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Why do the keypads on drive-up cash machines have Braille dots? Why are round-trip fares from Orlando to Kansas City higher than those from Kansas City to Orlando? For decades, Robert Frank has been asking his economics students to pose and answer questions like these as a way of learning how economic principles operate in the real world—which they do everywhere, all the time. Once you learn to think like an economist, all kinds of puzzling observations start to make sense. Drive-up ATM keypads have Braille dots because it's cheaper to make the same machine for both drive-up and walk-up locations. Travelers from Kansas City to Orlando pay less because they are usually price-sensitive tourists with many choices of destination, whereas travelers originating from Orlando typically choose Kansas City for specific family or business reasons. The Economic Naturalist employs basic economic principles to answer scores of intriguing questions from everyday life, and, along the way, introduces key ideas such as the cost-benefit principle, the "no cash on the table" principle, and the law of one price. This is as delightful and painless a way to learn fundamental economics as there is.

Ask a dozen talking heads about the course of action we should take to right the economy and you'll get thirteen different answers. But what if we possessed a handful of basic principles that could guide our decisions—both the personal ones about how to save and spend but also those national ones that have been capturing the headlines? Robert H. Frank has been illustrating these principles longer and more clearly than anyone else. In The Economic Naturalist's Field Guide, he reveals how they play out in Washington, on Wall Street, and in our own lives, covering everything from healthcare to tax policy to everyday decisions about what we do with our money. In today's uncertain economic climate, The Economic Naturalist's Field Guide's insights have more bearing than ever on our pocketbooks, policies, and personal happiness.

Have you ever wondered why there is a light in your fridge but not in your freezer? Or why 24-hour shops bother having locks on their doors? Or why soft drink cans are cylindrical, but milk cartons are square? Robert Frank shares the most intriguing and bizarre questions and the economic principles that answer them.

Argues that ecologist Charles Darwin's understanding of competition describes economic reality far more accurately than economist Adam Smith's theories ever did.

From New York Times bestselling author and economics columnist Robert Frank, a compelling book that explains why the rich underestimate the importance of luck in their success, why that hurts everyone, and what we can do about it How important is luck in economic success? No question more reliably divides conservatives from liberals. As conservatives correctly observe, people who amass great fortunes are almost always talented and hardworking. But liberals are also correct to note that countless others have those same qualities yet never earn much. In recent years, social scientists have discovered that chance plays a much larger role in important life outcomes than most people imagine. In Success and Luck, bestselling author and New York Times economics columnist Robert Frank explores the surprising implications of those findings to show why the rich underestimate the importance of luck in success—and why that hurts everyone, even the wealthy. Frank describes how, in a world increasingly dominated by winner-take-all markets, chance opportunities and trivial initial advantages often translate into much larger ones—and enormous income differences—over time; how false beliefs about luck persist, despite compelling evidence against them; and how myths about personal success and luck shape individual and political choices in harmful ways. But, Frank argues, we could decrease the inequality driven by sheer luck by adopting simple, unintrusive policies that would free up trillions of dollars each year—more than enough to fix our crumbling infrastructure, expand healthcare coverage, fight global warming, and reduce poverty, all without requiring painful sacrifices from anyone. If this sounds implausible, you'll be surprised to discover that the solution requires only a few, noncontroversial steps. Compellingly readable, Success and Luck shows how a more accurate understanding of the role of chance in life could lead to better, richer, and fairer economies and societies.

From New York Times bestselling author and economics columnist Robert Frank, bold new ideas for creating environments that promise a brighter future Psychologists have long understood that social environments profoundly shape our behavior, sometimes for the better, often for the worse. But social influence is a two-way street—our environments are themselves products of our behavior. Under the Influence explains how to unlock the latent power of social context. It reveals how our environments encourage smoking, bullying, tax cheating, sexual predation, problem drinking, and wasteful energy use. We are building bigger houses, driving heavier cars, and engaging in a host of other activities that threaten the planet—mainly because that's what friends and neighbors do. In the wake of the hottest years on record, only robust measures to curb greenhouse gases promise relief from more frequent and intense storms, droughts, flooding, wildfires, and famines. Robert Frank describes how the strongest predictor of our willingness to support climate-friendly policies, install solar panels, or buy an electric car is the number of people we know who have already done so. In the face of stakes that could not be higher, the book explains how we could redirect trillions of dollars annually in support of carbon-free energy sources, all without requiring painful sacrifices from anyone. Most of us would agree that we need to take responsibility for our own choices, but with more supportive social environments, each of us is more likely to make choices that benefit everyone. Under the Influence shows how.

Air bags cause accidents, because well-protected drivers take more risks. This well-documented truth comes as a surprise to most people, but not to economists, who have learned to take seriously the proposition that people respond to incentives. In The Armchair Economist, Steven E. Landsburg shows how the laws of economics reveal themselves in everyday experience and illuminate the entire range of human behavior. Why does popcorn cost so much at the cinema? The 'obvious' answer is that the owner has a monopoly, but if that were the whole story, there would also be a monopoly price to use the toilet. When a sudden frost destroys much of the Florida orange crop and prices skyrocket, journalists point to the 'obvious' exercise of monopoly power. Economists see just the opposite: If growers had monopoly power, they'd have raised prices before the frost. Why don't concert promoters raise ticket prices even when they are sure they will sell out months in advance? Why are some goods sold at auction and others at pre-announced prices? Why do boxes at the football sell out before the standard seats do? Why are bank buildings fancier than supermarkets? Why do corporations confer huge pensions on failed executives? Why don't firms require workers to buy their jobs? Landsburg explains why the obvious answers are wrong, reveals better answers, and illuminates the fundamental laws of human behavior along the way. This is a book of surprises: a guided tour of the familiar, filtered through a decidedly unfamiliar lens. This is economics for the sheer intellectual joy of it.

A theoretical study dealing chiefly with matters of definition and clarification of terms and concepts involved in using Darwinian notions to model social phenomena.

Economic Facts and Fallacies exposes some of the most popular fallacies about economic issues-and does so in a lively manner and without requiring any prior knowledge of economics by the reader. These include many beliefs widely disseminated in the media and by politicians, such as mistaken ideas about urban problems, income differences, male-female economic differences, as well as economics fallacies about academia, about race, and about Third World countries. One of the themes of Economic Facts and Fallacies is that fallacies are not simply crazy ideas but in fact have a certain plausibility that gives them their staying power-and makes careful examination of their flaws both necessary and important, as well as sometimes humorous. Written in the easy-to-follow style of the author's Basic Economics, this latest book is able to go into greater depth, with real world examples, on specific issues.

A leading conservative intellectual defends charter schools against the teachers' unions, politicians, and liberal educators who threaten to dismantle their success. The black-white educational achievement gap -- so much discussed for so many years -- has already been closed by black students attending New York City's charter schools. This might be expected to be welcome news. But it has been very unwelcome news in traditional public schools whose students are transferring to charter schools. A backlash against charter schools has been led by teachers unions, politicians and others -- not only in New York but across the country. If those attacks succeed, the biggest losers will be minority youngsters for whom a quality education is their biggest

chance for a better life.

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