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Dear Editor/Producer,

Every year, scammers and con-artists steal billions of dollars from unsuspecting Americans. Modern technology – even those meant to protect us – have only made it easier for scammers to steal victims' money, information or even life.

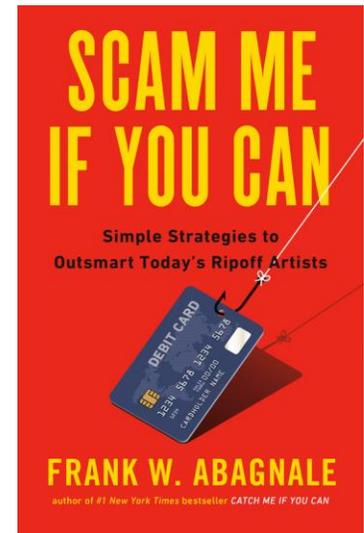
From identity theft to scam phone calls and insurance fraud, con artists are always out there, waiting for the right moment to commit their crime.

As a former con artist, bestselling author of *Catch Me If You Can*, and now one of the world's most respected authorities on the subjects of fraud, forgery, and cyber security, Frank Abagnale knows how scammers work.

Through a series of real-life anecdotes, stories and his own experiences conning, Abagnale's new book, **SCAM ME IF YOU CAN: Simple Strategies to Outsmart Today's Ripoff Artists** (Portfolio/Penguin Random House-AARP; on-sale: August 27, 2019) reveals the very latest tricks that today's scammers, hackers, and con artists use to steal your money and personal information—often online and over the phone.

In the book, you will learn:

- **Charity scammers know how to pull at your heartstrings:** A (seemingly) heartwarming story on Go Fund Me about a homeless man helping a couple who ran out of gas was really a scam – all three parties were in on it and raised \$400,000 that promptly disappeared. It's important to be careful when donating to causes online – researching the charity and knowing the fundraiser (preferably personally) are two of the best ways to avoid getting scammed.
- **The wild world of dating app scams:** Catfishing is still very real (and isn't what you think). Over the years, romance scammers have stolen millions of dollars from unsuspecting people looking for love – in 2016 alone, they stole \$220 million. Melissa was scammed by a handsome, soft-spoken man who claimed he was a veteran. After going out for a few weeks, he managed to convince her to "lend" him her Audi and a few hundred dollars that he gambled off at a casino.
- **The dark underbelly of autonomous vehicles – hacking:** In 2015 Charlie Miller and Chris Valasek, two professional car hackers, hacked a Jeep that *Wired* writer Andy Greenburg was driving. It was planned – Greenburg was going to write about it after. Though this was a planned event – and consisted of the hackers blasting the radio and the A/C, car hacking is a real concern. Cars are becoming more autonomous, which means they use wireless networks and computers to function – systems that require only a bit of coding to get around.
- **Social media is an identity thief's treasure trove.** John went to drinks with his golf buddy and checked in at the bar he was at – a thief then used this, and other info John had posted including a cause that was important to him, to craft the perfect email scam that seemed to be coming directly from his golf buddy.
- **DNA testing companies are quietly selling your biology.** In 2018, Senator Chuck Schumer pushed for an FTC probe of DNA testing companies – and for good reason: DNA companies can sell your biological data



to third-party companies. This means your biology is at risk of falling into the hands of scammers or health insurance companies and employers who can use this information to discriminate against you.

- **Passwords aren't protecting us – not even when they require re-authentication.** Activist DeRay Mckesson had his Twitter account hacked via a method called SIM swapping, where hackers contact a phone carrier, claiming to be the victim, and sailing through the security procedures through some simple online research and social engineering. They then redirect the victim's SIM card and incoming texts to their own phone, easily getting the security code needed for reverification. By the time Mckesson got wind of the scam, the hackers had already gained access to his Twitter account.
- **Yes, you are getting more robo-calls and phone scams than last year.** In 2017, The FTC logged 4.5 million complaints about robocalls, more than double the 2.18 million complaints logged in 2013. Robocalls have gotten *way* worse – and with new technology, scammers can even spoof the phone numbers of real companies. This happened to Shanna, who answered a call that seemed to be coming from Verizon. The scammer was able to trick Shanna into reading back real verification codes, sent to her phone via text from Verizon, which he then used to purchase 3 iPhone Xs.

With his simple but counterintuitive rules, Abagnale offers guidance to Americans in every stage of life, from young people navigating credit and identity for the first time to older people getting calls for free health services. **SCAM ME IF YOU CAN** is a guidebook for outsmarting every scam imaginable – even those you didn't know existed.

I'll be in touch soon to discuss coverage opportunities.

All best,

Alyssa Adler

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About the Author

A former professional impostor and the author of the bestselling memoir, *Catch Me If You Can*, as well as *The Art of the Steal* and *Stealing Your Life*, **Frank Abagnale** is one of the world's most respected authorities on the subjects of fraud, forgery, and cyber security. Trusted by the FBI for more than four decades, he lectures at the FBI's Academy and field offices. Frank's contributions to the world of security are immeasurable.

Abagnale has become a hero to hundreds of public and private sector organizations for his indispensable counsel and strategic insight on safeguarding information systems and combating cyber-fraud. More than 14,000 financial institutions, corporations, and law enforcement agencies use his fraud prevention programs. He consults with major corporate clients such as TruSona, Experian, Intuit, and LexisNexis. Abagnale serves as AARP's Fraud Watch Network Ambassador. He has undertaken the writing of this book at the request of his client, and by his own choice, is giving all proceeds from this book to the social mission of AARP.

About AARP

AARP is the nation's largest nonprofit, nonpartisan organization dedicated to empowering people 50 and older to choose how they live as they age. With a nationwide presence and nearly 38 million members, AARP strengthens communities and advocates for what matters most to families: health security, financial stability and personal fulfillment. AARP also produces the nation's largest circulation publications: AARP The Magazine and AARP Bulletin. With its Fraud Watch Network, members and nonmembers can receive free watchdog alerts; get tips to spot and avoid scams like identity theft, investment fraud, and holiday scams; review a scam-tracking map that provides real-time alerts from law enforcement in each state; and call the toll-free fraud helpline to report fraud or speak with fraud counselors.