

A RANDOM HOUSE TRADE PAPERBACK

PONZI'S SCHEME

THE TRUE STORY OF A FINANCIAL LEGEND

THE MAN BEHIND THE ORIGINAL "PONZI"

SCHEME IT IS NAMED FOR.

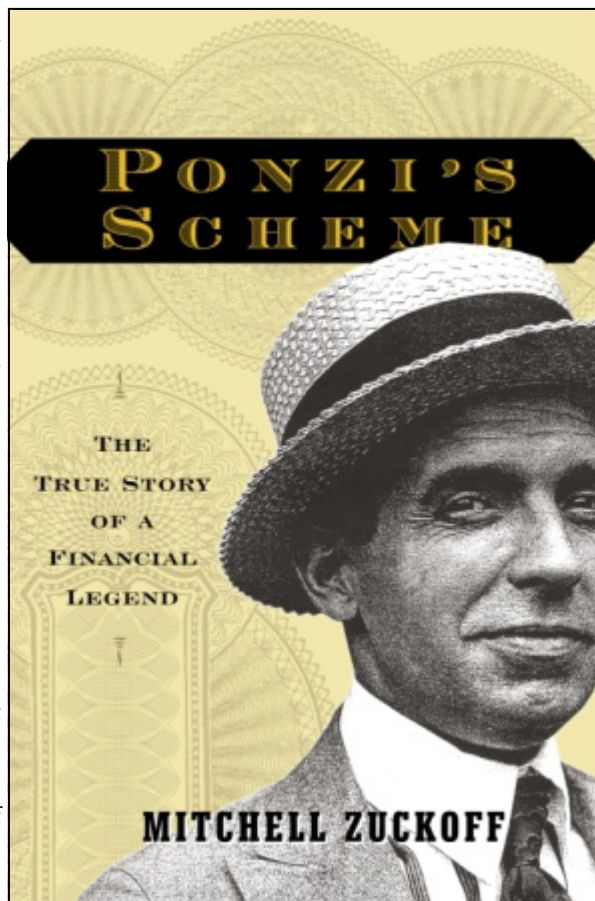
Before Bernard Madoff, there was Charles Ponzi. You've heard of the scheme. Now comes the man. In Mitchell Zuckoff's book, the first nonfiction account of Charles Ponzi, we meet the charismatic rogue who launched the most famous and extraordinary scam in the annals of American finance until today.

It was a time when anything seemed possible—instant wealth, glittering fame, fabulous luxury—and in the spring and summer of 1920, Charles Ponzi made it all come true. Promising to double investors' money in three months, the dapper, charming Ponzi raised the "rob Peter to pay Paul" scam to an art form and raked in millions at his office in downtown Boston. Ponzi's Scheme is the amazing true story of the scoundrel who launched the most successful scheme of financial alchemy.

Ponzi may have been a charlatan, but he was also a wonderfully likable man. His intentions were noble, his manners impeccable, his sales pitch enchanting. Born to a genteel Italian family, he immigrated to the United States with big dreams but no money. Only after he became hopelessly enamored of a stenographer named Rose Gnecco and persuaded her to marry him did Ponzi light on the means to make his dreams come true. His true motive was not greed but love.

With rich narrative skill, Mitchell Zuckoff conjures up the feverish atmosphere during the weeks when Ponzi's bubble grew bigger and bigger. At the peak of his success, Ponzi was taking in more than \$2 million a week. And then his house of cards came crashing down—thanks in large part to the relentless investigative reporting of The Boston Post.

In Zuckoff's hands, Ponzi is no mere swindler; instead he is appealing and magnetic, a colorful and poignant figure, someone who struggled his whole life to attain great wealth and who sincerely believed—to the very end—that he could have made good on his investment promises if only he'd had enough time. Ponzi is a classic American tale of the dream of success, and the unexpectedly moving story of a man who—for a fleeting, illusory moment—attained it all.



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