

Staff Picks



Changing the World One Step at a Time

Mahatma Gandhi and Florence Nightingale noticed huge problems that seemed to have no solutions. Yet, they devoted their lives to making incremental changes that eventually encouraged more people to follow them and use techniques that they pioneered. What these "world-changers" have in common is a belief that each of us can make a difference in the world. Compiled by: Keith C.



A Beginner's Guide to Changing the World: A True Life Adventure

Isabel Losada 951.505 Lo

This adventurous British woman decides to protest China's occupation of Tibet in London's streets. But she soon realizes that this is not promoting change fast enough, so she travels to Tibet to fight injustice. Through tenacity and inventiveness she meets with the Dalai Lama and the Chinese ambassador, proving that one determined person can make a difference.



Bono: In Conversation with Michka Assayas

Bono 780.92 Bono Bon

In conversations with a close friend, Bono describes his journey from rock star to international spokesman for third world humanitarian causes. He's worked with Greenpeace and Amnesty International and collected millions along the way through his Live Aid and Conspiracy of Hope tours.



Half the Sky: Turning Oppression into Opportunity for Women Worldwide

Nicholas Kristof 362.83 Kri

"More girls have been killed in the last fifty years than men were killed in all the battles of the twentieth century," according to this husband-and-wife writing team. They examine human rights abuses against females, highlighting programs that provide third-world women and girls with education and employment.



How to Change the World: Social Entrepreneurs and the Power of New Ideas

David Bornstein 361.2 Bo

In the tradition of Gandhi and Florence Nightingale, these nine activists from South Africa to Australia set up programs promoting better health care, college access, and rural electrification. Bornstein finds the common techniques that make these do-gooders successful in changing lives.



Kabul Beauty School: An American Woman Goes Behind the Veil

Deborah Rodriguez 305.48697 Rod

A Michigan woman moves to Afghanistan and helps women there by setting up the first modern beauty salon and training school. Besides becoming a social hub for the neighborhood women, Miss Debbie's school teaches the ladies important occupational skills so they can make their own livelihoods.



Leaving Microsoft to Change the World

John Wood

370.91734 Wo

Told by a friend that if he climbed high enough in the Himalayas, he would not be able to hear his boss's yelling anymore, this business school grad decided to give up his highly-paid tech career to make a real difference in people's lives. He created Room to Read, a nonprofit organization that gave away several million books, and started over a thousand libraries and over two hundred schools.



Mountains Beyond Mountains

Tracy Kidder 921 Farmer Kid

A biography of Dr. Paul Farmer, a medical anthropologist and practitioner, who has fought hard to bring medical aid to the poor in Haiti, to "the underdogs of the underdogs." Kidder, who has won a Pulitzer and a National Book Award, shares this inspiring story about the founder of Partners in Health and documents Farmer's extraordinary life of self-sacrifice and commitment.



One Day, All Children: The Unlikely Triumph of Teach for America

Wendy Kopp 372.1 Kop

From her college dorm room, this enterprising young woman launched a program that would improve education by encouraging talented college graduates to enter the field of education. Since that time, over 24,000 Americans have served as teachers in predominately low-income neighborhoods.



Reading Lolita in Tehran: A Memoir in Books

Azar Nafisi 800.92 Nafisi Naf

Nafisi, a professor in Iran, invites seven promising female students to her own home to discuss some banned works of Western literature. At great risk to herself, the author promotes the education of women. Together, the women discuss important ideas that change their lives.



The Lemon Tree: an Arab, a Jew, and the Heart of the Middle East

Sandy Tolan 956.94 Tol

A Palestine returns to visit his old stone home in Ramla, formerly in Palestine, but now part of Israel. He discovers that Israeli immigrants, survivors of the Holocaust from Bulgaria, now live there. They forge an unlikely friendship and begin a four-decade long dialogue. Finally, they gather a group of Palestinian and Israeli children and plant lemon seeds from an old tree in the house's back yard.
