

Rich and Wealthy Aren't Really Synonyms

# Grab Your Slice of the Upper Crust

by Angele McQuade

Ask someone whether they want to be rich, and they're probably going to say yes. Wrong answer, says *New York Times* "Wealth Matters" columnist Paul Sullivan. For true financial success, our ultimate financial goal should be to become truly wealthy.

The difference between the two is the subject of Sullivan's new book, *The Thin Green Line: The Money Secrets of the Super Wealthy*.

The idea was sparked in part by angry letters from Sullivan's *New York Times* readers. They "directed their vitriol and hatred of the rich at me," he recounts, "(and) convinced me that ignorance about wealth and money was so widespread and deep that this book could fill a need."

The book was also inspired by Sullivan's realization that though he considered himself wealthy, his family's financial situation was far more tenuous and risky than he imagined. Launching from this financial emotional crisis, Sullivan takes us on a personal, professional, geographical and at times literary journey as he digs deeply into the financial decisions of the rich, the

**What I liked:** Sullivan's distinction between wealthy (which he defines as having more money than you need to do all the things you want to do) and rich (a number that doesn't always equal financial security) and why being on the wealthy side of the title's "thin green line" should be our goal.

The gap between the haves and have-nots is widening, but so is the gap between the haves and the have-mores.

"Knowing the difference between being wealthy and being rich," he says, "is the difference between living a secure or a fraught life."

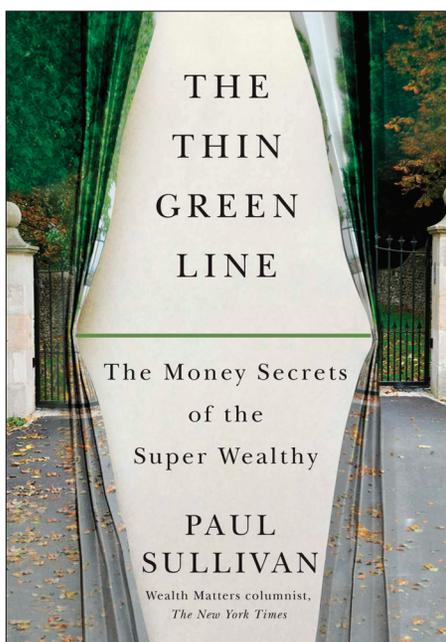
**What I loved:** Sullivan's breezy, compelling writing. He's a natural storyteller and each chapter feels more like a thoughtful conversation with an old and trusted friend than some important lesson you're supposed to be memorizing.

**What makes *The Thin Green Line* worth buying:** How open Sullivan is about the details of his own financial life. One of the main themes of his book is the importance of the personal side of money, and he opens up his own financial history with incredible candidness.

"If people aren't honest with themselves," he writes, "they won't make progress on their feelings

toward money."

**Read *The Thin Green Line* if:** You're looking for new ideas to increase your personal net worth or you want to see how your own decisions measure up to those who've had great financial success. **B**



***The Thin Green Line: The Money Secrets of the Super Wealthy*, Paul Sullivan, Simon & Schuster (2015), hardcover (\$27) and ebook, 256 pages**

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wealthy, heirs, philanthropists, trust-fund babies and others, following insight and guidance from academics, psychologists, economists and a host of other experts.

Sullivan concludes that how we think about money is incredibly important to how we end up financially, and he offers up simple steps we can take to change the way we think and improve our own odds for greater financial success. He finishes with a summary of the financial changes he and his wife ended up making based on all he learned, including selling their vacation condo at a loss, a tough but ultimately correct choice.

## Websites of Interest

**Paul Sullivan**  
<http://pauljsullivan.com/>  
**Paul Sullivan on Twitter**  
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