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## The Most Good You Can Do: How Effective Altruism Is Changing Ideas About Living Ethically



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### The Most Good You Can Do: How Effective Altruism Is Changing Ideas About Living Ethically

From the ethicist the New Yorker calls “the most influential living philosopher,” a new way of thinking about living ethically Peter Singer’s books and ideas have been disturbing our complacency ever since the appearance of Animal Liberation. Now he directs our attention to a new movement in which his own ideas have played a crucial role: effective altruism. Effective altruism is built upon the simple but profound idea that living a fully ethical life involves doing the “most good you can do.” Such a life requires an unsentimental view of charitable giving: to be a worthy recipient of our support, an organization must be able to demonstrate that it wi

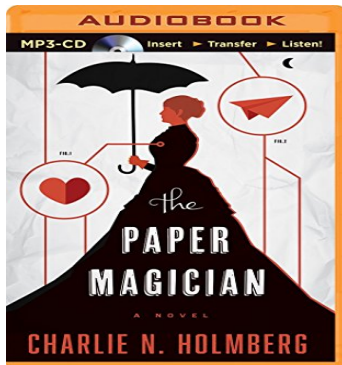
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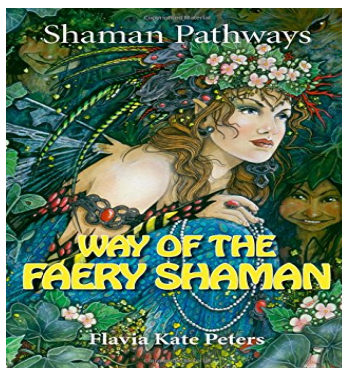
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Originally published in Ronin 1-6, c1983, 1984--T.p. verso.



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What others say about this ebook:

**Review 1:**

Singer promotes effective altruism, which is a thoughtful, intelligent way of donating to well-administered charities that maximize the effectiveness of their distribution of funds. According to Singer, and depending on an individual's resources, a portion of what is earned could be devoted to charitable causes. For those with more than enough to care for self and family, the amount should be greater. Singer gives examples of numerous individuals and couples who have planned their lives to give a portion of their earned money to others. He also gives the names of worthy organizations and of meta charities, that are clearing houses for individual charities. My fundamental objection to Singer's approach is that it does not deal with the ineffectiveness of capitalist governments to take care of all their citizens. The redistribution of goods from individuals is spotty and prone to gross miscalculations, while, if a central authority and its many subservient organisms were to act as organizers of such channels of distribution, the result would be much more just.

**Review 2:**

Peter Singer is inspiring us throughout the book to give and give efficiently. He's reflecting on the idea of effective altruism writing about amazing human beings whose goal is to make the biggest impact they can. Effective altruists care about results and the change organizations can make. They want to save lives and reduce suffering by donating to charities, which can make the biggest difference.

**Review 3:**

This book by Peter Singer may seem in some ways counterintuitive. Many of us determine our charitable contributions because of our emotional reactions to a perceived need or emergency. This book suggests some ways that we be more rational in our decisions and identify charities that can make the most difference in the world. It is an excellent starter book on the issue of effective altruism. One third of the book is footnotes that will lead you to extensive additional information.

**Review 4:**

This was a very positive and engaging read that made me consider how to do more in my life for the betterment of the world. This book's title (and message) is not entirely clear until you read it. The book is not about simply doing the most good that You-the-Reader can do, although I am sure it is a play on words, but is about "what" one chooses to do, as rated by effectiveness.

The Most Good You Can Do is about the concept of 'effective altruism'; basically it's about interrogating your own philanthropic choices to ascertain whether it's money, time or other forms of altruism well spent.

I also like that he encourages simple living in order to have the maximum amount of our income for charitable giving. He's not suggesting austerity, but we can ask ourselves, when contemplating an unnecessary purchase or trip, whether the value of more stuff or experiences is greater to us than what that same amount of money could do in preventing suffering or saving lives in developing countries. He introduces us to some people who train for and take high-paying jobs yet continue to live simply, giving as much as 50% of their income away. However, if the average person can manage giving 5-10% of income, that can do a lot of good.

All in all, he uses thought-experiments, case-studies and empirical data to make what I hope is a

common-sense utilitarian judgement - we should be aiming to do the most good we can if we're concerned about doing good in the first place.

Review 5:  
Hell of a book

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**The Most Good You Can Do: How Effective Altruism Is Changing Ideas About Living Ethically is a 2015 Yale University Press book by moral philosopher and bioethicist Peter Singer describing and arguing for the ideas of effective altruism. It is a follow-up to his earlier book The Life You Can Save (TLYCS). While TLYCS ...**

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