

GEORGE LARDNER JR.
... for a story of personal tragedy



MICHAEL DIRDA
... for book reviews and essays



DAVID MARANISS
... for chronicle of candidate Clinton

Post Wins Three Pulitzer Prizes

National Reporting, Feature Writing, Book Criticism Honored

4/14/93

By Howard Kurtz
Washington Post Staff Writer

The Washington Post won three Pulitzer Prizes yesterday, one for chronicling the rise of candidate Bill Clinton, one for literary criticism and a third for a reporter's tale of personal tragedy.

Post reporter David Maraniss won the national reporting prize for articles examining the forces that shaped Clinton's life and character. Michael Dirda, a writer and editor for *Book World*, won the criticism prize for his reviews and essays on subjects ranging from Elmore Leonard to Fyodor Dostoevsky to the Bible.

Reporter George Lardner Jr. won the feature writing prize for his account of how the criminal justice system failed to protect his 21-year-old daughter, Kristin, who was

stalked and murdered in Boston last year by a former boyfriend.

The Los Angeles Times and Miami Herald each won Pulitzers for their coverage of disasters, one natural and one man-made. The Times won the spot news prize for its reporting on the second day of the Los Angeles riots. The Herald was awarded the public service medal for its coverage of Hurricane Andrew, a storm that left some of the paper's own staff members homeless.

The prizes, administered by Columbia University, also included seven arts awards. Garry Wills won the nonfiction prize for his book "Lincoln at Gettysburg," and David McCullough the biography prize for "Truman." [Details on Page B1.]

Two newspapers shared the prize for foreign reporting from war-torn Bosnia. One went to Roy Gutman of

Newsday, who disclosed atrocities in Serbian camps, and the other to John F. Burns of the New York Times, who wrote about the destruction of Sarajevo.

Jeff Brazil and Steve Berry of the Orlando Sentinel won the investigative reporting prize for detailing how a sheriff's drug squad unfairly seized millions of dollars from motorists, most of them minorities.

Paul Ingrassia and Joseph B. White of the Wall Street Journal won the Pulitzer for beat reporting for their coverage of management turmoil at General Motors Corp. The explanatory journalism prize went to Mike Toner of the Atlanta Journal-Constitution for "When Bugs Fight Back," a series of arti-

See PULITZERS, A12, Col. 1

PULITZERS, From A1

cles on the diminishing effectiveness of antibiotics and pesticides.

The Herald won a second prize when Liz Balmaseda was honored for commentary for her reports on Cuban Americans in Miami and turmoil in Haiti.

It was the first time in the 77-year history of the Pulitzer that The Post has won three prizes in one year. Executive Editor Leonard Downie Jr. told the staff at a newsroom celebration that "this is a really, really special day in the history of this newspaper."

Lardner, 58, is a dogged investigator who has worked for The Post since 1963. The paper's local columnist in the mid-1960s, he covered the assassination of Robert F. Kennedy, the Chappaquiddick incident, the Watergate coverup trial, the Iran-contra scandal and the controversy surrounding the assassination of John F. Kennedy.

In "The Stalking of Kristin," published in the Outlook section, Lardner wrote of his daughter's murder: "This was a crime that could and should have been prevented. I write about it as a sort of cautionary tale, in anger at a system of justice that failed to protect my daughter, a system that is addicted to looking the other way, especially at the evil done to women."

Lardner said yesterday that "I'm stunned and elated and sad all at once—sad because I'm getting a prize for writing about what happened to Kristin. I'd give anything not to have to have written it. But it was the most important story I've ever done, and I think Kristin would be proud of it."

Lardner said he felt compelled to write about the murder after "a Brookline, Mass., police lieutenant named George Finnegan said to me, 'You're a reporter, aren't you?' I was sort of shame-faced. I only had the vaguest idea what had happened to my own daughter."

Maraniss, 43, recently completed a tour as The Post's Southwest bureau chief and is on leave to write a biography of Clinton. In 1975, Maraniss talked his way into a job with the Trenton (N.J.) Times, then owned by The Washington Post Co., and joined The Post two years later, eventually becoming assistant managing editor for metropolitan news.

Maraniss began one article by describing the car wreck that killed

Clinton's father: "If lives are molded by purpose and chance, the first defining moment for Bill Clinton was what might be called the ultimate accident. It occurred before he was born—in darkness and rain on a desolate stretch of Highway 61 four miles west of Sikeston in southern Missouri."

"I thought the most valuable service a newspaper could do was to have someone on the paper who was consistently thinking about the person's career, life, motivations, how he makes decisions, how he's changed, so the reader would have a deeper understanding of a person who could be president," Maraniss said. Calling himself "an iconoclastic and unorthodox guy," he added: "I'm trying to understand the person. That doesn't mean you're taking that person's side or are against them."

Dirda, 44, who earned a doctorate in comparative literature from Cornell University, joined Book World in 1978. His reviews have ranged from history and biography to science fiction and children's literature.

In an essay about books on the Bible, Dirda wrote: "Like a grounding in the classics or a thorough knowledge of baseball, familiarity with the Bible invests life, whether one is a believer or not, with a kind of ballast, steadying one through moments of crisis . . ."

Dirda said that when he was 12 years old, his father, an Ohio steelworker, would kick books out of his hand and tell him to build something or play outside. "I'm an enthusiast for books," Dirda said. "I try to make people excited about books, to recreate on the page the pleasure I feel about books."

Shelby Coffey III, editor of the Los Angeles Times, said more than 150 staffers contributed to the paper's wide-ranging coverage of last April's riot. "It was an extraordinary mobilization . . . We had photographers and reporters who came under fire," he said.

John Pancake, who supervised the Herald's hurricane coverage, said the story was especially difficult because "a lot of people who worked on it had their houses wrecked. A tremendous number of us suffered what everyone else in south Dade suffered." With television knocked out by the storm, "the newspaper was the primary source of information," he said.

White, the Journal reporter, said his and Ingrassia's work on the GM

story "reflected five years' worth of work on both our parts in covering the industry . . . I'm still having a little trouble believing it happened."

Max Frankel, executive editor of the New York Times, said Burns's reporting from Bosnia was partic-

ularly courageous because he had just recovered from a long bout with cancer. "He plunged into the assignment and found new life," Frankel said. "It's been breathtaking, emotional coverage all year."

Newsday's Gutman said that his story on abuses in Serbian prisoner camps "made quite a splash at the time, but it didn't close all the camps. I don't find anything to celebrate. This thing goes on, and you can't make as much of a splash with follow-up stories. I feel pretty depressed about the whole thing."

Other Winners

Editorial cartooning: Stephen R. Benson of the Arizona Republic.
Spot news photography: Ken Geiger and William Snyder of the Dallas Morning News for coverage of the Summer Olympics.
Feature photography: The Associated Press for coverage of the 1992 campaign.
Editorial writing: No award.
Fiction: Robert Olen Butler for "A Good Scent for a Strange Mountain."
Drama: Tony Kushner for "Angels in America: Millennium Approaches."
History: Gordon S. Wood for "The Radicalism of the American Revolution."
Poetry: Louise Glück for "The Wild Iris."
Music: Christopher Rouse for "Trombone Concerto."

Non-Winning Finalists

Associated Press

JOURNALISM

Public service: The Orlando (Fla.) Sentinel for exposure by reporters Jeff Brazil and Steve Berry of unjust seizures of money from motorists (this entry won the Pulitzer for investigative reporting); the Seattle Times for reporting of sexual-harassment allegations against Sen. Brock Adams.
Spot news reporting: The staff of the Miami Herald for the legal battle to allow organ donation from a baby born without a brain; the staff of the Spokesman-Review, Spokane, Wash., for coverage of the 11-day clash between an armed white separatist and law officers in Idaho.
Investigative reporting: Dave Davis and Ted Wendling of the (Cleveland) Plain Dealer for a series on botched radiation therapy; Terry Ganey, Michael D. Sorkin and Louis J. Rose of the St. Louis Post-Dispatch for investigation of prosecutorial corruption; James Heaney of the Buffalo (N.Y.) News for articles on neighborhood decline.
Explanatory journalism: Dennis Farney of the Wall Street Journal for a series on Jeffersonian



BY HARRY NALTCHAYAN—THE WASHINGTON POST

Dirda, Maraniss and Lardner cut cake during celebration in Post newsroom.

ideals in contemporary America; staff of the Post-Standard of Syracuse, N.Y., for a series on inadequate medical care in prisons.
Beat reporting: Jesse Katz of the Los Angeles Times for a series on city gang life; Fawn Vrazo of the Philadelphia Inquirer for coverage of women's health issues.
National reporting: Douglas Frantz and Murray Waas of the Los Angeles Times for reporting on clandestine U.S. efforts to supply money and weapons to Iraq; Donald C. Drake and Marian Uhlman of the Philadelphia Inquirer for investigation of the pharmaceutical industry's role in the soaring price of medicine.
International reporting: John-Thor Dahlburg of the Los Angeles Times for a probe of nuclear pollution in the former Soviet Union; Jane Perlez of the New York Times for reporting on famine and suffering in Somalia.
Feature writing: Hank Stuever of the Albuquerque Tribune for reporting the celebration of a young couple's wedding; Judith Valente of The Wall Street Journal for a story of a family brought together by AIDS.
Commentary: Betty DeRamus of the Detroit News for columns about urban problems and promise; Bill Johnson of the Orange County (Calif.) Register for articles about a Los Angeles neighborhood before and after the riots.
Criticism: Gail Caldwell of the Boston Globe for literary and social criticism; Leonard Pitts Jr. of the Miami Herald for articles on popular music and culture.
Editorial writing: The Dallas Morning News editorial staff for a campaign focusing on a neglected part of the city; Larry Dale Keeling of the Lexington (Ky.) Herald-Leader for editorials about corruption in the Kentucky legislature; Robert M. Landauer of the Oregonian, Portland, Ore., for reports about the campaign over an anti-gay-rights constitutional amendment.
Editorial cartooning: Jeff Danziger of the Christian Science Monitor; Don Wright of the Palm

Beach Post in West Palm Beach, Fla.
Spot news photography: The Palm Beach Post and the Miami Herald and El Nuevo Herald photographic staffs for Hurricane Andrew coverage.
Feature photography: The Associated Press staff and Yurghi Kim of the Boston Globe for Somalia coverage.

ARTS

Fiction: "At Weddings and Wakes" by Alice McDermott; "Black Water" by Joyce Carol Oates.
Drama: "The Destiny of Me" by Larry Kramer; "Fires in the Mirror" by Anna Deavere Smith.
History: "The Promise of the New South: Life After Reconstruction" by Edward L. Ayers; "Lincoln at Gettysburg: The Words That Remade America" by Garry Wills (this entry won the Pulitzer for general nonfiction).
Biography: "Genius: The Life and Science of Richard Feynman" by James Gleick; "Kissinger" by Walter Isaacson.
Poetry: "Hotel Lautreamont" by John Ashbery; "Selected Poems 1946-1985" by James Merrill.
General nonfiction: "A Chorus of Stones: The Private Life of War" by Susan Griffin; "Where the Buffalo Roam" by Anne Matthews; "Days of Obligation: An Argument with My Mexican Father" by Richard Rodriguez.
Music: "Music for Cello and Orchestra" by Leon Kirchner; "Violin Concerto," by Joan Tower.

Dear George,

4.14.93

Congratulations! One more to add to the many you earned by such pain.

I'm so glad the Pulitzers agreed what I believe ⁿ may of us conveyed to you on the publication of your story.

The inquiry and the writing were outstanding, a really fine ^e pice of very difficult work.

I think it was Boccaccio who said in an entirely different context what I remember from before you were born, that "dolor determineth imminent joyance."

While nothing can fully end the lingering pain it is so ^{of r} appropriate that the quality of what was also a fine public service was recognized with the awarding of the highest honor possible.

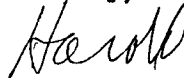
The Post's pride was reflected in such good taste, too. And every word of your lead sounded familiar. It is that good.

I was so please when I read it early this morning during my waking in which most of my time is resting, which is when I read it, my mind st went back over those many years, about 26⁺ I think.

Parts of two of your stories I recalled with some satisfaction. One is when you asked me if I minded your direct quotation of Blakey when my name was mentioned to him, "Weisberg? That son-of-a-bitch can kiss my ass!" That he could say no more when confronted with some of the criticisms of his failures for which I was responsible is a satisfaction and I'm glad to have that confession recorded. The other was when you asked his House assassins' neutron-activation analysis expert, Vincent Guinn, the question I suggested. While it is unfortunate that ~~ego~~centric David Lifton so intent upon advancing his false theory prevented your proceeding with it, you did get him to respond, meaning Guinn, that he could not and did not validate the specimens he tested for the committee, supposed to be from Specter's ^{magic} ~~gamic~~ bullet of the history not equally ^{of} in science or mythology. While I doubt there will ever be any acknowledgement of it, I am certain those specimens are from the excess metal SA Robert Frazier removed from its base without any need for it and for which neither he nor the FBI can account. So, I think those few words are also a little-known truthful ffragment of bur history.

I hope you and your wife enjoy this honor as much as you can. It is more than well earned!

Sincerely,



Harold Weisberg