

**Toxic Toys**  
by  
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While we're fighting a war on terror with the premise that we have to get them over there before they come over here, could anyone conceive of a more diabolically ingenious recipe to destroy the US from within than by shipping toxic junk to American kids under the guise of cheap toys, using our own capitalist system against us? The famous Trojan horse ploy used by the Greeks pales in comparison.

Like most parents with small children, I have been outraged to learn that many of the toys we have purchased over the years have had lead-based paint. It's too little too late for our kids as they've just passed the age where they might try to put toys in their mouths. If they swallowed anything toxic over the last few years, they've probably already sent their IQ scores plummeting 10 points or more. Infuriating!

I'm as guilty as anyone for shopping at Wal-Mart for those every day low prices. My ugly greed gave no consideration whatsoever that some poor Chinese child slave was painting Thomas the Train with lead-based blue paint. I have never been one to look where a product is made. Nope like millions of other Americans, I saw a great price and bought it. Is this what the American way has become?

While he's not my candidate, Ron Paul sounds less and less nutty about taking care of business here before we try to take care of everyone else's business. Where in the world is homeland security when it comes to protecting us from things brought into this country? Is fighting a war over there more important than the poisoning of kids over here?

At the stores I frequent, it's next to impossible not to buy anything from China. But I've finally woken up. My family's health comes before almost anything else. This Christmas season I decided that I'm not buying any gifts made outside the US.

"But am I too late" I seriously wondered to myself. "Is there anything here in the US that we manufacture for children any more?"

Fortunately I discovered that it's not too late. A quick Google search revealed a number of games and toys are made right here in the US. But my kids will probably be disappointed. It appears that the vast majority of toys advertised on television are made elsewhere although there are some classics games like Battleship, Monopoly and Parcheesi that are still made here.

As I ran through the list pricing of the American made toys, I soon realized that I would be spending more this Christmas. If there is a price to be met for paying US citizens a fair wage to make safe toys, so be it. At least with these toys the chance they've been

laced with a date rape drug by a foreign manufacturing subcontractor on another continent is greatly reduced.

Some additional enlightenment shone into my vacuous head last night as I was reading a book to the kids before they went to bed. The story was about a little family who lived in Wisconsin in the 19<sup>th</sup> century. Survival was not a sure thing in those days as they were dependent on themselves for everything. Everyone had to pitch in and work hard. Interestingly the girls used a corn cob of all things as a doll. Those were the days. “Give me a corn cob over a foreign made Barbie any day,” I mumbled to myself.

But perhaps this book reinforced for both my kids and me a more important lesson I need to remember about the materialism that surrounds us. The family in the story was happy not because they had anything but simply because they had each other. Gee, imagine that. Maybe I can do something even better for my kids this Christmas by giving them something other than toxic toys. Maybe I can make the time to give them more of me.



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