



Rock Breaks Scissors: A Practical Guide to Outguessing and Outwitting Almost Everybody

By William Poundstone

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Rock Breaks Scissors: A Practical Guide to Outguessing and Outwitting Almost Everybody By William Poundstone

A practical guide to outguessing everything from multiple-choice tests to the office football pool to the stock market.

People are predictable even when they try not to be. William Poundstone demonstrates how to turn this fact to personal advantage in scores of everyday situations, from playing the lottery to buying a home. ROCK BREAKS SCISSORS is mind-reading for real life.

Will the next tennis serve go right or left? Will the market go up or down? Most people are poor at that kind of predicting. We are hard-wired to make bum bets on "trends" and "winning streaks" that are illusions. Yet ultimately we're all in the business of anticipating the actions of others. Poundstone reveals how to overcome the errors and improve the accuracy of your own outguessing. ROCK BREAKS SCISSORS is a hands-on guide to turning life's odds in your favor.

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Editorial Review

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The title makes it sound kind of like one of those shady get-rich-quick books, but this is, in fact, a smart, engagingly written account of how to capitalize on other peoples' predictability (while at the same time, if we're paying attention, minimize our own predictability). With the smooth readability of John Allen Paulos, whose *Innumeracy* (1988) has some thematic similarities, Poundstone explores how our tendencies toward uniformity and simplicity, even when we think we're being random and complex, leave us open to exploitation by people who know more than we do, like the fact that, when asked to pick one object out of five lined up in a row, most people will pick the second or fourth, or that, in the game rock/paper/scissors, most men choose rock, and scissors is the least popular choice by both genders. There's some mathematics here—the author explains what he's talking about in detail—but it's clearly explained and easily accessible to the general reader. An enlightening book, though, sadly, much of the enlightenment comes from realizing that we're not as clever as we thought we were. --David Pitt

Review

"An ingenious guide to outsmarting others by predicting their choices when they are trying to be unpredictable." -- *Kirkus* (Starred Review)

"Of all of the books I've received for The Post, none has received as much over-the-shoulder reads than ROCK BREAKS SCISSORS."

?*Susannah Callahan, The New York Post*

Praise for *Are You Smart Enough to Work at Google?* "Poundstone displays his scientific knowledge, mathematical fluency, and knack for explaining the arcane in playfully precise sentences."?*Bloomberg Businessweek*

"A smart, engagingly written account of how to capitalize on other peoples' predictability . . . clearly explained and easily accessible to the general reader. An enlightening book."?*Booklist*

"Delightful, fun, and worth a read."?*Seth Godin*

"Incredibly gratifying....There's an art to these invasive questions, as Poundstone reveals in this neat little manifesto."?*New Scientist*

About the Author

William Poundstone is the author of thirteen previous books, including *Are You Smart Enough to Work at Google?*, *How Would You Move Mount Fuji?*, and *Fortune's Formula*. He has written for the *New York Times*, *Harper's*, *Harvard Business Review*, and the *Village Voice*, among other publications, and is a frequent guest on TV and radio. He lives in Los Angeles. Follow Poundstone on Twitter (@WPoundstone) and learn more at his website, home.williampoundstone.net.

Users Review

From reader reviews:

Gloria Robey:

This book entitled Rock Breaks Scissors: A Practical Guide to Outguessing and Outwitting Almost Everybody to be one of several books which best seller in this year, this is because when you read this book you can get a lot of benefit on it. You will easily to buy this particular book in the book retail store or you can order it through online. The publisher with this book sells the e-book too. It makes you more readily to read this book, as you can read this book in your Cell phone. So there is no reason to your account to past this e-book from your list.

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