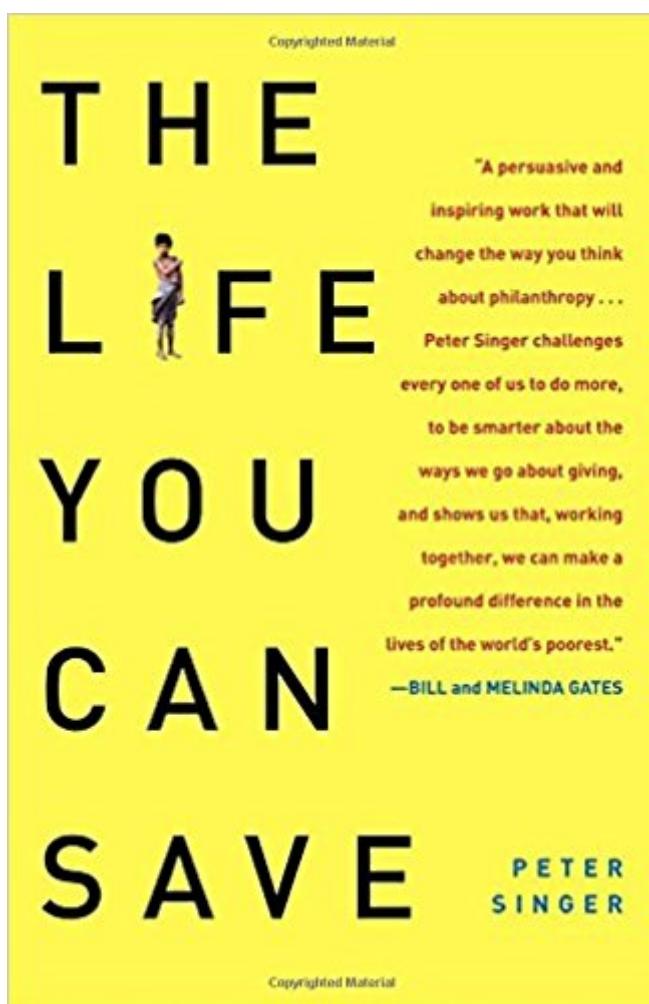


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# The Life You Can Save: How To Do Your Part To End World Poverty



## Synopsis

For the first time in history, eradicating world poverty is within our reach. Yet around the world, a billion people struggle to live each day on less than many of us pay for bottled water. In *The Life You Can Save*, Peter Singer uses ethical arguments, illuminating examples, and case studies of charitable giving to show that our current response to world poverty is not only insufficient but morally indefensible. *The Life You Can Save* teaches us to be a part of the solution, helping others as we help ourselves.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

Starred Review. Part plea, part manifesto, part handbook, this short and surprisingly compelling book sets out to answer two difficult questions: why people in affluent countries should donate money to fight global poverty and how much each should give. Singer (Animal Liberation) dismantles the justifications people make for not giving and highlights the successes of such efforts as microfinance in Bangladesh, GiveWells charitable giving and the 50% League, where members donate more than half their wealth. Singer alternately cajoles and scolds: he pillories Microsoft cofounder Paul Allen, who has given less than his former partner, Bill Gates, and lives far more extravagantly: His toys include a large collection of vintage military aircraft and a 413-foot oceangoing yacht called Octopus that cost him over \$200 million and has a permanent crew of sixty. Singer contrasts Allens immoderation with the work of Paul Farmer (a cofounder of the international social justice organization Partners in Health) and the cost of basic health services in

Haiti (\$3,500 per life saved), or malaria nets (\$623Â¢ âœ \$2,367 per life saved). Singer doesn't ask readers to choose between asceticism and self-indulgence; his solution can be found in the middle, and it is reasonable and rewarding for all. (Mar.) Copyright Â© Reed Business Information, a division of Reed Elsevier Inc. All rights reserved. --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

Advance praise for *The Life You Can Save*â€"Part plea, part manifesto, part handbook, this short and surprisingly compelling book sets out to answer two difficult questions: why people in affluent countries should donate money to fight global poverty and how much each should give. . . . Singer doesn't ask readers to choose between asceticism and self-indulgence; his solution can be found in the middle, and it is reasonable and rewarding for all.â€"âœPublishers Weekly (starred review)â€"â€œIf you think you can't afford to give money to the needy, I urge you to read this book. If you think you're already giving enough, and to the right places, still I urge you to read this book. In *The Life You Can Save*, Peter Singer makes a strong caseâ€"âœlogical and factual, but also emotionalâ€"âœfor why each of us should be doing more for the worldâ€"âœs impoverished. This book will challenge you to be a better person.â€"âœHolden Karnofsky, co-founder, GiveWellâ€"â€œIn *The Life You Can Save*, Peter Singer challenges each of us to ask: Am I willing to make poverty history? Skillfully weaving together parable, philosophy, and hard statistics, he tackles the most familiar moral, ethical, and ideological obstacles to building a global culture of philanthropy, and sets the bar for how we as citizens might do our part to empower the worldâ€"âœs poor.â€"âœRaymond C. Offenheiser, president, Oxfam AmericaFrom the Hardcover edition.

This is easily the most transformative book I have ever read. I frequently lend one of my four copies to students and friends who are interested in poverty, ethics, and global issues. It has also altered the way I live and how I spent my money. Singer presents an incredibly well-researched review of the circumstances of the developing world, the organizations that address global poverty, and the philanthropic efforts of the western world's wealthy. He presents a clear, compelling, and substantiated ethical argument that westerners (of varying levels of wealth) have a fundamental and moral obligation to involve themselves in addressing global poverty. He is one of the greatest thinkers of our time.

Peter Singer lays out his case as to why we should all give to organizations that help the world's poorest people. No, we can't individually save the world, but we can individually help, and even make a difference. He does this by analyzing various excuses for not giving, in (frankly) more detail than I required. He understands why we don't do what he thinks we should, and doesn't heap guilt on us. He shows how little it would take to make a genuine difference. He thinks about ways to figure out which organizations use the money we send most effectively. The one thing I was hoping for that Singer did not provide: recommendations for organizations that help. That may be a good thing, as it wouldn't be feasible to update the book continually.

I have wanted to contribute more but in a way that would make the greatest impact. This book shows you where your money goes best. It does talk quite a bit about ethical and moral obligations to help those in need. I happen to agree with this viewpoint, but I can see others points of view that says this comes off as a bit judgmental. However, I appreciate Singer's decision not to sugarcoat and unapologetically describe how we are obligated to help others when we are born into privilege and first-world opportunities. I think Singer could spend more time describing how he came at his recommended percentages of income to give. I also love hearing about people's stories (which I read on his website) about their experience in giving. This would be a nice transition/break from statistics...more reader friendly. However, this book is valid and relevant to the world's needs. Highly recommended!

An interesting argument and sometimes a persuasive one. I wish Singer encouraged more people to actually "do the work" and contribute with their time, energy, and sweat, rather than just money, but the audience he's probably talking to needs to hear why it's a big world and they need to do more to make it better.

The most clear exposition I've yet read of the implications (largely unrecognized by most people in their everyday lives) of affirming the equal dignity of all persons -- and thus the equal value/scandal of their suffering. A powerful teaching tool since just about every student in my classes would say that they believe all people are equal and would affirm universal human rights, but this helps them to realize just what that might all commit them to. I also appreciated the concrete suggestions re: implication, so that students aren't left with a despairing, "So now what??!" feeling at the end.

By means of logic and numbers Peter Singer brings you deep in the psychological and social

reasons of why we keep being dormant in the comfort of our lives while there is a world of people screaming for suffering. It definitely helps to start to wake you up and connect some (ethical) dots. And he suggests how to take action.

Before I read this book, I had a vague sense that all was not right with the world, but no idea what to do about it. The Life You Can Save discusses in clear language why it's important, and not at all difficult in most cases, to help fight world poverty. The sections on charitable giving and what types of groups do the most good were especially illuminating, and I feel like I'm making a much greater impact on the world's problems now that I've read this book.

A very well written ethical argument for Effective Altruism-- potentially life-changing, definitely interesting. Will have you questioning how you best want to live your life and what your values are, and provides you with the framework to delve deeper into the world of philosophy. One of the few books I always keep a copy or two laying around for people to borrow!

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