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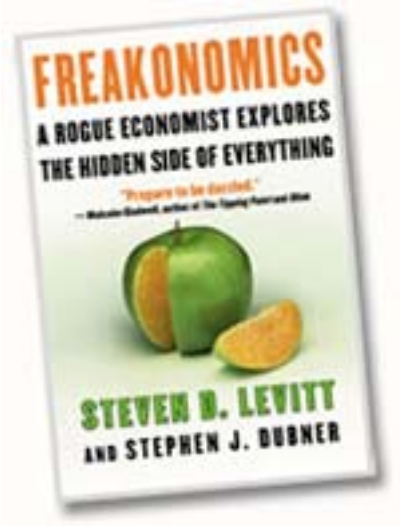
Freakonomics— a rogue economist explores the hidden side of everything

Many of the apparent mysteries of everyday life don't need to be so mysterious: they could be illuminated and made even more fascinating by asking the right questions and drawing new connections.

by **Steven D. Levitt** and **Stephen J. Dubner**

445 words | 3 pages



"Forget your image of an economist as a crusty professor worried about fluctuating interest rates," say the folks from Publisher's Weekly, "Levitt focuses his attention on more intimate real-world issues, like whether reading to your baby will make her a better student..." or the relationship between violent crime and the criminals who commitment them and Roe v' Wade... or why a backyard pool is more life threatening than a gun... or how and why the new permissive methods of post-sensitive parents don't really make a difference... or that inner-city gangs are structured like corporations, even pyramid schemes. If any or all of those topics catch your attention, *Freakonomics* will be an enjoyable journey of discovery.

Freakonomics
Written by Steven D. Levitt and Stephen J. Dubner
Publisher: William Morrow (May 1, 2005) Hardcover: 256 pages
ISBN: 006073132X
Retail: $25.95
At Amazon.com

There's a reason why *Freakonomics* has been in or always near Amazon's top 10 since it was published in May of 2005... and, what's made the Freakonomics.com/blog so popular. It's Steven Levitt's clever and compelling way of looking at things from a very different and unexpected (economics...?) point of view. The Chapter titles alone tell the story of the stories (and each title below leads to an excerpt from that chapter):

Chapter 1: What Do Schoolteachers and Sumo Wrestlers Have in Common?
In which we explore the beauty of incentives, as well as their dark side-cheating.

Chapter 2: How Is the Ku Klux Klan Like a Group of Real-Estate Agents?
In which it is argued that nothing is more powerful than information, especially when its power is abused.

Chapter 3: Why Do Drug Dealers Still Live with Their Moms?
In which the conventional wisdom is often found to be a web of fabrication, self-interest, and convenience.

Chapter 4: Where Have All the Criminals Gone?
In which the facts of crime are sorted out from the fictions.

Chapter 5: What Makes a Perfect Parent?
In which we ask, from a variety of angles, a pressing question: do parents really matter?

Chapter 6: Would a Roshanda by Any Other Name Smell as Sweet?
In which we weigh the importance of a parent's first official act-naming the baby.

I found only one part of the book disappointing. Sadly, the last chapter on names. It started interesting enough— even had moments of fascinating. But soon enough it became enough is enough and I wished for more

about real estate agents selling their own homes... how experts exploit us all... and what online daters lie about— and why.

If you're a thinking network marketer or simply one of those people who believes xenophobia is the one of the worst diseases of human kind, *Freakonomics* will appeal to your MP3— My Pleasure Passion and Purpose.

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