

# Response to singer's solution to world poverty

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A child dies of hunger every 5 seconds. Thousands of people die from starvation each day and millions of people are hungry. Today poverty remains one of the biggest issues in the world. Peter Singer, a professor bioethics, addresses the dilemma of poverty in his New York Times article, *The Singer Solution to World Poverty*. He asserts that the prosperous individuals should donate money to overseas aid organizations to help the impoverished. However, his seemingly simple and straightforward proposition lays on a controversial topic that questions people's moral and their own rights.

Although Singer's argument is considered to be naive and unrealistic, people should be more aware of poverty and take actions against it. "The formula is simple: whatever money you're spending on luxuries, not necessities, should be given away," said the utilitarian philosopher. This means instead of upgrading our TV, we could use that money to save the lives of kids in need. With the advancement of technology, the American standard of living has significantly increased. In fact, Americans spend nearly one-third of its income on unnecessary things.

Singer raises the concern that there are innocent beings dying around the world because they lack money while we spend money on things that we "desired." Children are exposed to deprivation of food and shelter and others die of lack of medical care. Therefore the moral question is raised: shouldn't the wealthy ones make an effort to make a difference? Eradicating world poverty has always been a priority. However, in spite of numerous efforts to do so, some strategies have not always been the best, even Peter Singer's. Like all things, there are flaws and criticisms.

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Americans believed in their unalienable rights: “ life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness.” They have worked for their money, paid high taxes for the right to live in this country; therefore, they should be entitled the right to do whatever they want with their money. Questions by critics are raised, “ Why are we Americans to blame? What about the governments of the countries where these poor children live?” In addition, they argue that the economy is dependent on the Americans’ expenses. If Americans don’t spend money on expenses, businesses and factories will be closed; then the unemployment rate will rise. Therefore, Singer’s idea is set aside as more nonrealistic than pragmatic. Those that think that they shouldn’t work hard and give their money away because it is morally right must not have been through poverty.

Even the sight of destitution and filth is unimaginable and tragic. Poor children, old men, and single mothers desperately begged for money to people passing by, with plead and hope in their eyes. On a personal note, I’ve been through poverty. I experienced hunger, lived in decrepit shelters, and read books under the candles. As Singer implied, Americans are spoiled; we have become materialistic, fulfilling the “ American dream”, while ignoring the millions of destitute lives.

Some say they work hard and deserve the reward of spending it. Is the fact that of saving a person’s life not good enough? Even though Singer’s solution was desirable but idealistic and impossible, he did raised the concern of the poor. We incorporate a little of his idea; we should donate money- not too much that it would cause a drastic change in our economy- but a little can make a difference since about 80% of the world population lives on less than \$2 a day. In addition, the U. S. poverty-focused development assistance <https://assignbuster.com/response-to-singers-solution-to-world-poverty/>

currently totals about \$28 billion; this amount represents less than 1% of the federal budget.

People are born in poverty. Poverty kills. It is not only the people but the government, which possesses much more global control, that should make an effort to save the millions of hungry lives.