

Elizabeth Svoboda Bio

Elizabeth Svoboda has been trying to get inside people's heads from the time she first cracked open a book. In her teen years, sprawled on her bed with her favorite authors for company, she found herself drawn to questions of moral motivation. In the midst of the twentieth century's worst genocides, why did so many people stand back and do nothing? And why did a select few do everything they could to rescue others—even under threat of death?

After graduating from Yale, Elizabeth did an internship at Discover Magazine, where she relished the challenge of conveying new discoveries to readers. That first gig led her to a fulfilling career in science writing. Over the years, she's written for publications like the New York Times, Psychology Today, the Washington Post, and Scholastic Choices, and she received the Evert Clark/ Seth Payne Award for Young Science Journalists. Her stories have covered a smorgasbord of topics, from the biology of resilience to the psychology of thoroughly modern breakups.

Eventually, Elizabeth noticed that the question of why people behave the way they do was at the heart of much of her work—and that a number of intrepid researchers were exploring that question scientifically. After a mind-bending chat with Stanford psychologist Phil Zimbardo, who'd just started a new venture called the Heroic Imagination Project, Elizabeth grew obsessed with finding out what scientists were learning about the origins of heroism and altruism. Her first book, *What Makes a Hero: The Surprising Science of Selflessness*, describes what she learned along the way.

After What Makes a Hero? came out, Elizabeth met and heard about dozens of other incredible heroes of all ages. Realizing that age was no obstacle to heroic action, Elizabeth decided to write a book especially for young heroes-in-training who want to transform their communities. *The Life Heroic: How to Unleash Your Most Amazing Self* is grounded in recent research and features a cast of heroic kids and teens who inspire readers to follow in their footsteps.