:** “Wal-Mart Hushed Up a Vast Mexican Bribery Case,” *New York Times*, April 21, 2012. **“Nobody should”:** “Wal-Mart Employee Starts Petition for CEO’s Ouster,” *Reuters*, April 27, 2012. The matter was resolved in 2019 when Walmart agreed to pay \$282 million to settle charges brought by the Securities and Exchange Commission and the Justice Department.
- 119 **Went out on strike:** The details and quotes in this paragraph are drawn from National Labor Relations Board decision, Walmart Stores Inc. and the Organization United for Respect at Walmart (OUR Walmart), 16-CA-096240, Jan. 21, 2016; “Walmart Strike: Dozens of LA Workers Walk Off the Job in First-Ever Strike Against Retailer,” *Huffington Post*, Oct. 4, 2012; “Wal-Mart Workers on Strike,” *Salon*, Oct. 4, 2012; “Walmart Workers Stage a Walkout in California,” *New York Times*, Oct. 4, 2012. Also see Orleck, 113–115; Jaffe, 71–76; Reich and Bearman, 167–169.
- 120 **Strikes spread:** “Walmart’s First-Ever Retail Worker Strike Spreads to 12 Cities,” *Huffington Post*, Oct. 9, 2012; “Wal-Mart

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- Labor Protests Grow, Organizers Say,” *New York Times*, Oct. 9, 2012; “Walmart Strikes Spread to More States,” *Salon*, Oct. 9, 2012. **“Attempts to silence”**: National Labor Relations Board decision, Walmart Stores Inc. and the Organization United for Respect at Walmart (OUR Walmart), 16-CA-096240, Jan. 21, 2016.
- 120 **Only about 100**: National Labor Relations Board decision, Walmart Stores Inc. and the Organization United for Respect at Walmart (OUR Walmart), 16-CA-096240, Jan. 21, 2016. **Best Black Friday**: “Walmart U.S. Reports Best Ever Black Friday Events,” corporate news release, Nov. 23, 2012. **“Walmart Strike”**: “Walmart Strike Proves to Be a Turkey,” *Chain Store Age*, Nov. 25, 2012.
- 121 **“Taking a Stand”**: As seen in OUR Walmart’s “Black Friday 2012” report. **“Media tsunami”**: Interview with Iny by the author.
- 121 **Tyrone Robinson**: Details on his experience are drawn from “Black Friday Marches Converge on Walmart,” *South Florida Sun-Sentinel*, Nov. 24, 2012; “Walmart Workers Stage Unprecedented Strike,” Marketplace, Oct. 10, 2012. **Sara Gilbert**: Details on her experience are drawn from “Walmart Workers to Walk Off the Job on Black Friday,” MSNBC, Nov. 15, 2012; “Leaked Document Shows What Walmart Really Pays Its Workers,” NBC News, Nov. 19, 2012; “Wal-Mart Workers’ Black Friday Strike,” *Bloomberg Businessweek*, Nov. 16, 2012. **Colby Harris**: Details on his experience are drawn from “Walmart Strikes Spread to More States,” *Salon*, Oct. 9, 2012; “Some Wal-Mart Workers Walk Out in Lead-Up to Black Friday,” *Los Angeles Times*, Nov. 16, 2012. Regarding Walmart’s complaint, also see “Protests Backed by Union Get Wal-Mart’s Attention,” *New York Times*, Nov. 18, 2012. **The complaint**: The UFCW eventually agreed to a 60-day cooling-off period, in which neither it nor OUR Walmart would hold any strikes or demonstrations, in order to settle the company’s unlawful picketing charges with the National Labor Relations Board. See

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- National Labor Relations Board decision, Walmart Stores Inc. and the Organization United for Respect at Walmart (OUR Walmart), 16-CA-096240, Jan. 21, 2016; “Labor Union to Ease Walmart Picketing,” *New York Times*, Jan. 31, 2013.
- 122 **“Exaggerated publicity campaign”:** “Wal-Mart Workers’ Black Friday Strike,” *Bloomberg Businessweek*, Nov. 16, 2012. **Audacity and efficacy:** See “The Great Walmart Walkout,” *The Nation*, Dec. 19, 2012. **“Shook them up”:** Interview with Dehlendorf by the author.
- 122 **Internal documents:** “How Walmart Keeps an Eye on Its Massive Workforce,” *Bloomberg Businessweek*, Nov. 24, 2015. The documents were produced in discovery ahead of a National Labor Relations Board hearing into OUR Walmart’s allegations of retaliation against employees who joined protests in June 2013. OUR Walmart provided them to *Bloomberg Businessweek* after the judge concluded the case. Also see “Walmart Strike Memo Reveals Confidential Management Plans,” *Huffington Post*, Oct. 13, 2012.
- 122 **Began airing:** “Walmart Launches National Advertising Campaign to Show ‘The Real Walmart,’” corporate news release, May 4, 2013. In addition to the TV spots, the campaign included digital ads and an accompanying website. Also see “Walmart’s New ‘Real’ Ad Campaign Hopes to Highlight Chain’s Goodwill,” *Brandchannel*, May 7, 2013; “Walmart’s Goodwill Tour: We Love Our Workers and America, Too,” *Daily Beast*, June 29, 2013.
- 123 **Survey conducted:** “Walmart U.S. Segmentation Overview,” April 2013. A copy was provided by the company to the author.
- 123 **Based on:** Reich and Bearman, 41–42. **“Do not experience”:** Reich and Bearman, 46.
- 123 **“A great company”:** Interview with Hale by the author. **“Been good to me”:** Interview with Lopez by the author.
- 123 **Only about 24,000:** “Walmart U.S. Segmentation Overview,” April 2013. A copy was provided by the company to the author.
- 124 **Nathaniel Williams:** Details on Williams’s life and work history, and all of his quotes, are from an interview with him by the

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- author; the Voices of Walmart Oral History Project, Columbia University; Reich and Bearman, 1–3.
- 125 **“Helped position”**: “Man Who Helped Image of Wal-Mart Steps Down,” *New York Times*, March 8, 2013. As Dach’s departure was announced in March, he said he would stay on at Walmart until June.
- 125 **Military veterans**: “Walmart and Sam’s Club Announce Military Family Promise Following White House Call to Action,” corporate news release, April 12, 2011. Also see “Remarks by the First Lady at Business Roundtable Quarterly Meeting,” White House Office of the First Lady, March 13, 2013. As noted there, Michelle Obama thanked CEO Mike Duke for Walmart’s “open-ended commitment” to hire veterans. **Food insecurity**: “Retailers Speak Out About Commitments to Provide Millions of People Access to Healthy, Affordable Food in Underserved Communities,” White House Office of the First Lady, July 20, 2011. **Made in America**: “Day One at the SelectUSA 2013 Investment Summit,” White House blog, Oct. 31, 2013. **Climate change**: “Business Leaders Support President Obama’s Plan to Reduce Carbon Pollution,” White House blog, June 27, 2013. **Met with Mike Duke**: As noted in the Nov. 29, 2010, briefing by White House Press Secretary Robert Gibbs. **Michelle Obama**: “First Lady Michelle Obama Celebrates Walmart’s Progress on Making Food Healthier and More Affordable,” corporate news release, Feb. 28, 2013.
- 126 **“Hold them up”**: Interview with Gavin by the author. Also see “Michelle Obama Partners with Walmart for Healthy Eating,” NPR, Jan. 20, 2011.
- 126 **“While we know”**: “Remarks by the President on American Energy,” White House Office of the Press Secretary, May 9, 2014.
- 126 **Union supporters**: All quotes in this paragraph are from “Obama’s Wal-Mart Stop Prompts Labor Backlash,” *Los Angeles Times*, May 9, 2014. Also see “Obama’s Choice of Walmart Draws Fire,” *USA Today*, May 9, 2014; “Once a Walmart

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- Boycotter, Obama Now on Cozier Terms with Retailer,” *Huffington Post*, May 9, 2014; “Obama’s Tricky Relationship with Walmart,” *Wall Street Journal*, May 9, 2014; “Obama’s Choice of Walmart Draws Angry Protests,” *In These Times*, May 9, 2014. Joe Biden would go through a similar evolution when he reached the Oval Office. See “Biden Embraces His One-Time Foe: Walmart,” *Politico*, Dec. 3, 2021.
- 127 **“Going really well”**: “Man Who Helped Image of Wal-Mart Steps Down,” *New York Times*, March 8, 2013. **“Helping us understand”**: Wal-Mart Corporate Affairs Leader Dach to Leave in June,” Reuters, March 8, 2013. **“One of my frustrations”**: Interview with Dach by the author.
- 127 **Buses had left**: National Labor Relations Board decision, Walmart Stores Inc. and the Organization United for Respect at Walmart (OUR Walmart), 16-CA-096240, Jan. 21, 2016.
- 127 **About 100**: “Striking Workers Bring Bangladesh Safety Demand to Walmart Headquarters,” *The Nation*, June 5, 2013; “Striking Walmart Workers Bus to Bentonville Seeking Corporate Reform,” *In These Times*, June 6, 2013. **Restraining order**: “Wal-Mart Granted Restraining Order Against Union,” *Talk Business & Politics*, June 4, 2013. **Injunctions**: Each of these court orders can be found on the United for Respect website.
- 128 **50 feet away**: “Striking Workers Bring Bangladesh Safety Demand to Walmart Headquarters,” *The Nation*, June 5, 2013. **Bangladeshi garment workers**: In the case of both the 2012 fire and the 2013 factory collapse, Walmart said that suppliers had improperly subcontracted work to those Bangladeshi facilities without its knowledge. Both suppliers were fired. The company also said that it had no products in the factory that collapsed when the tragedy occurred. See “Documents Indicate Walmart Blocked Safety Push in Bangladesh,” *New York Times*, Dec. 5, 2012; “Building Collapse in Bangladesh Leaves Scores Dead,” *New York Times*, April 24, 2013; “Wal-Mart Fires Supplier After Bangladesh Revelation,” ABC News, May 15, 2013; “Walmart Accepted Clothing from Banned Bangladesh Factories,” ProPublica,

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- June 12, 2013. **Near the home:** “Walmart Strikers Target Waltons, as NOW Calls Out Obamas,” *The Nation*, June 7, 2013.
- 128 **Rose to speak:** A video of Sparks addressing the annual meeting can be found at [youtube.com/watch?v=Y1_HzzUM7Gc](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Y1_HzzUM7Gc). Also see “As Walton Family Solidifies Majority, Wal-Mart Workers Promise Dissent for Fair Pay,” *Forbes*, June 13, 2013; “Wal-Mart Yearly Meeting Follows a Narrow Script,” *New York Times*, June 7, 2013; “Walmart Activism Is Effecting Change at World’s Largest Retailer, Organizers Say,” *Huffington Post*, June 7, 2013. Sparks had risen to introduce a shareholder resolution calling for Walmart executives to “retain a significant percentage of shares acquired through equity compensation programs until reaching normal retirement age or terminating employment with the company.” The goal was “to better link executive compensation with long-term performance.” The resolution, which the company opposed, was defeated.
- 130 **Been writing:** “Walter F. Loeb Retires to Publish Newsletter,” *New York Times*, Jan. 31, 1990.
- 130 **“Everywhere I looked”:** “Why Are Walmart Stores Such a Mess?,” *Forbes*, July 17, 2013.
- 131 **At least 2011:** See “Wal-Mart Brings in Consultants to Help Keep Its Shelves Stocked,” Bloomberg, Oct. 6, 2011; “The High Price of Low Cost: The View from the Other Side of Walmart’s Productivity Loop” by John Marshall, UFCW, 2011. **“Not on the shelf”:** “Customers Flee Wal-Mart Empty Shelves for Target, Costco,” Bloomberg, March 26, 2013.
- 131 **Had been sluggish:** GDP growth was 2% from 2011–2013. **Over 7 percent:** It fell to 6.9% in November 2013 and then 6.7% in December. **Hitting households:** See “Why Is Wal-Mart Worried? Payroll Tax Could Cut Consumer Spending,” *Christian Science Monitor*, Feb. 22, 2013. **“Train wreck”:** “Are Wal-Mart’s Shoppers Disappearing?,” *Christian Science Monitor*, Sept. 28, 2013. **Dollar stores:** “Budget-Conscious Customers Are Abandoning Wal-Mart for Dollar Stores,” *Business Insider*, Sept. 30, 2013.

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- 132 **Sales down:** Throughout 2013, Walmart reported decreasing same-store sales in its US business, year over year. See “Is Wal-Mart in Trouble?,” *Slate*, May 17, 2013; “Walmart Cuts Sales Forecast as Consumers Rein in Spending,” *The Guardian*, Aug. 15, 2013; “Wal-Mart US Quarterly Comparable Sales Decline,” CNBC, Nov. 14, 2013.
- 132 **“Self-inflicted wounds”:** “Wal-Mart’s Slowness to Stock Shelves Worsens, Sales Slump,” Bloomberg, Feb. 28, 2013. **Shelves were bare:** “Hey Walmart, It’s Hard to Make Sales When Store Shelves Are Empty,” *Time*, March 27, 2013; “The Trouble Lurking on Walmart’s Empty Shelves,” *Time*, April 9, 2013. **Had an average:** “Walmart Strains to Keep Aisles Stocked Fresh,” *New York Times*, April 3, 2013. In what was also seen by some as a cost-cutting move, Walmart began hiring more temp workers in 2013. The company said that this was to ensure its stores were staffed properly and not to save money. In any case, some longtime employees, who were hoping to get more hours themselves, were put off by the development. See “Wal-Mart’s Everyday Hiring Strategy: Add More Temps,” Reuters, June 12, 2013. One former HR executive pointed out to the author that some of the drop in the number of employees per store reflected automation and process improvements, as well as the addition of smaller-format Neighborhood Markets—not just cost-cutting. **“Pull people”:** Voices of Walmart Oral History Project, Columbia University.
- 132 **“Make it fair”:** Voices of Walmart Oral History Project, Columbia University. **200 percent:** Interview with Jacqui Canney, who joined Walmart in August 2015 as executive vice president in charge of human resources, by the author. **75 percent:** This was according to the consulting firm Hay Group. See “Retail’s Turnover a Plus for Economy but Challenge for Stores,” CNBC, Sept. 23, 2014.
- 133 **“Had joined Walmart”:** “Wal-Mart Appoints William Simon as Executive Vice President of Professional Services,” corporate news release, March 1, 2006. Simon came into the company as executive vice president of Walmart’s specialty division, overseeing its

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- pharmacy, optical, tire and lube express, and photo and connection center divisions. He became chief operating officer of Walmart's US operations in 2007 and CEO of Walmart US in 2010.
- 133 **Liked to chug:** As noted in "Head of Wal-Mart's U.S. Division Leaving," *Wall Street Journal*, July 24, 2014. **As head of:** "The Terrible Economy Just Claimed Another Victim: Walmart's U.S. CEO," *Huffington Post*, July 24, 2014. **Invested heavily:** See "Wal-Mart Notches Web Win Against Rival Amazon," *Wall Street Journal*, May 5, 2014. **Greatly expanded:** "Wal-Mart Plans 500 U.S. 'Neighborhood Market' Stores," *TheStreet*, Sept. 11, 2013.
- 133 **"Was very involved":** Interview with Oliver by the author. **"Not every returning":** "Wal-Mart Pledges to Hire Any Returning Veteran Who Wants a Job," *Los Angeles Times*, Jan. 15, 2013.
- 134 **The company promoted:** Presentation by Bill Simon to the Goldman Sachs Annual Global Retailing Conference, Sept. 11, 2013. Also see "Wal-Mart Emphasizes Paths to Promotion," *Philadelphia Inquirer*, Oct. 30, 2013. **"Some people took":** "More Trapped in Low-Wage Jobs," *Boston Globe*, March 13, 2014. This was an Associated Press report.
- 134 **"Great job opportunities":** Presentation by Bill Simon to the Goldman Sachs Annual Global Retailing Conference, Sept. 11, 2013. **"Only two places":** "Most Walmart Store Workers Didn't Earn \$25,000 Last Year," *Huffington Post*, Oct. 23, 2013. Also see "More than Half of Wal-Mart's Hourly Workers Make Less than \$25,000," Bloomberg, Oct. 23, 2013.
- 135 **"Without enough employees":** "Walmart Pays Workers Poorly and Sinks While Costco Pays Workers Well and Sails—Proof That You Get What You Pay For," *Forbes*, April 17, 2013. Walmart did eventually hire tens of thousands of additional workers to try to deal with its operational challenges. See "Wal-Mart Just Came Closer to Fixing Its Empty Shelves Problem," *Business Insider*, Sept. 24, 2013.
- 135 **"The most competitive":** "Walmart CEO Mike Duke: 'We Do Pay Competitive Wages,'" *Huffington Post*, Dec. 13, 2012. **"Thought about expanding":** Interview with Oliver by the author.

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- 135 **“Change our employee reputation”**: Interview with Kersey by the author.
- 136 **“Pressure building”**: Interview with Ruiz by the author.
- 137 **“Everywhere I traveled”**: Interview with Ormanidou by the author.
- 138 **Would venture**: All details on Canton’s experience, as well as his quotes, are from an interview with him by the author.
- 139 **“Segmentation study”**: All details are from “Walmart U.S. Segmentation Overview,” April 2013. A copy was provided by the company to the author.
- 140 **“The big aha”**: Interview with Oliver by the author.
- 140 **“The only thing”**: This and the other quotes in this chapter by Gottman are from an interview with him by the author.
- 141 **Scheduling system**: “Wal-Mart Tests New Scheduling Program,” *Arkansas Democrat-Gazette*, Feb. 28, 2015. The article notes that the pilot began in the Wichita area in September 2014. **Employee development program**: “Wal-Mart Tests Skills Initiative,” March 2, 2015. The article notes that the program had been under development for more than a year.

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- 143 **“Much larger”**: “CEO Mike Duke Leaves Wal-Mart Stores Bigger, Growing Slowly,” *Wall Street Journal*, Nov. 25, 2013.
- 144 **Had approached**: “Wal-Mart Names Doug McMillon CEO to Succeed Mike Duke,” Bloomberg, Nov. 25, 2013. **Had spent most**: “Who Is New Wal-Mart CEO Doug McMillon?,” *Wall Street Journal*, Nov. 25, 2013.
- 144 **“I would bet”**: “Wal-Mart Stores Names New CEO, Effective Feb. 1,” CNBC, Nov. 25, 2013. **“A Walmart guy”**: “Wal-Mart Replaces Its CEO with Company Insider,” *USA Today*, Nov. 25, 2013.
- 144 **“Dad would chuckle”**: All the details on McMillon’s early life, as well as all of the quotes by him in this chapter, are from an interview with him by the author, unless otherwise specified. Also see “Doug McMillon: The Southern Charmer Taking

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- Over Walmart's Retail Empire," *Financial Times*, Nov. 29, 2013;
"The Man Who's Reinventing Walmart," *Fortune*, June 4, 2015.
- 146 **"McMillon, you're not very smart"**: As recounted by McMillon in an interview with the author.
- 146 **"Please remember"**: From McMillon's May 27, 2021, speech to the graduates of Harvard Business School.
- 148 **"They had a deal"**: As recounted by McMillon in an interview with the author.
- 148 **"Before you leave town"**: As recounted by McMillon in an interview with the author.
- 149 **"You can do it"**: As recounted by McMillon in an interview with the author.
- 149 **He found a note**: See "Doug McMillon: The Southern Charmer Taking Over Walmart's Retail Empire," *Financial Times*, Nov. 29, 2013.
- 150 **"Equal parts"**: "Wal-Mart's \$288 Billion Meeting," *Fortune*, April 18, 2005.
- 151 **"All well and good"**: As recounted by McMillon in an interview with the author.
- 152 **"In the fray"**: Interview with Harris by the author. **His father, Claude**: See "Early Wal-Mart Shareholders Invest on Faith," *Talk Business & Politics*, May 30, 2012.
- 153 **"Flat-screen TVs"**: Interview with Harris by the author.
- 153 **"Would call you when"**: Interview with Lafley by the author.
- 153 **Only 38**: "New CEO for Sam's Club," *Chain Store Age*, Aug. 4, 2005. **Would have ranked**: Walmart reported that Sam's Club took in \$37.1 billion in revenue for the fiscal year ending Jan. 31, 2005, which would have placed it 41st on the 2005 Fortune 500 list. **His appointment**: "McMillon Named President and CEO, Wal-Mart International," *Chain Store Age*, Jan. 7, 2009.
- 154 **"One of the greatest"**: Walton, 169. **"You can't just keep doing"**: Walton, 249.
- 154 **The Everything Store**: As noted in "Wal-Mart Looks to Grow by Embracing Smaller Stores," *Wall Street Journal*, July 8, 2014.

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- 154 **Sales would increase:** Amazon's sales rose from \$8.5 billion in 2005 to \$107 billion in 2015. "**The conversation**": Stone, *The Everything Store*, 119.
- 155 **"Drive diaper prices":** Stone, 299.
- 156 **"Over-infatuated":** At the same time, it is undeniable that Walmart has put a special emphasis on battling Amazon. See "Walmart Is Betting on a Secret Initiative Called 'Project Glass' in the War Against Amazon. See the Full Presentation Outlining Its Plan," *Business Insider*, March 10, 2021. Also see "A 'Grass Roots' Campaign to Take Down Amazon Is Funded by Amazon's Biggest Rivals," *Wall Street Journal*, Sept. 20, 2019.
- 156 **"Soft-spoken":** "Doug McMillon: The Southern Charmer Taking Over Walmart's Retail Empire," *Financial Times*, Nov. 29, 2013.
- 156 **"Take great ideas":** Among these was to expand the number of third-party sellers at Walmart.com. See "Walmart's Online Store Isn't Profitable. Now It's Borrowing from Amazon's Playbook," CNN Business, May 4, 2021.
- 156 **"In his grill":** Interview with Harris by the author.
- 157 **Fortune now declared:** "The Man Who's Reinventing Walmart," *Fortune*, June 4, 2015. **Winnow its foreign presence:** "Walmart Retreats Around Globe to Focus on E-Commerce," *Wall Street Journal*, Nov. 16, 2020. **Jet.com:** "Walmart Winds Down Jet.com Four Years After \$3.3 Billion Acquisition of E-Commerce Company," CNBC, May 19, 2020. **New services:** See, for instance, "Walmart Partners with Goldman Sachs to Offer Marketplace Sellers Access to Capital," corporate news release, Sept. 22, 2020. Walmart has also made its own e-commerce tools available to smaller retailers through a cloud-based subscription. See "Walmart's Latest Business: Selling Its E-Commerce Tech to Other Retailers," CNBC, July 28, 2021. **Third-party sellers:** "How Walmart Is Trying to Reach Amazon Sellers," *Modern Retail*, Feb. 24, 2021. **Walmart+:** "Walmart's Answer to Amazon Prime Is Cheaper and Has Gas Discounts," *Washington Post*, Aug. 31, 2020; "Walmart May Have Just One-

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Upped Amazon with Walmart+,” *Forbes*, July 14, 2020; “Don’t Count on Walmart+ to Take Down Amazon, Yet,” *USA Today*, Aug. 6, 2020. **Local fulfillment centers:** “Walmart to Build Local Fulfillment Centers at Dozens of Stores,” *Supermarket News*, Jan. 27, 2021; “Why Amazon Should Be Worried About Walmart’s Micro-Fulfillment Centers,” *Forbes*, Feb. 28, 2021; “Walmart Pushes New Delivery Services for a Post-Pandemic World,” *Wall Street Journal*, Feb. 27, 2022. **Digital advertising:** “Walmart Buys Ad Tech to Chase Small-Business Advertisers,” *Wall Street Journal*, Feb. 4, 2021; “Why Walmart Wants a Bigger Slice of the Digital Ad Market,” *Forbes*, Feb. 5, 2021. **TikTok:** In 2020, Walmart and Oracle announced that they were buying stakes in a new entity called TikTok Global from TikTok’s current owner, Beijing-based ByteDance Ltd. For its part, Walmart said it had agreed to purchase 7.5% of TikTok Global as well as enter into commercial agreements to provide e-commerce, fulfillment, payments, and other services to the new company. But the US government, citing security concerns, ultimately stopped the deal. See “TikTok Sale to Oracle, Walmart Is Shelved as Biden Reviews Security,” *Wall Street Journal*, Feb. 10, 2021. Despite the setback, Walmart continued to use the TikTok platform to spot trends, create shoppable content, and build its brand among teens and 20-somethings. See, for example, “Walmart Doubles Down on TikTok Shopping, Hosts All-New Live Stream Shopping Event,” corporate news release, March 9, 2021. **Metaverse:** “Walmart Is Quietly Preparing to Enter the Metaverse,” CNBC, Jan. 16, 2022. **Drone:** “Walmart Is Now Delivering Diapers and Food by Drone (If You Live Close to This Arkansas Store),” *The Verge*, Nov. 22, 2021. **Driverless truck:** “Walmart Is Using Fully Driverless Trucks to Ramp Up Its Online Grocery Business,” CNBC, Nov. 8, 2021. **Into people’s fridges:** “Walmart Expands Delivery to Your Fridge, Pandemic Be Damned,” *Bloomberg*, April 28, 2021; “Walmart Expands Its Direct-to-Fridge In-home Delivery Service to 30 Million Homes,” CNBC, Jan. 5,

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2022. **Health clinics:** “How Walmart Plans to Take Over Health Care,” CNBC, Jan. 4, 2021; “Walmart Is Rapidly Expanding Its Presence in Healthcare,” *Forbes*, July 23, 2021; “Walmart Health Expands to Florida with Five New Health Centers,” corporate news release, April 5, 2022. Also see “Walmart Deal Shows Expansion in Telehealth, New Front with Amazon,” *Wall Street Journal*, May 6, 2021. **Medical insurance:** “The Right Plan for the Right Person: Introducing Walmart Insurance Services,” corporate news release, Oct. 6, 2020. **Financial technology:** “Walmart Creates Fintech Startup, Speeding Push Beyond Retail,” Bloomberg, Jan. 11, 2021; “Walmart Has Over 200 Million Visits to Its Stores Weekly. Why Not Become a Fintech?,” *Barron’s*, March 5, 2021; “Walmart-Backed Fintech Startup Is Acquiring Two Firms and a New Name,” *Wall Street Journal*, Jan. 26, 2022; “The Supply Side: Walmart Looks to Fintech as New Profit Center,” *Talk Business & Politics*, March 5, 2022. **Bonobos:** “Walmart to Acquire Bonobos and Appoint Andy Dunn to Oversee Exclusive Consumer Brands Offered Online,” corporate news release, June 16, 2017. **ModCloth:** “Walmart to Sell Online Women’s Apparel Brand ModCloth to Go Global Retail,” CNBC, Oct. 4, 2019. **Coterie of designers:** “Brandon Maxwell Is Walmart’s New Creative Director for Its Elevated Fashion Brands,” *Vogue*, March 16, 2021. **“Can’t remember a time”:** “Why Walmart Could Be the Surprise Stock of the Decade,” *The Motley Fool*, March 25, 2021.
- 158 **Simon was leaving:** “Head of Wal-Mart’s U.S. Division Leaving,” *Wall Street Journal*, July 24, 2014. **In China:** Foran had recently been put in charge of Walmart’s Asian operations.
- 158 **Matter of time:** This is the way the company itself presented things. See “Wal-Mart U.S. CEO Bill Simon Steps Down,” *USA Today*, July 24, 2014. In that article, Walmart spokesman David Tovar said that Simon “is leaving on good terms” and added, “When someone else gets (the job) out of two candidates, it’s not unexpected when the other person leaves to go do

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- something else.” **“His passion”**: “Walmart Names Greg Foran President and CEO of Walmart U.S.,” corporate news release, July 24, 2014. **Five straight quarters**: “Walmart U.S. CEO Bill Simon Is Out,” *Huffington Post*, July 24, 2014. **“Don’t deliver”**: “Why Walmart’s U.S. Head Bill Simon Had to Step Down,” *Forbes*, July 29, 2014. **“About time”**: “It’s About Time: Walmart’s U.S. CEO Bill Simon Unexpectedly Stepping Down,” *Forbes*, July 25, 2014.
- 158 **Gotten his start**: “Top Kiwi Executive ‘Driven’ to Succeed,” *New Zealand Herald*, July 28, 2014. **“Real wild card”**: “The Meteoric Rise of Greg Foran at Walmart,” *Chain Store Age*, July 24, 2014. **McMillon had watched**: Interview with McMillon by the author. **“Greatest retailer”**: “Walmart CEO Thinks This 56-Year-Old New Zealander Is Greatest Retailer on Planet,” *TheStreet*, Nov. 27, 2017.
- 159 **“Profit can hide”**: “The Right Thing to Do,” *Harvard Business Review*, Dec. 7, 2017.
- 159 **“Couldn’t actually get into”**: All quotes by McKenna in this chapter are from an interview with her by the author.
- 159 **One analyst report**: This was from Wolfe Research. See “Walmart Memo Orders Stores to Improve Grocery Performance,” *New York Times*, Nov. 11, 2014. **“Was seven steps”**: All quotes by Carithers in this chapter are from an interview with him by the author.
- 160 **Under EDLP**: You can hear McMillon explain the philosophy of everyday low prices at vimeo.com/342112322/89e38f8d95. Also see “This Walmart Exec Is Betting His Career on the Success of ‘EDLP,’” *Business Insider*, June 4, 2012.
- 161 **“Skeptical about”**: Interview with Gottman by the author. **“Even within my team”**: Interview with Canton by the author.
- 162 **“That highly of them”**: All quotes by McLaughlin in this chapter, unless otherwise noted, are from an interview with her by the author.
- 163 **“We were thinking”**: Interview with Gehrki by the author.
- 164 **“They would always”**: Interview with Auguste by the author.

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- 164 **"Dollar to dollar"**: All quotes by Agnew in this chapter are from an interview with her by the author.
- 164 **"We need you"**: As recounted by Agnew.
- 165 **"You have to think about"**: Interview with Conway by the author. **"A combination of"**: "Build Ladders and Raise the Floor: Workforce Strategies Supporting Mobility and Stability for Low-Income Workers" by Steven Dawson of PHI-Quality Care Through Quality Jobs and Maureen Conway of the Aspen Institute, April 2014.
- 166 **Since 2006**: See "Wal-Mart Names Claudia Kennedy to Employment Practices Advisory Panel," corporate news release, May 9, 2006. Kennedy was a retired lieutenant general in the US Army. The other members of the panel were Dennis Archer, the former mayor of Detroit and Michigan Supreme Court judge, and former Mexican American Legal Defense and Education Fund Vice President Vilma Martinez. **National Council of La Raza**: The organization is now known as UnidosUS. **"They were helping"**: Interview with Kersey by the author.
- 166 **"But you have agency"**: As recounted by Kamasaki in an interview with the author. **"A very simple issue"**: "Remarks by the President on Raising the Minimum Wage," White House Office of the Press Secretary, April 30, 2014. Also see "President Barack Obama's State of the Union Address," Office of the Press Secretary, Jan. 28, 2014. **"My frame was"**: Interview with Herman by the author.
- 167 **"She specifically said"**: Interview with McMillon by the author.
- 167 **Wide variety**: "Investing for the Long Term: Faith-Based Investors' Engagement with Walmart," Interfaith Center on Corporate Responsibility, 1993, 2006; Interfaith Center on Corporate Responsibility records, Rare Book & Manuscript Library, Columbia University. **"The only group"**: Interview with Schilling by the author.
- 168 **"Can unequivocally say"**: Soderquist, 45. **Gospel singers**: Moreton, 94. **A professor from**: Moreton, 101. **Truckers belted out**:

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- Moreton, 248. **Inclusive workplace:** See Walmart's 2021 report, "Better Together: Culture, Diversity, Equity & Inclusion." Notably, McMillon joined other CEOs in urging the veto of a so-called religious freedom bill in Arkansas. Opponents said the measure would give legal cover to those who decided not to provide services to LGBTQ people if they thought doing so would "substantially burden" their religious freedom. McMillon said the law "threatens to undermine the spirit of inclusion present throughout the state of Arkansas and does not reflect the values we proudly uphold." **"Like to be known":** "Live Life with the End in Mind," Workmatters, Sept. 1, 2016. **"God is good":** As noted in "With His TikTok Pursuit, Walmart CEO Seeks to Revamp Retailer Again," *Wall Street Journal*, Aug. 28, 2020.
- 168 **"Sister Barbara kept us":** Interview with Oliver by the author.
- 168 **Who earned so little:** This scene is as recounted in interviews with Mika and Aires by the author.
- 169 **"She's a force":** Interview with Weber by the author. **"Kind of strong":** Interview with Rauscher by the author.
- 169 **"Upped their ante":** Interview with Aires by the author.
- 169 **"Doesn't have a kneejerk":** Interview with Schilling by the author. **"Pushed him hard":** Interview with Finn by the author.
- 170 **"What are you doing":** Interview with Sherman by the author.
- 170 **Which led to:** See "Did Henry Ford Pay Efficiency Wages?" by Daniel M. G. Raff and Lawrence H. Summers, National Bureau of Economic Research, Working Paper 2101, Dec. 1986; Brinkley, *Wheels for the World*, 174. **"Prosperous workers begat":** Brinkley, *Wheels for the World*, 175. **"Distributed in wages":** "Overcapitalization Cause of Depression, Says W.R. Hearst," *Washington Herald*, Oct. 9, 1930. **"As bad for employers":** Filene, *Speaking of Change*, 150.
- 170 **Economy boomed:** See "The Way We Won: America's Economic Breakthrough During World War II" by Doris Goodwin, *The American Prospect*, Dec. 19, 2001. **"Sell my refrigerators":** As quoted in Drew Pearson's widely syndicated newspaper column, "The Washington Merry-Go-Round," Nov. 22, 1944. Also cited

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- in Wartzman, 14. **“Have got money”**: “Man of the Year: First Among Equals,” *Time*, Jan. 2, 1956. **“People’s capitalism”**: Miller and Nowak, *The Fifties*, 111–112. Also cited in Wartzman, 109.
- 171 **“A vicious cycle”**: “Retailer Revelations: Why America’s Struggling Middle Class Has Businesses Scared,” Center for American Progress, Oct. 2014. **Gave prominence to**: In 2015, ICCR cited the Center for American Progress report in a shareholder resolution that called for the Walmart board to initiate a review of the company’s executive compensation policies. Similar resolutions were submitted to McDonald’s, Target, Dollar General, Gap, and others.
- 171 **Hundreds picketed**: “26 Arrested for Protesting Outside Walmart Billionaire’s New York Home,” CNN, Oct. 16, 2014. **“Can’t afford anything”**: “Walmart Workers Demand \$15 Wage in Several Protests,” *New York Times*, Oct. 16, 2014. Also see “Struggling Workers Take Wage Protest to Upscale Doorstep of Walmart Heiress Alice Walton,” *The Guardian*, Oct. 17, 2014. **1,500 demonstrations**: “On Black Friday, Walmart Is Pressed for Wage Increases,” *New York Times*, Nov. 28, 2014.
- 172 **“That burger joint”**: As recounted by McMillon in an interview with the author.
- 172 **“Much more ambitious”**: Interview with Gehrki by the author.
- 173 **“Five-dimensional chess”**: Interview with Bartlett by the author.
- 173 **\$8.25 an hour**: From an interview with McMillon by the author.
- 173 **6,000 of them**: “Walmart Raising Wage to at Least \$9,” *New York Times*, Feb. 19, 2015. **Was \$7.65**: “The Right Thing to Do,” *Harvard Business Review*, Dec. 7, 2017.
- 173 **“Already peaked”**: Interview with Oliver by the author. **“Jim was very passionate”**: Interview with Wolf by the author.
- 174 **“He’d come home”**: This quote and all other details in this paragraph on Cash’s childhood are from “Boston Celtics Co-Owner and Business Leader James Cash on Breaking Barriers,” *Sarasota Magazine*, Dec. 22, 2020; “Much More Than an Athlete,” *Fort Worth Star-Telegram*, May 9, 1993.

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- 174 **“His honest comment”**: “Celtic Part-Owner James Cash Sees Light in the Long Social Justice Tunnel,” *Boston Herald*, June 21, 2020. **Would eventually earn**: “Boston Celtics Co-Owner and Business Leader James Cash on Breaking Barriers,” *Sarasota Magazine*, Dec. 22, 2020.
- 174 **“Really quite negative”**: This, and all of the remaining quotes in this chapter by Cash, is from an interview with him by the author.
- 175 **“I would have thought”**: Interview with Archer by the author.
- 176 **A group of scholars**: See “‘Service-Profit Chain’ Links Members of Service Management Unit,” Harvard Business School, Oct. 1, 1996. **A set of relationships**: See “Putting the Service-Profit Chain to Work” by James L. Heskett, Thomas O. Jones, Gary W. Loveman, W. Earl Sasser Jr., and Leonard A. Schlesinger,” *Harvard Business Review*, July–Aug. 2008.
- 176 **“Putting employees first”**: Heskett, Sasser, and Schlesinger, *The Service Profit Chain*, 329. **“Dangerously close”**: Heskett, Sasser, and Schlesinger, 143. They wrote this about Nordstrom, explaining, “Nordstrom does whatever it can to encourage” relationships that lead to customer satisfaction—“most importantly rewarding results by paying salespeople a substantial commission on sales as opposed to a salary dangerously close to minimum wages. As a result, successful Nordstrom salespeople are among the highest paid anywhere in retailing.” **“We can predict”**: Heskett, Sasser, and Schlesinger, 146.
- 177 **“Turnover and shrinkage”**: “Turnover’s Impact on Shrinkage in Retail Positions,” HR.com, Nov. 8, 2004.
- 177 **“Given everything”**: Interview with Wolf by the author.
- 178 **“Take the operational issues”**: Interview with Reinemund by the author.
- 178 **He told Oliver**: Interview with Oliver by the author. **“Needed to yield”**: Interview with Culpepper by the author. **Hopped in the car**: Interview with Oliver by the author.
- 179 **“Kept thinking about her”**: Interview with Kersey by the author.
- 179 **Walmart would increase**: The details are spelled out in “Walmart to Increase Wages for Current U.S. Workers to \$10 an Hour or

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- Higher, Launches New Skills-Based Training for Associates,” corporate news release, Feb. 19, 2015. **The next year:** “More Than One Million Walmart Associates to Receive Pay Increase in 2016,” corporate news release, Jan. 20, 2016.
- 179 **“Strategically important”:** Interview with Bartlett by the author.
- 180 **“We really wanted to demonstrate”:** The video is available at [youtube.com/watch?v=x9t4cI7CzAQ](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=x9t4cI7CzAQ). “The Wal-Mart CEO Who’s Giving Raises to 500,000 Workers,” *Washington Post*, Feb. 19, 2015. McMillon also sent out a letter to employees. See “In Letter to Associates, Walmart CEO Doug McMillon Announces Higher Pay,” corporate news release, Feb. 19, 2015. In addition, he did a live TV interview that morning. See “Wal-Mart CEO: We Want Happy and Excited Associates,” CNBC, Feb. 19, 2015.
- 181 **“Never been more proud”:** The text of the email was read by Kristin Oliver as part of her remarks at the 2015 National Opportunity Summit. See [youtube.com/watch?v=K3jenS8D4bQ](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=K3jenS8D4bQ).
- 181 **“When compared”:** “Walmart Raising Wage to at Least \$9,” *New York Times*, Feb. 19, 2015. **“Hugely profitable”:** “Walmart Gives a Raise,” *New York Times*, Feb. 20, 2015. **“Haven’t pacified us”:** “Workers and Critics Greet Walmart Pay Raise but Say Much Remains to Be Done,” *The Guardian*, Feb. 23, 2015.
- 182 **“Complete breakdown”:** “Two Dozen Arrests After Workers Protest Against Walmart Treatment,” *The Guardian*, Nov. 14, 2014. **“Satisfactory one”:** “Workers and Critics Greet Walmart Pay Raise but Say Much Remains to Be Done,” *The Guardian*, Feb. 23, 2015. **“Have long challenged”:** “Walmart Shareholders See Decision to Raise Workers’ Wages as Positive Step Forward,” Interfaith Center for Corporate Responsibility, Feb. 19, 2015. **“When it’s a big player”:** “Walmart Minimum Wage to Keep Staff Rise Piles Pressure on Rivals,” *The Guardian*, Feb. 28, 2015. Also see “What Wal-Mart’s Pay Raise May Mean for Other Workers,” *Wall Street Journal*, Feb. 19, 2015. Notably, Walmart did not lead everyone; Gap and some other retailers were already paying \$10 or more at the time of Walmart’s announcement. **TJ Maxx, Marshalls:** “Following Wal-Mart Lead,

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- T.J. Maxx, Marshalls to Boost Employee Wage,” *Christian Science Monitor*, Feb. 25, 2015. **Target:** “Target Plans to Raise Pay to at Least \$9 an Hour,” *New York Times*, March 18, 2015. **McDonald’s:** “McDonald’s Is Giving 90,000 Workers a Raise,” CNN Business, April 2, 2015.
- 182 **Trip to Miami:** “Daily Guidance and Press Schedule for Wednesday, February 25, 2015,” White House Office of the Press Secretary. **From Air Force One:** “Obama Congratulates Walmart CEO on Wage Hike,” CNN, Feb. 25, 2015. **“The president is going”:** “Press Briefing by the Press Secretary Josh Earnest, 2/26/15,” White House Office of the Press Secretary.
- 183 **3 percent:** “Walmart Raising Wage to at Least \$9,” *New York Times*, Feb. 19, 2015.
- 183 **“Maybe we didn’t give you”:** All quotes and details on Walmart’s strategy from the analysts’ meeting are from the transcript of Walmart’s 22nd Annual Meeting for the Investment Community, Thomson Reuters Street Events, Oct. 14, 2015. **A 4 percent rise:** “Wal-Mart CEO Speaks Out to Cramer: This Was Coming,” CNBC, Oct. 14, 2015.
- 184 **Being remodeled:** See “Walmart U.S. Boss Admits Half of All Stores Could Look Better,” *Fortune*, June 4, 2015.
- 184 **As a signal:** For background on the market’s view of buybacks, including the effect on share prices after a repurchase is announced, see “Examining Share Repurchasing and the S&P Buyback Indices in the U.S. Market” by Liyu Zeng and Priscilla Luk, S&P Dow Jones Indices, March 2020. **Financial manipulation:** See “Regulating Stock Buybacks: The \$6.3 Trillion Question” by Lenore Palladino and William Lazonick, Roosevelt Institute, May 2021; “Profits Without Prosperity” by William Lazonick, *Harvard Business Review*, Sept. 2014.
- 185 **Put up a slide:** “Wal-Mart Surprises Market with Dim Outlook,” *Wall Street Journal*, Oct. 14, 2015. **More than 30 million:** “Wal-Mart CEO: Even with EPS Hit, Wage Hike Was ‘Right Decision,’” CNBC, Oct. 14, 2015. **Suspending trading:** Interview with Kary Brunner, a member of Walmart’s investor

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- relations team, by the author. **Largest single-day:** “Wal-Mart Warns on Profit, Stock Has Steepest Decline in 25 Years,” Reuters, Oct. 14, 2015.
- 185 **“Burned the boats”:** As recounted by Canney in an interview with the author.
- 185 **Screaming at him:** As recounted by Bartlett in an interview with the author.
- 185 **“To the woodshed”:** “Wal-Mart CEO Speaks Out to Cramer: This Was Coming,” CNBC, Oct. 14, 2015.
- 186 **“Don’t really get”:** “Cramer: Guess What? Wal-Mart’s CEO Is Right,” CNBC, Oct. 19, 2015. **Drift lower:** See “Why Wal-Mart Stores Inc. Dropped 12% in October,” *The Motley Fool*, Nov. 13, 2015; “Why Wal-Mart Stock Has Surged 20% in 2016,” *The Motley Fool*, July 27, 2016.
- 186 **“Pocket change”:** “Wal-Mart Pay Hike Raises Hopes of Workers and Shoppers,” *Los Angeles Times*, Feb. 19, 2015. **Less than \$26,000:** Walmart said that the move to \$10 an hour would, coupled with other changes, raise its average full-time pay to \$13.38. (See “More Than One Million Walmart Associates to Receive Pay Increase in 2016,” corporate news release, Jan. 20, 2016.) Full-time employees worked an average of 37 hours a week, according to the company. That pencils out to \$25,743 a year.

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- 187 **“Snatch at the privilege”:** As cited in “The Historical Development of Women’s Work in the United States” by Helen L. Sumner, *Proceedings of the Academy of Political Science in the City of New York*, Oct. 1910.
- 188 **“Their diets”:** “Late Nineteenth-Century American Working-Class Living Standards” by John F. McClymer, *Journal of Interdisciplinary History*, Autumn 1986. **“The exploitation of farm labor”:** McWilliams, *Factories in the Field*, 7.
- 188 **Lost his teaching position:** Whitfield, *Scott Nearing: Apostle of American Radicalism*, 25. **Cost at least:** Nearing, *Poverty and Riches*, 114. **“The chief cause”:** Nearing, 190.

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- 188 **“Virtually every major”**: Brenner, Day, and Ness, *The Encyclopedia of Strikes in American History*, 177. **Some four million**: Zieger, *American Workers, American Unions*, 6. **Many sang**: From “Solidarity Forever” by Ralph Chaplin, 1915.
- 189 **40 percent**: Zieger, 5. **Consumers purchased**: See “Advertising, Consumer Credit, and the ‘Consumer Durables Revolution’ of the 1920s” by Martha L. Olney, *The Journal of Economic History*, June 1987. **All but disappeared**: Zieger, 6. He notes that a mere 1.2% of the US labor force went out on strike in 1929.
- 189 **Wages erode**: Zieger, 7. **Who were surveyed**: Zieger, 8.
- 189 **Income inequality**: See “Understanding Income Inequality in the United States” by Mark J. Stelzner, doctoral dissertation, University of Massachusetts Amherst, 2014. **“Prosperity to the extent”**: “Address of Acceptance at the State Capitol, Albany, New York,” Aug. 22, 1928.
- 190 **Wartime intervention**: This was through the National War Labor Board. **Rich and poor got substantially smaller**: “The Great Compression: The Wage Structure in the United States at Mid-Century” by Claudia Goldin and Robert A. Margo, National Bureau of Economic Research, Working Paper 3817, Aug. 1991. Also see Wartzman, 112–113.
- 190 **Didn’t become more unequal**: Noah, *The Great Divergence*, 19–22. **“To prevent management”**: Miller and Nowak, 108. The quote is from 1951. **“Stands on the threshold”**: Miller and Nowak, 109. This quote is from the 1952 campaign. Stevenson also ran in 1956.
- 190 **Pay discrimination**: See Wartzman, 161–189. **“While white families”**: Franklin and James, *Ensuring Inequality*, 92.
- 191 **“How much the job”**: Liebow, *Tally’s Corner*, 36. **Less than half**: Liebow’s study was based on field research he conducted in 1962 and 1963. The median wage for a full-time year-round male worker in 1963 was \$5,980, according to “Income of Families and Persons in the United States: 1963,” Current Population Reports, US Department of Commerce, Sept. 1964. **“Most important fact”**: Liebow, 50–51.

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- 191 **“When the hotels”**: Harrington, *The Other America*, 24. **“In Los Angeles”**: Harrington, 25.
- 192 **In 1963**: “American Poverty in the 1960’s” by Robert G. Mogull, *Phylon*, 2nd Qtr., 1972. **Under the poverty line**: “The Development and History of the Poverty Thresholds,” Social Security Bulletin, 1992. The poverty threshold for a nonfarm family of four in 1963 was \$3,128. **“Working poor”**: For instance, the term started to be used frequently on Capitol Hill for the first time in the 1960s, according to a search of *The Congressional Record*. Google’s Ngram Viewer, which shows how often a phrase is used in the corpus of books, likewise shows an upsurge through the ’60s. **Such as retail**: See “Employment Characteristics of Low-Wage Workers” by Steven Sternlieb and Alvin Bauman, *Monthly Labor Review*, July 1972. The article notes that more than half of retail trade workers were considered low-paid, earning less than \$2 an hour. **“It is a fact”**: Cited in “Employment at Low Wages” by Howard M. Wachtel and Charles Betsey, *The Review of Economics and Statistics*, May 1972.
- 192 **Compensation for**: “The Productivity–Pay Gap,” Economic Policy Institute, updated Aug. 2021. **“Deep nostalgia”**: “The United States of Inequality,” *Slate*, Sept. 3, 2010.
- 192 **From 1979 to 2020**: “The Productivity–Pay Gap,” Economic Policy Institute, updated Aug. 2021. For a view that runs counter to the institute’s findings, see “The Link Between Wages and Productivity Is Strong” by Michael R. Strain, American Enterprise Institute, Feb. 2019.
- 192 **Their findings**: “Trends in Income from 1975 to 2018” by Carter C. Price, Kathryn A. Edwards, RAND Corp., Sept. 2020. The study focused on full-time, prime-age (25–54 years old) workers. Also see “Wage Inequality Continued to Increase in 2020” by Lawrence Mishel and Jori Kandra, Economic Policy Institute, Dec. 2021; “America Will Struggle After Coronavirus. These Charts Show Why,” *New York Times*, April 10, 2020. **Making about \$100,000**: The range RAND uses is \$92,000 to \$102,000; the figures vary slightly, depending on how inflation is calculated.

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- 193 **On the lower end:** These figures are for those in the 25th percentile of US income distribution.
- 193 **“Two-and-a-half-trillion-dollar theft”:** “‘We Were Shocked’: RAND Study Uncovers Massive Income Shift to the Top 1%” by Rick Wartzman, *Fast Company*, Sept. 14, 2020.
- 193 **“Explains almost everything”:** Wartzman, “‘We Were Shocked.’”
- 194 **Hovering between:** See “Bring the Households Back In: The Effect of Poverty on the Mobility of Low-Wage Workers to Better Wages” by Michael Schulz, Washington Center for Equitable Growth, 2021. Some researchers, using different measures, come up with higher figures. For instance, if you define “low-paid” by using the mean hourly wage (rather than the median) for full-time, prime-age workers, their share of the labor force rises from about 39% to 45% between 1979 and 2017. See “Declining Job Quality in the United States: Explanations and Evidence” by David R. Howell and Arne L. Kalleberg, *The Russell Sage Foundation Journal of the Social Sciences*, 2019. Also see the US Private Sector Job Quality Index at jobqualityindex.com. The index divides all categories of jobs in the US into high- and low-quality by calculating the mean weekly income (hourly wages multiplied by hours worked) of all production and nonsupervisory jobs and then calculates the number of such jobs that are above or below that mean. An index reading of 100 would indicate an even distribution between high- and low-quality jobs. Readings below 100 indicate a greater concentration in lower-quality (below the mean) positions, and a reading above 100 would indicate a greater concentration in high-quality (above the mean) positions. According to this measure, there was roughly an even number of low-quality and high-quality jobs in 1990 (53% low versus 47% high). But since then, 63% of the jobs created in the United States have been low-quality. **20 times larger:** Gross domestic product was \$1.09 trillion in the third quarter of 1970; it was \$23.20 trillion in the third quarter of 2021. **40 times larger:** According to the Federal Reserve, household net worth—assets minus liabilities—was

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- \$3.75 trillion in the third quarter of 1970; it was \$145 trillion in the third quarter of 2021. **“So much more wealth”**: Interview with Schultz by the author.
- 194 **Have deteriorated**: “Declining Job Quality in the United States: Explanations and Evidence” by David R. Howell and Arne L. Kalleberg, *The Russell Sage Foundation Journal of the Social Sciences*, 2019. Kalleberg’s *Good Jobs, Bad Jobs: The Rise of Polarized and Precarious Employment Systems in the United States, 1970s–2000s*, is also an essential text in this area. Also see “Not Just a Job: New Evidence on the Quality of Work in the United States,” Gallup, Lumina Foundation, the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, and Omidyar Network, Oct. 2019. **“Has been ruptured”**: Interview with Kalleberg by the author.
- 194 **Much more volatile**: “The Evolution of Household Income Volatility” by Karen Dynan, Douglas Elmendorf, and Daniel Sichel, *The B.E. Journal of Economic Analysis & Policy*, Dec. 2012. Also of great importance in this area are Hacker, *The Great Risk Shift*; Gosselin, *High Wire*. **“Walking a tightrope”**: Morduch and Schneider, *The Financial Diaries*, 10.
- 195 **Largely to blame**: See “Income Volatility: Why It Destabilizes Working Families and How Philanthropy Can Make a Difference,” Asset Funders Network, 2017; “Unpredictable Work Hours and Volatile Incomes Are Long-Term Risks for American Workers” by Katherine Guyot and Richard V. Reeves, Brookings Institution, Aug. 18, 2020. **Past 15 years**: Walmart was an early adopter in 2007. “Other employers soon followed suit,” note Heather Boushey and Bridget Ansel in “Working by the Hour: The Economic Consequences of Unpredictable Scheduling Practices,” Washington Center for Equitable Growth, Sept. 2016. **Presumably brings**: While certain efficiencies are clearly achieved through “just-in-time scheduling,” studies have actually found that more stability for workers can lead to better business outcomes. See “Stable Scheduling Increases Productivity and Sales” by Joan C. Williams, Susan J. Lambert, Saravanan Kesavan, Peter J. Fugiel, Lori Ann Ospina,

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- Erin Devorah Rapoport, Meghan Jarpe, Dylan Bellisle, Pradeep Pendem, Lisa McCorkell, and Sarah Adler-Milstein, University of California Hastings College of the Law, University of Chicago, University of North Carolina Kenan-Flagler Business School, 2018. Also see “The Effect of Unstable Schedules on Unit and Employee Productivity” by Mahdi Hashemian, Zeynep Ton, and Hazhir Rahmandad, MIT Sloan School of Management, Working Paper 6056-19, May 2021.
- 195 **Survey data:** “Hard Times: Routine Schedule Unpredictability and Material Hardship Among Service Sector Workers” by Daniel Schneider and Kristen Harknett, *Social Forces*, June 2021. Also see “It’s About Time: How Work Schedule Instability Matters for Workers, Families, and Racial Inequality,” Shift Project, Oct. 2019. **Last-minute changes:** Two-thirds of respondents reported such a change in the prior month. **Canceled outright:** Of the respondents, 15% reported having a canceled shift in the prior month. **A second job:** As of 2018, 7.8% of US workers held a second job, up from 6.8% in 1996. See “Using Administrative Data, Census Bureau Can Now Track the Rise in Multiple Jobholders” by Keith A. Bailey and James R. Spletzer, Census Bureau, Feb. 3, 2021.
- 195 **Has about doubled:** The civilian labor force went from 85.6 million in Dec. 1970 to 162.3 million in Dec. 2021; before the pandemic, in Feb. 2020, it was 164.6 million. **Between 30 million and 50 million:** The 30 million represents 25% of prime-age workers, or 32.5 million people (out of about 130 million) who are between 25 and 64 years old. Using a more expansive approach to counting low-paid workers, researchers at the Brookings Institution have found that 53 million Americans ages 18 to 64—44% of all workers—earn low hourly wages. They defined low-paid as those earning less than two-thirds median wages for full-time/full-year male workers. They also accounted for variation in the cost of living across the country. The average of the national threshold across their five years of data, in 2016 real dollars, was \$16.03, with the adjusted

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- thresholds ranging from \$12.54 in Beckley, West Virginia, to \$20.02 in San Jose, California. See “Meet the Low-Wage Workforce” by Martha Ross and Nicole Bateman, Metropolitan Policy Program at Brookings, Nov. 2019. **“When’s the last time”:** Guendelsberger, *On the Clock*, 7.
- 196 **“Had just run across”:** Harrington, 185.
- 197 **Essay in *Commentary*:** The article, which ran in July 1959, was titled “Our Fifty Million Poor: Forgotten Men of the Affluent Society.” **Helped to spur:** See “Michael Harrington: Warrior on Poverty” by Maurice Isserman, *New York Times*, June 19, 2009; “Everything You Need to Know About the War on Poverty,” *Washington Post*, Jan. 8, 2014. **“Scream of rage”:** “The Unknown and Unseen,” *New York Times Book Review*, April 8, 1962.
- 197 **“Never truly mobilized”:** Shipler, *The Working Poor*, 6.
- 197 **One in six:** “Health and Productivity Challenges for Lower-income Workers” by Brian Gifford and Erin Peterson, Integrated Benefits Institute, July 2019. It defines “lower-income employees” as those with annual family incomes less than \$35,000. **Material hardship:** “Working to Make Ends Meet During Good Economic Times” by Breno Braga, K. Steven Brown, and Signe-Mary McKernan, Urban Institute, Feb. 2019. **Going to food banks:** “From Paycheck to Pantry: Hunger in Working America,” Oxfam America and Feeding America, 2014. The report is based on a survey conducted with more than 60,000 clients randomly sampled at 12,500 food programs across the Feeding America network. It found, specifically, that 34% of all client households had a member that had been employed in the four weeks prior to the survey. More than half of client households had a member with a paying job in the previous 12 months. **Able to cover:** “America 2002 in Charts: An Economic Opportunity Snapshot,” McKinsey & Co., Dec. 2021. Also see “What a \$400 Emergency Expense Tells Us About the Economy” by Michael Grover, Federal Reserve Bank of Minneapolis, June 11, 2021; “A Breakdown of What Living Paycheck to Paycheck Looks Like,” *Washington Post*, Aug. 17,

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2020. The *Post* article notes, “There are millions of Americans living paycheck to paycheck in this country, as many surveys have shown. According to Nielsen data, the American Payroll Association, CareerBuilder, and the National Endowment for Financial Education, somewhere between 50% and 78% of employees earn just enough money to pay their bills each month. Should they miss a paycheck, some of those bills would go unpaid.” **Those in shelters:** “Learning About Homelessness Using Linked Survey and Administrative Data” by Bruce Meyer, Angela Wyse, Alexa Grunwaldt, Carla Medalia, and Derek Wu, Becker Friedman Institute for Economics at the University of Chicago, June 2021. Also see Kristof and WuDunn, *Tightrope*, 161. **“Comes to poverty”:** “Americans Want to Believe Jobs Are the Solution to Poverty. They’re Not.” by Matthew Desmond, *New York Times Magazine*, Sept. 11, 2018.
- 198 **In 29 states:** “Out of Reach 2021,” National Low Income Housing Coalition. Its estimates are based on the hourly wage a full-time worker must earn to afford a modest rental home at the federal Department of Housing and Urban Development’s “fair market rent” without spending more than 30% of his or her income on housing costs, the accepted standard of affordability.
- 198 **Bank of America:** “Bank of America Accelerates US Minimum Hourly Wage to \$22 as Next Step to \$25 by 2025,” corporate news release, May 23, 2022. **Costco:** “Costco Is Raising Starting Wages to \$17 an Hour,” *Business Insider*, Oct. 26, 2021. **Charter Communications:** “Charter Communications Reaches \$18 Milestone on Path to \$20 Minimum Starting Wage in 2022,” corporate news release, March 9, 2021.
- 198 **“I was told”:** As quoted in “How Much Money Americans Actually Make,” *New York Times*, July 2, 2020. **Posted an ad:** Hat tip to Ben Zipperer of the Economic Policy Institute, who spotted this and tweeted about it.
- 199 **2017 survey:** “Working for the Mouse: A Survey of Disneyland Employees” by Peter Dreier and Daniel Flaming, Occidental College and the Economic Roundtable, Feb. 2018. **Blizzard**

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Entertainment: “Blizzard Workers Share Salaries in Revolt Over Wage Disparities,” Bloomberg, Aug. 3, 2020. **“Definitely have been”:** As quoted in “Early Career Workers in the Service Sector” by Kristen Harknett, Daniel Schneider, and Adam Storer, Shift Project, July 2021. **Kroger supermarket workers:** “Hungry at the Table” by Daniel Flaming, Peter Dreier, Patrick Burns, and Aaron Danielson, Economic Roundtable, Jan. 2021. Also see “Workers Are Paying the Price for Kroger’s Profits,” *The Nation*, Jan. 14, 2022; “Why Most Kroger Workers Are Food Insecure” by Peter Dreier, *The American Prospect*, Feb. 1, 2022; “Business Booms at Kroger-Owned Grocery Stores, but Workers Are Left Behind,” *New York Times*, Feb. 12, 2022. In April 2022, workers at Kroger-owned Ralphs stores in Southern California ratified a new contract that included the biggest pay raises in decades—19% to 31% for most positions. Peter Dreier called it “a big win” for them and their union, the United Food and Commercial Workers. See “‘United and Militant’: Grocery Workers Get Double-Digit Pay Raises in New Contract,” *Los Angeles Times*, April 14, 2022.

- 199 **Average annual wage:** All figures in this paragraph are from National Occupational Employment and Wage Estimates, US Bureau of Labor Statistics, May 2021. For firm-level data at dozens of service-sector companies, see the Company Wage Tracker from the Economic Policy Institute and Shift Project at epi.org/company-wage-tracker/.
- 200 **Steal or withhold:** See “Wage Theft in Restaurants,” *New York Times*, March 12, 2018; “Living on Tips,” *Time*, Sept. 2, 2019. **“Once taxes”:** “How We Should Reimagine Restaurant Work in a Post-COVID-19 World” by Saru Jayaraman, *Fast Company*, March 1, 2021.
- 200 **“More humane system”:** “If This Pandemic Has Taught Us Anything, It’s That Workers Are Essential,” *Los Angeles Times*, Sept. 7, 2020.
- 201 **Brookings Institution reported:** “The COVID-19 Hazard Continues, but the Hazard Pay Does Not: Why America’s

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- Essential Workers Need a Raise” by Molly Kinder, Laura Stater, and Julia Du, Brookings Institution, Oct. 29, 2020. Also see “Essential Workers Are Losing Their ‘Hazard Pay’ Even as the Pandemic Rages On,” *Time*, May 14, 2020; “As ‘Hero’ Pay Ends, Essential Workers Wonder What They Are Worth,” National Public Radio, May 30, 2020. This trend of “essential workers” struggling financially amid the pandemic would continue throughout 2021 and into 2022. See “Profits and the Pandemic: As Shareholder Wealth Soared, Workers Were Left Behind” by Molly Kinder, Katie Bach, and Laura Stater, Brookings Institution, April 21, 2022.
- 201 **Nearly six in 10:** “Household Experiences in America During the Delta Variant Outbreak,” National Public Radio, Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, and the Harvard T. H. Chan School of Public Health, Oct. 2021. **“While federal”:** “Close to 40% of U.S. Households Say They Face Financial Difficulties as Covid-19 Pandemic Continues,” *Wall Street Journal*, Oct. 14, 2021.
- 201 **Gave voice:** For more, go to brookings.edu/interactives/meet-the-covid-19-frontline-heroes/. **About \$13.50:** As noted in “With Inflation Surging, Big Companies’ Wage Upticks Aren’t Nearly Enough” by Molly Kinder, Katie Bach, and Laura Stater, Brookings Institution, Dec. 13, 2021. **About \$10:** This is based on data from Indeed.com, which was cited by Brookings. **“I have coworkers”:** “The COVID-19 Hazard Continues, but the Hazard Pay Does Not: Why America’s Essential Workers Need a Raise” by Molly Kinder, Laura Stater, and Julia Du, Brookings Institution, Oct. 29, 2020. **“Very lucky”:** This part of Harris’s quote is from “Grocery Workers Are Keeping Americans Alive During the COVID-19 Pandemic. Here’s What They Need,” by Molly Kinder, Brookings Institution, March 25, 2020.
- 202 **“Very hard”:** “The COVID-19 Hazard Continues, but the Hazard Pay Does Not: Why America’s Essential Workers Need a Raise” by Molly Kinder, Laura Stater, and Julia Du, Brookings Institution, Oct. 29, 2020.

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- 203 **“Skill-biased technological change”**: See, for instance, “Unpacking Skill Bias: Automation and New Tasks” by Daron Acemoglu and Pascual Restrepo, National Bureau of Economic Research, Working Paper 26681, Jan. 2020. Also see “Economists Pin More Blame on Tech for Rising Inequality,” *New York Times*, Jan. 11, 2022. There is some evidence that the advantage for more-educated workers may have lessened since 2000 as compared with the 20 years prior. See “Extending the Race Between Education and Technology” by David Autor, Claudia Goldin, and Lawrence F. Katz, National Bureau of Economic Research, Working Paper 26705, Jan. 2020. Others have offered even harsher critiques of the notion that skill-biased technological change is the primary driver of the increase in wage inequality since the late 1970s. See, in particular, “Don’t Blame the Robots: Assessing the Job Polarization Explanation of Growing Wage Inequality” by John Schmitt, Heidi Shierholz, and Lawrence Mishel, Economic Policy Institute, Nov. 2013; Galbraith, *Created Unequal*, 5–8, 23–36; “The False Promise of Good Jobs” by Oren Cass and Richard Oyeniran, *American Compass*, Feb. 2022. For an excellent discussion of both sides of the debate and its history, see Rosenfeld, 223–232.
- 203 **“A generation ago”**: Harrington, 13.
- 204 **“A serious mismatch”**: Wilson, *The Truly Disadvantaged*, 41. Wilson is quoting here from “The Regional and Urban Redistribution of People and Jobs in the U.S.” by John D. Kasarda, National Academy of Science, 1986. **“The rewards”**: Case and Deaton, *Deaths of Despair and the Future of Capitalism*, 155.
- 204 **Globalization**: See, for example, “Why Are American Workers Getting Poorer? China, Trade and Offshoring” by Avraham Ebenstein, Ann Harrison, and Margaret McMillan, National Bureau of Economic Research, Working Paper 21027, March 2015. **Concentration of power**: See “Employer Concentration and Outside Options” by Gregor Schubert, Anna Stansbury, and Bledi Taska, Washington Center for Equitable Growth, March 2022; “Stakeholder Capitalism’s Next Frontier: Pro- or

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Anti-Monopoly?” by Denise Hearn and Michelle Meagher, American Economic Liberties Project, April 2022; “Concentration in U.S. Labor Markets: Evidence from Online Vacancy Data” by José Azar, Ioana Marinescu, Marshall Steinbaum, and Bledi Taska, *Labour Economics*, Oct. 2020; Posner, *How Anti-trust Failed Workers*; Case and Deaton, 236; Rosenfeld, 240–241. Also see “More and More Companies Have Monopoly Power Over Workers’ Wages. That’s Killing the Economy,” *Vox*, April 6, 2018. **“Fissuring of work”:** Weil, *The Fissured Workplace*; Case and Deaton, 165; Rosenfeld, 234–236. Also see “How to Make Employment Fair in an Age of Contracting and Temp Work” by David Weil, *Harvard Business Review*, March 24, 2017. For a particularly powerful case study, see “Meet the Customer Service Reps for Disney and Airbnb Who Have to Pay to Talk to You,” ProPublica, Oct. 2, 2020. Another manifestation of the fissuring of work has been the rise of the so-called gig economy. Companies often tout the flexibility and freedom that gig workers have. But many are suffering. A 2022 survey by the Shift Project found that 19% of gig workers went hungry because they could not afford enough to eat. See “National Survey of Gig Workers Shows Poor Working Conditions and Low Pay,” Economic Policy Institute, June 1, 2022. **Organized labor:** See “The Enormous Impact of Eroded Collective Bargaining on Wages” by Lawrence Mishel, Economic Policy Institute, April 2021; Rosenfeld, 165–169; Case and Deaton, 164. **Or illegal:** “Unlawful: U.S. Employers Are Charged with Violating Federal Law in 41.5% of All Union Election Campaigns” by Celine McNicholas, Margaret Poydock, Julia Wolfe, Ben Zipperer, Gordon Lafer, and Lola Loustaunau, Economic Policy Institute, Dec. 2019; “No Holds Barred: The Intensification of Employer Opposition to Organizing” by Kate Bronfenbrenner, Economic Policy Institute, May 2009; “How the American Worker Got Fleeced,” *Bloomberg Businessweek*, July 2, 2020. **Seemed to tilt:** See “‘They Are Fed Up’: US Labor on the March in 2021 After Years of Decline,” *The Guardian*, Dec. 21, 2021.

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- This trend continued in 2022 with notable—arguably even historic—organizing wins at Amazon, Starbucks, Trader Joe’s, Apple, REI, and other companies. But it remained to be seen whether, as the Century Foundation put it, this promising moment would turn into a lasting movement. **An upswing:** “U.S. Workers Have Been Striking in Startling Numbers. Will That Continue?,” *Washington Post*, Nov. 11, 2021; “Union Activity Increased in 2021, While Membership Continued to Decline,” USAFacts, Feb. 3, 2022. **Went down:** It declined from 6.3% in 2020 to 6.1% in 2021. Also see “Major Strike Activity Increased in 2021 but Remains Below Pre-Pandemic Levels” by Margaret Poydock, Ihna Mangundayao, Celine McNicholas, and John Schmitt, Economic Policy Institute, Feb. 2022.
- 205 **Said in 1950:** “Memorandum on General Motors Profits,” United Auto Workers records, Walter P. Reuther Library, Wayne State University. Also quoted in Wartzman, 95–96.
- 205 **Having latched on to:** See Wartzman, 265–270; Rosenfeld, 120–124.
- 205 **Dow Jones:** “Dow Had Rough Trek to Break 1000 in 1972,” *Wall Street Journal*, July 22, 1996. **“Shareholders deserved better”:** “It’s Time for Top CEOs to Realign Their Interests—Beyond Those of Elevating Shareholders Above All” by Rick Wartzman, *Fast Company*, June 28, 2018.
- 206 **Had the effect:** See “The Declining Worker Power Hypothesis: An Explanation for the Recent Evolution of the American Economy” by Anna Stansbury and Lawrence H. Summers, Brookings Papers on Economic Activity, Spring 2020. For a summary, see “Declining Worker Power and American Economic Performance,” Brookings Institution, March 18, 2020. Also see “Shareholder Power and the Decline of Labor” by Antonio Falato, Hyunseob Kim, and Till M. von Wachter, National Bureau of Economic Research, Working Paper 30203, July 2022. **Have some investment:** “More Than Half of U.S. Households Have Some Investment in the Stock Market,” Pew Research Center, March 25, 2020. **Is low:** See “401(K)/IRA

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- Holdings in 2019: An Update from the SCF” by Alicia H. Munnell and Anqi Chen, Center for Retirement Research at Boston College, Oct. 2020. It shows that, as of 2019, the median 401(k) balance for households approaching retirement was \$144,000—enough to provide a couple with just \$570 a month.
- More than 80 percent:** “Household Wealth Trends in the United States, 1962 to 2016: Has Middle Class Wealth Recovered?” by Edward N. Wolff, National Bureau of Economic Research, Working Paper 24085, Nov. 2017. Also see “Who Owns Stocks? Explaining the Rise in Inequality During the Pandemic,” *New York Times*, Jan. 26, 2021.
- 206 **More than 80 percent:** See “CEO Pay Has Skyrocketed 1,322% Since 1978” by Lawrence Mishel and Jori Kandra, Economic Policy Institute, Aug. 2021. **Explosion in executive pay:** See “Executive Compensation: A New View from a Long-Term Perspective, 1936–2005” by Carola Frydman and Raven E. Saks, National Bureau of Economic Research, Working Paper 14145, June 2008; Wartzman, 271–272. **\$25.7 million:** Per Walmart’s 2022 proxy statement. This is for the fiscal year ending Jan. 31, 2022.
- 207 **“If you were a CEO”:** “The Tricky Role of the CEO in a New Era of Social Responsibility” by Rick Wartzman, *Wall Street Journal*, Dec. 12, 2019.
- 207 **“When we break down”:** “Why So Many CEOs Don’t Realize They’ve Got a Bad Jobs Problem” by Katie Bach and Zeynep Ton, *Harvard Business Review*, Nov. 19, 2019.
- 207 **Jamie Dimon appeared:** “Freshman Democrat Presses JPMorgan CEO Jamie Dimon Over Pay Disparity,” CNN, April 11, 2019. Also See “Jamie Dimon Defends JPMorgan Chase’s \$16.50-an-Hour Minimum Wage, Saying It’s Not an ‘Arms Race,’” *Washington Post*, April 12, 2019.
- 208 **Set out to learn:** “Health Insurer Aetna Raises Wages for Lowest-Paid Workers to \$16 an Hour,” NPR, April 30, 2015. **“I was embarrassed”:** “My Reality: A Hidden America,” ABC News 20/20, Jan. 13, 2017. **Later sold:** “CVS Creates New

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- Health-Care Giant as \$69 Billion Merger with Aetna Officially Closes,” CNBC, Nov. 28, 2018.
- 209 **At a food bank:** “PayPal CFO: ‘Profit and Purpose Are Not Mutually Exclusive,’” *Fortune*, May 19, 2021. **“Almost positive”:** “PayPal CEO Dan Schulman Explains His Strategy for Investing in Employees’ Financial Health,” *Forbes*, Oct. 15, 2020.
- 209 **PayPal subsequently:** “PayPal Workers Were Struggling to Make Ends Meet; CEO Dan Schulman Vowed to Change That,” *Business Insider*, Dec. 29, 2020. Also see “How Paypal CEO Dan Schulman Is Leading a More Inclusive Way Forward,” *Fast Company*, April 30, 2020.
- 209 **Four times more engaged:** “PayPal CEO Dan Schulman Explains His Strategy for Investing in Employees’ Financial Health,” *Forbes*, Oct. 15, 2020. **Paid for themselves:** “PayPal CFO: ‘Profit and Purpose Are Not Mutually Exclusive,’” *Fortune*, May 19, 2021.
- 210 **She has heard:** Bach’s insights and quotes are from an email to the author.
- 211 **“Any number of white papers”:** “Low-Skill Workers Aren’t a Problem to Be Fixed” by Annie Lowrey, *The Atlantic*, April 23, 2021. Also see “Do We Value Low-Skilled Work?” by Brittany Bronson, Oct. 1, 2015; “‘All Work Produces Value’: What Experts Say Eric Adams Gets Wrong About ‘Low Skill’ Workers,” CNBC, Jan. 6, 2022; “Stop Calling Workers ‘Low Skill,’” *Vox*, Jan. 11, 2022. **Without the credentials:** Requiring a four-year college degree for jobs that don’t really need someone to have that formal level of education to be successful is a major problem. See “Dismissed by Degrees: How Degree Inflation Is Undermining U.S. Competitiveness and Hurting America’s Middle Class” by Joseph B. Fuller and Manjari Raman, Accenture, Grads of Life, and Harvard Business School, Oct. 2017; “The Majority of Americans Lack a College Degree. Why Do So Many Employers Require One?” by Byron Auguste, *Washington Post*, July 20, 2021.
- 211 **2020 analysis:** “Reach for the STARS: The Potential of America’s Hidden Talent Pool,” Opportunity@Work and Accenture,

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- March 2020. **Government data:** This was information drawn from the Occupational Information Network, or O*Net, database.
- 212 **“What are the jobs”:** “Low Wage, Not Low Skill: Why Devaluing Our Workers Matters” by Byron Auguste, *Forbes*, Feb. 7, 2019.
- 212 **Retail industry productivity:** Reich and Bearman, 100–101. Jared Bernstein, before he joined President Biden’s Council of Economic Advisors, ran an analysis for the author that showed the same results. Bernstein cautioned that there are limits to this kind of data-crunching at the sector (versus the aggregate economy) level. But the results left no doubt that “there’s a hefty productivity–wage gap here,” he said.
- 213 **McMillon told the audience:** McMillon’s speech can be accessed at cdn.corporate.walmart.com/f5/59/47badacb4c4eb54cdc24e7537bed/transcript-dougmcmillon-net-impact-5-1.pdf. Also see “Walmart Offers New Vision for the Company’s Role in Society,” corporate news release, Nov. 4, 2016. **18 percent:** This was compared to 2015 levels. **Would later pledge:** For details, go to walmartsustainabilityhub.com/media-library/document/zero-emissions-by-2040-white-paper/_proxyDocument?id=00000174-ad59-d343-a17d-bffd7bba0000. Also see “Walmart Sets Goal to Become a Regenerative Company,” corporate news release, Sept. 21, 2020; “Walmart Is Aiming for Zero Emissions by 2040. How Will It Get There?,” *GreenBiz*, Sept. 28, 2020.
- 214 **\$17.06 an hour:** The company provided this figure to the author in June 2022. **Two-thirds full-timers:** The company reported in its 2022 annual report that about 69% of its 1.6 million hourly workers were full-timers. Also see “Emphasizing Opportunity, Walmart Moves More Associates to Full Time,” corporate news release, April 14, 2021. **“I love when”:** From the comments for “What Will Going to Mostly Full-Time Staff Mean for Walmart’s Stores?,” RetailWire, April 15, 2021.
- 214 **After a campaign:** “Walmart Employees Deliver Petition with 70,000 Signatures for Expanded Family Leave,” KNWA, June

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1, 2017. “Meet the Activists Leading the Fight for Paid Family Leave,” *Fortune*, April 20, 2018; “Why Walmart Expanded Parental Leave—and How to Convince Your Company to Do the Same,” *Harvard Business Review*, March 1, 2018. **10 weeks:** Employees can use paid time off for the first week, followed by nine weeks covered at 100% pay. **“For decades”:** “Wal-Mart’s New Parental-Leave Plan Is Even More Generous Than Starbucks’,” Bloomberg, Jan. 11, 2018. **Within months:** “Meet the Activists Leading the Fight for Paid Family Leave,” *Fortune*, April 20, 2018. **One in four:** “National Compensation Survey: Employee Benefits in the United States, March 2021,” US Department of Labor. The exact figure was 23%.

215 **“You had a lot”:** Interview with Holler by the author.

215 **The company replaced:** Not long after Walmart introduced its two-step pay raise in 2015, it decided against making the increase to \$10 an hour contingent on completion of Pathways training, as originally planned. The concern was that some workers were missing out on the raise simply because they couldn’t schedule a training or for some other reason that made it unfair not to give them the bump in pay. Around the same time, the company started to focus on the academies model, which was first developed in Britain by Judith McKenna. **2.4 million:** Figure provided by the company to the author in April 2022. Also see “Walmart Launches One Global Walmart Academy to Help 2.3 Million Associates Build and Grow Their Careers,” corporate news release, June 2, 2022. **“Caps and gowns”:** “At Walmart Academy, Training Better Managers. But with a Better Future?,” *New York Times*, Aug. 8, 2017. **For free:** “Walmart to Pay 100% of College Tuition and Books for Associates,” corporate news release, July 27, 2021. **Building on:** See “Study Shows the Benefits of Walmart Education Effort,” Lumina Foundation, Sept. 2021. The Lumina study found that some 30,000 Walmart workers were actively enrolled in the \$1-a-day program, Live Better U, through April 30, 2021. That, of course, is only about 2% of the company’s frontline workforce. Over three years, 336 people had

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- earned a bachelor's degree and 50 an associate's degree. In addition, some 2,400 had completed their high school studies, 2,519 had finished a college pathways program, and 1,805 certificates were earned in subject areas such as tech and health. Also see "How to Get Rich Sending Low-Income Workers to College," Bloomberg, Dec. 14, 2021.
- 216 **Gotten better:** See "Walmart Rolls Out Slew of New Health-Care Benefits for Employees," Bloomberg, Oct. 2, 2019. **Free telehealth visits:** Walmart introduced this benefit in 2020. **Highly vaunted program:** See "How Employers Are Fixing Healthcare" by Lisa Woods, Jonathan R. Slotkin, and M. Ruth Coleman, *Harvard Business Review*, March 2019.
- 216 **"Design and manage":** Ton, *The Good Jobs Strategy*, 15.
- 216 **"Famous and infamous":** Ton, 7.
- 217 **Having sought advice:** Both Greg Foran and his successor as head of Walmart's US business, John Furner, met with Ton. Furner also used Ton's methods when he ran Sam's Club. Also see "The Financial Case for Good Retail Jobs" by Katie Bach, Sarah Kalloch, and Zeynep Ton, *Harvard Business Review*, June 26, 2019. It notes that "Walmart is...on a good jobs journey." **"Ask Sam":** "Walmart Rolls Out New 'Ask Sam' Tool to Store Employees to Help Shoppers Find Products, Prices," *USA Today*, July 29, 2020. **"The right tools":** "Walmart Unveils All-in-One Associate App, Me@Walmart, and Gives 740,000 Associates a New Samsung Smartphone," corporate news release, June 3, 2021.
- 217 **Become truck drivers:** "Walmart Dangles \$110,000 Starting Pay to Lure Truck Drivers," *Wall Street Journal*, April 7, 2022. **Pharmacy technicians:** In addition to raising the average wage for Walmart and Sam's Club pharmacy technicians to more than \$20 an hour, the company said it would offer these 36,000 workers more frequent and automatic pay increases as part of a new "progressive wage model." See "Walmart Raises Wages of Pharmacy Workers in Tight Labor Market," CNBC, June 16, 2022. **"We want people":** Interview with Furner by the author. Also see "Accelerating Associate Opportunity Through Growth,

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- Well-Being, Inclusion and Digital,” corporate news release, March 16, 2022. **Took over for:** Foran left Walmart to become CEO of Air New Zealand.
- 218 **By 2016:** See “How Did Walmart Get Cleaner Stores and Higher Sales? It Paid Its People More,” *New York Times*, Oct. 15, 2016; “Walmart Is Killing It with Shoppers,” *Fortune*, Aug. 18, 2016. **Pays a bit more:** In Sept. 2021, Amazon announced that “roles in fulfillment and transportation offer an average starting wage of more than \$18 per hour.” That same month, Walmart shared data with the author showing that the average starting pay in its distribution and fulfillment centers for fiscal 2021 was \$17.80 an hour. **Far more ruthless:** See “Amazon’s Employee Surveillance Fuels Unionization Efforts: ‘It’s Not Prison, It’s Work,’” *Washington Post*, Dec. 2, 2021; “Primed for Pain: Amazon’s Epidemic of Workplace Injuries,” Strategic Organizing Center, May 2021; “Amazon Warehouse Workers Suffer Serious Injuries at Higher Rates Than Other Firms,” *Washington Post*, June 1, 2021; “The Amazon That Customers Don’t See,” *New York Times*, June 15, 2021. **Banning certain words:** “Leaked: New Amazon Worker Chat App Would Ban Words Like ‘Union,’ ‘Restrooms,’ ‘Pay Raise,’ and ‘Plantation,’” *The Intercept*, April 4, 2022.
- 218 **“We’re making progress”:** Interview with Furner by the author.
- 218 **“An inch into”:** Interview with Murphy by the author.
- 219 **Less than \$29,000:** This is based on Walmart’s average wage of \$17.06, as reported by the company in June 2022, at the average number of hours worked per week by 1.1 million full-time employees (36 hours) and 495,380 part-time employees (23 hours), as shared with the author. That comes out to \$28,361 a year. **Under \$32,000:** At an average of 36 hours, a full-timer’s annual pay comes to \$31,936.
- 219 **Being “underinsured”:** The lowest annual deductible in any of Walmart’s employee health plans in 2022 is for a single individual enrolled in its Contribution Plan: \$1,750. That would be 6.2% of someone’s gross pay if they make \$28,361. The Commonwealth Fund says that someone is considered underinsured when their

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- deductible constitutes 5% or more of household income. Notably, even an average full-time worker would be underinsured using this threshold. **Were on Medicaid:** “Millions of Full-Time Workers Rely on Federal Health Care and Food Assistance Programs,” General Accounting Office, Oct. 2020.
- 219 **“If not for the employment access”:** “Walmart and McDonald’s Have the Most Workers on Food Stamps and Medicaid, New Study Shows,” *Washington Post*, Nov. 18, 2020.
- 220 **“What does one do”:** Interview with Bland by the author.
- 220 **Are overrepresented:** Osterman, *Creating Good Jobs*, 3; “Fewer Americans Are Earning Less Than \$15 an Hour, but Black and Hispanic Women Make Up a Bigger Share of Them,” *Washington Post*, March 3, 2021; “Closing the Racial Inequality Gaps: The Economic Cost of Black Inequality in the U.S.,” Citi GPS: Global Perspectives & Solutions, Sept. 2020; “Race, Risk, and Workforce Equity in the Coronavirus Economy,” PolicyLink, June 2020; “Workers of Color Are Far More Likely to Be Paid Poverty-Level Wages Than White Workers” by David Cooper, Economic Policy Institute, June 2018. **The largest:** See “Walmart and Foundation Commit \$100 Million Toward Diversity Efforts,” *Talk Business & Politics*, June 6, 2020. **Has been taking:** See “Obama Election Sparks New Interest in Civil Rights,” Reuters, Jan. 12, 2009. **One corporation after the next:** “Corporate America’s \$50 Billion Promise,” *Washington Post*, Aug. 23, 2021; “Have Companies Followed Through on Promises Made After George Floyd’s Death?,” *PRWeek*, May 26, 2021.
- 220 **Hundreds of thousands:** “Walmart’s Pay-Advance App Even Used by 200,000 Employees,” *American Banker*, July 19, 2018. The company stopped reporting how many employees use the app, but by all accounts, the number has only gone up over the past four years. In early 2022, it was announced that Hazel, an independent fintech launched in partnership with Walmart and Ribbit Capital, was acquiring Even. **“It sounds like”:** “Walmart Will Let Its 1.4 Million Workers Take Their Pay Before Payday,” *New York Times*, Dec. 13, 2017.

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- 221 **More than \$5:** “Making the Case: How Ending Walmart’s Stock Buyback Program Would Help to Fix Our High-Profit, Low-Wage Economy” by Lenore Palladino and Adil Abdela, Roosevelt Institute, May 2018. **Walmart invested:** “Walmart Maintains Relentless Focus on Growing Frontline Associates in the Pandemic and Beyond,” corporate news release, March 4, 2021. **It repurchased:** Share buyback data is from YCharts.
- 221 **Split off from:** The parting was not friendly. A new UFCW president, Marc Parrone, questioned the amount of money that had been devoted to the Walmart campaign without gaining any new members for the union. Those running the campaign, then known as OUR Walmart, had their funding cut off. See “The Union Behind the Biggest Campaign Against Walmart in History May Be Throwing in the Towel. Why?,” *In These Times*, Aug. 11, 2015; “Wal-Mart Worker Group Splits in Two; Both Sides Vow to Continue Wage Fight,” Reuters, Sept. 16, 2015; “Who Really Works for the Walmart Worker?,” *BuzzFeed*, Sept. 18, 2015. The OUR Walmart team regrouped and came up with innovative ways to connect and empower workers. See “American Workers Try to Organize—One Click at a Time” by Rick Wartzman, *Fortune*, Feb. 16, 2016. In 2019, OUR Walmart changed its name to United for Respect. In addition to continuing to speak out against Walmart, the group has broadened its scope to also take on Amazon, PetSmart, Toys “R” Us, and others. **“Associates don’t need”:** “Walmart Aims to Empower Workers with Own Devices, New App,” ABC News, June 3, 2021.
- 221 **“Sense of disrespect”:** Reich and Bearman, 150.
- 221 **Used an open mic:** You can see a video of McGrath’s PA announcement at [youtube.com/watch?v=93FBTM6LXX0](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=93FBTM6LXX0). She was not the first to quit this way. Another Walmart worker, Shana Blackwell, had done something similar in Oct. 2020. See “The Great Escape,” *The American Prospect*, Nov. 29, 2021.
- 222 **Pico Rivera:** “Wal-Mart Workers: Store Closings Due to Plumbing Are ‘Retaliatory,’” *Fortune*, April 20, 2015; “Skeptics Suspicious of Sudden Walmart Closures, Claims of Plumbing

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- Issues,” UPI, April 18, 2015; “Laid-Off Walmart Workers Head to Labor Board,” *New York Times*, April 19, 2015. **Nobody who had been:** Orleck, 32. **“Continued to go after”:** Interview with Iny by the author. **Was rejected:** See “Walmart Announces 2021 Annual Shareholders’ Meeting Voting Results,” corporate news release, June 2, 2021. Also See “After a 38-Year-Old Walmart Worker Died at the Store, Employees Are Fighting for a Voice and More Paid Sick Leave,” *Business Insider*, June 1, 2022.
- 222 **Stayed in Walmart’s ear:** Interview with Margaret Weber of the Basilian Fathers of Toronto by the author. Specifically, ICCR was pushing for Walmart to raise wages to at least \$15 an hour. **“Our wages reflect”:** In April 2021, for example, Walmart’s Kathleen McLaughlin told an industry gathering: “Our starting wages and our average wages simply reflect what is the local market average for that type of job in that format.” See “Walmart’s Sustainability Pitch to Wall Street,” *Women’s Wear Daily*, April 6, 2021. **“A circular argument”:** Interview with Omens by the author. Also see Rosenfeld, 190–191. **JUST ranked Walmart:** For details, go to justcapital.com/companies/walmart-inc.
- 223 **“More as a cost”:** Interview with Polman by the author.
- 224 **“Beats the bold”:** Interview with Goonan by the author.
- 224 **“No issue”:** “How Walmart Is Changing the World,” *Fortune*, Aug. 18, 2016.
- 224 **“Is absent”:** 2021 Edelman Trust Barometer.
- 225 **“Washington’s prod”:** Wartzman, 7.
- 225 **Rewriting labor law:** See, especially, “Clean Slate for Worker Power: Building a Just Economy and Democracy” by Sharon Block and Benjamin Sachs, Labor and Worklife Program, Harvard Law School, Jan. 2020. **“Full employment”:** See “The Importance of Strong Labor Demand” by Jared Bernstein, The Hamilton Project, Feb. 2018. **Overtime pay:** See “Will the Biden Administration Deliver on Overtime Pay?,” *Capital & Main*, Jan. 19, 2022; “America Gave Up on Overtime—and It’s Costing Workers \$35,451 a Year” by Nick Hanauer, *Time*, April, 21, 2022; “Overworked and Underpaid,” *Capital & Main*, May

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- 10, 2022. **Worker protections:** “Employers Steal Billions from Workers’ Paychecks Each Year” by David Cooper and Teresa Kroeger, Economic Policy Institute, May 2017; “Broken Laws, Unprotected Workers: Violations of Employment and Labor Laws in America’s Cities” by Annette Bernhardt, Ruth Milkman, and Nik Theodore, National Employment Law Project, Sept. 2009; “Lots of Employees Get Misclassified as Contractors. Here’s Why It Matters” by David Weil, *Harvard Business Review*, July 5, 2017.
- 225 **In the spring:** The story of how Living Wage for US was formed, the quotes from Murray, and all of the living wage data from the organization are adopted from “Are You Being Paid Enough to Live On? New Tool Aims to Answer That Question,” by Rick Wartzman, *Capital & Main*, Nov. 15, 2021.
- 226 **Certifies those:** A key feature of For US is the way it credits employers for forms of compensation besides wages, including health coverage, a retirement plan, and childcare and transportation benefits. All of that goes into evaluating whether a company qualifies to be certified by For US as a “leading” living-wage employer. A company can attain a lower-tier certification by paying all of its workers at least \$15 to \$18 an hour, depending on where it has operations, and then increasing remuneration every year by inflation plus 3% until a family living wage is paid to everyone.
- 227 **Widely accepted methodology:** See Anker and Anker, *Living Wages Around the World*. It states on page 31: “There is a broad consensus that living wage is a family concept. A worker should be able to support a family on a living wage.” **Mostly adults:** See “Why the U.S. Needs a \$15 Minimum Wage,” Economic Policy Institute, Jan. 2021. It notes that 51% of workers who would benefit from a rise in the minimum wage to \$15 an hour are adults between the ages of 25 and 54; only one in 10 is a teenager.
- 227 **Other such frameworks:** The most well-known is the MIT Living Wage Calculator. The Economic Policy Institute’s Family Budget Calculator is also a widely used tool.

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- 227 **Rose appreciably:** “Real Wages Are Increasing for Those in the Bottom Half of the Income Distribution” by Joana Duran-Franch and Mike Konczal, Roosevelt Institute, Nov. 17, 2021. Also helping to lift wages have been the dozens of states, cities, and counties that have increased their own minimum wages—though few are at \$15 an hour yet. See “Raises from Coast to Coast in 2022” by Yannet Lathrop, National Employment Law Project, Dec. 2021; “Raising Minimum Wages in 20 States and Localities Help Protect Workers and Families Against Higher Prices” by Sebastian Martinez Hickey and David Cooper, Economic Policy Institute, July 11, 2022.
- 227 **Rise by \$1.05:** Calculations made at the request of the author by Lawrence Mishel of the Economic Policy Institute. Also see “Despite Recent Pay Hikes, Many American Workers Are Still a Long Way From a Living Wage” by Rick Wartzman, *Capital & Main*, April 25, 2022. **Market won’t solve:** For more on this perspective, see “The Revolution Will Not Be Privatized” by Diane Coyle, *Foreign Affairs*, Jan.–Feb. 2022. “The Dangerous Allure of Win-Win Strategies” by Andrew A. King and Kenneth P. Pucker, *Stanford Social Innovation Review*, Winter 2021; “Corporations Aren’t Going to Save America,” *Vox*, July 26, 2021; “If We Want More Companies Like Patagonia, We Need Laws to Enforce It,” *Fast Company*, Oct. 15, 2020.
- 228 **Adjusted upward:** Some would index the minimum wage to inflation. But indexing it to the median wage would, in the words of the Economic Policy Institute, “ensure that low-wage workers share in broad improvements in US living standards and would prevent future growth in inequality between low- and middle-wage workers.” See “Raising the Federal Minimum Wage to \$15 by 2024 Would Lift Pay for Nearly 40 Million Workers” by David Cooper, Economic Policy Institute, Feb. 2019. Also see “Bolstering the Bottom by Indexing the Minimum Wage to the Median Wage” by Ben Zipperer, Washington Center for Equitable Growth, June 2015. **Earned Income Tax Credit:** “The EITC and Minimum Wage Work Together to

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- Reduce Poverty and Raise Incomes” by Jesse Rothstein and Ben Zipperer, Economic Policy Institute, Jan. 22, 2020. Also see “Income Support Programs Boost Earnings for Low-Wage Workers by Reducing Household Poverty in the United States” by Michael A. Schultz, Washington Center for Equitable Growth, Aug. 2021.
- 228 **“More than sufficient”**: This is from Roosevelt’s “New Nationalism” speech, delivered in 1910. **“Bare subsistence level”**: This is from FDR’s June 1933 statement on the National Industrial Recovery Act.
- 228 **How workers at Burger King**: Rosenfeld, 196–197. Also see “Danes Don’t Have a Minimum Wage. We Have Something Even Better.” by Ida Auken, *Washington Post*, March 8, 2021.
- 229 **“A better measure”**: Interview with Polman by the author. **\$17.4 billion**: Data is from MarketWatch. **“Cash cow”**: “2 Top Stocks That Are Cash Cows,” *The Motley Fool*, Sept. 25, 2021.
- 229 **“It can’t be”**: Interview with Murray by the author.
- 229 **“A law requiring”**: Ryan, *A Living Wage*, 171. **“Countries have a choice”**: “The Nature of Work After the COVID Crisis: Too Few Low-Wage Jobs” by David Autor and Elisabeth Reynolds, The Hamilton Project, July 2020.
- 230 **“The luxury of”**: “A Testament of Hope” by Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., *Playboy*, Jan. 1969.