

13 A Handful of Gold, 1936–1952: The Post-Dispatch Makes Its Mark

Chapter 13 Discussion

1. What are some of the strengths you see in the “Platform” written by Joseph Pulitzer? What weaknesses in it do you see?
2. Consider the string of top editors at the paper: O.K. Bovard, Ben Reese, and Ray Crowley. What factors do you think contributed to the newspaper having three leaders in a row who helped launch public service projects?
3. When reporter Roy Harris says that each name published in the Post-Dispatch represented a potential million-dollar lawsuit, how much pressure would he be feeling on this story? How would you deal with the pressure of knowing that there could be a huge lawsuit against you if your information is wrong?
4. Consider Theodore Link, the Post-Dispatch investigative reporter who broke a scandal involving the Internal Revenue. How does his investigative style differ from that of other reporters at the paper, on previous winning article?
5. Scan www.pulitzer.org to see what Pulitzer Prizes the Post-Dispatch has won since 1952, or when it was a Pulitzer finalist. Does that record say anything about the newspaper’s work since 1952, and if so, what?

Chapter 13 Quiz

1. What do we mean by Joseph Pulitzer’s “Platform”?
 - A The pedestal where the Statue of Liberty was placed
 - B Where he spoke to the Post-Dispatch staff
 - C The nickname of his penthouse office
 - D The code he wrote as the Post-Dispatch mission statement
2. Who were the “ghost voters”?
 - A Scary people who lined up outside the polling booth
 - B Names on the voter rolls of people who didn’t live at their supposed addresses
 - C People on a statue in St. Louis
 - D Those voters who died each year
3. What town where Joseph Pulitzer had a house had cleaner air than St. Louis?
 - A Bar Harbor, Me.
 - B Chicago
 - C New York City
 - D Portland, Ore.
4. What did the Post-Dispatch disclose about the Centralia mine disaster?
 - A Mine inspectors had been paid off
 - B The mine had a faulty ceiling
 - C Miners panicked after an explosion
 - D A bomb had gone off in the mine
5. Dwight Green was
 - A A reporter
 - B An editor
 - C A mine inspector
 - D The governor of Illinois