



Your Call Is Important to Us: The Truth About Bullshit

Laura Penny



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Every once in a while a truth-telling book appears out of nowhere, a book that crystallizes our darkest suspicions and makes us mad as hell—while we’re laughing like fiends. A book like this one.

Your Call Is Important to Us is a manifesto for anyone who’s sick and tired of the twenty-first century’s tidal wave of bullshit. Taking no prisoners, author Laura Penny dissects—no, disembowels—the culture of globalized, super-sized, consumerized b.s.

Dating the renaissance of bullshit to wartime propaganda, Penny skewers the “corporate bafflegab,” scripted, question-proof political events, toxic faux foodstuffs, and miracle pills that clutter our lives. She spares no one and nothing: not Wal-Mart, where “every rinky-dink chunk of mass-produced bric-a-brac is manufactured expressly for you”; not Bush’s White House, with its “wallpaper of phony populist sloganizing”; and not the vast pharmaceutical industry, with its “gateway prescription drugs.”

Penny reveals that prisons are the hot new thing in call centers (the federal prison industry bills itself as “the best-kept secret in outsourcing”) and that the Public Relations Society of America has a Code of Ethics Pledge (who knew?). Finally, with devastating precision, she demonstrates how our “all-you-can-eat buffet of phoniness” not only alienates us from each other but degrades public discourse, breeds apathy, and makes us just plain stupid.

Your Call Is Important to Us introduces a fearless and utterly disarming new voice in social criticism. It’s an island of clarity in an ocean of ordure.

Laura Penny on Bullshit:

There is so much bullshit that one hardly knows where to begin.

The platitudinous pabulum that passes for stirring political rhetoric is bullshit. . . . The committee-crafted persona and the focus-grouped fad and the rule of the polls are straight-up bullshit. The disease hysteria du jour is bullshit, and so is the latest miracle pill. The new product that will change your life is probably just more cheap, plastic bullshit.

“Your call is important to us” has been chosen from a very deep reservoir of bullshit phrases for the title of this book because it best exemplifies the properties native to bullshit. It tries to slather some nice on the result of a simple ratio: your time versus some company’s dough. Like most bullshit, the more times you hear it, the bullshittier it gets. This is why bullshit is best served quickly, with many visuals, in mass quantities, with no questions from the floor.



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