

Part II: Coming of Age

Part II. Coming of Age: Book Group Questions

1. See the first Book Group Question from Part I. Having now read about the Pentagon Papers, what comparisons do you see between the New York Times Pentagon Papers and Washington Post Watergate stories that won the public service Pulitzers in the 1972–1973 period, and the Times 9/11 coverage and the Boston Globe Church stories that won in 2002–2003? What strengths and weaknesses are there in making the comparison?
2. What do you feel are the most important Pulitzer-winning stories, starting with the first public service prize in 1918, and ending with 1973, in helping establish the Pulitzers as a standard of excellence and community leadership?
3. Note the changing role of women in news reporting and in newspaper management during this period. Viewed through the lens of Pulitzer winners and Pulitzer-winning publications, what personalities stand out? Why do you think they broke through the news media's "glass ceiling"?
4. Journalism that treats racial hatred as an evil, and racial equality as a virtue, seems to have won favor over the early decades of prizes among the Pulitzer board members. Why is this? And do you think the recognition of these stories has affected American history? If so, how?
5. Do some research into the careers of Bob Woodward and Carl Bernstein in the years since they helped the Post with its winning Watergate coverage. What do their careers say about the progress of journalism since 1973?