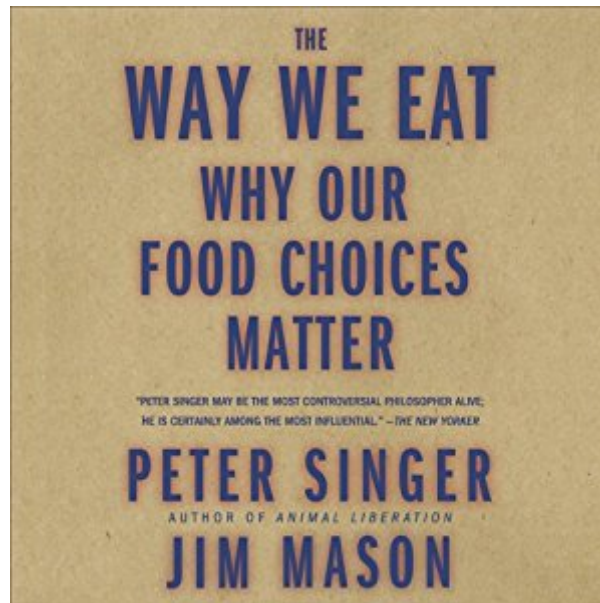




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The Way We Eat: Why Our Food Choices Matter



Synopsis

More people than ever before are paying attention to the food they buy and eat: where it comes from, how it's produced, and whether or not it was raised humanely. Singer and Mason examine the diets of three typical families to explore the impact our food choices have on the future of life on earth. They also identify six empowering ethical principles that conscientious consumers should consider when shopping for groceries or eating out. Speaking to the mainstream, their advice reflects this principle: "You can be ethical without being fanatical." A thought-provoking look at how what we eat profoundly effects all living things and the environment—and how we can make healthful, more humane food choices.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Thoroughly researched, this book provides an insightful and provocative look into the ethical/environmental concerns revolving around our meat eating culture. What Singer and Mason are able to avoid is taking on a holier-than-thou tone, while they come to the sensible conclusion that a vegan lifestyle is preferable to an omnivorous one. However, they also investigate the truth behind food labels, and the issues of organic and local food. Very thoughtful, and hopefully this book will instigate further change in people who wish to make a positive change for the sake of the world.

In an auspicious convergence for the ethics of eating, the year 2006 heralded publication of two divergent but equally important answers to the puzzling questions of the morality of meat. The

bestselling *The Omnivore's Dilemma* is well known. The philosophical but practical *The Way We Eat* is less so. No one philosopher has better earned the title as "animal rights ethicist" than has Peter Singer. Yet in *The Way We Eat*, co-authored with animal rights attorney Jim Mason, Singer suggests it might be ethical to eat animals who have lived comfortable lives. Somewhat synonymous with what some now call "humane meat," Singer and Mason anoint the appellation "conscientious omnivore." A new ethnic cuisine: Ethic cuisine. This emerging moral vocabulary is one whose etymologies can be attributed to vegetarian evangelists and animal liberationists. Their shouts of protest and their cries of lamentation have been heard. Many meat eaters grown uneasy with their own complicity now seek the lesser of several evils. Michael Pollan too deserves credit for expanding this lexicon. Pollan, however, is less forthright about his own omnivorism than are Singer and Mason about their veganism. Instead, Pollan applies his considerable intelligence merely to rationalize and bolster his considerable decadence. For Pollan, meat's taste trumps its waste. Rather than renounce meat as a superfluity, at least he denounces its cruelty. But if you dare to look beyond the cutesy façade that "humane meat" constructs so carnivores can have their cows and eat them too, then to venture further you should fully digest the facts and reasons presented in this book. Upon doing so, we should address the issue of "humane meat" first by changing the term to "less inhumane meat." Ultimately, this book provides both the facts and the credo to enable its readers to make informed choices about whether to eat meat, and if to eat meat then what sort of meat to eat.

very good, accessible book overall, though with some unfortunate typos. but that's just the bored copy editor in me. anyway, as this book has reaffirmed for me, eating meat "fails" on a number of fronts concerning the head & heart, but eating meat produced through industrialized farming -- which in this country unfortunately makes up 90-98% of the meat available, depending on which meat (or eggs) -- fails on every imaginable front: health; ethical for the animals (living conditions, selective breeding, slaughter, etc.); ethical for humans (wages, conditions, environmental concerns, health risks to humans in terms of viruses and chemicals, etc.); and environment (pollution, inefficient use of food/energy used in industrialized farming, etc.). of course, it is possible to eat meat that avoids most of these ethical concerns, but it takes some effort to certify that the meat and eggs are genuinely coming from a responsible, sustainable, humane farm. there are still health questions, however, as well as concerns about energy uses to produce and transport the food (vs. more efficient options), but those can be addressed on a more personal basis. the other ethical concerns, however, should genuinely trouble all persons with consciences and challenge them to re-consider

what, and the ways in which, they eat. but rest assured: this book is not a blatant case for veganism, and I'm not suggesting that vegans can read it with little to no ethical stirrings. there are still a host of ethical issues relating to fruits, veggies, rice, coffee, etc., particularly when it comes to concerns about the environmental impact of buying organic and/or buying local -- this is an issue that I have wondered about, and this book was helpful in addressing some of the ethical concerns in, for instance, buying more locally grown but not organic fruit vs. organic fruit imported from another country. also, is it always better to buy local when the money can go further and do more good in developing countries? actually, this book has only further complicated the picture for me -- but that's because the issues are so darn complex, not because of any fault of the writers. most helpful has been the prod to think and research, and the sources they provide to help are a great start. I do wish that the authors would have been a bit more critical about "dumpstering" and "freegans" at the end. I think they gave a free pass to a phony, garbled revolutionary outlook about consumerism and change. becoming irrelevant to a system you think is destroying the world isn't the best way to work against it -- it's just a way of washing your hands of a problem and going on your way.

Great

Very informative and eye opening. I wouldn't say I enjoy it bc it is upsetting but I think more people should read it so we can make changes

Great read...time to look at the way we eat and it's VERY important impact on the global community. Eating is an ethical act...this book offers insight and thoughtful discussion on this communal activity. Great read...The Way We Eat: Why Our Food Choices Matter

This is a great non judgemental look at our food industry. They follow the daily diets of three different families, tracing several of their food choices back to where the products originated. They look at America's food choices from many perspectives and provide valuable information. The end of the book has must-have references to hundreds of websites and other helpful tools to make this book a staple in anyones library.

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