

Ethical Consumption

Modified from MacKinnon/Fiala, *Ethics: Theory and Contemporary Issues* 9th edition (Cengage Learning, 2017), Chapter 20.

Chris is an advocate of “ethical consumption.” He tries to buy only fair trade products, and he is willing to pay more for an item when he is certain that the item is produced without exploitation. This means that he often pays 10 to 25 percent more for certain products. His father thinks this is a dumb idea. He tells Chris, “You could buy cheaper stuff and with the money you save, you could save for your own future and retirement. Heck, you could even give that money to the poor.” Chris is not concerned with his retirement fund. But he is concerned about alleviating poverty. He’s puzzled by his father’s response.

Discussion Questions

1. Should Chris try to find the cheapest products and save money, which he would then donate to charity?
2. Or should he continue to seek out fair trade items, which would leave him with less to donate to charity?
3. What is the solution to this problem? Explain your thinking.