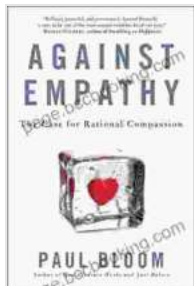


# Against Empathy: The Case for Rational Compassion



## Against Empathy: The Case for Rational Compassion

by Paul Bloom

★★★★☆ 4.4 out of 5

Language : English  
File size : 1688 KB  
Text-to-Speech : Enabled  
Screen Reader : Supported  
Enhanced typesetting : Enabled  
X-Ray : Enabled  
Word Wise : Enabled  
Print length : 266 pages



In his groundbreaking book, *Against Empathy*, Paul Bloom argues that empathy is overrated and can actually lead to harmful decisions. He proposes instead a more rational approach to compassion, one that is based on reason and evidence.

Bloom begins by defining empathy as the ability to share the feelings of another person. He argues that empathy is a powerful emotion, but it is also a limited one. We can only empathize with people who are similar to us, and even then our empathy is often incomplete. As a result, empathy can lead us to make biased and unfair decisions.

For example, Bloom cites a study that found that people were more likely to donate money to a homeless person if they were told that the person was a

veteran. This is because people empathize more with veterans, who are seen as deserving of help. However, the study also found that people were less likely to donate money to a homeless person if they were told that the person was a drug addict. This is because people do not empathize as much with drug addicts, who are seen as responsible for their own misfortune.

Bloom argues that this type of bias is common in our everyday decision-making. We are more likely to help people who are similar to us, and we are less likely to help people who are different from us. This can lead to discrimination and inequality.

Bloom also argues that empathy can lead us to make impulsive decisions. When we empathize with someone, we are more likely to act on our emotions without thinking things through. This can lead to mistakes and regrets.

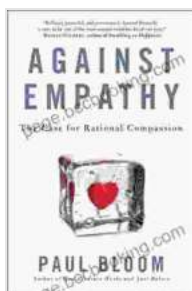
For example, Bloom cites a study that found that people were more likely to donate money to a charity if they were shown a picture of a suffering child. This is because people empathize with the child and want to help. However, the study also found that people were less likely to donate money to the charity if they were given more information about the charity's track record. This is because people were less likely to donate money when they thought about the charity's effectiveness.

Bloom argues that this type of impulsive decision-making is common in our everyday lives. We are more likely to make decisions based on our emotions than on reason.

Bloom concludes by arguing that we need to move beyond empathy and adopt a more rational approach to compassion. He proposes a new approach to compassion that he calls "rational compassion." Rational compassion is based on reason and evidence, and it takes into account the needs of all people, not just those who are similar to us.

Bloom argues that rational compassion is a more effective and ethical approach to helping others. It allows us to make decisions that are based on evidence and reason, and it helps us to avoid the biases and impulsive decision-making that can result from empathy.

*Against Empathy* is a challenging and thought-provoking book that will change the way you think about compassion. Bloom's arguments are persuasive, and he offers a compelling alternative to the traditional view of empathy. If you are interested in making a difference in the world, this book is a must-read.



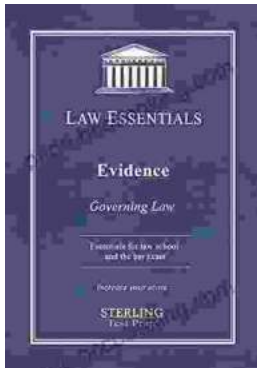
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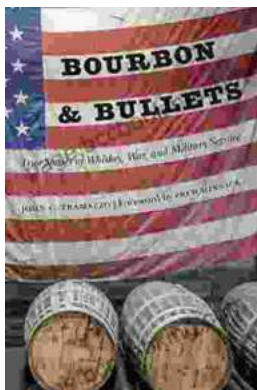
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