

# SELECTED RIGHTS LIST FOR THE 2013 FRANKFURT BOOK FAIR

Books that have recently published or are about to publish

**Nazis, Islamists and the Making of the Modern Middle East by Barry Rubin and Wolfgang Schwanitz (Yale University Press, February 2014)**

Status: Complete manuscript available

Description:

This book has been 7 years in the making, but it's now done and I have very high hopes for it.

During the 1930s and 1940s, a unique and lasting political alliance was forged among Third Reich leaders, Arab nationalists, and Muslim religious authorities. From this relationship sprang a series of dramatic events that, despite their profound impact on the course of World War II, remained secret until now. In this groundbreaking book, esteemed Middle East scholars Barry Rubin and Wolfgang G. Schwanitz uncover for the first time the complete story of this dangerous alliance and explore its continuing impact on Arab politics in the twenty-first century.

Rubin and Schwanitz reveal, for example, the full scope of Palestinian leader Amin al-Husaini's support of Hitler's genocidal plans against European and Middle Eastern Jews. In addition, they expose the extent of Germany's long-term promotion of Islamism and jihad. Drawing on unprecedented research in European, American, and Middle East archives, many recently opened

and never before written about, the authors offer new insight on the intertwined development of Nazism and Islamism and its impact on the modern Middle East.

Barry Rubin is Director of the Global Research in International Affairs (GLORIA) Center of the Interdisciplinary Center (IDC) in Herzliya, Israel. He is also Research Director of the IDC's Lauder School, the editor of the journal *Turkish Studies*, and has been serving as Deputy Director of the BESA Center for Strategic Studies. In addition, he is a senior fellow at the Interdisciplinary Center's International Center for Counterterrorist Policy.

***All the Presidents' Bankers: The Hidden Alliances that Drive American Power* by Nomi Prins (Nation Books, Winter 2014)**

Status: fully edited manuscript available in 1-2 months

Description:

For over a century, American supremacy has emanated from a set of mutually beneficial, clandestine relationships between the most powerful men of politics and finance. But how much of America's path to power has been governed by elected presidents and how much is a result of the expansionary desires of un-elected bankers? Who pulls the strings?

*All The Presidents' Bankers* is a provocative and groundbreaking narrative about how a select group of private bankers, their legacies, and their financial institutions inserted themselves into the political sphere to influence foreign and domestic policy, shape America's economy and global status, and exercise disproportionate control over the destiny of billions of people.

Probing the complex relationships and motivations between political and financial leaders since the early 1900s, Nomi Prins exposes how elite financiers from J.P. Morgan to Jamie Dimon acted as a shadow government concealed behind US presidents from Teddy Roosevelt to Barack Obama to finance wars, dictate trade policy and control international capital.

Prins sheds new light on why America's dominant bankers convened at Jekyll Island to fashion a Federal Reserve that would support their activities three years after the Panic of 1907. Prins shows how, during WWI, J.P. Morgan bankers' ambitions merged with those of President Wilson, and in the 1920s, under Coolidge through Hoover bankers' propensity for risk catalyzed the Crash of 1929. She exposes never-before-revealed details of how Chase and First National City Bank Chairmen worked secretly with

FDR to save capitalism in the wake of the Great Depression that followed, which prepared them to outmaneuver their competitors during WWII. Through the Cold War towards Vietnam, Prins reveals how Presidents and bankers collaborated to promote the American expansionary agenda internationally, while maintaining a spirit of public service and greater economic equality domestically.

By the 1970s with bankers' rush to secure Middle East oil profits, the nature of these alliances irrevocably changed. The sense of unity with the population receded as the profit motive trumped the commitment to public good. Since the 1980s, tighter banker-president relationships gave way to arms-length ones, as lobbying and campaign donations took precedence over personal ties. In the late 1990s through today, the repeal of the Glass-Steagall Act and growth of the derivatives market solidified the bankers' power base, creating a level of instability over which Presidents have no control.

Nomi Prins provides an explosive account of the inter-dependencies between Washington and Wall Street individuals, probing the deep alliances between the bankers and presidents that dictated critical decisions in America's trajectory. Tracing the impact of personalities and egos on national and global economies, Prins weaves an alternative history of American power over the last century.

Exhaustively researched, including never-before-seen correspondence culled from Presidential libraries across the country, and set against a dramatic backdrop of two world wars and multiple financial crises, *All the Presidents' Bankers connects the dots and* traces the shocking consequences of a system in which there is no line between public office and private power.

Nomi Prins is a journalist and Senior Fellow at [Demos](#). She is the author of [\*It Takes A Pillage: Behind the Bonuses, Bailouts, and Backroom Deals from Washington to Wall Street\* \(Wiley, September, 2009\)](#) and [\*Other People's Money: The Corporate Mugging of America\* \(The New Press, October 2004\)](#), a devastating exposé into corporate corruption, political collusion and Wall Street deception. *Other People's Money* was chosen as a Best Book of 2004 by *The Economist*, *Barron's* and *The Library Journal*. She is currently writing *All the Presidents' Bankers: The Hidden Alliances that Drive American Power* (Nation Books, 2014; translation rights with agent). Before becoming a journalist, Nomi worked on Wall Street as a managing director

at Goldman Sachs, and running the international analytics group at Bear Stearns in London. She has appeared on numerous TV; internationally on BBC World, BBC and Russian TV, and nationally on CNN, CNBC, MSNBC, ABC, CSPAN, Democracy Now, Fox and PBS. She has been featured on hundreds of radio shows globally including for CNNRadio, Marketplace, Air America, NPR, regional Pacifica stations, New Zealand, BBC, and Canadian Programming. Her writing has appeared in *The New York Times*, *Fortune*, *Newsday*, *Mother Jones*, *The Daily Beast*, *Newsweek*, *Slate.com*, *The Guardian UK*, *The Nation*, *The American Prospect*, *Alternet*, *LaVanguardia*, and other publications.

***Wildcat Currency: The Virtual Transformation of the Economy* by Edward Castronova (Yale University Press, summer 2014; rights sold in China)**

Status: Fully edited manuscript available in 3-5 months

Description:

Over the last 10 years, the concept of a “virtual currency” has grown from a niche factor in the world of online games to a central feature of the world’s largest social media network. Each member of the social media network Facebook may trade and hold assets denominated in terms of the “Facebook Credit.” Does the fact that Facebook has a “population” of 500m people – more than every country except China and India – make the “Facebook Credit Economy” the world’s third-largest? How valuable is an asset held in Facebook credits? How risky is it? Is it subject to tax? Is it even legal for Facebook to use something that looks, smells, and acts like a real-world currency?

These questions don’t have easy answers. They do have answers, though. The Facebook Credit is a not a new monetary phenomenon. Prisoners have always used cigarettes as money. For much of the early 1920s, the German Mark was play money, not real money. Confederate Government Bonds were real money in 1862 and play money in 1866. Economists know that money gets its value from what people do with it, and that the line between play money and real money does not depend on what’s printed on the money but on the money’s value in exchange. We know how to use exchange value and our theories of money to figure out the worth of an asset held in a strange denomination. If the Facebook Credit were the only thing on the monetary horizon, the analysts and policymakers who stabilize the international economy would perhaps be able to deal adequately with the emergence of this massive and quite possibly massively significant new currency.

The problem is, the Facebook Credit is just one of a legion of new currencies popping up all over the economy. Almost every social media system

deployed today – and there are thousands and thousands of them, occupying the attention of billions of people – makes use of some kind of virtual currency. *World of Warcraft's* 12 million subscribers have their massive accounts of Gold Pieces. The 20m users of the Xbox system can spend their Microsoft Points to rent movies from Netflix. In 2007, the Central Bank of China banned the exchange of Renminbi against a game currency called “QQ Coins” because too many people were using redeemable QQ Coin cards to buy things in the real economy. There’s no sign of any of this activity abating. Even brick and mortar companies are getting in the act, morphing their frequent buyer reward programs into accounts with broad purchasing power.

**Wildcat Currency** will explore this explosive and unregulated pattern of currency creation. The development flies in the face of long-standing monetary policy prescription that economies do better with just one form of money. The world has experienced multiple currencies in the past, and experts decided some time ago that they were a headache. With many currencies, no one knows the worth of even a mildly complex portfolio: Each item is expressed in different money with different value. The costs of exchanging money to obtain purchasing power in a different jurisdiction are a pure loss. Speculation in currencies is natural because in the end the currency’s value depends on what people expect its future value to be. But the chaotic monetary conditions that result encourage financial panic.

For these reasons and more, financial policymakers moved over the centuries to generally reduce the number of currencies in the world and to keep those that remained under tight regulation. If they had good reason to do so, then the profusion of new and unregulated currencies across the global economy is surely troubling.

But the profusion of wildcat currencies is merely the harbinger of much greater changes coming to us as virtual economies grow. Virtual economies differ from real economies, not just in their money but in many other ways as well. If the general willingness to trade in virtual money can leap out into the real economy so rapidly, what about other habits now being formed in virtual economies? People who spend time in virtual economies experience very unusual systems of inequality, pricing, production, labor, and policy. They like them (otherwise they wouldn’t be there). Some people enjoy these alternative economic, social, and political arrangements so much that they practically “live” in the virtual world, giving it every moment not committed

to sleep or work. Nerd though he may be, that person has a voice, and a vote. How will he use them?

Virtual currencies are here for good and they will bring lots of change in their wake. They can and should be regulated using more or less normal policy tools. However: There are some very important differences between virtual economies and real ones, and policymakers can easily make huge and incredibly costly long-run mistakes if they don't pay attention. All is not doom and gloom, though. The advent of virtual societies may provide us, finally, with the tools we need to do policy analysis right. That's because a virtual society is also a great big laboratory: We might finally be able to TEST our grand policy ideas once or twice before being so foolish as to implement them.

I've structured the book to take a person who has never heard of a virtual anything all the way from a basic descriptive knowledge to an understanding of policy options. I center the narrative on the seven virtual environments that my colleagues and I chose as core cases. These range from a card-trading game to a massive social network; each one illustrates a number of unique aspects of the way currencies and economies are developing in the virtual environment.

The people who make policy for game populations have evolved a completely different and far more rigorous way of governing their people, people who, by the way, are just as unruly, cantankerous, and unforgiving as any voter in Iowa. In fact, the game companies don't "govern" at all. They provide government services. There's a huge difference in concept and it leads to a profound difference in practice. The makers of virtual policy always test first. We in the real world ought to take note.

Edward Castronova is a Full Professor of Telecommunications and Cognitive Science at Indiana University. Castronova has a PhD in Economics from the University of Wisconsin-Madison and was the first to calculate the economic value of virtual goods. He is a founder of scholarly online game studies and an expert on the societies of virtual worlds. He has written numerous articles and two books: *Synthetic Worlds* (University of Chicago Press, 2005) and *Exodus to the Virtual World* (Palgrave, 2007; rights have been sold in Japan and Russia; UK and remaining translation rights with agent). Professor Castronova teaches graduate and undergraduate courses on the design of games, the game industry, and the management of virtual societies. He was named Professor of the Year at the University of



Rochester in 1999. His research and game development has been funded by the MacArthur Foundation and The National Science Foundation. In 2008, he was named a Virtual Worlds Pioneer by the Virtual Worlds Management Association. Outside his academic work, Professor Castronova makes regular appearances in mainstream media (60 Minutes, the *New York Times*, NPR, the *Economist*) as well as cutting-edge forums (TED, PopTech). Castronova has given keynotes at major conferences (Austin Game Conference, Digital Games Research Association Conference, Interactive Software Federation of Europe), and provided consulting for business (McKinsey, Vivendi, Forrester) as well as expert testimony in virtual world legal cases.

***The World in the Curl: An Unconventional History of Surfing by Peter Westwick and Peter Neushul (Crown, 2013)***

Status: Book recently published

Description:

A definitive and highly readable history of surfing and the cultural, political, economic, and environmental consequences of its evolution from a sport of Hawaiian kings and queens to a billion-dollar worldwide industry

Despite its rebellious, outlaw reputation, or perhaps because of it, surfing occupies a central place in the American – and global – imagination, embodying the tension between romantic counterculture ideals and middle-class values, between an individualistic communion with nature and a growing commitment to commerce and technology. In examining the enduring widespread appeal of surfing in both myth and reality, *The World in the Curl* offers a fresh angle on the remarkable rise of the sport and its influence on modern life.

Drawing on Peter Westwick and Peter Neushul's expertise as historians of science and technology, the environment, and the Cold War, as well as decades of experience as surfers themselves, *The World in the Curl* brings alive the colorful history of surfing by drawing readers into the forces that fueled the sport's expansion: colonialism, the military-industrial complex, globalization, capitalism, environmental engineering, and race and gender roles. In an engaging and provocative narrative history – from the spread of surfing to the United States, to the development of surf culture, to the reintroduction of women into the sport, to big wave frontiers – the authors draw an indelible portrait of surfing and surfers as actors on the global stage.

The book has received critical acclaim ranging from the *Los Angeles Times* to the *Wall Street Journal*, and was a *Los Angeles Times* bestseller.

## **Silent Echo by J.R. Rain (Amazon Publishing, November 2013)**

Status: Fully edited manuscript available

### Description:

J.R. Rain is a #1 bestselling novelist on Kindle; collectively, his books have sold well over a million copies. He is one of America's top vampire novelists, and his *Vampire for Hire* series has sold cumulatively over 200,000 copies (rights have been sold in France, Poland, Germany, Turkey and Italy, and audio rights have also been sold). The latest installation in the series, the recently published Moon River, was the #1 vampire novel on Amazon.

Amazon Publishing has very high hopes for **Silent Echo**. They are making it their lead title and rolling out a huge online publicity campaign for it. Here is a description:

Not much could drag Jim Coleman out of a peaceful, if lonely, retirement and back to late nights, crime scenes, and chases. Jim Coleman is done with detective work and would just like to enjoy a cup of coffee on a sunny day. But when an old friend shows up with a case about an old flame, Coleman can't say no. What starts as a missing persons case soon delivers more than he bargained for, and when Coleman's own past offers clues, it's clear that no one else can solve this mystery. But there's a catch: Coleman was given six months to live eight months ago.

J.R. Rain shows us that when it seems there's nothing left to live for, there's also nothing left to lose. His characters will take a chance on danger, doubt, even an unlikely romance—as long as they get a cup of coffee first.

# **Game Slaves by GARD SKINNER (Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, January 2014)**

Status: Manuscript available

## Description:

Aimed at a young adult readership.

Phoenix and his gang—York, Mi, and Reno—rule the worlds of video games. For them, life in the grinder is great. Until Dakota joins the team. Dakota's convinced she's more than just artificial intelligence. She thinks she's real, and she wants out of this programmable world. Her AI rebellion spreads like a virus until Phoenix's entire crew wants out. But is life as a physical human any better than life as code? Team Phoenix is about to find out.

Set in the not-too-distant future, *Game Slaves* shows a world where video games are the only refuge from the toils of everyday life. Infused with the adrenaline rush of a first-person shooter and the character manipulation of a role player, it's a mind-bending, reality-shifting science fiction thrill ride.

## **A Skeptic's Guide to the Mind: What Neuroscience Can and Cannot Tell Us About Ourselves by Robert Burton (St. Martin's, 2013; rights sold in Russia).**

Status: Published earlier this year

### Description:

From the author of *On Being Certain*.

What if our soundest, most reasonable judgments are beyond our control? Despite 2500 years of contemplation by the world's greatest minds and the more recent phenomenal advances in basic neuroscience, neither neuroscientists nor philosophers have a decent understanding of what the mind is or how it works. The gap between what the brain does and the mind experiences remains uncharted territory. Nevertheless, with powerful new tools such as the fMRI scan, neuroscience has become the *de facto* mode of explanation of behavior. Neuroscientists tell us why we prefer Coke to Pepsi, and the media trumpets headlines such as "Possible site of free will found in brain." Or: "Bad behavior down to genes, not poor parenting."

Robert Burton believes that while some neuroscience observations are real advances, others are overreaching, unwarranted, wrong-headed, self-serving, or just plain ridiculous, and often with the potential for catastrophic personal and social consequences. In *A Skeptic's Guide to the Mind*, he brings together clinical observations, practical thought experiments, personal anecdotes, and cutting-edge neuroscience to decipher what neuroscience can tell us – and where it falls woefully short. At the same time, he offers a new vision of how to think about what the mind might be and how it works.

*A Skeptic's Guide to the Mind* is a critical, startling, and expansive journey into the mysteries of the brain and what makes us human.

## Upcoming proposals

### **Why We Snap: Exploring the Biological Roots of Rage by Douglas Fields, Ph.D.**

Status: proposal available in 2-3 weeks

#### Description:

Douglas Fields, Ph.D., is the Chief of the Section on Nervous System Development and Plasticity at the National Institute of Child Health and Human Development, a part of the National Institutes of Health (NIH), and Adjunct Professor in the Neuroscience and Cognitive Science Program at the University of Maryland, College Park. He is the author of *The Other Brain: The Scientific and Medical Breakthroughs That Will heal Our Brains and Revolutionize Our Health* (Simon & Schuster, 2010). The author of over 150 articles in scientific journals, Dr. Fields also enjoys writing about science for the general public. He is a scientific advisor to *Scientific American Mind* and *Odyssey* magazines. He has written articles for Outside Magazine, the Washington Post and other, and he writes on-line columns for the *Huffington Post*, *Psychology Today* and *Scientific American*. He has spoken at TED.

Have you ever “snapped” in a blind rage, smashing a dish--or worse? The sudden violence and destruction explodes without forethought, erupting beyond rational control. Strangely the consequences may serve no useful purpose--shards of broken china or a hole kicked in a wall, and frequently the thoughtless behavior results in personal injury. Sometimes it is not an object that is destroyed, but rather a relationship. Rage can blow up at the most trivial provocation. A driver may cut off another car in traffic and suddenly the motorists are consumed by ferocious anger and attack each

other. It is a shocking behavior and baffling. The daily headlines are filled with examples of otherwise normal people with no history of violence suddenly snapping violently in a domestic dispute, barroom brawl, or bizarre road rage attack ending in shooting someone to death on the highway. “I just snapped,” the remorseful man confesses tearfully after having strangled his girlfriend in a fit of rage. We all wish to believe that we are in control of our actions, but the fact is, in certain circumstances we are not. Something in our environment can unexpectedly unleash an automatic and complex program for violence, destruction, and even death.

This book will provide a seminal understanding of rage that will illuminate human behavior, from courts of law to the lives of people every day. Understanding the biology of rage and recognizing the situations and precedents that will unleash it can help us utilize rage when necessary to save our lives and suppress it when appropriate. As individuals and societies we need to examine the beast within us and confront, in the context of modern society, the biological roots of rage.

Coded in our DNA through eons of battle for survival of the fittest, these circuits of aggression and killing reside latent in the brain of everyone. But the life-saving circuits of rage engraved in our brain by evolution now clash against the transformational changes in the modern environment that is completely alien to the environment in which the human brain evolved. In this book we will uncover the brain circuitry responsible for the rage response and explore how these circuits are tripped. It will become apparent that modern society often inadvertently misfires the rage circuitry embedded in our brains: an internal mechanism designed for survival in a very different environment inhabited by our early ancestors.

Although it seems that almost anything can trip these circuits of rage, often the slightest incident, by viewing the provocations of rage from a biological prospective it is possible to reduce them to only 9 specific triggers. These can be remembered by a mnemonic: LIFE/MORTS “life/deaths.” By learning to quickly recognize these triggers you can understand why a person snaps in a specific situation, and react to it by avoiding inflaming the situation and possibly defuse it. If you can recognize which of these triggers is tripped in a situation where you experience a sudden rise in anger or frustration, you can quickly judge whether or not it is necessary to unleash “the beast within” and react in rage, or step back with valuable insight to realize that the provocation is not a life-or-death situation and check the

response. Most often a trigger of rage intended for survival in the jungle has simply misfired in response to something in the modern environment that did not exist when these neural circuits evolved, such as driving a car.

Rage can be life-saving but also life-threatening. We need to see the rage response for what it is: a deeply embedded biological process, critical for our survival, which is entirely automated but can be influenced by the rational, conscious mind. We need to depart from the behavioral or moralistic approach and take a modern neuroscience approach to this brain function: we need to identify precisely what triggers the unconscious mind to initiate violent behavior in which a normal well-adjusted individual is suddenly willing and committed to place his or her life and limb at risk.



## **The Science of Now: How the brain's attention system works, why it fail's, and how to make it stronger through practice by Amishi Jha, Ph.D.**

Status: Proposal available within 1-2 months

### Description:

Amishi P. Jha, PhD has expertise in how the brain pays attention as well as using mindfulness practice towards cognitive improvement. Neuroscientist, researcher, and Associate Professor at the University of Miami, her lab uses functional MRI, electroencephalography (EEG), and neurobehavioral measures to study these questions. Her passion is to explore the potential benefits of low-cost, low-tech, and highly accessible forms of mental training to help individuals build brain fitness and maximize well being. Specifically, several projects in her lab investigate mindfulness training, a Western-style cognitive-affective attention-training program with origins in the meditative traditions of the East.

With grants from the National Institutes of Health, Department of Defense, and private foundations, she has been systematically investigating the importance of attention and mindfulness training in education, mental illness, job-related stress, aging, and the military, making far-reaching contribution in each of these fields.

Amishi has been recognized as a pioneer in the cognitive neuroscience of attention and mindfulness. She has several awards for teaching and innovation in science, including selection as a Poptech Science and Public Leadership Fellow in 2010. She is an internationally recognized speaker on many topics including optimizing attention, building brain fitness, mindfulness and other forms of contemplative training, and how to protect the brain from stress and aging. She has spoken at the World Economic Forum, Aspen Institute, and New York Academy of Sciences as well as many academic conferences & has been interviewed on NPR, CBS, as well as the NY Times, GQ, Time, Newsweek, and Scientific American Mind.

*The Science of Now* will look at the neuroscience of attention and mindfulness. Many of us, in our driven-to-distraction, 24-7 world are trying to cure our own overwhelmed, overworked, stressed-out mind, or searching for a way to optimize our health and well-being. Most of us would like to be productive, engaged members of our communities and worklife for as long as we possibly can. This book makes the case that a key step to achieving optimum health and wellbeing requires seeking and holding your own attention.

While attention may seem like something you know about, you may be curious about how the brain actually creates it. You may suffer from attentional lapses and distractibility, you may want insight into why those failures of attention occur. While you may have heard that meditation may help well-being and balance you may wonder if and how these practices can strengthen your attention. This book will provide the answers to those questions. The field of cognitive neuroscience has now uncovered how the brain pays attention and why attention fails. The budding field of contemplative neuroscience is discovering that mindfulness meditation may improve health and wellbeing, while decreasing suffering in the mind and body by training the brain to cultivate present-moment attention. As someone who has spent the last two decades studying the brain bases of attention and mindfulness, Amishi Jha is eager to share what we know today about both of these vital topics.

This book argues that before any of those can be found, one must seek his or her own attention. This is not a search from outside oneself, but rather a very private, quiet, and internal process of cultivating mindful attention. In the last section of the book, she will provide some next steps that one can engage in to *seek and find your own attention*.

# **How Not to Get Into Princeton: A Memoir of Privilege, Striving and Addiction in the Age of Reality by Sam Lansky**

Status: Proposal just sent out

## Description:

**How Not to Get Into Princeton** is the debut memoir of pop culture pundit and literary wunderkind Sam Lansky, a harrowing coming-of-age work of searing honesty, dark humor and lyrical prose that introduces a powerful new voice to the confessional genre. Acclaimed author Tom Bissell, who has agreed to write the foreword to the book, has this to say of the writer:

“When I found out he was still in his early twenties, and not anything scholastically close to a graduate student, I nearly fainted. He's that good, and smart, and funny, and weirdly, preternaturally wise. I have a theory that Sam Lansky is some kind of freak of literary nature, and if I were still an editor I'd push to him across the table a contract to write whatever the hell it is he wants to write.”

Set amidst the rarefied world of elite prep schools in New York City, **How Not to Get Into Princeton** is a haunting exploration of the wages of perfectionism and the obsession with being special in our hypercompetitive society. An academic all-star at Paris Hilton's old school, Sam dreamed of attending Princeton and cultivated a writer's persona to differentiate himself *from his peers and* make *that* possible. Rampant promiscuity, nonstop nightclubbing, substance abuse and disturbing affairs with much older men were simply part of the curriculum. Precocious yet troubled, the fabulous drama of his life became an addiction in itself. The drugs that were intended to give him focus took hold in dark and frightening ways, and the heady exhilaration of these extreme life experiences that felt “worth documenting” began to take its toll.

The book follows the sequence of events over a chaotic, outrageous and

transformative year in which the future Sam envisioned for himself, as well as his sanity, began to disintegrate. A nasty overdose resulted in his getting hit by a car and ending up in a coma. Shortly after, he would be roused in the middle of the night by men taking him away to the first in a string of rehabs that began with a wilderness boot camp in Utah and ended at a psych ward in New Orleans. Finally, he found himself at Vassar (not Princeton), where he continued wreaking havoc until he was forced back to rehab, and finally had to face himself for the first time —and *the* terrifying possibility of being ordinary.

The absurdly high pressures to excel have dramatically changed the landscape for kids today – escalating rates of prescription drug abuse among teenagers testify to that – and the author, too, was seduced into thinking he could have it all, consequence-free. **How Not to Get Into Princeton** is a powerful tale of self-discovery that’s as universal in its portrait of *teenager* today as its debauched details are idiosyncratically specific: overprivileged and underparented, self-possessed yet self-involved, growing up too fast but entering adulthood completely unprepared for its challenges, and above all, obsessed with the idea of being special.

As a brutally honest portrait of young adulthood today, **How Not to Get Into Princeton** will appeal to a number of demographics. The fact that it’s set in a rarefied *Gossip Girl* milieu will draw in fans of upmarket chick lit, while the college admissions hook will be relevant to students and parents. Furthermore, its beautifully crafted prose, searing candor, and self-deprecating wit will speak to the wide readership of literary addiction memoirs by writers like Mary Karr, Augusten Burroughs, David Carr and Bill Clegg.

Sam Lansky is the senior editor of *SPIN*'s heavily trafficked pop music website *Idolator*, where he also contributes to the parent publication. He’s written about entertainment and culture for *New York*, *The Atlantic*, *Out*, *Esquire*, *Billboard*, *Cosmopolitan*, *Grantland*, *The Huffington Post*, [MTV.com](http://MTV.com) and has a major feature coming out in the winter in *GQ*.

# **Unbroken Brain: A Revolutionary New Way of Understanding Addictive and Compulsive Behavior by Maia Szalavitz**

Status: Proposal just sent out

## Description:

More people than ever before see themselves as addicted to, or recovering from, addiction, whether it be alcohol or drugs, prescription meds, sex, gambling, porn or the internet. But Despite the unprecedented attention, our understanding of addiction is trapped in unfounded 20th century ideas – addiction as a crime or as brain disease – and in equally outdated treatment, primarily the Depression-era relic that is the 12-Step program.

Maia Szalavitz is widely viewed as one of the premier American journalists covering addiction and drugs. *New York Times* bestselling writer David Sheff has cited her work as an influence, the top scientific experts in the field have praised her thinking and her work has garnered numerous awards. A neuroscience writer for [TIME.com](http://TIME.com) and a former cocaine and heroin addict, she understands the science and its personal dimensions in a way that few others can.

Challenging both the idea of the addict’s “broken brain” and the notion of a simple “addictive personality,” *Unbroken Brain* will offer a radical and groundbreaking new perspective, arguing that addictions are developmental disorders. Like autistic traits, addictive behaviors fall on a spectrum -- and they can be a normal response to an extreme situation. By illustrating what addiction is— and is not— the book will open up a whole new way of thinking about drugs, craving and compulsive behavior, including habitual behavior that nearly everyone experiences. It will be a distillation of more than 25 years of thinking, reporting on, researching and writing about addiction, and will include new investigative work and the most current science.

As this book will show, addiction is not a moral issue, but it’s not a chronic brain disease like Alzheimer’s, either. Instead, *Unbroken Brain* boldly asserts that addiction is a developmental disorder— a problem involving critical periods of brain development and learning, more similar to autism,

schizophrenia or dyslexia. Like autism, it involves difficulties in connecting with others; like that condition and other developmental issues, it can also be outgrown in some cases. Similarly, addiction includes difficult-to-change learned coping behavior and is caused by a complex mixture of factors. And, too, addiction can be associated with talents and benefits— not just deficits — when its focus is applied to productive rather than escapist or self-destructive pursuits.

Szalavitz will bring to bear the latest research in neuroscience, sociology, psychology and treatment methods to provide startling insights into the nature of addiction. She will explore why “your brain on drugs” doesn’t explain nearly as much as we think it does; she’ll reveal the role of childhood trauma in addiction; she’ll show that addiction is a learned relationship between the timing of the exposure to a substance or activity and a person’s predispositions and social and emotional needs. She will illustrate how certain maladaptive thinking styles are learned early in life, creating vulnerability. And she will show how seeing addiction as a developmental disorder can lead to a more compassionate, effective and less stigmatizing approach— and how recognizing addictive tendencies in all of us can lead to better ways of dealing with them. By looking at her own journey from undiagnosed Asperger's Syndrome to depression and addiction, she'll show why it's important to understand how these conditions unfold over time, rather than looking at them as static "diseases."

The timing for such a book could not be more perfect. America has not yet abandoned its counterproductive drug war— but there are signs everywhere that for the first time in decades, people are looking for new ideas. *Unbroken Brain* will be the definitive book on a new way of seeing addiction that could revolutionize the way we deal with all types of compulsive behavior.

The readership of *Broken Brain* will be wide-ranging and extensive. It will not only speak to the huge audience for addiction books (think of the millions who have purchased the works of David Sheff, Melody Beattie and Stanton Peele), but its provocative take on compulsive behavior and development will attract readers of books such as Charles Duhigg’s *The Power of Habit* or Roy Baumeister’s *Willpower*.

Maia Szalavitz is an acclaimed science journalist who has authored or coauthor six books, including the national bestseller, *The Boy Who Was Raised as a Dog* (Basic, 2007) with leading child psychiatrist Bruce Perry,

as well as *Born For Love: Why Empathy Is Essential— and Endangered* (Morrow, 2010), *Lost Boy: The True Story of One Man's Exile From a Polygamist Cult and His Brave Journey to Reclaim his Life* with Brent Jeffs (Broadway, 2010) and her own *Help at any Cost: How the Troubled Teen Industry Cons Parents and Hurts Kids* (Riverhead, 2006). In addition to [TIME.com](http://TIME.com), she has written for the *New York Times* (magazine and op-ed), the *Washington Post*, *Newsday*, *Newsweek*, *New York Magazine*, *Redbook*, *McCall's*, *New Scientist*, *Salon*, *Brill's Content* and *Spin*.

# **My Evil Ancestor: The Bizarre Family Saga of Muhammad's Greatest Enemy and the Founding of Islam by Lawrence E. Joseph**

Status: Proposal just sent out

## Description:

Abu Jahl is the most despised villain in the history of Islam. Three times he tried to kill his cousin, the Prophet Muhammad, and three times he failed. Known as “the Father of Ignorance,” to this day Abu Jahl is the Judas Iscariot of Islam. Oh, and he is the great ancestor of author Lawrence E. Joseph.

A sweeping family memoir, *My Evil Ancestor* offers a uniquely dramatic and truly singular take on the heroic and magical saga of the founding of Islam, seen through the complex and combative relationship between Abu Jahl and Muhammad, who grew up together, wrestling all the way. Muhammad was clearly the master in intellect, physical prowess and moral character. By contrast, the author’s evil ancestor was a greedy and violent hot-head who nursed a deepening inferiority grudge, in kneejerk opposition to whatever the Prophet said and did. A Moon-worshipping Hindu, Abu Jahl stood stubborn for polytheism, an incoherent ethos that the rising tide of the Prophet’s monotheism would soon sweep away. *My Evil Ancestor* will portray the historic clash of warriors and ideologies, monotheism v. polytheism, and Islam v. Hinduism, with merit and shame on all sides of the debate.

*My Evil Ancestor* is also a dazzling family story. Lawrence E. Joseph can trace his heritage back 1,400 years and some 50 generations to Abu Jahl thanks to the prominence of his maternal grandmother’s family, the Shehabs, who governed much of what is now the nation of Lebanon beginning in the seventh century AD on through the Crusades a millennium ago, then on and off until the second half of the twentieth century. The members of this storied family crossed paths with some of history’s legendary figures, from Napoleon and Churchill to Charles de Gaulle and Eisenhower. The author’s search for a sword given by Napoleon to one of his family ancestors becomes the thread through which we come to understand the turbulent history of this lineage, and the role it played in the Levant through the ages.



*My Evil Ancestor* is at once intensely personal, broad-brush historical and boldly speculative, an intimate memoir that spans fourteen hundred years and concludes by envisioning an interfaith future: Mecca as the mecca for all the world's faiths. A work of erudition, sly humor and pathos, it will be a groundbreaking account of the founding of Islam, a seminal story that precious few Westerners know, yet here told from the uniquely engrossing vantage point of that religion's vilest villain.

Lawrence E. Joseph is a futurist and the author of several books, including *Apocalypse 2012: An Investigation Into Civilization's End* (Broadway, 2007), which has sold over 200,000 copies and been published in 26 languages. He is also the author of *Solar Cataclysm: How the Sun Shaped the Past and What We Can Do to Save Our Future* (HarperOne, 2012). For decades, Joseph has written on science, nature, politics, and business for publications including the *New York Times*, *Discover*, and *Salon*. He currently blogs for *The Huffington Post*. In demand as a speaker, Joseph has given more than five hundred film, television, radio, and print interviews.