

Living High and Letting Die

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Our Illusion of Innocence

Peter Unger

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By contributing a few hundred dollars to a charity like UNICEF, a prosperous person can ensure that fewer poor children die, and that more will live reasonably long, worthwhile lives. Even when knowing this, however, most people send nothing, and almost all of the rest send little. What is the moral status of this behavior? To such common cases of letting die, our untutored response is that, while it is not very good, neither is the conduct wrong. What is the source of this lenient assessment? In this contentious new book, one of our leading philosophers argues that our intuitions about ethical cases are generated not by basic moral values, but by certain distracting psychological dispositions that all too often prevent us from reacting in accord with our commitments. Through a detailed look at how these tendencies operate, Unger shows that, on the good morality that we already accept, the fatally unhelpful behavior is monstrously wrong. By uncovering the eminently sensible ethics that we've already embraced fully, and by confronting us with empirical facts and with easily followed instructions for lessening serious suffering appropriately and effectively, Unger's book points the way to a compassionate new moral philosophy.

作者介绍:

Peter Unger is Professor of Philosophy at New York University. He is the author of *Ignorance* (OUP 1975, 2002), *Philosophical Relativity* (1984, OUP 2002), and *Identity, Consciousness, and Value* (OUP 1990).

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只能希望Moral standard能慢慢发展吧~这本书太罗嗦了点儿。

too numb to finish it. China is not a good place to think about morality anyway.

Interesting

moral dilemma underlying all of our economic lives.

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