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"Bottled Water"

In The New York Times article "Bottled Water," author Bill Marsh enumerates the reasons why bottled water is such a growing industry and why using tap water is a much more cost effective and environmentally friendly alternative. Marsh begins the article by informing the audience of the cost difference for a New York City resident between bottled water and tap water if they drank the recommended eight glasses a day: "They will cost you \$0.00135 -- about 49 cents a year -- if you take it from a New York City tap. Or, city officials suggest, you could spend 2,900 times as much, roughly \$1,400 yearly, by drinking bottled water" (n.pag.). If the cost difference is so drastic, then why do consumers choose to spend their money on bottled water? When water bottles first became a common commodity in the mid 1900s, it was marketed as spa or mineral water and stated to have health benefits. Selling water for medical purposes was soon made illegal but it was still a sign of wealth to drink bottled water. Drinking water has been subjected to primitive accumulation. It should be a public, free source since most all Americans have access to it but it has been turned into a good that we must pay for. The reason bottled water companies are so successful, as Marsh cites in his article, is that their product is convenient for consumers.

Marsh also addresses the myth that bottled water has health benefits to tap water and the issue of the negative environmental impact that water bottles have. It

is not true that bottled water possesses health benefits to water that comes through the tap. Some bottled water companies even admit to using the city water source in their bottled water. In terms of environmental impact, Marsh states that the sources used in water bottle plants pose a problem to the environment: "Oil for plastic, oil for shipping, oil for refrigeration -- and in the end, most of the effort goes to landfills" (n.pag.). With such serious environmental impacts and no health benefits provided by bottled water, Americans should take the initiative to make more environmentally friendly choices.