

# When it Mattered

## Episode 50: Leigh Steinberg

Chitra Ragavan:

Leigh Steinberg was about a decade into his career as a sports agent when he had a crisis of conscience after watching his clients suffer from multiple concussions. Steinberg decided one day that he was going to make brain health seminars for his athletes a mandatory part of his core practice. Hello everyone, I'm Chitra Ragavan. Welcome to this very special 50th episode of When It Mattered. This episode is brought to you by Goodstory, an advisory firm helping technology startups find their narrative.

Chitra Ragavan:

Educating his players about the damaging effects of football is just one way in which Steinberg has served as a player coach to his 300+ athletes during his 46 year+ career. Steinberg has an unrivaled history of record setting contracts in football, baseball, basketball, boxing, and Olympic sports. He has secured more than \$3 billion for his pro athletes and has directed more than \$750 million to various charities around the world. Steinberg also requires all of his athletes to give back to their communities.

Chitra Ragavan:

I'm joined now by the legendary Leigh Steinberg, CEO of Steinberg Sports & Entertainment. Steinberg's blue chip clients include the number one overall pick in the NFL Draft for an unprecedented eight times in conjunction with 64 total first round picks. He has represented notable athletes, such as Troy Aikman, Steve Young, Patrick Mahomes, Oscar De La Hoya, and Lennox Lewis, as well as multiple Olympians and professional teams. Steinberg is often credited as the inspiration for the film, Jerry Maguire, starring Tom Cruise and Oscar-award winner, Cuba Gooding Jr.. Leigh, welcome to the podcast.

Leigh Steinberg:

Thank you so much.

Chitra Ragavan:

Was there a particular moment of clarity or an incident or episode when you realized that the physical trauma of brain concussion from football was something you had to address?

Leigh Steinberg:

I was watching Troy Aikman, the quarterback of the Dallas Cowboys, play in his first season in Arizona, and he got knocked out. And he was laying flat on his back and not

moving. And at that point, time attenuated and every second seemed like a minute and every minute seemed like an hour. And when we would go to doctors back in that period, no doctor could really tell us how many hits were too many and what the longterm consequences were. So, as you mentioned, I had a crisis of conscience and I said, "We need to explore the reality of TBI and concussions and understand what the dangers are." And so that led to a series of conferences, which we've probably done about 16 now, and we do one every year in which we explore what the awareness prevention cure.

Leigh Steinberg:

And the difficult thing is athletes tend to be in a state of denial when it comes to their physical state. They grow up playing Pop Warner and Little League, and they accept norms of injury that are abnormal to the rest of us. And so it becomes very difficult to get them to confront this because there's athletic denial, which all athletes share with other athletes. They could have a very serious injury and they will tell you nothing's wrong. And then there's young people's denial where the future seems like an impossibility to even visualize.

Leigh Steinberg:

And what I've found out is that every time an offensive lineman hits a defensive lineman at the inception of a play in football, it produces a low level sub-concussive event, a little bit of brain change. And so an offensive lineman could walk out of football with 10,000 sub-concussive hits, none of which have been diagnosed and none of which he's aware of, but the aggregate one will certainly do the predilection towards Alzheimer's, ALS, premature senility, chronic traumatic encephalopathy and depression, that getting knocked out three times will. And so this is a ticking time bomb and an undiagnosed health epidemic we need to urgently address.

Chitra Ragavan:

And on top of all of those issues you discussed, you're seeing evidence I think, doctors are seeing evidence of potential suicides on the part of some of these players as well related to the depression I imagine.

Leigh Steinberg:

So that is one of the bad byproducts of chronic traumatic encephalopathy. And there's a syndrome that seems to take place when someone is too far advanced in it, where they become deeply depressed, it ruins their marriage, they stop being able to work, they have periods of time where they're very angry, and in a number of cases, have committed suicide at the end of it. So again, I love football. I think it... And any sport that has collision in it is apt to have this problem. Soccer young girls who head the ball in some cases show lower test scores. So it's a universal issue for collision sports. And so what I've tried to do is figure out if there are methods in prevention, prophylactically protecting the brain prior to it getting hit, if there's protective equipment, if there's a helmet that uses coil and compression to attenuate the energy field and dissipate it, are there nutraceuticals and pharmaceuticals that can heal the brain or protect the brain?

Leigh Steinberg:

This is all a brave new world because the brain is the last frontier of medical research. But the good news is there's a profit motive now because the same product that would protect a football player would protect someone who has a motorcycle accident or falls off a horse or is in another collision sports. So, hopefully, we'll see breakthroughs and advances here because this injury's different than anything else. We know that players because in a sport like football will break down all the joints in their body and may be difficult when they turn 50 to pick up their child. It's another thing not to be able to identify that child. The brain is the center of consciousness and judgment and memory and what it means to be a sentient being as opposed to this desk here.

Chitra Ragavan:

Having learned as much as you did about brain concussion, did you ever have qualms about representing players in a sport that is so potentially dangerous and is even killing or maiming a lot of them?

Leigh Steinberg:

Absolutely. And so you're presented with a choice. Knowing that brain damage may be at the end of the road for some of the athletes, if you stay involved or... The question is, am I an enabler? But staying involved and advocating reform probably does more to help. And concussions is the existential threat to certain collision sports because if half of the mothers understood the facts we just talked about and tell their teenage sons, "You can play any sport, but not tackle football," it won't kill football, but it will turn it into a gladiator sport where only people who are economically challenged will decide to do it. And sports don't succeed at the professional level, unless people are able to play them in large numbers. And so it's a disturbing longterm trend.

Chitra Ragavan:

If efforts to help players with protecting their brain health, I think probably came very naturally to you given that you've developed this very purpose-driven practice. Where did your values come from?

Leigh Steinberg:

Well, initially, from my parents. So my father brought us up with two core values. One is treasure relationships, especially family, and the second was to try to make a meaningful difference in the world and help people who can't help themselves. So in our practice, we ask the athletes to go back and retrace their roots to the high school community where they can set up a scholarship fund or work with the boys and girls club or church, and then to the collegian institution where once again, they can endow the scholarship fund, and then at the professional level to set up charitable foundations, which have the leading political figures, business figures, and community leaders on an advisory board to execute a program.

Leigh Steinberg:

So it's a former running back Warrick Dunn having a program called Homes for the Holidays where he has moved 175 single mothers and their families, since it's the first home they'll ever own by making the down payment and having a house outfitted. And messaging can also be powerful. So you mentioned Lennox Lewis, the boxer. Well, he did a public service announcement that said real men don't hit women. And that could do more to trigger imitative behavior and behavioral change in rebellious adolescents than a thousand authority figures could. So it's trying to not simply negotiate contracts, but it's stimulating the best values in young men, encouraging them to be role models. And then what we can do together to tackle problems like domestic violence and bullying and sex trafficking and racism and rolling back climate change.

Chitra Ragavan:

You've basically written the playbook for what it is to be a sports agent. You've basically wrote the job description. How did that come about? Did you always want to be a sports agent?

Leigh Steinberg:

Oh, no. There really wasn't an established field as sports agent when I was going to school. So I was either going to go into politics, work for a nonprofit when I came out of law school or I liked courtroom law. So I thought about working as a DA or a public defender. I was living in a dorm as a dorm counselor at UC Berkeley back in the tumultuous days of the '60s. Actually, I learned everything I needed to know about negotiating because every time when I was student body president that we demonstrated, the governor was Ronald Reagan and he cracked down. But I was a dorm counselor in an undergrad dorm, and one of the students was the quarterback on the football team. And in 1975, he became the very first player selected in the first round of the NFL Draft and asked me to represent him.

Leigh Steinberg:

So there I was brimming with legal experience, never having practiced law before. And he was the first player overall, and we got the largest rookie contract. And really in that was a seminal relationship because I saw the idol worship and veneration that athletes are held in communities across the country, how they were the movie stars. And at that point, teams could just hang up the phone and say, "We don't deal with agents." There was no guaranteed right, so it was somewhat rudimentary. The economics were certainly had no relationship to what they are today, but it was only after seeing the power of role modeling that I thought I'd continue on in representing athletes.

Chitra Ragavan:

And this came after you got your law degree, and you'd also done a little bit of, I guess, international travel and you wound up coming home pretty sick I think.

Leigh Steinberg:

So whenever people get disappointed in life, we always talk about the road traveled, the road not traveled. I took a tour around the world and when I got to Egypt, they had just

had the Yom Kippur War. So the people I was traveling with didn't want to go, but I went. And I went out with a family that had one of those curved shell boats on the Nile and the kids were jumping in the river, and so I did too, only to find later that there are dozens of diseases endemic to the Nile River. So I got really sick and left Egypt, went to England and they immediately put me in quarantine. So I was six weeks in the hospital there. So I couldn't take the jobs as a DA or corporate litigation or politics or TV news that I'd been offered, and that meant that I was available when Bartkowski asked me. So sometimes when reverses can lead to amazing opportunity.

Chitra Ragavan:

Over your nearly 5- year career, you've represented the best of the best across many, many sports. How did you build this blue chip clientele? And what do you think drew them to you? Do you think it was this values-driven, purpose-driven practice that you had? What drew them to you? Or just your ability to get good money for them?

Leigh Steinberg:

I think the most critical skill is the ability to listen and draw another person out so that you can peel back the layers of the onion and get deeper and deeper below the surface to understand someone's deepest anxieties and fears and their greatest hopes and dreams, to be able to put yourself into the heart and mind of another human being and see the world the way they see it. So part of the key is an exploratory process where I'm really trying to get a young man or woman to focus on how important short-term economic gain or long-term economic security or family or geographical location or profile or the sports considerations being on a winning team, the quality of coaching, and to understand that constellation of values and have the athlete be able to prioritize it. So in that way, I can bond deeply with an athlete and help them fulfill their dreams.

Chitra Ragavan:

And do you have a history of retaining them for many, many years? Do you find yourself successful in doing that?

Leigh Steinberg:

Oh, Warren Moon and I, for example, the former quarterback of Houston and some other teams and the first African-American quarterback to be inducted into the Hall of Fame, and I were together for 23 years. She actually played six in Canada and 17 in the NFL. Bruce Smith, the all-time sack leader, 19 years, Troy Aikman and Steve Young, like 14 years. So the goal is if someone's going to choose our practice, we profile ahead of time, prospective clients, so that we're looking for athletes that are self-starters, that have ambition, that will be interested in developing second career plans, and that have a good heart and a sense of social conscience and understand the power that their profile gives them to be able to talk about non-athletic values and issues and really make a difference. So it's by profiling and then by an athlete having those qualities, then you know it will be a good match.

Chitra Ragavan:

And going back to the brain injury issue, given how long these players stay with you, it probably resonates even more deeply considering they're practically like family.

Leigh Steinberg:

So it really does. And when a player talks about memory loss or different problems like that, there are actually proactive things that athletes can do. There are different clinics that treat them with nutraceuticals, some people believe in hyperbaric pressure, there are brain retraining concepts like biofeedback that can be done. So we try to be in solution and to have the athlete be proactive in protecting their brain health. My best allies in this tend to be the parents or the wife or girlfriend of a male player, because they care longterm more about that athlete being healthy than about him or her playing another year or two.

Chitra Ragavan:

Your efforts to your approach and your efforts to give back to those less fortunate than yourself, and all of your contributions to these sports have resulted in huge amounts of awards and accolades from Congress, from the California State Legislature, presidents of the United States, you've been given like I don't know how many keys to how many cities, and you also were the inspiration for Tom Cruise's role in Jerry Maguire. What was that like?

Leigh Steinberg:

So I got a call back in 1993 from a director writer, Cameron Crowe, who told me he wanted to do a film centering around the character of a sports agent and asked if he could shadow me and if I take him to a variety of experiences. So we went to the NFL Draft in 1993 together where I had the first player picked overall. We went to NFL league meetings where he saw me trying to find the right place for free agents. We went to games together. He came to Pro Scouting Day at the University of Southern California, went to the Super Bowl, Super Bowl party, sat in my office and I told him stories, lots and lots of stories. And then he went off and wrote a script. And so my job as technical advisor was to vet the script to ensure that the suspension of disbelief necessary to keep you in the flow of a plot in the movie wasn't broken so we didn't have unrealistic dialogue or look.

Leigh Steinberg:

And then I worked with some of the actors. I actually took Cuba Gooding Jr. down with me to the Super Bowl in Arizona and made him pretend for that week that he was a wide receiver client of mine. I showed Jerry O'Connor who played the quarterback coach had a throw spiral because he had gone to NYU and they didn't have a football program there. So it was a interesting experience, a lot of life up there on the screen. And I haven't been able to walk through an airport. We sat in an airport last night and somebody inevitably runs up and says those four words that start with "Show me."

Chitra Ragavan:

Yeah, I just saw a video where Cuba Gooding Jr. says he can't go anywhere without them. Saying that phrase to him. So I saw in a YouTube video where you said that one of your goals was to make sure that the movie didn't come across as a caricature of a sports agent and that it was true to life. And did you find that it was in the end?

Leigh Steinberg:

It was. I thought it was very good there. Cameron saw the relationships I had with players like Warren Moon, where there's real caring in the relationship. And the stereotype of someone with four pinky rings and slicked back hair and only concerned with how much money they could make really doesn't characterize this work, which is taking young men and going through their maturation stage with them, and then trying to stimulate the best in them, both in terms of what they can do off the field, but then also second career. So that many of the athletes I've worked with are very successful in business or broadcast. Desmond Howard is a host on College GameDay and Troy Aikman the number one color broadcaster for Fox and they own businesses. And three of them are actually minority owners of the actual team themselves. So part of the empowerment is to try to encourage them that they can be the owner. That they can fulfill amazing dreams, whether it's media or coaching or business or politics, and help them really be the best they can be.

Chitra Ragavan:

There's just an early defining scene in the movie where Tom Cruise, the Jerry Maguire character, has like this crisis of conscience. And then he types up this manifesto as the way of moving forward in his work. And then of course he gets fired. Was there something like that that happened in your life, a defining moment?

Leigh Steinberg:

Well, the first defining moment was arriving in Atlanta at the airport to sign Bartkowski the next day and there are clique lights flashing in the sky akin to a movie premiere, and huge crowds pressed up against the police line. And the first thing we hear is, "We interrupt the Johnny Carson show to bring you a special news bulletin. Steve Bartkowski and his attorney, Leigh Steinberg, have just arrived at the Atlanta Airport. We switch you live for an in depth interview." And I realized then the power that sports had. So the mission statement in Jerry Maguire is certainly influenced by our philosophy of the athlete's role model, and also being a steward of sport so that if we rub fans in the face with contract negotiations and collective bargaining, it alienates them. And so it's not only that I need to help clients, I need to be a steward of the sport and do the things to keep collegiate and professional sports healthy.

Chitra Ragavan:

And we should note that not only did you advise the movie, but you also had a little cameo in it.

Leigh Steinberg:

Yeah. Not to quit my day job, but yes.

Chitra Ragavan:

As we've talked about, you've had this huge positive impact on those around you, on the sport, on the world with all of your charitable contributions and encouraging others to give as well, but your own life has not been without struggles. You've filed for bankruptcy, you've had a very long and difficult battle with alcoholism, you've had years of lawsuits that costs you briefly I guess, your certification as an NFL agent. What happened?

Leigh Steinberg:

First of all, I decided not to practice for a while. I wasn't decertified. But there were series of reverses in my personal life, that. I had a father died of cancer, my two boys were diagnosed with a eye injury called retinitis pigmentosa that has led to total blindness in one and impaired vision in the other, we lost a house to mold, then my marriage started to break up and I turned to the wrong thing. I had not been a chronic drinker throughout my life, but sort of like Dr. Pavlov, when he comes in to do the experiment to shock the dog, he doesn't need to shock him, the dog just rolls over in anticipation.

Leigh Steinberg:

And it got to the point in 2010, where I realized I had an epiphany that my life had become imbalanced. And so I gave up my practice. I went to Sober Living. I entered a 12 step program and I said to myself, the only important thing is that I maintain sobriety and that I'm a good father and everything else will just be the cherry on top. And so, last March, I celebrated my 10th year of continuous sobriety. And if there's someone out there who is struggling because of problems with addiction and is depressed and hopeless, there is hope. And you can reach out. There's help available and don't give up because that was 10 years ago and life is much different now.

Chitra Ragavan:

In a 2012 ESPN story, you had described that one of the lowest points in that journey of yours, maybe the lowest point, I don't know, was when you were trying to get admitted to a rehab center for indigent alcoholics. Can you talk about that story? It's quite amazing.

Leigh Steinberg:

They didn't have a bed.

Chitra Ragavan:

Ironic.

Leigh Steinberg:

So I ended up just going straight to Sober Living and that ended up working. Look, to confront the cravings that come with addiction, it really is necessary in most people's lives to hit bottom, whatever you perceive that bottom is. Your life is so unacceptable

that you cannot continue like that. And, again, this was a period of personal reverse. There was nothing in my business life that particularly I found too stressful. I come into the office every day knowing that not withstanding our best plans, something will go awry. But I was simply unprepared because I had the illusion I could somehow protect my father and protect my kids with their eye disease and protect our home and hold my marriage together. And when all that began to crumble, I turned to the wrong thing. And so I was helped by a whole series of people, and I've been open about my alcoholism and hope that it will help someone else who may be struggling.

Chitra Ragavan:

And was there any one moment or a thing that happened that made you realize that you were at that rock bottom and then you started your climb back up?

Leigh Steinberg:

Giving my practice to younger people, it was closing up my condo and going to live for a little while with my parents. I was sitting on my father's bed, who was deceased, at our family home, and my only thought was where can I find more vodka? And it really is a sense of proportionality that I wasn't a starving peasant in Darfur, that I didn't have the last name, Steinberg, in Nazi Germany, that I didn't have cancer, I didn't have a problem, and that my kids didn't apply for citizenship in this world. We brought them into the world and the least I owed them was a stable, loving father. So it was that sense. And then I'd been brought up with a natural sense of optimism. And I think the key quality is resilience. Life will set you back, you will have reverses, but can you come back and see a new day? I'm a person who, if there's a barn filled with defecation, I think there's a pony in there somewhere. And so, resilience and optimism.

Chitra Ragavan:

And did things work out okay with the family? And were you able to bring everything back around with your finances and your life?

Leigh Steinberg:

Oh, absolutely. And again, the most important thing is to be a great dad to my kids. And then are we addressing situations in the world that need addressing?

Chitra Ragavan:

You talked about resilience and this is such a difficult time in history for all of us, and in particular, for athletes given that they've been essentially benched by COVID-19. How are your players coping with it? And what are you doing, if anything, to help them deal with it, or is it just a matter of waiting it out?

Leigh Steinberg:

No. In football, for example, we had a draft that cut off the scouting process at a certain point. So it required adaptation and using Zoom to interact with teams, or in the case of a client, we had Tua Tagovailoa taping a workout in a pro passing day that would normally have been done in-person. And the first key and priority is safety, obviously.

And none of us really know how the pandemic will play out over time, so we're trying to be sensitive to that. And so for the first time, we're going to have baseball and basketball and hockey with no fans. So that will be different. First of all, it has an economic impact because gate is a large part of the gross revenue. And second of all, we don't know, since performance seems to be tied into home field advantage and stadia filled with screaming fans, we don't know what effect it'll have on the quality of the play.

Leigh Steinberg:

Fortunately, football comes the last of all the sports and they won't start their regular season until September. So while at this exact moment, we're seeing a spike in cases across the country, the hope is that things will calm down, but we'll deal with it, whatever the situation is, and athletes will deal with it. It's obviously probably the most extraordinary time in this country since World War II and the Great Depression. And so it requires flexibility, resilience, and creativity to think about how we can stay safe and normalize our existence.

Chitra Ragavan:

To add to the perfect storm, on top of COVID-19, you have had all of this turmoil around social injustice and racism just tearing up this country and having a huge impact on sports as well. How are your athletes dealing with all of this and how are you helping them deal with this turmoil and the impact it's likely to have on the sport and on history?

Leigh Steinberg:

I had a uncle who defended a whole series of black speck in the 1950s, who were victims of police brutality, and I remember my dad having me march in 1963 in the Civil Rights Movement. So, while this is a revelation to certain people who are just waking up to the problem, I've been aware of it forever and fought really hard. I created a group to fight against racism and skinheads and hate groups across the country and gave them training as an advanced guard against hate. I encourage our athletes to speak out. We've held internal town halls with our clients, which are listening situations. I actually think this will have been a healthy moment, although it may not seem like this now because it's started a dialogue where African-Americans can express their feeling and their reality. And hopefully, we can find our way to a better place.

Leigh Steinberg:

But I think anytime you have mass social change, the real question is what in a practical sense, can people do? So we have our athletes involved in voter registration, we have a number of them speaking out in different ways. And again, you look at all these young people who were out on the streets for the first time and then the question is, will they be around in November to vote? And so what specifically can we do?

Leigh Steinberg:

So as a firm, we're talking about bringing a program, which we do, which is both an agent academy and a sports career conference to inner city high schools to show them

what the opportunities are in sports, and to do what we do in our conferences, which is to train young people and have it be a sports professional with ethics and values and the rest of it. And the athletes have done a variety of different consciousness raising efforts. And so it really is you can view this, not simply as a time of chaos and demonstrations, but as a time of uplift for the country. And hopefully at the end of this, we come out with a much happier and just society.

Chitra Ragavan:

And I think your approach also is another example of how you look at your athletes as whole athletes, not just oftentimes, people look at them as cash registers. And I think to you, you view them as how do I represent the whole athlete through the course of their life as they evolve as people as well?

Leigh Steinberg:

So the enemy in many ways for athletes is self-absorption. It's the concept of being passive, of living in a homunculus of athletes, which is a bubble, and not really understanding their other role as citizens and the imminence of second career. And so again, to get athletes involved here, it started with coronavirus, where we had someone like Patrick Mahomes donate some hundreds of thousands of school lunches for kids. He's spoken out on this issue and a number of the athletes have... We have a running back, Aaron Jones, who just wrote a great story about Father's Day, but also about the experience of being a young black man in this country. And I think the important thing for white people is to think about the fact that when I tell my kids about the police, I tell them they're friends and protectors.

Leigh Steinberg:

I don't know, but I wonder what a African-American father of teenage boys tells his kids. When I walk out of the house each day, I don't have any fear or apprehension of police. I know that if I have an experience, the most negative thing that could happen is I might get a traffic ticket. But what does it feel like to go out knowing there's a slight chance that you might not come home? So, athletes or African-American athletes can express this well. And our non-African-American athletes are also part of it because to get social justice, it's going to require not simply the activism of African-Americans. In the State of California, they only make up 8% of the population. It's to have all people working together.

Chitra Ragavan:

Leigh, looking back at that young man who was raised by his parents to make an impact on the world and to give back to society, and looking back on that sports agent who lost a decade to alcohol and debt and worked his way back to sobriety and success, and the sports agent who's always giving back and is purpose-driven in his practice, what would you say to that young man about the journey that you've been on and where you are today?

Leigh Steinberg:

One of the things I learned in my experience with alcohol is that the most horrific circumstances can come to someone's life. They can lose a child to drugs, they can experience cancer, but there's no causal connection between that type of adversity and substance abuse. In other words, you don't have to blot out yourself that way. So it's about learning coping skills. And what I would tell that young person is to make sure that you've done an internal inventory and are pretty clear on what your goals are in life, and understand that when we help other people and make a difference, it's...Human beings are social animals and we're really tied together in fundamental ways so that more than simply looking at your own personal goals, it's how you can be an active member of a community and bring uplift to other people.

Chitra Ragavan:

Have you had any, what I call viral insights from COVID-19 that moment of clarity brought upon by a crisis?

Leigh Steinberg:

I think we're going to look back in some ways and think the most amazing thing was that a country of 330 million people actually quarantined themselves and put themselves in economic problems and all the rest of it to try to fight this virus. I think it's going to be the remarkable thing to me is not that you have people that are behaving in unsafe ways, it's just you have so many people that have sacrificed themselves to try to put an end to the virus.

Leigh Steinberg:

And if you had said a country of 330 million people based on the concept that don't tread on me and individualism would be able to do that collective sacrifice. I think that's an extraordinary thing. Clearly, we're not out of the woods. But the point was not only are the first responders and medical community heroes, but I think every single person who sat at home knowing they might lose their job or that their economics were challenged or their ability to move and travel was challenged, but they sacrificed it and went through with it.

Chitra Ragavan:

Leigh, thank you so much for taking the time to be with us today. As I mentioned, this is the 50th episode of When It Mattered. So I'm so happy that you accepted my invitation to be my guest of honor for this special episode.

Leigh Steinberg:

It was my pleasure.

Chitra Ragavan:

Leigh Steinberg is CEO of Steinberg Sports & Entertainment. Steinberg is a legendary sports agent who has represented some of the most famous athletes in sport history. He's the author of the bestselling book, Winning with Integrity, providing insight on how to improve life through non-confrontational negotiation. His most recent book, The

Agent: My 40-Year Career of Making Deals and Changing the Game, details his decades of dominance in the sports industry and sheds light on overcoming his personal struggles to launch his comeback. Leigh has been rated the sixth most powerful person in the NFL according to Football Digest, and the 16th most powerful person in sports according to the Sporting News. And he was the only agent that made sports illustrated list of most influential figures that shaped the NFL's first 100 years. This is When It Mattered, I'm Chitra Ragavan.

Chitra Ragavan:

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