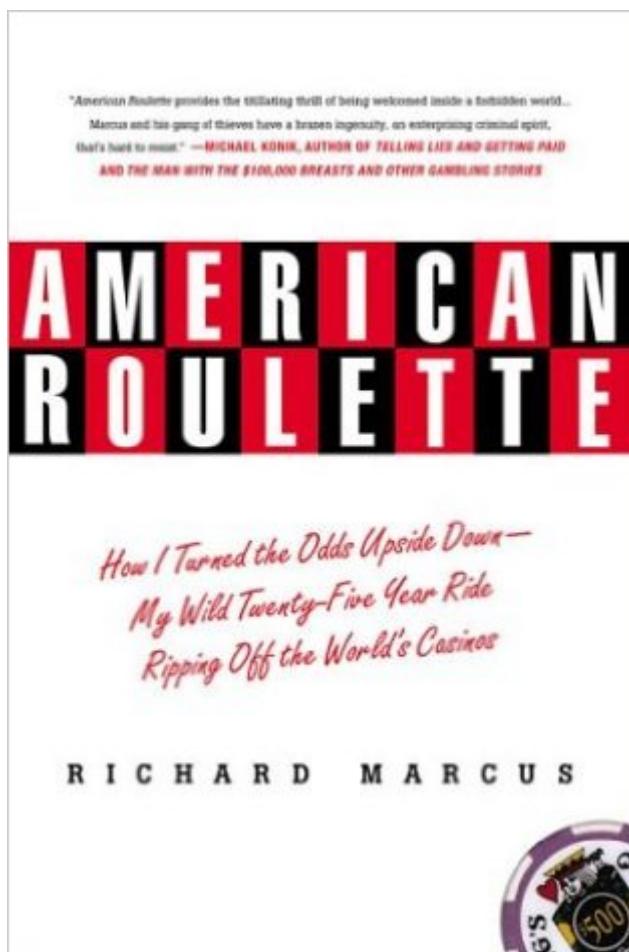


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American Roulette: How I Turned The Odds Upside Down---My Wild Twenty-Five-Year Ride Ripping Off The World's Casinos



Synopsis

In American Roulette, Richard Marcus tells his never-before-heard story, of ripping off casinos. The book follows Marcus, along with several of the world's great professional casino cheaters, as he travels from Las Vegas to London and Monte Carlo, pilfering large sums of money from casinos by performing sleight of hand magic tricks with gaming chips. As skilled cheaters, they back up their moves with psychological setups to convince pit bosses that they're watching legitimate high rollers getting lucky, while in fact they're being ripped off blind. With the exploding growth of casino gambling, heightened by Indian reservation and riverboat expansion, more and more elaborate casino cheaters are illegally assaulting the green-felt, getting rich off of novice casino personnel. Richard Marcus's insider story is a window into the hidden world of intriguing personalities and tense situations he encounters as a member of expert casino-cheating teams who use their wits to turn the odds upside down and "earn" millions. American Roulette is a fascinating story not only for those who occasionally casino-gamble, but for everyone with a little larceny in their heart.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

This book tells the author's story of how he lost everything he had gambling, took a crappy job as shill--promoted to baccarat dealer--at the Four Queens in Las Vegas, and then had the opportunity to join a group of gambling cheaters and thieves. The cheating moves described in the book are mostly "pastposting"--placing high bets after the outcome is known by swapping in a new stack of chips for the ones previously bet. The trick is that high-value chips are concealed underneath low-value chips, and the cheater often has to issue a "claim" by pointing out to the dealer that he's

been underpaid for the bet. The book begins and ends with a move he calls the "Savannah" which is an opposite maneuver--a high bet is placed, with the high-value chips concealed by lower-value chips, and if the bet loses, the high-value chips are pulled off. With that move, the winning bets are legitimate and surveillance tapes show that the high-value chips were there all along. The group also would occasionally make money with other scams, like "railing"--stealing directly out of the chip racks of their fellow players. They also narrowly avoid getting involved in a card-marking scheme, violating their own rules of not using any specialized equipment that could be incriminating. The book is most interesting for the characters involved and how they dealt with "steam" from the casinos when they caught on to what was happening. The author appears to have no guilt or remorse for his actions on the grounds that casinos are regularly "stealing" from people every day (though that certainly doesn't justify the thefts directly from other gamblers, and ignores that gamblers are willing participants who know the odds are stacked against them).

First of all, I must confess that I know next to nothing about gambling. I don't know the rules of any card games, and the intricacies of games such as roulette and keno are lost upon me. My experience in casinos is limited to dropping a quarter into a slot machine and pulling a lever, and that is just for grins and giggles. Accordingly, *AMERICAN ROULETTE* qualifies for me as a great book, given that it deals with a topic that I know very little about and makes it the subject of fascinating and compelling reading. *AMERICAN ROULETTE* is about gambling, but it is more about cheating at gambling, or more specifically, systematically cheating at casino gambling. Author Richard Marcus made a very nice living for decades by cheating casinos. He is unapologetic about it; in fact, he is quite proud of the methods he used. His justification appears to be that casinos cheat their customers, so he is merely getting his own back. This is arguably a self-serving view. Anyone entering a casino has at least a rudimentary idea of whose side the laws of chance reside; one either chooses to gamble or not. Philosophical considerations aside, however, *AMERICAN ROULETTE* remains a fascinating study in the hows and wheres of casino cheating, as well as casino security. Casinos, understandably, are not in the business of losing money. While the individual scores that cheaters like Marcus might inflict may individually be relatively small, taken in the aggregate they could constitute death by a thousand cuts. Casinos accordingly are quite interested in stanching the flow and are constantly playing Tom to Marcus's larcenous Jerry. Marcus describes in *AMERICAN ROULETTE* how he first became involved in casino cheating. He actually started off as a casino dealer.

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