

2022

Porchlight Business Book Awards





# The 2022 Porchlight Business Book of the Year

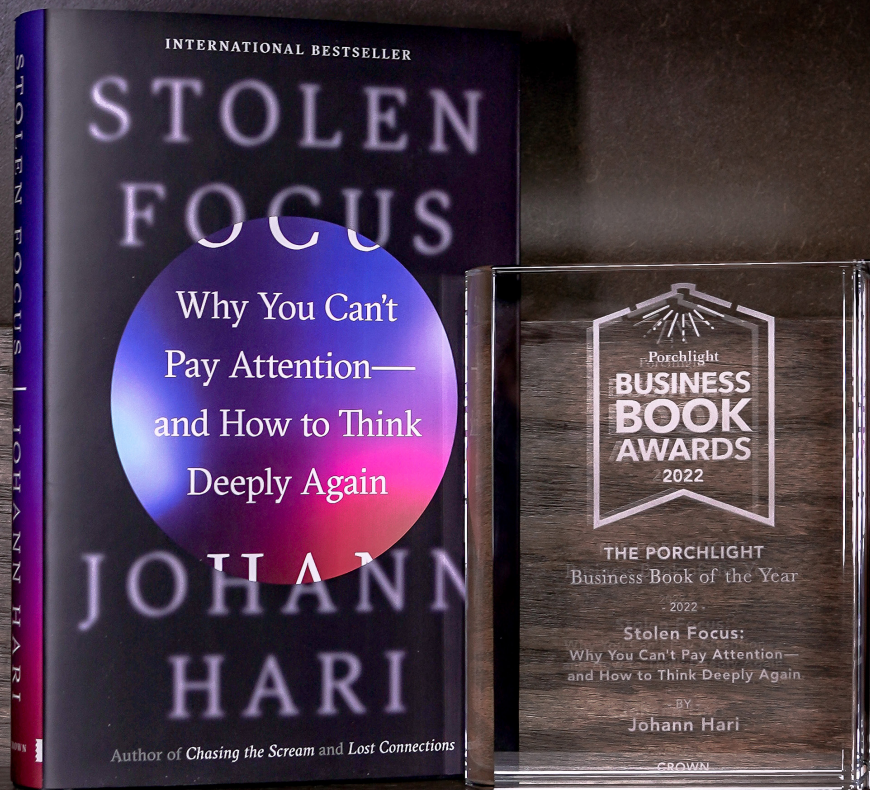
***Stolen Focus: Why You Can't Pay Attention—and How to Think Deeply Again***

by Johann Hari  
Crown

Through extensive research and conversations with both experts on attention and those who have contributed to its decline, Hari establishes and unpacks what he views as the forces thwarting our ability to focus. Rather than treating the inability to simply put the damn phone down and stay on track as a personal failing, Hari shows us in meticulous detail the extent to which this is an endemic condition brought on by deliberate, cynical measures taken for the sole purpose of corporate profit. As Hari says, "It's by design. Your distraction is [Big Tech's] fuel."

In example after insightful example, Hari demonstrates the ways in which our attention is deliberately hijacked—and the ways in which companies and their software could (easily!) do just the opposite. In a conversational style, he thoughtfully and convincingly shows us the incentives around which the internet and the sites that depend on it are designed – and how they could be organized around very different principles, those that not only enhance our focus but feed our emotional health and cooperative spirits as well.

Of the many compelling aspects of *Stolen Focus*, the personal context in which he situates his investigation and alarm is revealing and relatable. And yet, even as he discloses his own vulnerability to wasting hours online or fishing for "likes," he makes a hopeful, fearless case for how we must combat the loss of human attention. In doing so, we will renew our creative imaginations and inspire our collective energies to fight for the common good. Porchlight Book Company's Book of the Year for 2022, *Stolen Focus*, is in many ways the book we need right now.





# Leadership & Strategy

## BEST IN CATEGORY:

***Dare to Un-Lead: The Art of Relational Leadership in a Fragmented World***

Céline Schillinger

Figure 1

Céline Schillinger boldly calls for the radical deconstruction of our historical and hierarchical assumptions about leadership. This isn't a superficial cultural or moral critique of leaders' clay feet. Instead, Schillinger, an engagement leadership consultant, reveals how the established and archaic mythology of leadership hurts us all. "Leadership ... becomes a badge of honor, a status, rather than something fluid, contextual, enabling, and active." To instead build a collective culture "that truly encourages action, risk-taking, autonomy, and accountability," leaders must "learn to let go and replace control with trust." Equal parts radical and practical, the impassioned yet deeply researched *Dare to Un-Lead* will challenge everything you think about leadership, expanding both your vocabulary and your vision.

## RUNNERS UP:



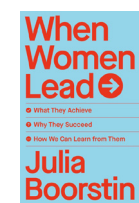
***Anti-Racist Leadership: How to Transform Corporate Culture in a Race-Conscious World***  
James D. White  
with Krista White  
Harvard Business  
Review Press



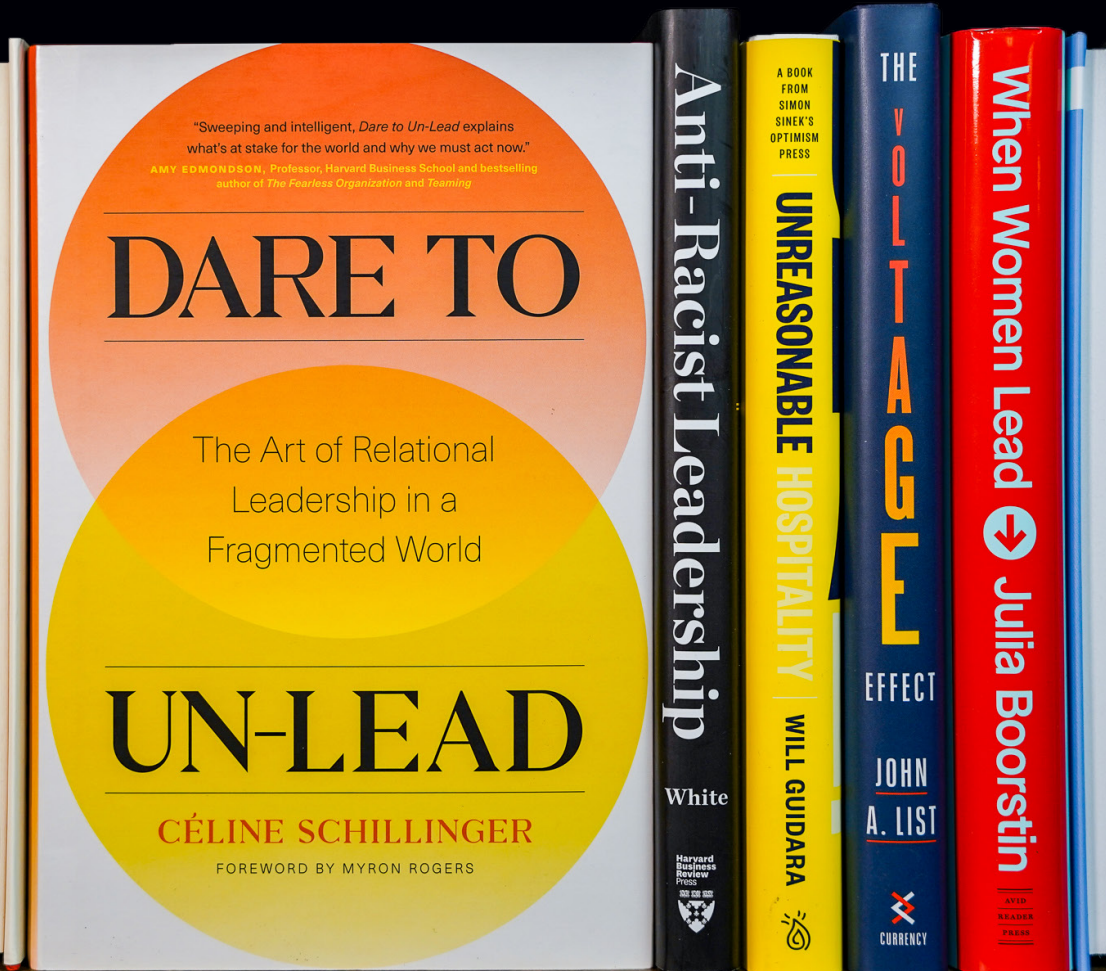
***Unreasonable Hospitality: The Remarkable Power of Giving People More than They Expect***  
Will Guidara  
Optimism Press



***The Voltage Effect: How to Make Good Ideas Great and Great Ideas Scale***  
John A. List  
Currency



***When Women Lead: What They Achieve, Why They Succeed, How We Can Learn from Them***  
Julia Boorstin  
Avid Reader Press





# Management & Workplace Culture

BEST IN CATEGORY:

***Beloved Economies: Transforming How We Work***

Jess Rimington & Joanna Levitt Cea

Page Two

We were immediately intrigued to find *Beloved Economies* referencing Jeffrey Pfeffer's 2018 book, *Dying for a Paycheck*, at length in the first chapter—not only covering the statistics presented by Pfeffer, but connecting them to bell hooks' diagnosis of our "nation's turning away from love." It is a powerful introduction to the ideas and organizations that follow. The authors proceed to not only ponder what it would look like if we were to build an economy that nurtures us, but show us what it looks like inside a diverse array of different circumstances where people are building a more resilient way of working and connecting based on well-being and building community, and meaning that restores us and moves us toward a beloved economy.

RUNNERS UP:



***How the Future Works: Leading Flexible Teams to Do the Best Work of Their Lives***

Brian Elliot, Sheela Subramanian, and Helen Kupp  
Wiley



***Satisfaction Guaranteed: How Zingerman's Built a Corner Deli into a Global Food Community***

Micheline Maynard  
Harper Wave



***Shared Sisterhood: How to Take Collective Action for Racial and Gender Equity at Work***

Tina Opie & Beth A. Livingston  
Harvard Business Review Press



***Still Broke: Walmart's Remarkable Transformation and the Limits of Socially Conscious Capitalism***

Rick Wartzman  
PublicAffairs





# Marketing & Communications/ Sales & Influence

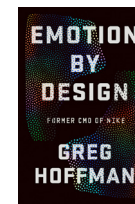
BEST IN CATEGORY:

***How Minds Change: The Surprising Science of Belief, Opinion, and Persuasion***

David McRaney  
Portfolio

The level of animosity in our public debate has become debilitating. If we are going to continue to govern ourselves effectively, we can't remain as divided as we are today. To lessen the level of division, we need to learn how to talk to each other even when we disagree. We also need to understand the nature of disagreement better. McRaney accomplished both, explaining why relaying facts is less persuasive than engaging with others lived experiences and emotions, and how we can change others' perceptions through withholding our condemnation and engaging in conversation. It can feel as if we are living in completely different realities, and to a certain extent, we are. McRaney helps us understand why and how to bridge the divide.

RUNNERS UP:



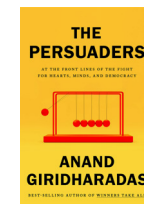
***Emotion By Design: Creative Leadership Lessons from a Life at Nike***  
Greg Hoffman  
Twelve



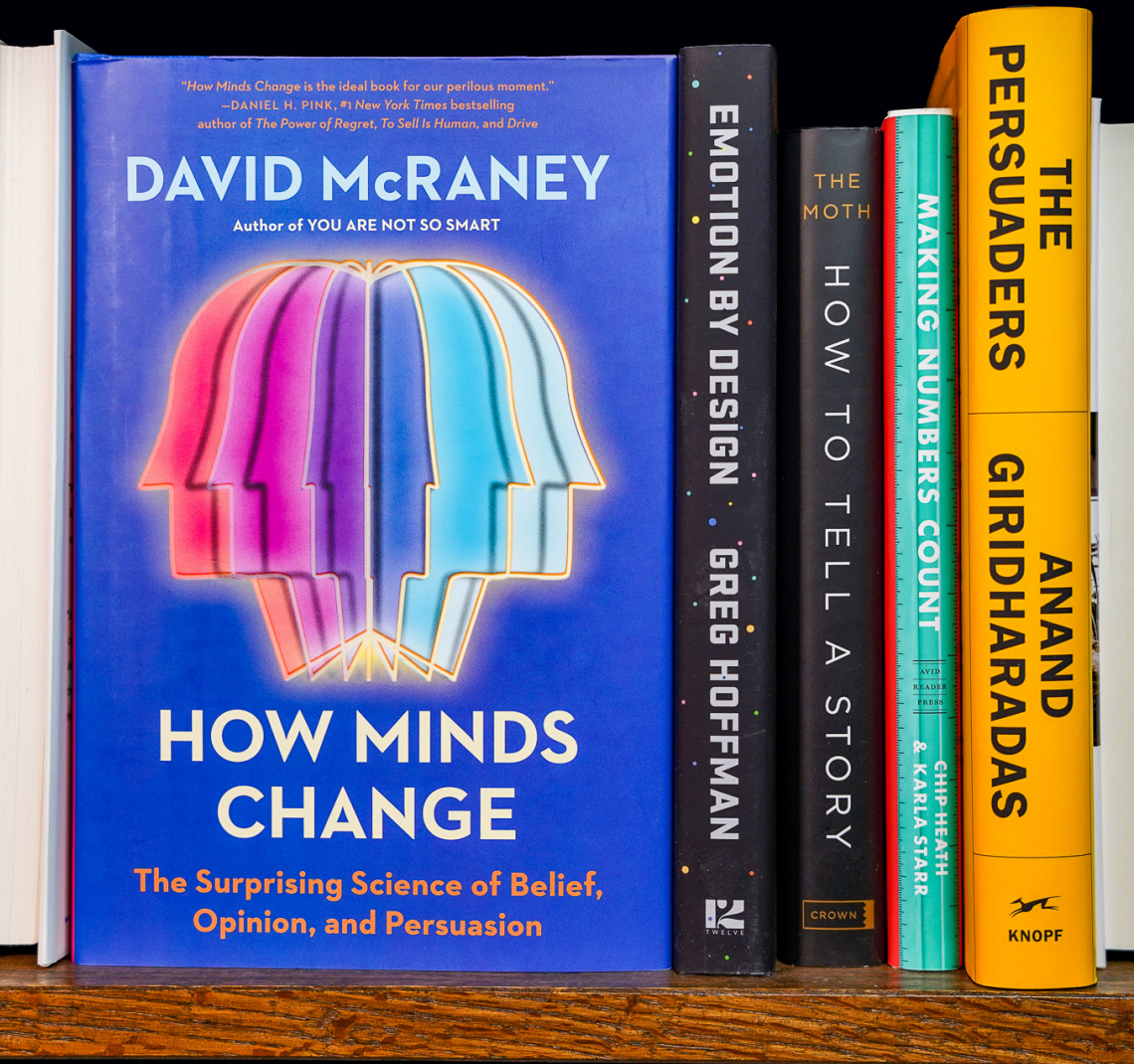
***How to Tell a Story: The Essential Guide to Memorable Storytelling from The Moth***  
Meg Bowles, Catherine Burns, Jenifer Hixson, Sarah Austin, Jenness, and Kate Tellers  
Crown



***Making Numbers Count: The Art and Science of Communicating Numbers***  
Chip Heath & Karla Starr  
Avid Reader Press



***The Persuaders: At the Front Lines of the Fight for Hearts, Minds, and Democracy***  
Anand Giridharadas  
Knopf





# Innovation & Creativity

BEST IN CATEGORY:

***Inspired: Understanding Creativity: A Journey Through Art, Science, and the Soul***

Matt Richtel

Mariner Books

Matt Richtel looks realistically at how creativity evolves across industries and across time, and how it is tied to our humanity. What he shows is that creativity cannot exist in a vacuum. Creative ideas and humans are built on the shoulders of the generations that have come before them, and their characteristics depend on adapting to the conditions of their environment. Creative individuals depend on being connected with their communities, but they also depend on internal review and rest. *Inspired* is a convincing and encouraging book that shows how, across the world and across time, the most fulfilling creativity occurs when we tap into our most true and complete selves without needing to put ourselves into specific creative categories or allowing others to do so.

RUNNERS UP:



***Build the Damn Thing: How to Start a Successful Business If You're Not a Rich White Guy***

Kathryn Finney  
Portfolio



***How Big-Tech Barons Smash Innovation—and How to Strike Back***

Ariel Ezrachi & Maurice E. Stucke

Harper Business



***She Builds: The Anti-Hustle Guide to Grow Your Business and Nourish Your Life***

Jadah Sellner  
Harper Business



***Visual Thinking: The Hidden Gifts of People Who Think in Pictures, Patterns, and Abstractions***

Temple Grandin  
Riverhead Books





# Personal Development & Human Behavior

## BEST IN CATEGORY:

***Stolen Focus: Why You Can't Pay Attention—and How to Think Deeply Again***

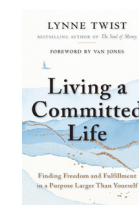
Johann Hari  
Crown

Johann Hari found and interviewed the foremost scientists and experts studying attention and gathered up the latest research on the act of focusing. In Hari's quest to discover how we can reconnect with the world around us and tame the metal beast that tends to control our every move, he embarks on a journey to fully disconnect from tech for three-months. The result is a book that will help every distracted office and any individual who finds themselves unfocused throughout their day reprioritize and regain their focus.

## RUNNERS UP:



***Bittersweet: How Sorrow and Longing Make Us Whole***  
Susan Cain  
Penguin Press



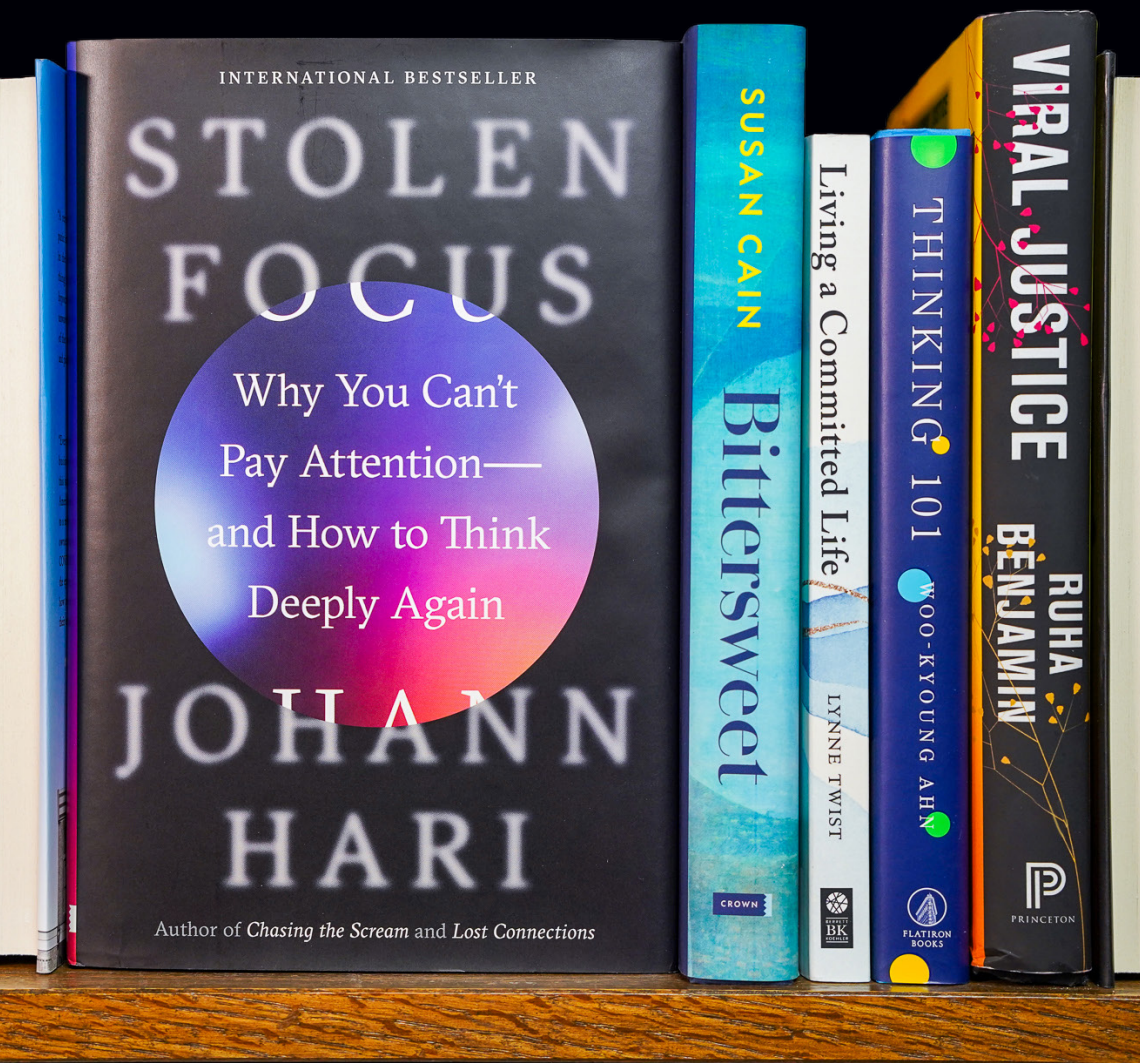
***Living a Committed Life: Finding Freedom and Fulfillment in a Purpose Larger Than Yourself***  
Lynne Twist  
Berrett-Koehler



***Thinking 101: How to Reason Better to Live Better***  
Woo-Kyoung Ahn  
Flatiron Books



***Viral Justice: How We Grow the World We Want***  
Ruha Benjamin  
Princeton University Press





# Current Events & Public Affairs

## BEST IN CATEGORY:

***Pandemic, Inc.: Chasing the Capitalists and Thieves Who Got Rich While We Got Sick***

David McSwane

One Signal Publishers

If there could be a better test case than a global pandemic for when and where an unfettered free market might fail us, I can't think of one. But it wasn't a free market failure alone. As David McSwane writes, "COVID-19 would render in high definition the contrasts of an inequitable nation. At the same time families waited in miles-long lines for groceries at food banks, the pandemic economy created about 500 new billionaires." At least 40 of those 500 were minted due to "the boom in biotech and healthcare stocks" in "companies that gained from COVID-19." The stock market soared as local economies sputtered and people suffered. As conspiracy theories proliferated, so did unscrupulous profiteers. The human cost has been, and continues to be, staggering.

## RUNNERS UP:



***Delinquent: Inside America's Debt Machine***

Elena Botella  
University of California  
Press



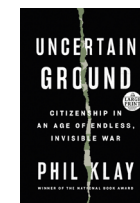
***Direct: The Rise of the Middleman Economy and the Power of Going to the Source***

Kathryn Judge  
Harper Business



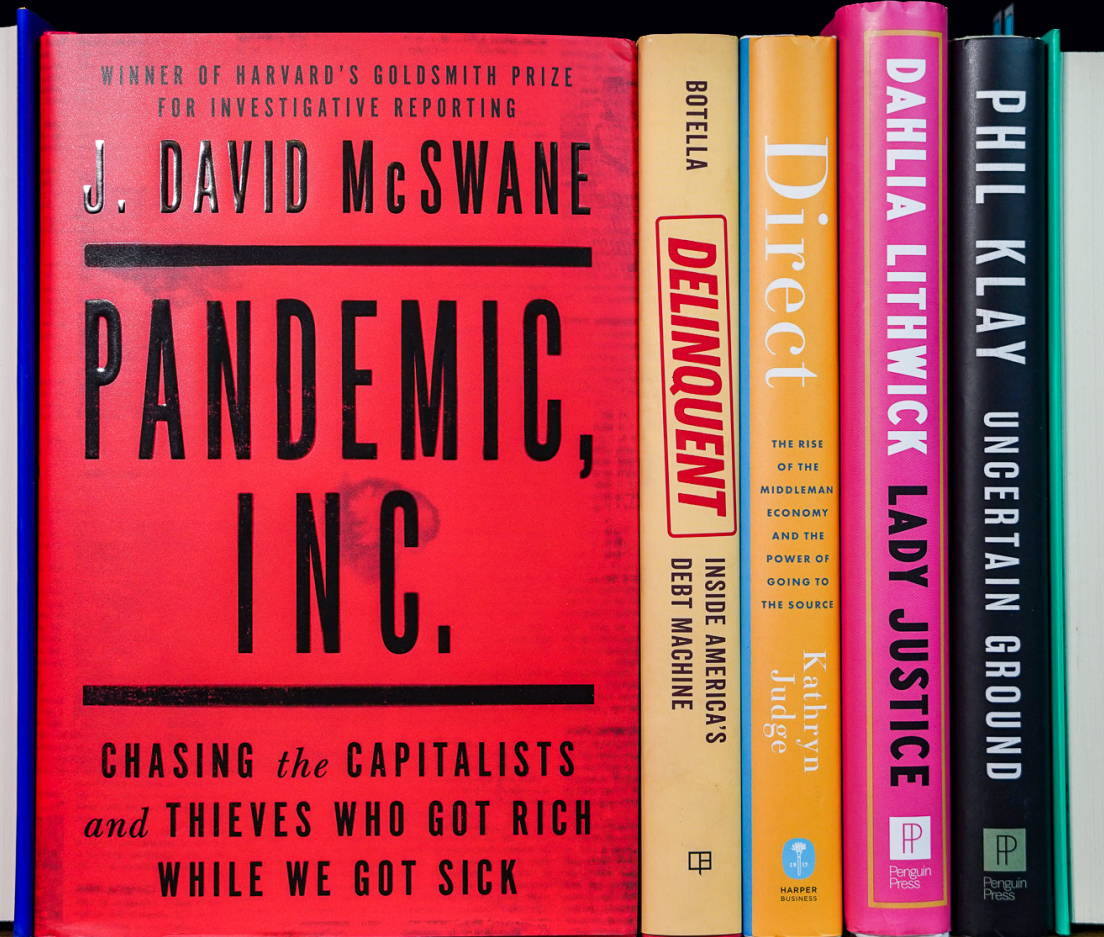
***Lady Justice: Women, the Law, and the Battle to Save America***

Dahlia Lithwick  
Penguin Press



***Uncertain Ground: Citizenship in an Age of Endless, Invisible War***

Phil Klay  
Penguin Press





# Narrative & Biography

## BEST IN CATEGORY:

***Shine Bright: A Very Personal History of Black Women in Pop***

Danyel Smith

Roc Lit 101

Danyel Smith's *Shine Bright* tells the story of the Dixie Cups, of Dionne Warwick and Cissy Houston, of Leontyne Price and Linda "Peaches" Greene, of Janet Jackson and Mariah Carey, and of so many more Black women whose intelligence, talent, and drive made the music that has created so much of American pop culture. Interweaved with those stories, she also relates the struggles and successes of her own life and career, which saw her rise to become the first Black and first woman editor in chief of *Vibe*. It is a mind-bogglingly ambitious formula, and Smith pulls it off with aplomb. It is also also a solid business book—about an individual career and about an industry that has not done well historically by those who create the product that produces the wealth, about the women who have defined the culture, and one woman who has covered their triumphs.

## RUNNERS UP:



***Meet Me by the Fountain: An Inside History of the Mall***  
Alexandra Lange  
Bloomsbury Publishing



***Milked: How an American Crisis Brought Together Midwestern Dairy Farmers and Mexican Workers***  
Ruth Conniff  
The New Press



***A Place at the Nayarit: How a Mexican Restaurant Nourished a Community***  
Natalia Molina  
University of California Press



***Saving Main Street: Small Business in the Time of COVID-19***  
Gary Rivlin  
Harper Business





# Big Ideas & New Perspectives

## BEST IN CATEGORY:

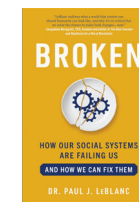
***The College Devaluation Crisis: Market Disruption, Diminishing ROI, and an Alternative Future of Learning***

Jason Wingard

Stanford Business Books

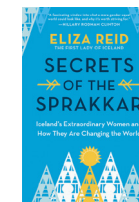
Because of his role as a university president, one might expect that Wingard would attempt to rehabilitate the image of the college degree and exhort employers to once again find value in it. He demonstrates that the promise of the college degree hasn't been entirely unfounded—it did historically have significant and immediate impact on graduates' job prospects and wealth. But today, four-year universities continue to rely on curricula meant to produce generalized critical thinkers, whereas employers increasingly want people with concrete, specialized skills and tangible proof of their ability to do the job well. As such, Wingard calls upon the industry of higher education to better understand the needs of its students and to prioritize not just the mere prestige of a college degree, but the equipping of students with the tools to find gainful employment upon graduation.

## RUNNERS UP:



***Broken: How Our Social Systems are Failing Us and How We Can Fix Them***

Paul LeBlanc  
Matt Holt



***Secrets of the Sprakkar: Iceland's Extraordinary Women and How They Are Changing the World***

Eliza Reid  
Sourcebooks



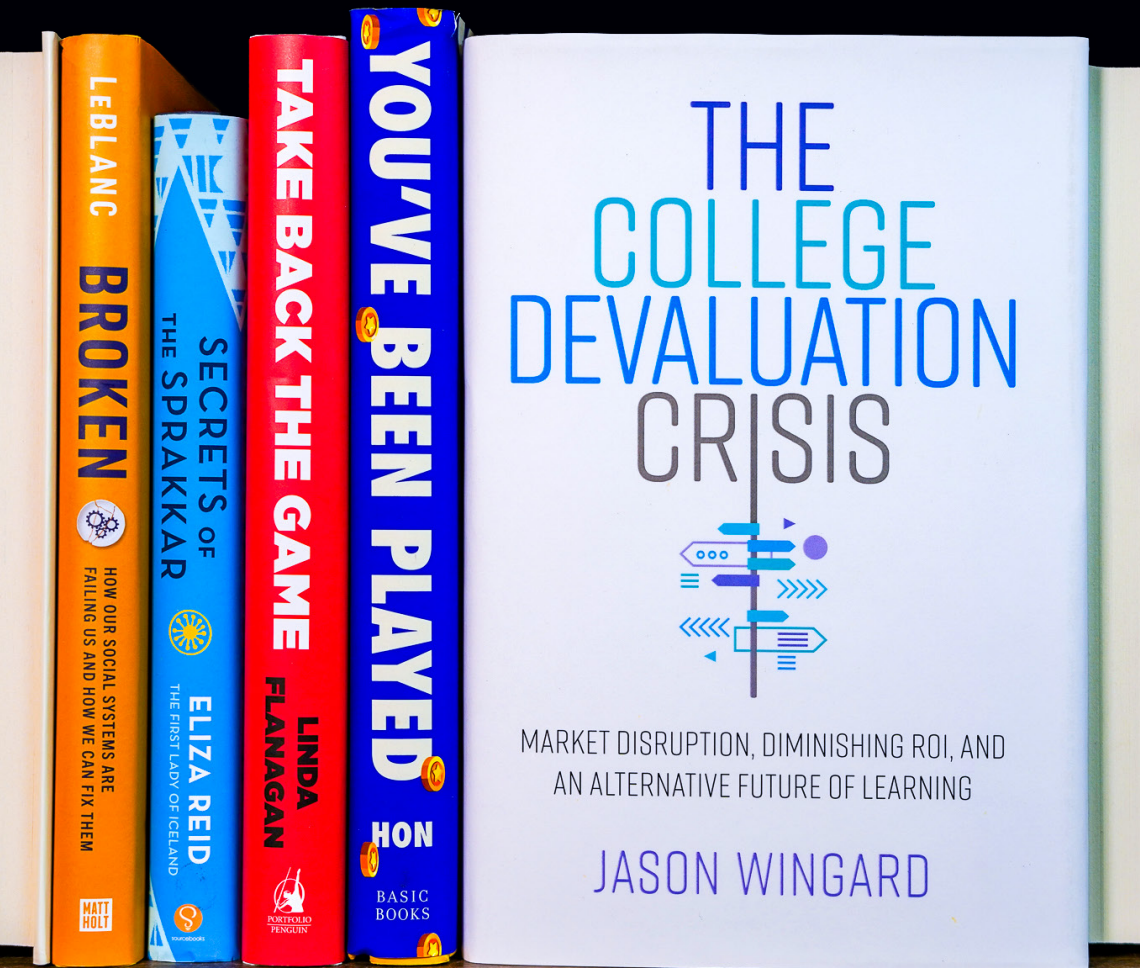
***Take Back the Game: How Money and Mania are Ruining Kids' Sports—And Why It Matters***

Linda Flanagan  
Portfolio



***You've Been Played: How Corporations, Governments, and Schools Use Games to Control Us All***

Adrian Hon  
Basic Books





# The Jack Covert Award

for contribution to the  
business book industry

## **Barbara Cave Henricks**

President & CEO, Cave Hendricks Communications

There is a mighty army of cooks in every book's kitchen, each one essential to the success of each one. And with each book they work on, year after year, these people make up the industry. And that's why the Jack Covert Award for Contribution to the Business Book industry exists. To recognize the people who, like our founder, Jack Covert, contribute in the overall evolution of a genre that we all believe is critical to the improvement of people's work lives, to the success of businesses, to the development of a broader culture that can respond positively to crises, large and small.

For a book to have that kind of impact, for an industry to have that kind of impact, these books and the authors who write them need to reach an audience. The books quite literally need to get in the hands of the people who read them, and the ideas in the minds of those who are most open to change. And to do that? We need publicists. Really talented publicists who know how to build a wind behind the back of a good book and push it into the public eye where it belongs. And one of the very best publicists in our industry, one who has worked with business names such as Jack Welch, Tom Rath, Seth Godin, Ram Charan, Joann Lublin and Maria Bartiromo, is Barbara Cave Henricks. In fact when our own company wrote *The 100 Best Business Books of All Time* for Portfolio, she was the one we turned for publicity.

Once a journalist, Barbara left her job editing and producing the news at NBC Radio, moving to New York and into publishing. After stints at Workman Publishing and Houghton Mifflin Company, she became publicity director at Goldberg McDuffie Communications, where she created and led the business book division.

In 2007, Barbara opened her own firm in Austin TX, which represents about 25 nonfiction titles and authors a year. She now guides a team who are every bit as caring and deliberate and motivated to drive a book's success as she has always been.

Just months before Jack passed away in 2021, he wrote an email to me noting that "BTW Barbara should be the next." So we are proud, in Jack's stead, to give the Jack Covert Award for Contribution to the Business Book Industry to Barbara Cave Henricks.





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## AUTHOR SERVICES

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- Our extensive logistics expertise is coupled with thorough bestseller reporting. Our sales are reported to NPD BookScan, *The New York Times*, and our own monthly syndicated bestseller list (distributed through the Tribune News Service).
- We also serve as the fulfillment partner for the semi-annual J.P. Morgan Reading List (approximately 25,000 copies sold per program), and have a primary role in funneling publisher recommendations to JPM's review staff.

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## EDITORIAL & ADVERTISING

Having come out of an independent bookstore, and knowing that finding the right book at the right time can change someone's life, we've always maintained an ethos of handselling books. With no bricks and mortar bookshop in which to meet our customers face-to-face, our conversations take place online in the in-depth reviews we write, in the author manifestos and interviews we share, and the many other ways we engage with books and the publishing industry editorially.

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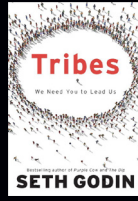


**THE  
PORCHLIGHT  
BUSINESS  
BOOK  
AWARDS**

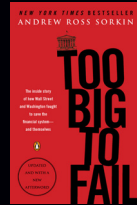
2007



2008



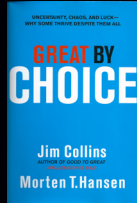
2009



2010



2011



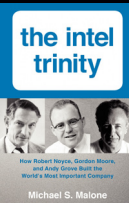
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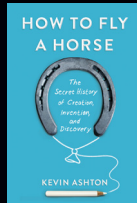
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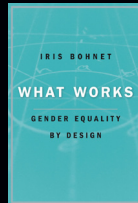
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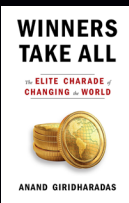
2016



2017



2018



2019



2020



2021



We believe that books can help create more humane, diverse, modern, and effective businesses, stronger communities, and a better world. The Porchlight Business Book Awards exist to recognize the best books published every year, and all the people who helped bring them to life. While the books we choose are not always what most would consider traditional business books, they are the books we believe are the most important for businesses to consider.

