

George Lardner
5604 32 St., NW
Washington, DC 20005

6/1/92

Dear George,

Six mornings each week I follow the same routine. When I feel it is safe for me I drive to the end of our lane where, usually at about 2 a.m., the Post is there. I sit in the car, listen to the stereo when^{re} it can't disturb Lil, and go through the Post until the local paper is delivered. First I lay the main news section aside, then sports, then Style or Metro, and then go over whichever is more inside. This morning the first section I looked at was Metro. and there was your tragedy. I've not been able to pay attention to the paper or anything else since.

So I just sat and thought, knowing I could not make sense out of it, but I thought back over my many years in the world that has grown increasingly and more senselessly violent. After 60 years or so I still remember some of the details of the first suicide I covered, so poorly that the desk rewrote the story. To my own commitment to nonviolence, to Gandhian belief, to the Oxford pledge of before World War II, to my opposition to compulsory military training in college, which cost me my degree, and to my hastening my induction when I did not have to be a soldier. I remember but a single violent act, when not realizing that a fellow soldier had serious emotional problem I stopped just short of throwing him overboard when his pestering became intolerable.

Having lived with violence, as we all do, and having worked with it these many years, it still makes no sense to me, ever. and although we can all understand why some resort to it, I can make no sense of it. It is one of the world's most pointless and self-destructive acts.

We've all been touched by it in varying degrees and this is not the first time I've had a friend who suffered from it as you have. Whether it is from accident or irrational intent, as I've thought of this and groped for a way of expressing sympathy or seeking to suggest what^{may} bring a modicum of comfort so often^{at} seems awkward when, unlike with my brother-in-law who died just last week at 85, it is so utterly pointless, so without any rational meaning at all.

We can't make sense of the senseless. We can say we are sorry and to the degree possible sorrow with the victims, and hope that we are understood and that we do feel this, and yet not be content with what we can say. But the reality for the victims is that what has been done cannot be undone, that their loss is a finality. That nobody else can feel as they do. We can only hope that they cope with and adjust to it as well as they can, as I ^{hope,} do.

You can take comfort from your own religion. I suggest that as you do you extend it to Ecclesiastes. Read it again. It may mean something when nothing seems to mean anything.

I am, sincerely, very sorry.

Lardner

Daughter of Post Reporter Is Fatally Shot in Boston

Police Say Ex-Boyfriend Killed Woman, Self

6/11/92
By James Ragland
Washington Post Staff Writer

A 21-year-old District woman was shot and killed Saturday night on a Boston street by a former boyfriend whom she had feared might harm her, police said.

Kristin Lardner, daughter of Washington Post reporter George Lardner Jr. and a 1988 graduate of Wilson High School in Northwest Washington, was a junior at the School of the Museum of Fine Arts in Boston.

Police said she was shot three times by Michael Cartier, 23, who later returned to his apartment near the scene of the shooting and fatally shot himself. Her father said that she had dated Cartier for about

two months and that he was under a court order to stay away from her.

"I talked to her on Friday, and her last words to me were, 'I love you, daddy,'" George Lardner said in a telephone interview yesterday from Boston, where he and his wife, Rosemary Lardner, were making arrangements to bring their daughter home.

"She was a lovely, caring, vibrant girl," her father said. "She was just wonderful to be around. And she was a talented artist too."

The shooting occurred about 6 p.m. Saturday outside the Philadelphia Steak and Hoagie shop on Boston's Commonwealth Avenue, near Marty's Liquors, where Kristin Lardner worked part time.

Sonnie Souarit, 30, an assistant



KRISTIN LARDNER
... was a junior studying fine arts

manager at the restaurant, said he first saw a man with a gun run in front of the window of the restaurant and fire one shot, but he wasn't certain whether the gun was real or what the man's target was. "I thought someone was playing a game with a gun," he said.

See LARDNER, D5, Col. 1

LARDNER, From D1

About 30 seconds later, he said, an unidentified man ducked into the restaurant and told Souarit that someone had a gun outside.

Then, Souarit said, "I saw the man with the gun" running back toward the restaurant and "and he fired two shots more."

Lardner lived in an apartment in Brookline, a suburb of Boston. Cartier lived in Allston, a Boston neighborhood.

Police said that Cartier recently had been fired from his job as a bartender at a Boston nightclub. The Boston Globe quoted the club's manager yesterday as saying that Cartier was dismissed because he "wasn't showing up for work and he wasn't doing his job."

Brookline police Lt. Frank Dwyer said Lardner had called police at least twice, on May 11 and May 19, to complain about Cartier. On both dates, she also applied for a restraining order, he said. The last call came at 12:30 a.m. on May 19, Dwyer said.

"She said she had been assaulted by him. Of course, when we got there, he was gone," Dwyer said.

About 12 hours later, a judge issued a restraining order forbidding Cartier to go within 200 yards of where Lardner lived and worked, Dwyer said.

"She was being harassed. She has been positively assaulted by him," said Dwyer, adding that Cartier apparently was "just a complete annoyance" to the young woman.

Dwyer confirmed reports in the Globe that Cartier was on parole, but said he did not know the details.

"My understanding is that he has some sort of record of violent crime," he said.

Helen Lardner said her youngest sister had told her in a telephone conversation that Cartier harassed and hit her while she was out walking.

"It ended up with him throwing her down on the curb and kicking her," she said.

In Boston, the incident prompted some advocates of tougher laws against those who threaten women to question the effectiveness of court-issued restraining orders.

"When we first put the law into effect in 1978, we thought the restraining order was the kind of law that perpetrators would respect. Clearly they do not," said Massachusetts state Rep. Barbara E. Gray (D), co-chairman of the Women's Legislative Caucus.

Gray, saying that victims of such crimes "rely upon the courts and police to keep the perpetrators away," said Cartier "should have been picked up, arrested and jailed."