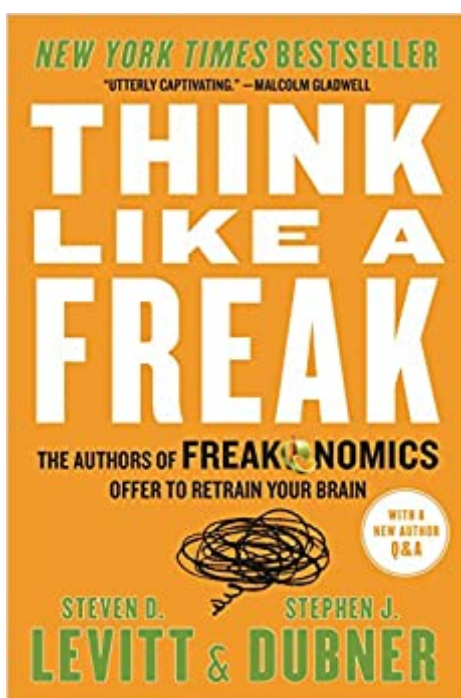


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# Think Like A Freak: The Authors Of Freakonomics Offer To Retrain Your Brain



## Synopsis

Now in Paperback – the New York Times bestseller – and follow up to the revolutionary bestsellers *Freakonomics* and *Superfreakonomics* – with a new author Q&A. With their trademark blend of captivating storytelling and unconventional analysis, Steven D. Levitt and Stephen J. Dubner take us inside their thought process and teach us all how to think a bit more productively, more creatively, more rationally. In *Think Like A Freak*, they offer a blueprint for an entirely new way to solve problems, whether your interest lies in minor lifehacks or major global reforms. The topics range from business to philanthropy to sports to politics, all with the goal of retraining your brain. Along the way, you’ll learn the secrets of a Japanese hot-dog-eating champion, the reason an Australian doctor swallowed a batch of dangerous bacteria, and why Nigerian e-mail scammers make a point of saying they’re from Nigeria. Levitt and Dubner plainly see the world like no one else. Now you can too. Never before have such iconoclastic thinkers been so revealing – and so much fun to read.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

“Utterly captivating.” (Malcolm Gladwell, New York Times bestselling author of *Blink*, *The Tipping Point*, and *David and Goliath*)  
“Over nine entertaining chapters [Levitt and Dubner] demonstrate how not to fall into hackneyed approaches to solving problems and concretely illustrate how to reframe questions.” (New York Daily News)  
“Compelling and fun.” (New York Post)  
“This book will change your life.” (Daily Express (London))  
“Good ideas... expressed with panache.” (Financial Times)  
“An

interesting and thought-provoking read. (The Horn) "Their most revolutionary book yet. With their trademark blend of captivating storytelling and unconventional analysis, they take us inside their thought process and teach us all to think a bit more productively, more creatively, more rationally --- to think, that is, like a Freak. (Bookreporter.com)

Put away your moral compass. Learn to say "I don't know." Think like a child. Take a master class in incentives. Appreciate the upside of quitting. . . . And more! Think Like a Freak is Steven D. Levitt and Stephen J. Dubner's most revolutionary book yet. With their trademark blend of captivating storytelling and unconventional analysis, they take us inside their thought process and teach us all to think a bit more productively, more creatively, more rationally to think, that is, like a Freak. Levitt and Dubner offer a blueprint for an entirely new way to solve problems, whether your interest lies in minor lifehacks or major global reforms. As always, no topic is off-limits. They range from business to philanthropy to sports to politics, all with the goal of retraining your brain. Along the way, you'll learn the secrets of a Japanese hot-dog-eating champion, the reason an Australian doctor swallowed a batch of dangerous bacteria, and why Nigerian e-mail scammers make a point of saying they're from Nigeria. Never before have such iconoclastic thinkers been so revealing and so much fun to read.

If you're a fan of Freakonomics and Super Freakonomics, you'll love this book. Here's why: Like many other people, after reading both of the Freakonomics books, I felt like I learned a ton, but I wasn't sure how it would apply directly to my life. And that's okay. They weren't writing a self help book, and I read their work because I was genuinely curious in understanding how the world works. But this book departs from their usual method of explaining how the world works and instead shows you how you can better live in the world. And that's why I believe this is their best book yet. Here's a little summary of what I learned: 1. In one chapter, the three hardest words in the English language, they talk about one of the main problems that plagues people today - the inability to say "I don't know." And they show you how it's a deadly combination because "cocky plus wrong" is a recipe for disaster. They then show you how to avoid making this mistake. They even give a word for word script you can use. 2. In another chapter, "What's your problem," they share the story of Kobayashi and how he became a professional hot dog - and food eater. They walked through his entire process and how he went on to eat 50 hot dogs when people thought eating 30 was impossible. And even though they're talking about hot dogs, you'll see how this can apply to everyone. As an example, back when I started creating videos for Social Triggers TV, a friend of

mine told me they were filming about 6 videos a day. And I thought, "Well, I'm new at this there's no way I'll get there." And I would film 3 videos a day. Eventually, as I got good, I got to the magic number - 6 videos in a day and I felt like I was on top of the world. Until I spoke to another friend who told me they do 15 or 20 videos in a day. I was SHOCKED. But I went back to the drawing board, refined my process, and eventually got up to 17 videos in a day. I'm being vague here, mainly because I want you to read the book. But it's funny seeing how the same process I used to increase my video production was used by the hot dog champ as well.<sup>3</sup> And my favorite part of the book is when they talk about what they call "the once and done" technique. If you're a non-profit, you'll LOVE reading about this because you'll see how you can potentially increase donations a drastic amount by using this simple marketing tactic. And that's it. Great book and I suggest you buy it and read it.

The men behind Freakonomics have always written some of the most entertaining economics texts available. I wish these books had been required reading in college, but at least I managed to find them later. In this book, authors Levitt and Dubner offer simple instructions on how to approach life as they do. Lessons in identifying problems, setting up experiments, and persuading others are all presented, alongside humorous accounts of like-minded people. Put simply, this book is both funny and educational, a combination that is sorely lacking in much of literature. I highly recommend this book to anyone.

As a huge fan of the podcast, I read this entire book with Dubner's voice in my head. That was awesome. The downside of the book for someone who's been following along with Freakonomics Radio over the past few years is that there's very little "new" here. A quick perusal through the citations section reveals a lot of references to the podcast, and to research that's been featured in the podcast. So if you're looking for brand new stories, this is perhaps not the book in which you'll find them. That said, I think the book succeeds in providing a more comprehensive synthesis of various things the podcast and the other books have addressed. As other reviewers (and the book itself) point out, the approach is more prescriptive and practical. In that respect, I found the book valuable in describing an approach to thinking as opposed to delving into a clever new case study. My reading experience was essentially the book saying, "Here's a core approach to critical thinking/problem solving, and here's how the stories we've examined before illustrate the value of that approach." So while not many of the stories were new, they were presented in a unique way which illustrated things from a different angle than I'd experienced them when listening on the

podcast. It did not take me very long to read - I basically knocked it out over the course of one day. I'd recommend the book to people unfamiliar to the podcast, people who want to support Dubner/Levitt/Freakonomics, and to people who just like to spend time with some of the stories they've heard before.

The title is to link it to their previous books, Freakonomics and Superfreakonomics. I'm not sure of the spelling there; I had not read the books. I read this only because it was the book selected by the ESL Junior College teacher to be discussed with an outside group (my group--a retirement center.) Written in a breezy style with lots of references to situations you will remember and recognize, it is a quick read that held my attention from the first page although, hating the title, I read it reluctantly. I think you will enjoy the time you spend with this book.

Even though this book rehashed some old information from books one and two, I thought it was different enough to be a good read. This book is a different premise than the first two. I wouldn't call it "self help" but that's only because I'm really not sure how I would categorize this. It certainly contains advice - but it goes way beyond that. There is consideration of new or different ways to look not just problems, but day to day decisions as well. Their writing is easy to read with a good dose of humor throughout. If you like their other books or their podcast, you will definitely like this book.

For two bucks it's an extraordinary deal. Odds are if you're looking to buy this you've read their first few books. No reason to stop now. Especially for \$1.99

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