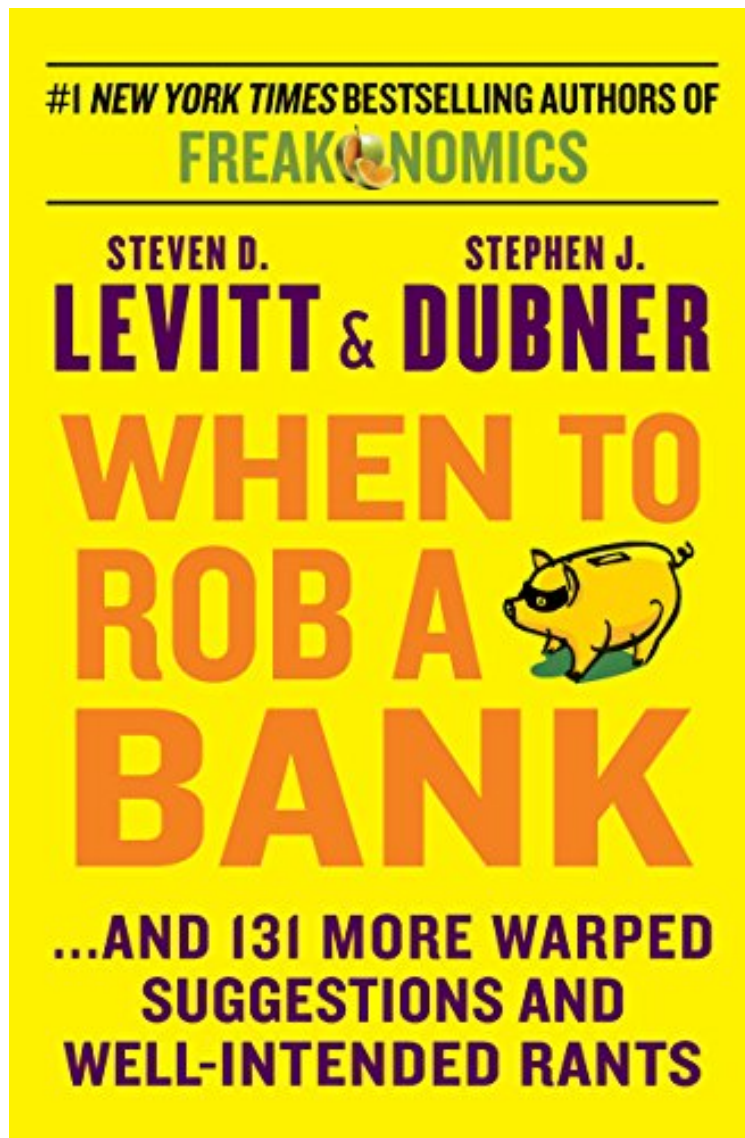


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# When to Rob a Bank: ...And 131 More Warped Suggestions and Well-Intended Rants

Steven D. Levitt, Stephen J. Dubner  
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**Steven D. Levitt, Stephen J. Dubner : When to Rob a Bank: ...And 131 More Warped Suggestions and Well-Intended Rants** before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised When to Rob a Bank: ...And 131 More Warped Suggestions and Well-Intended Rants:

97 of 100 people found the following review helpful. If you have the perception that this is a 10th anniversary bit of memorabilia, it becomes a better readBy ApolloThis book isn't so much a book, let alone a sequel to Freakonomics, as

it is a celebration of 10 years of the Freakonomics branded state-of-mind. Little to nothing here is presented as thoroughly researched forays into unrelated anecdotes but rather it is more of a ticket into the minds of Levitt and Dubner who show they think about various topics in somewhat different ways (such as "Why Don't Flight Attendants Get Tipped?"). The book does expand beyond this idea of understanding the psychology of economists as well, offering "fun sized" pieces of Freakonomics, such as the story/stories about Jane Siberry. Additionally, there are just genuinely fun parts that celebrate the decade long run of this "new" way of thinking, as evident through the author's contests. If you are expecting to thoroughly understand when to rob a bank or the cost of fearing strangers, then you should look elsewhere. This book is more of a piece of memorabilia that marks the 10th anniversary of the Freakonomics brand (the original book was published in 2005). The same way that die hard Harry Potter fans might purchase J.K. Rowling: A Bibliography 1997-2013, and fans of the Andy Griffith Show might purchase Mayberry Memories: The Andy Griffith Show Photo Album, fans of Freakonomics should buy this book to have a look behind the scenes of the mindset of the authors. Plus there are little bonuses along the way. Now, most of this book, if not all of this book is from their blog. Which means most of this book, if not all of this book is available online. For free. So why did I buy it? For the same reason that people bought Malcolm Gladwell's What the Dog Saw: And Other Adventures: simply just to have a nice, updated collection of the author's/authors' anthology in the form of a tangible item. As for charging people for free material, perhaps the authors say it best: "Having grown up on the middle of nowhere himself, Dubner had always thought it strange that so many people would pay good money for a bottle of water. And yet they do, to the tune of roughly \$100 billion a year. Suddenly a book of blog posts didn't seem so dumb. So in the tradition of Poland Springs, Evian, and other hydro-geniuses, we've decided to bottle something that was freely available and charge you money for it." Levitt and Dubner are just responding to incentives. If it seems a little odd then that this is only a 3 star review given what I have been previously trying to argue, that is because there are still some aspects that take away from the experience. Poor editing is one. For example, on page 38, the first sentence in the section "The Next Time Your Daughter Brings Home A New Boyfriend, Be Sure To Ask His Middle Name," Levitt writes: I got an interesting package..." (the authors write their blog posts separately they explain early in the book. So yes, it is Levitt as the SDL indicates below the entry's title.) This piece about middle names also serves as another example for how the book falls short. Some of these "taste" of Freakonomics, the pieces that seem like they are the springboard into something truly fascinating, do not go anywhere. Although, it truly seems like they should. The source of this middle name material came from a reader who had sent the authors pieces of articles that showed crimes were being committed by people whose middle names were Wayne. But there is nothing more than that. An anecdote like this begs an explanation, yet there is none to be found. It would be like if the (in)famous abortion piece was shortened to a couple of pages that essentially stated: "After decades of escalation, the rate of crime is dropping!" Pieces like this should have been excluded as to be further elaborated on in a true sequel (if that true sequel should ever happen). Finally, why this book is getting 3 stars (from me anyway) is because of the authors' habit of providing theoretical solutions or conclusions in the forms of one or two sentences. It is one thing to show where the sources of their "What if..." or "How come..." questions originate from. It is further interesting to illustrate the seeds of these ideas that have presumably bloomed into full fledged Freakonomic pieces (as was partially the purpose of the Beatles Anthology CDs). But after only a few pages of introducing an idea, sometimes even far less, the authors will from time to time end by saying something along the lines of "My guess is that..." or "It would be better if..." These solutions and explanations and conclusions are not rooted in anything except for speculation. Which is something that anyone can do. Readers should not expect an answer for every problem in this book because this book is not about that. It is 131 examples of how to think differently (which does a better job by doing it indirectly than the direct approach of Think Like a Freak: The Authors of Freakonomics Offer to Retrain Your Brain). And there are some gems in the 131 examples. But the abbreviated conclusions negate these introductions to new ideas because they are not founded in data. Nor years of research. It is just the authors attempting to wrap up these little bits of stories by inserting their opinions. Which seems odd for the world of Homo economicus. Not to say that the authors shouldn't insert their opinions. But even when they blatantly say that it is a guess, it still undermines the fact that their actual conclusions of former pieces are based on data. And their success is based on their unique interpretation of the data. All in all, it is a nice, quick read. It introduces some interesting thoughts but it does not take the time to explore them. Because that is not what this book is about. It is about the fact that for 10 years, the world has been shown how to think differently. That the world is not black and white. Nor are there just many shades of grey. But often, you may find hues of fuchsia. It is an anniversary of the creation of something interesting and addictive. It is a celebration that people from all walks of life have come together to join in on becoming Freaky. Through all its faults, and the faults are there, When To Rob A Bank is a nice afterward to the first decade, a little memento from Masters Levitt and Dubner. 0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Great title, great series - accumulated short stories blog posts (not a long form book or chapters) By Marc A. Ross The Freakonomics series continues to fascinate while the witty insights of the two authors brings me continual pleasure. As an aside, this book is 4/5 instead of 5 as it is more a series of short articles and blog posts put together to make a book. Title told me that but was still surprised at how brief each of the 'chapters' were.... 0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. OK, but just recycled blog materials By

NonaThis is a collection of recycled blog entries rather than a unified whole. The tales are nice in themselves, but there is not a unified structure to the book. I would just put it in a place where you repeat short business and eventually you will make it through, with a couple of new ideas. Freakonomics is a five star, this collection of anecdotes is a nice follow up, but doesn't break any new ground

In celebration of the 10th anniversary of the landmark book *Freakonomics* comes this curated collection from the most readable economics blog in the universe. It's the perfect solution for the millions of readers who love all things *Freakonomics*. Surprising and erudite, eloquent and witty, *When to Rob a Bank* demonstrates the brilliance that has made the *Freakonomics* guys an international sensation, with more than 7 million books sold in 40 languages, and 150 million downloads of their *Freakonomics* Radio podcast. *When to Rob a Bank* was first published, the authors started a blog—and they've kept it up. The writing is more casual, more personal, even more outlandish than in their books. In *When to Rob a Bank*, they ask a host of typically off-center questions: Why don't flight attendants get tipped? If you were a terrorist, how would you attack? And why does KFC always run out of fried chicken? Over the past decade, Steven D. Levitt and Stephen J. Dubner have published more than 8,000 blog posts on *Freakonomics.com*. Many of them, they freely admit, were rubbish. But now they've gone through and picked the best of the best. You'll discover what people lie about, and why; the best way to cut gun deaths; why it might be time for a sex tax; and, yes, when to rob a bank. (Short answer: never; the ROI is terrible.) You'll also learn a great deal about Levitt and Dubner's own quirks and passions, from gambling and golf to backgammon and the abolition of the penny.

Lively, self-deprecating writing ensures an entertaining read for fans and new readers alike. (Publishers Weekly) [A] kooky and counterintuitive collection of economic analysis. ... Plenty to revel in. (Kirkus) Levitt and Dubner... return with more of their signature humor and economic perspective on everyday life. ... Will be a hit with fans of *Freakonomics*. (Library Journal) Praise for the *Freakonomics* Books: Genius... has you gasping in amazement. (Wall Street Journal) We are all *Freakonomists* now. (Washington Post) An afternoon with Levitt and Dubner's book will transform you into the most interesting person in the room that evening. (National Public Radio) A splendid book, full of unlikely but arresting historical details that distinguish the authors from the run of pop social scientists. (New York Times) An addictive, irresistible crash course in the populist application of economics. (The A.V. Club) Good ideas ... expressed with panache. (Financial Times) From the Back Cover Surprising and erudite, eloquent and witty, *When to Rob a Bank* demonstrates the brilliance that has made the *Freakonomics* guys an international sensation, with more than 7 million books sold in 40 languages, and 200 million downloads of their *Freakonomics* Radio podcast. *When to Rob a Bank* is Steven D. Levitt and Stephen J. Dubner's curated collection from the most readable economics blog in the universe. Drawn from 10 years of entries on *Freakonomics.com*, where they employ a style that is more casual, more personal, and more outlandish than in their books, they answer such questions as: Why don't flight attendants get tipped? If you were a terrorist, how would you attack? And why does KFC always run out of fried chicken? You'll discover: What people lie about, and why The best way to cut gun deaths Why it might be time for a sex tax And yes, when to rob a bank (Short answer: never; the R.O.I. is terrible) You'll also learn a great deal about Levitt and Dubner's own quirks and passions, from gambling and golf to backgammon and the abolition of the penny. About the Author Steven D. Levitt, a professor of economics at the University of Chicago, was awarded the John Bates Clark Medal, given to the most influential American economist under forty. He is also a founder of *The Greatest Good*, which applies *Freakonomics*-style thinking to business and philanthropy. Stephen J. Dubner, an award-winning journalist and radio and TV personality, has worked for the *New York Times* and published three non-*Freakonomics* books. He is the host of *Freakonomics* Radio and *Tell Me Something I Don't Know*. Stephen J. Dubner is an award-winning author, journalist, and radio and TV personality. He quit his first career—as an almost rock star—to become a writer. He has since taught English at Columbia, worked for *The New York Times*, and published three non-*Freakonomics* books.