

The Profile: New York's biggest con artist & the reporter who rose from the dead

This week's edition of The Profile is sponsored by [Underdog.io](#), a talent marketplace that helps growing technology companies in NYC and SF hire software engineers, designers, product managers, and business professionals for a fraction of the cost of traditional staffing firms.

Good morning, friends.

This week, I spoke with Melinda Gates, the legendary philanthropist who has quietly entered the venture capital world by investing in female-led or minority-focused venture firms.

"I am a big believer in disruptive innovation, but it's been incredibly disappointing to watch how few women-led businesses are getting funded," she said.

In our conversation, she discusses the role LPs play in the venture ecosystem, the long-lasting effects of the #MeToo movement, and what industry she'd like to see backed by more venture dollars. [Read the Q&A here.](#)

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PEOPLE TO KNOW.

[New York's biggest con artist](#): In what reads like a version of the film *Catch Me If You Can*, an aspiring New York "entrepreneur" named Anna Sorokin turns out to be a stone-cold scammer. She managed to trick banks, hotels, private jet companies, and a whole lot of rich people out of ungodly amounts of money. But the house of cards, built on bad checks and unpaid debts, eventually falls apart in spectacular fashion. [Tweet this.](#)

"I was never trying to be a socialite. I had dinners, but they were work dinners. I wanted to be taken seriously"

[The professor teaching happiness](#): Laurie Santos is the professor of the most popular course at Yale University — PSYC 15. It's a "positive psychology" class that attempts to teach students

how to be happier. In a deep dive of Santos and her teachings, you get a cheat sheet of ways to get close to what we're all chasing. [Tweet this.](#)

"Happiness, in the end, is a mindset to be cultivated, not a condition to be imposed."

[The reporter who rose from the dead:](#) Well, this is a wild story. Arkady Babchenko was a Russian journalist who had been reportedly murdered on Tuesday. At a press conference the following day, he showed up alive. Here's a look at the man who faked his own death as part of a sting operation in effort to catch his own would-be killers. [Tweet this.](#)

"That Babchenko is alive is the best news. That's what should always happen. Too bad other times it wasn't a masquerade."

[The celebrity on a quest for acceptance:](#) Caitlyn Jenner is a trans woman. She is also a staunch Republican who attended Donald Trump's inauguration and met with VP Mike Pence. Caitlyn does not easily fit into one ideological box for conservatives or liberals — and she's OK with that. This story explores the many facets of one's identity & how productive disagreements could be the key to understanding, tolerance, and freedom. [Tweet this.](#)

"The Republicans need the most work when it comes to our issues, I get that. I would rather work from the inside. I'm not the type of person who is going to stand on a street corner with a sign and jump up and down. No, I'm going to go have dinner with these people."

COMPANIES TO WATCH.

[The car company that saved Volvo:](#) It's still hard to believe that auto company Geely managed to acquire Volvo for the fire-sale of price of \$1.8 billion in 2010. Yet the odd marriage between China's 36th best car company and the iconic Swedish brand has somehow proved successful. Here's the behind-the-scenes story of how Geely saved Volvo. [Tweet this.](#)

"It's not that they came with a bag of money; actually the opposite. They left us alone and had the patience not to take our money but to reinvest it. We were close to being dead in 2010. And here we are."

[Hollywood's biggest dealmaker:](#) Reese Witherspoon's production company Hello Sunshine has released multimillion-dollar blockbusters, including *Gone Girl* and *Wild*. There are many female-focused production companies, but no one has yet tried to do what Witherspoon is attempting: build a premium independent film studio within a female-led brand that operates on multiple platforms. "Fortunately," she says, "I like proving people wrong." [Tweet this.](#)

"A lot of us are having to step up into leadership positions that we didn't know we were capable of. I definitely feel that in my life."