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Peter Singer Under Fire  
The Moral Iconoclast Faces His Critics

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**Peter Singer Under Fire**  
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Edited by Jeffrey A. Schaler

Peter Singer, the best-known and most controversial ethicist of our day, has done more than anyone else to make philosophical ethics relevant to the troubling moral issues that concern ordinary people and policy-makers.

Singer's views on such topics as world hunger, abortion, infanticide, the sanctity of life, and our treatment of animals have often aroused fierce opposition from political and religious leaders. Singer was subjected to violent attacks during his visits to Germany in 1989–1991, and his appointment to a chair in bioethics at Princeton University led to noisy protests and threats of boycott.

*Peter Singer Under Fire* includes Singer's intellectual autobiography, in which he relates the events of his life and tells how he arrived at his contentious views, followed by fifteen essays from prominent critics of Singer (not all philosophers or academics), to each one of which Singer gives a careful and clear reply.

"If you've ever wondered what kind of person follows a rational argument wherever it leads, no matter how controversial that place might be, you'll want to read *Peter Singer Under Fire*. Peter Singer is thought to be the most controversial philosopher alive and this book explains some of the reasons why. Singer describes the intellectual path that led him to his commitment to ending the suffering of both humans and animals, a commitment that many have thought leads him to repugnant, or at least outrageous, conclusions. These criticisms are included in this collection and Singer provides lively responses to them—sometimes quietly making philosophical points and other times making witty, political points."

—Lori Gruen, Director of the Ethics in Society Project, Wesleyan University

"Bertrand Russell once said that philosophy is the process by which we move from unassailable premises, with unquestionable logic, to unbelievable conclusions. We all have to come to grips with the implications of Singer's thorough-going utilitarianism, for they are the working out of the moral premises of modernity itself. If his conclusions are unacceptable, perhaps the sources of the problem can be found in his premises—premises which many of us share without carrying them quite as far as Singer consistently does. Singer's premises and his reasoning are put to the test in *Peter Singer Under Fire*."

—John Lawrence Hill, author of *The Case for Vegetarianism*

"Peter Singer once again does the impossible. He manages to present his ground-breaking controversial ideas so clearly and precisely as to make them accessible to everyone. Since those ideas are not merely academic, but rather concern how we should live, there is ample material here to excite, enrage, or challenge any reader, and not merely those who are already well versed in philosophy."

—David Detmer, author of *Sartre Explained*



**Jeffrey A. Schaler** teaches in the Department of Justice, Law, and Society at American University's School of Public Affairs in Washington, D.C. He is Executive Editor of *Current Psychology*. Dr. Schaler wrote *Addiction Is a Choice* (2000). His edited volumes include *Howard Gardner Under Fire* (2006), *Szasz Under Fire* (2004), *Drugs: Should We Legalize, Decriminalize, or Deregulate?* (1998), and *Smoking: Who Has the Right?* (with Magda E. Schaler, 1998).

[Jeffrey@Schaler.net](mailto:Jeffrey@Schaler.net)

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Open Court Publishing Company  
332 South Michigan Avenue, Suite 1100  
Chicago, Illinois 60604

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