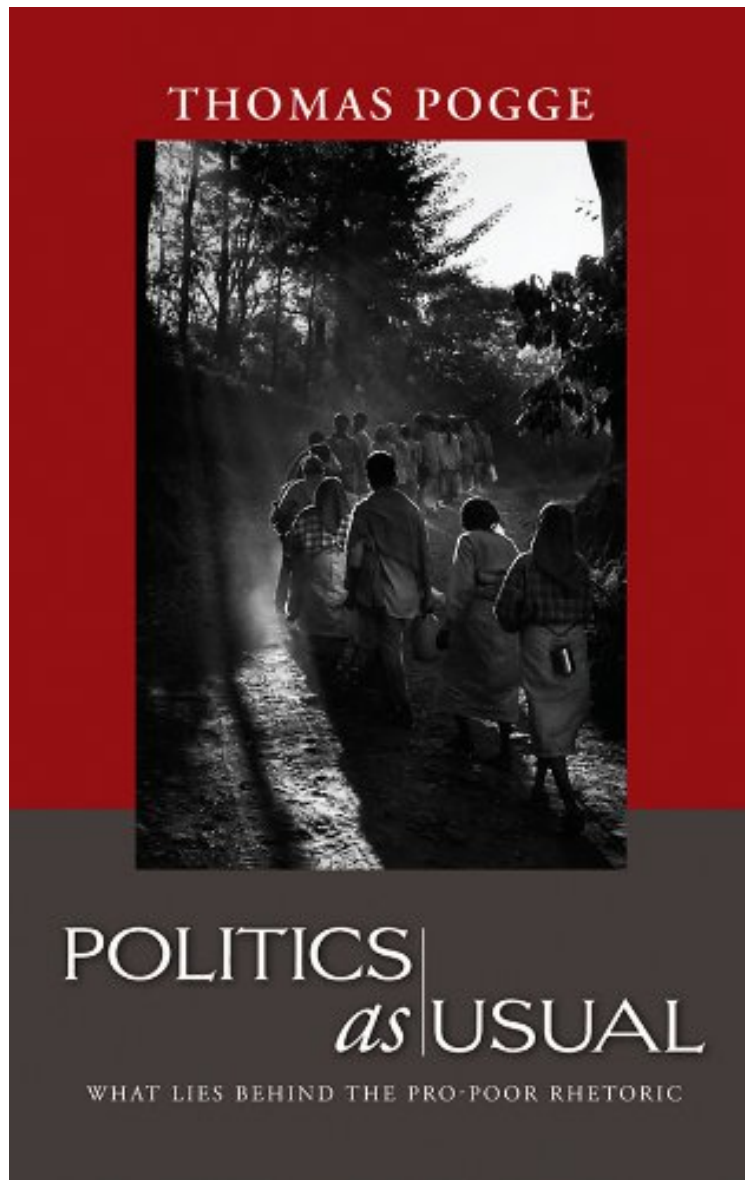


(Download free ebook) Politics as Usual: What Lies Behind the Pro-Poor Rhetoric

## Politics as Usual: What Lies Behind the Pro-Poor Rhetoric

*Thomas W. Pogge*

*DOC | \*audiobook | ebooks | Download PDF | ePub*



[Download](#)

[Read Online](#)

#1640183 in eBooks 2013-04-19 2013-04-19 File Name: B00CHK5V3W | File size: 22.Mb

**Thomas W. Pogge : Politics as Usual: What Lies Behind the Pro-Poor Rhetoric** before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Politics as Usual: What Lies Behind the Pro-Poor Rhetoric:

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. How eager is the West to eradicate world hunger?By Sasha AlysonIn 2015 -- 6 months before the program even ended and long before complete data were available -- the United Nations declared its Millennium Development Goals to be "the most successful anti-poverty program in

history." Thomas Pogge carefully shows why this was, at best, self-serving hype. The U.N. measured not from a baseline of 2000 when the MDGs were announced, but 1990, allowing it to include tremendous progress made by China in the 1990s even though that predated the MDG program and had nothing to do with it. It used misleading statistics. (The details involve GDP/PPP conversions, and Pogge has a talent for explaining such things clearly.) It stealthily abandoned a more ambitious hunger-reduction goal, agreed at the Rome Summit a few years earlier, in favor of this one. And more. It was a cover-up which the media largely ignored. Pogge presents this as one example of how the West is not trying very hard to eradicate world hunger. Not through the U.N., nor through other means. Western governments and institutions prop up dictators with loans and arms; meanwhile a population that gets no benefit from these loans (and perhaps was shot at with the bullets) is burdened with debt incurred a generation ago by previous (or the same) dictators. That's how international law says it must be. And who do you think writes international law? Referring to one such case, Pogge writes that "we, as states, do not care about what happens to people in Rwanda and, for that matter, to poor people outside our own Western circle." He makes a far more rigorous case for his position than the U.N. does. Another reviewer has given a helpful summary of the book's content, chapter-by-chapter. Here I'll simply say that if you merely want to feel good, read the U.N.'s self-evaluation. If you want some depth and understanding, and remarkably lucid prose, read Pogge.

15 of 15 people found the following review helpful. Thought-provoking study of ethics and politics

By William Podmore

Thomas Pogge, the Leitner Professor of Philosophy and International Affairs at Yale University, has written a remarkable study. He exposes as myths the ideas that capitalist globalisation is gradually improving the lives of the world's poor through trade and aid, and that any remaining problems are local in origin, from backward cultures to bad rulers.

Chapter 1 introduces the global justice debate. Chapter 2 presents "my central claim: the dominant Western countries are designing and upholding global institutional arrangements, geared to their domestic economic elites, that foreseeably and avoidably produce massive deprivations in most of the much poorer regions of Asia, Africa, and Latin America." Chapter 3 looks at how the United Nations and the World Bank present the situation of the world's poor. Chapter 4 examines how the Bank fixes the international poverty line at an absurdly low level. Chapter 5 looks at the huge growth of global inequality between and within nations. Chapter 6 argues that global poverty is a higher moral priority than the abortion debate and that pro- and anti-abortion activists should work together for the better moral cause of ending poverty. Chapter 7 studies 9/11 and concludes that the US and British 'war on terror' 'copied the two great moral failings of the terrorists' - harming the innocent and caring little about their actions' morality. Chapter 8 criticises Kofi Annan's misuse of the Rwandan genocide to press for more 'humanitarian interventions'. Pogge's Chapter 9 claims to relate our foreign policy failings to the flaws of our domestic institutions, but in fact it only presents an arid scheme for reforming what he rightly calls the EU's 'undemocratic rule'. He notes, "Many more people - some 360 million - have died from hunger and remediable diseases in peacetime in the 20 years since the end of the Cold War than perished from wars, civil wars, and government repression over the entire twentieth century. ... 1,020 million human beings are chronically undernourished, 884 million lack access to safe water, and 2,500 million lack access to basic sanitation; 2,000 million lack access to essential drugs, 924 million lack adequate shelter and 1,600 lack electricity; 774 million adults are illiterate; and 218 million children are child laborers. Roughly one third of all human deaths, 18 million annually, are due to poverty-related causes, easily preventable through better nutrition, safe drinking water, cheap rehydration packs, vaccines, antibiotics and other medicines." "The rich states, and the international financial institutions they run, promote the avoidable evils of massive poverty and oppression, selfishly pushing rules and policies that they know harm the poor, while hypocritically claiming to promote development goals. The capitalist states rob the poor while claiming to aid them. Poor countries illicitly transfer an estimated \$1 trillion a year to rich people in the rich countries. Pogge concludes, "By foreseeably producing these effects, the present global order is unjust insofar as there are feasible (i.e., practicable and reachable) institutional alternatives that would not produce such catastrophic human suffering." "This poverty could be ended! \$296 billion a year, just 0.66 per cent of global GDP, would lift above the poverty line of all those who live below this line.

Worldwide, human lives are rapidly improving. Education, health-care, technology, and political participation are becoming ever more universal, empowering human beings everywhere to enjoy security, economic sufficiency, equal citizenship, and a life in dignity. To be sure, there are some specially difficult areas disfavoured by climate, geography, local diseases, unenlightened cultures or political tyranny. Here progress is slow, and there may be setbacks. But the affluent states and many international organizations are working steadily to extend the blessings of modernity through trade and generous development assistance, and it won't be long until the last pockets of severe oppression and poverty are gone. Heavily promoted by Western governments and media, this comforting view of the world is widely shared, at least among the affluent. Pogge's new book presents an alternative view: Poverty and oppression persist on a massive scale; political and economic inequalities are rising dramatically both intra-nationally and globally. The affluent states and the international organizations they control knowingly contribute greatly to these evils

;- selfishly promoting rules and policies harmful to the poor while hypocritically pretending to set and promote ambitious development goals. Pogge's case studies include the \$1/day poverty measurement exercise, the

cosmetic statistics behind the first Millennium Development Goal, the War on Terror, and the proposed relaxation of the constraints on humanitarian intervention. A powerful moral analysis that shows what Western states would do if they really cared about the values they profess.

"I would recommend this book for its provocative and well-argued positions on a range of topics." *Population Studies* "In an age of economic austerity and financial crisis, the temptation is to literally adopt the old adage that 'charity begins at home' ... Pogge's book is an important corrective to such arguments." *Central European Journal of Economic and Security Studies* "Likely to challenge, disturb and shock any reader willing to enter the world described by Pogge. Nevertheless, it is essential reading ... Pogge brings a very personal and heartfelt morality to issues that are usually dealt with in high economic terms." *Kelvingrove* **From the Back Cover** Worldwide, human lives are rapidly improving. Education, health-care, technology, and political participation are becoming ever more universal, empowering human beings everywhere to enjoy security, economic sufficiency, equal citizenship, and a life in dignity. To be sure, there are some specially difficult areas disfavoured by climate, geography, local diseases, unenlightened cultures or political tyranny. Here progress is slow, and there may be set-backs. But the affluent states and many international organizations are working steadily to extend the blessings of modernity through trade and generous development assistance, and it won't be long until the last pockets of severe oppression and poverty are gone. Heavily promoted by Western governments and media, this comforting view of the world is widely shared, at least among the affluent. Pogge's new book presents an alternative view: Poverty and oppression persist on a massive scale; political and economic inequalities are rising dramatically both intra-nationally and globally. The affluent states and the international organizations they control knowingly contribute greatly to these evils; selfishly promoting rules and policies harmful to the poor while hypocritically pretending to set and promote ambitious development goals. Pogge's case studies include the \$1/day poverty measurement exercise, the cosmetic statistics behind the first Millennium Development Goal, the War on Terror, and the proposed relaxation of the constraints on humanitarian intervention. A powerful moral analysis that shows what Western states would do if they really cared about the values they profess. **About the Author** Thomas Pogge, Professor, Australian National University