

Living Large: From SUVs to Double Ds---Why Going Bigger Isn't Going Better

Sarah Z. Wexler

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Supersizing has become an American way of life. We have XXL cars, homes, and waistlines. We built the world's tallest monument. We get the largest breast implants. We're home to the world's largest retailer, sports stadiums, and office building. But with a deep recession and our nation's leaders urging us to reassess the impact of our daily lives, it has become impossible to ignore the effects—on our environment, finances, communities, and psyches—of going ever-bigger.

By turns funny and incisive, Living Large is a nation-spanning journey into the world of "extreme big," from North Way Christian Community Church in Wexford, Pennsylvania (one of the 1,300 American megachurches), to Bloomington, Minnesota's, Mall of America (4.2 million square feet in size); from the Tiffany flagship store in Manhattan (where in the past two decades the average engagement ring diamond has nearly doubled in size), to Whittier, California (home of America's largest landfill).

Wexler's firsthand reports on going for a breast enlargement consultation, trying to lift the world's largest ball of twine, getting lost in the country's largest hotel, talking shop with members of the Hummer Club of America are complemented by interviews with researchers, economists, business owners, critics, and consumers. Living Large offers a fascinating, thought-provoking look at a nation that's been supersizing for centuries but is only now coming to terms with its appetite for more.



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