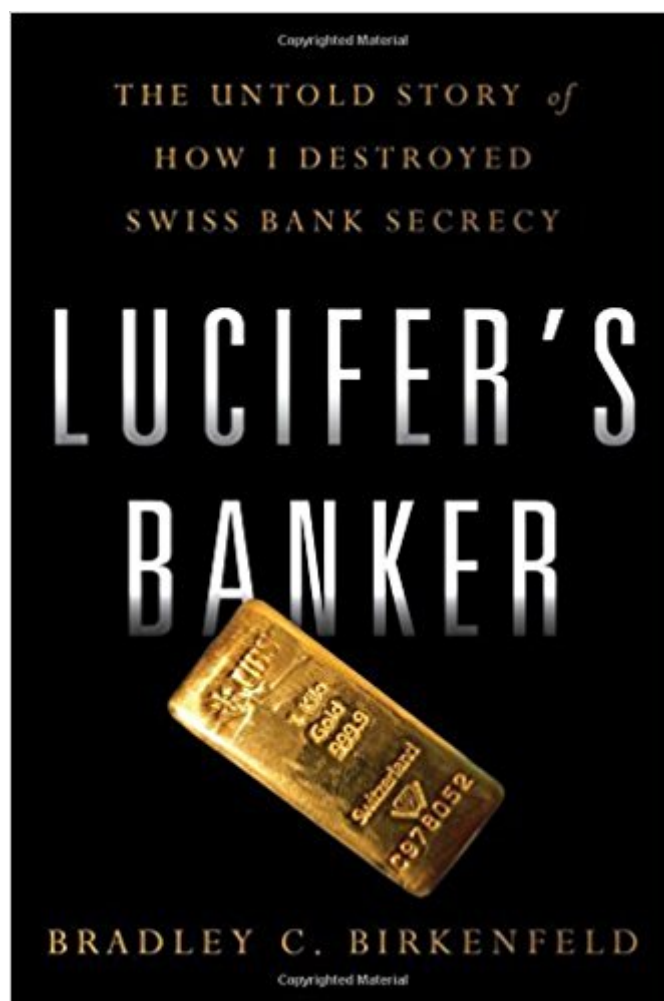


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# Lucifer's Banker: The Untold Story Of How I Destroyed Swiss Bank Secrecy



## Synopsis

Bestseller in White Collar Crime   Bestseller in Financial Services   Bestseller in Banks & Banking

As a private banker working for the largest bank in the world, UBS, Bradley Birkenfeld was an expert in Switzerland's shell-game of offshore companies and secret numbered accounts. He wined and dined ultrawealthy clients whose millions of dollars were hidden away from business partners, spouses, and tax authorities. As his client list grew, Birkenfeld lived a life of money, fast cars, and beautiful women, but when he discovered that UBS was planning to betray him, he blew the whistle to the US Government. The Department of Justice scorned Birkenfeld's unprecedented whistle-blowing and attempted to silence him with a conspiracy charge. Yet Birkenfeld would not be intimidated. He took his secrets to the US Senate, the Securities and Exchange Commission, and the Internal Revenue Service, where he prevailed. His bombshell revelations helped the US Treasury recover over \$15 billion (and counting) in back taxes, fines, and penalties from American tax cheats. But Birkenfeld was shocked to discover that at the same time he was cooperating with the US Government, the Department of Justice was still doggedly pursuing him. He was arrested and served thirty months in federal prison. When he emerged, the Internal Revenue Service gave him a whistle-blower award for \$104 million, the largest such reward in history. A page-turning real-life thriller, *Lucifer's Banker* is a fascinating behind-the-scenes look at the secret Swiss high-net worth banking industry and a harrowing account of our government's justice system. Readers will follow Birkenfeld and share his outrage with the incompetence and possible corruption at the Department of Justice, and they will cheer him on as he "hammers" one of the most well-known and powerful banks in the world.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

Bradley C. Birkenfeld is a retired financial industry professional renowned as the most significant whistle-blower in history. He is dedicated to supporting whistle-blower initiatives exposing and eliminating fraud. As a result of Brad's historic actions, the risks and costs to financial institutions that support clients' tax evasion, fraud, corruption, and terrorist activities have increased dramatically. Birkenfeld holds a BS in Economics from Norwich University in Vermont and an International MBA from the American Graduate School of Business in Switzerland. A lifelong fan of the Boston Bruins, Brad works with the team to help disadvantaged children, along with other philanthropic endeavors.

What I liked most about the book was learning about the enormous scope of tax evasion that takes place in the US and most importantly how many people and law firms engage in abetting tax evasion along with the complicity of some in the US government. I didn't care much for the braggadocio of the author and at times he was more than just a little annoying. He sounded like I imagine Trump sounds when he's with his buddies, you know, like bragging about all the great a\$\$ he's gotten and how rich he is. In fact, the similarities between the author and Trump were such that I wonder where Trump is stashing his money: Switzerland, Lichtenstein, Cook Islands? It is definitely worth a read to get justifiably enraged at efforts by the Congress to reign in the IRS and cut their funding even more while continuing to cry about the sad predicament of the 1%. Oh what a rigged system we have woven.

I am giving 5 stars for the subject the book covers. It is important that the whole world knows how this corporate criminals together with millionaires are ripping off the citizens of their respective countries by not paying their taxes. Also is noted the criminal behaviour of banks and I believe not matter how many pieces of law are passed they will always be one step ahead. In terms of the author I personally do not believe he is a hero. He decided to spill the beans when he was crossed by the bank and get infuriated by all they did to him. What he did was taking revenge becoming a whistle blower. I personally believe he deserved his term in jail even when he opened Pandora's box. He was part of the criminal enterprise "willingly" and again, he only decided to take on them after the bank screwed him big time. Great reading.

While the book is clearly written in a defiant manner, it at times comes off as a little too bellicose. I sympathize with the injustice committed against Mr. Birkenfeld and hope he finds a good way to channel the rage into positively impacting manners for others tempted to follow in his footsteps.

It is nigh-on impossible to like Bradley Birkenfeld. I almost quit reading his book more than once, because I really could not stand him. He comes across as vapid, self-centered, self-aggrandizing, juvenile, sexist and, frankly, dumb. His favorite topic, right through the book, is his good self. The way he sees it, the world revolves around him. And it largely consists of cars, cigars, legs and swimming pools. More damningly, and for all the talk about right and wrong, the impression I came away with from the book is that the original motivation Birkenfeld had to blow the whistle on UBS was to humiliate his former boss. If you're wondering who the "Lucifer" is who gave his name to the book, that's Bradley Birkenfeld's supervisor at UBS, which is what makes the author "Lucifer" a Banker. Lucifer is some private banker in Switzerland, it turns out. Eat your heart out, Robert deNiro. The heroic acts recounted here include giving up to the US government the list of all clients who entrusted him with their secrets, often as a result of his having made the first approach. And the man shows no style whatsoever when he gloats that his estranged client's son died. He even quips something about death and taxes that left a terrible taste in my mouth. Guess what, folks, the guy is a total saint if you compare him with the system he foolishly decided to confront (and naively thinks he has beaten) and I spent the last one third of the book cheering for him with everything I had. GO BRAD! If you want to understand how the justice system goes about meting out justice, if you want to get into the head of a DoJ investigator and understand his motivations, if you did not know how Eric Holder earned his wings (or if you have any doubts about how his current "investigation of Uber will go), if you need to understand what "revolving door" means between the justice system and the wealthier members of the private sector, if you'd like a glimpse of the head-of-state level of quid-pro-quo between the US and Switzerland, if you want to know who Obama was playing golf with as the judge was sending Birkenfeld to the slammer for three years, it's all here. It really is. And it's damning and devastating, of course. So after having spent most of the book thinking to myself "this woman you just talked about, please please don't tell me if you slept with her, or "I

really don't care if your friend has a helicopter, I spent the last bit dying to hear how he dealt with the low-life prosecutor from the DoJ, marvelling at how he put the jail guards in their place, trembling that somebody would hurt him and cheering for him when he got his just reward. At the end of the day, the man is a fighter and he took on a rigged system and, much as he did it for himself, he also did it for all of us. Bravo! In truth, there could not possibly have been a better author for this book. It is by dint of having been delivered by so distasteful a messenger (and, for all his protestations to the contrary, so tangential a messenger: 20 billion is nothing compared to the 5-10 trillion that is hiding beyond the taxman's reach) that this indictment of our system brings home the message loud and clear: The fish stinks from the head.

The only problem I saw with this book was any repentance on the part of Lucifer's banker. He is still in much the same business, except he's not working for the white-socked Swiss anymore. Perhaps he has become Lucifer himself. Mr. Birkenfeld is surely familiar with the international banking cartel centered in Basel, and makes no mention of their Financial Stability Board, or the banks represented on that cartel board.

An excellent read that I couldn't put down. He gives the juicy details about how the rich hide money in Switzerland and the corruption in the US Dept. of Justice.

I just finished reading Lucifer's Hammer. I went into it with low expectations -- the author's a banker, not a novelist, right? But it turned out to be a total page-turner. I was surprised to like Birkenfeld's writing style a lot -- it's humorous and informative. On top of its literary merits, the author is doing a great public service by telling his story. As a whistleblower myself, I can attest that Birkenfeld's story is enlightening about how I should handle my dealings with the authorities.

Not only is this an important blockbuster story, it is written like a blockbuster novel. A real page turner made all the more irresistible by two facts: It's true, and it sheds light on what the 1% want to keep us in the dark about!

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