

## How Have Georgia's Journalists Influenced Change Throughout the State?



By Daniel Chester French (1850–1931) and Augustus Lukeman (1872–1935) - "The Pulitzer Medal" at the American Numismatic Society website. Rearranged, transparent background, drop shadow effect. The arrangement of the two sides of the medal is modeled after the image Gen pulitzer.jpg, which has been frequently used in Pulitzer Prize templates (e.g. {{Pulitzer}} at English Wikipedia)., Public Domain, <https://commons.wikimedia.org/w/index.php?curid=82820997>

## HISTORICAL INQUIRY ACTIVITY

How have Georgia's journalists influenced change throughout the state?	
Inquiry Standard	<p>American Government and Civics</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>SSCG7 Demonstrate knowledge of civil liberties and civil rights</li> </ul> <p>Journalism I</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>ELAGSEJ.LE3 Recognize and analyze rights and responsibilities guaranteed by the First Amendment of the Constitution of the United States.                             <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Study the interrelationships among the five freedoms: speech, press, religion, assembly and petition.</li> </ol> </li> </ul> <p>Information Processing Skills K-12</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>SSIPS3 Identify issues and/or problems and alternative solutions.</li> <li>SSIPS5 Identify main idea, detail, sequence of events, and cause and effect in a social studies context.</li> <li>SSIPS6 Identify and use primary and secondary sources.</li> <li>SSIPS11 Draw conclusions and make generalizations.</li> </ul>
Staging the Compelling Question	<p>Read the "<a href="#">History of the Pulitzer Prize</a>" and "<a href="#">Biography of Joseph Pulitzer</a>" and summarize Joseph Pulitzer's view of the press and why he felt it was important to establish consistent standards for journalism. At its inception, there were four main categories of the Pulitzer Prize for newspapers, but only three were awarded consistently. Describe the three used categories from the second paragraph under "<a href="#">Pulitzer's Flexible Will</a>."</p>

Supporting Q #1	Supporting Q #2	Supporting Q #3
According to the Pulitzer Prize organization, what constitutes "meritorious public service"?	How does one evaluate whether an editorial "influences the public in the right direction"? Who decides what is the "right direction"?	The "coverage of significant issues of local or statewide concern," is another avenue for a reporter/newspaper to receive a Pulitzer Prize. How might a local issue also have state-wide or national significance?
Formative Performance Task	Formative Performance Task	Formative Performance Task
In 1926, a Pulitzer Prize was awarded to a GA newspaper for	In 1959, the <i>Atlanta Constitution's</i> Ralph McGill	Another <i>Atlanta Constitution</i> journalist was awarded the

*HISTORICAL INQUIRY ACTIVITY*

<p>the first time. Julian and Julia Collier Harris, owners and editors of the <i>Columbus Enquirer Sun</i>, were awarded the Pulitzer Prize for Public Service for their coverage of (1) exposing politicians in the Ku Klux Klan; (2) the Scopes Trial; and (3) the practices of convict leasing and lynching.</p> <p>Listen to the “Pulitzer Peaches” podcast about Julia and Julian Harris and read the article on the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary year of receiving the Pulitzer Prize. Write a short explanation as to why their coverage of the Ku Klux Klan constituted a “public service,” and how it affected their newspaper business in Columbus.</p>	<p>was awarded the Pulitzer Prize for Editorial Writing. Read McGill’s piece, “A Church, A School...” and examine the provided sources. Explain how McGill’s editorial seemed to “influence people in the right direction.”</p>	<p>Pulitzer the next year. In 1960, Jack Nelson was recognized with the Pulitzer Prize for Local Reporting, exposing the deplorable conditions and actions at Georgia’s Central State Hospital.</p> <p>Read the overview of the Central State Hospital and the selected article by Jack Nelson. Write a short essay as to why this topic was considered a “significant issue” and describe the impact of Nelson’s reporting.</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">Featured Source</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Featured Source</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Featured Source</p>
<p><a href="#">Pulitzer Peaches: Columbus Sun-Enquirer</a>, GPB, July 6, 2016</p> <p><a href="#">Julia Harris, Husband, Shared Pulitzer Prize</a>, <i>Atlanta Journal and Constitution</i>, February 15, 1976</p>	<p><a href="#">“A Church, A School...”</a> by Ralph McGill</p> <p><a href="#">Today in Georgia History</a> - October 12, 1958</p>	<p><a href="#">New Georgia Encyclopedia – Central State Hospital</a></p> <p>“Use of Drugs, Anesthesia Investigated” <i>The Atlanta Constitution</i>, March 18, 1959</p>

<p>Summative Performance Task</p>	<p>Argument</p> <p>“[I]t’s my duty to see that they get the truth; but that’s not enough, I’ve got to put it before them briefly so that they will read it, clearly so that they will understand it, forcibly so that they will appreciate it, picturesquely so that they will remember it, and, above all, accurately so that they may be wisely guided by its light.” ~ Joseph Pulitzer</p>
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## HISTORICAL INQUIRY ACTIVITY

	<p>Select one of the three Pulitzer Prize examples that has been explored and describe how it exemplifies the quote above.</p> <p>Extension</p> <p>Review the adjectives in the above quote: briefly, clearly, forcibly, picturesquely, and accurately. Write a short definition of each. Select a current issue/event of importance to you and write a short article fitting within the parameters of these definitions.</p>
Taking Informed Action	<p>Understand</p> <p>Nellie Bly introduced something new to the world in 1887 – investigative journalism. Read about <a href="#">Nellie Bly</a> and what launched her to fame at Joseph Pulitzer’s paper, the <i>New York World</i>.</p> <p>Assess</p> <p>Both Nellie Bly and Jack Nelson exposed horrible conditions at mental hospitals. Compare and contrast their approaches to the subject and the response of the community.</p> <p>Action</p> <p>Research how the work of Bly and Nelson have contributed to change in the mental health field. Create a timeline that shows the changes in the field from the 1880s to today.</p>

### Overview

#### Inquiry Description

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This historical inquiry requires students to investigate a series of primary sources related to the freedom of the press to gain a better understanding of the role and responsibilities of the press (media) in a democratic society. It is relevant to both middle and high school standards in regards to civic education.

#### Structure

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To set the stage for the compelling question, students will read selections from the Pulitzer Prize website to gain an understanding of Joseph Pulitzer’s reasons for establishing the prize and his vision for journalism and journalists. By analyzing various primary and secondary sources, students will become familiar with several Georgia journalists and their efforts to inform Georgia citizens about significant issues.

## HISTORICAL INQUIRY ACTIVITY

Staging the Compelling Question	
Compelling Question	How have Georgia's journalists influenced change throughout the state?
Featured Sources	Source A: Selected passages from the Pulitzer Prize website.

### Staging the Compelling Question

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In 1917, the first Pulitzer Prizes were awarded to journalists based on the vision of Joseph Pulitzer, owner of *New York World* and *The St. Louis Post-Dispatch*.

Read the "[History of the Pulitzer Prize](#)" and "[Biography of Joseph Pulitzer](#)" and summarize Joseph Pulitzer's view of the press and why he felt it was important to establish consistent standards for journalism. At its inception, there were four main categories of the Pulitzer Prize for newspapers, but only three were awarded consistently. Describe the three used categories from the second paragraph under "[Pulitzer's Flexible Will](#)."

### Excerpt(s)

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History of the Pulitzer Prize

Biography of Joseph Pulitzer

Source A: [The Pulitzer Prizes](#) website

## HISTORICAL INQUIRY ACTIVITY

Supporting Question #1	
Supporting Question	According to the Pulitzer Prize organization, what constitutes “meritorious public service”?
Formative Performance Task	<p>In 1926, a Pulitzer Prize was awarded to a GA newspaper for the first time. Julian and Julia Collier Harris, owners and editors of <i>Columbus Enquirer Sun</i>, were awarded the Pulitzer Prize for Public Service for their coverage of (1) exposing politicians in the Ku Klux Klan; (2) the Scopes Trial; and (3) the practices of convict leasing and lynching.</p> <p>Listen to the “Pulitzer Peaches” podcast about Julia and Julian Harris and read the article on the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary year of receiving the Pulitzer Prize. Write a short explanation as to why their coverage of the Ku Klux Klan constituted a “public service”, and how it affected their newspaper business in Columbus.</p>
Featured Sources	<p>Source B: <a href="#">Pulitzer Peaches: Columbus Sun-Enquirer</a>, GPB, July 6, 2016</p> <p>Source C: <a href="#">Julia Harris, Husband, Shared Pulitzer Prize</a>, <i>Atlanta Journal and Constitution</i>, February 15, 1976</p>

### Formative Performance Task

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Listen to the “Pulitzer Peaches” podcast about Julia and Julian Harris and read the article on the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary year of receiving the Pulitzer Prize. Write a short explanation as to why their coverage of the Ku Klux Klan constituted a “public service”, and how it affected their newspaper business in Columbus.

### Excerpt(s)

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Source B: [Pulitzer Peaches: Columbus Sun-Enquirer](#), GPB, July 6, 2016

Source C: [Julia Harris, Husband, Shared Pulitzer Prize](#), *Atlanta Journal and Constitution*, February 15, 1976

## HISTORICAL INQUIRY ACTIVITY

Supporting Question #2	
Supporting Question	How does one evaluate whether an editorial “influences the public in the right direction”? Who decides the “right direction”?
Formative Performance Task	In 1959, the <i>Atlanta Constitution</i> ’s Ralph McGill was awarded the Pulitzer Prize for Editorial Writing. Read McGill’s piece, “A Church, A School...” and examine the provided sources. Explain how McGill’s editorial seemed to “influence people in the right direction.”
Featured Sources	Source D: <a href="#">“A Church, A School...”</a> by Ralph McGill  Source E: <a href="#">Today in Georgia History</a> -October 12, 1958

### Formative Performance Task

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In 1959, the *Atlanta Constitution*’s Ralph McGill was awarded the Pulitzer Prize for Editorial Writing. Read McGill’s piece, “A Church, A School...” and examine the provided sources. Explain how McGill’s editorial seemed to “influence people in the right direction.”

### Excerpt(s)

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Source D: [“A Church, A School...”](#) by Ralph McGill

Source E: [Today in Georgia History](#) -October 12, 1958

## HISTORICAL INQUIRY ACTIVITY

Supporting Question #3	
Supporting Question	The "coverage of significant issues of local or statewide concern", is another avenue for a reporter/newspaper to receive a Pulitzer Prize. How might a local issue also have state-wide or national significance?
Formative Performance Task	<p>Another <i>Atlanta Constitution</i> journalist was awarded the Pulitzer the next year. In 1960, Jack Nelson was recognized with the Pulitzer Prize for Local Reporting, exposing the deplorable conditions and actions at Georgia's Central State Hospital.</p> <p>Read the overview of the Central State Hospital and the selected article by Jack Nelson. Write a short essay as to why this topic was considered a "significant issue" and describe the impact of Nelson's reporting.</p>
Featured Sources	<p>Source F: <a href="#">New Georgia Encyclopedia – Central State Hospital</a></p> <p>Source G: "Use of Drugs, Anesthesia Investigated" <i>The Atlanta Constitution, March 18, 1959</i></p>

### Formative Performance Task

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Another *Atlanta Constitution* journalist was awarded the Pulitzer the next year. In 1960, Jack Nelson was recognized with the Pulitzer Prize for Local Reporting, exposing the deplorable conditions and actions at Georgia's Central State Hospital.

Read the overview of the Central State Hospital and the selected article by Jack Nelson. Write a short essay as to why this topic was considered a "significant issue" and describe the impact of Nelson's reporting.

### Excerpt(s)

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Source F: [New Georgia Encyclopedia – Central State Hospital](#)

Source G: "Use of Drugs, Anesthesia Investigated" *The Atlanta Constitution, March 18, 1959*



## HISTORICAL INQUIRY ACTIVITY

Summative Performance Task	
Compelling Question	How have Georgia's journalists influenced change throughout the state?
Argument	<p>"[I]t's my duty to see that they get the truth; but that's not enough, I've got to put it before them briefly so that they will read it, clearly so that they will understand it, forcibly so that they will appreciate it, picturesquely so that they will remember it, and, above all, accurately so that they may be wisely guided by its light." ~ Joseph Pulitzer</p> <p>Select one of the three Pulitzer Prize examples that has been explored and describe how it exemplifies the quote above.</p>
Extension	Review the adjectives in the above quote: briefly, clearly, forcibly, picturesquely, and accurately. Write a short definition of each. Select a current issue/event of importance to you and write a short article fitting within the parameters of these definitions.

### Argument

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"[I]t's my duty to see that they get the truth; but that's not enough, I've got to put it before them briefly so that they will read it, clearly so that they will understand it, forcibly so that they will appreciate it, picturesquely so that they will remember it, and, above all, accurately so that they may be wisely guided by its light." ~ Joseph Pulitzer

Select one of the three Pulitzer Prize examples that has been explored and describe how it exemplifies the quote above.

### Extension

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Review the adjectives in the above quote: briefly, clearly, forcibly, picturesquely, and accurately. Write a short definition of each. Select a current issue/event of importance to you and write a short article fitting within the parameters of these definitions.

## HISTORICAL INQUIRY ACTIVITY

Taking Informed Action	
Understand	Nellie Bly introduced something new to the world in 1887 – investigative journalism. Read about <a href="#">Nellie Bly</a> and what launched her to fame at Joseph Pulitzer’s paper, the <i>New York World</i> .
Assess	Both Nellie Bly and Jack Nelson exposed horrible conditions at mental hospitals. Compare and contrast their approaches to the subject and the response of the community.
Action	Research how the work of Bly and Nelson have contributed to change in the mental health field. Create a timeline that shows the changes in the field from the 1880s to today.

## Appendices

These resource can be accessed using this link: [Georgia’s Journalist Historical Inquiry 2024-2025](#)

Source C: [Julia Harris, Husband, Shared Pulitzer Prize](#), *Atlanta Journal and Constitution*, February 15, 1976

Source G: “Use of Drugs, Anesthesia Investigated” *The Atlanta Constitution*, March 18, 1959

### Additional Resources:

“Julian Harris, the Georgia Press, and the Ku Klux Klan”, by William F. Mugleston, *The Georgia Historical Quarterly*, Fall, 1975, Vol. 59, No. 3 (Fall, 1975)

### Additional Primary Source Investigation – The Pulitzer Prize Medal

Look at the medal on the introduction page and record your observations. Note the images and words. Who is pictured on the medal and why?

Research the medal’s designer. What other iconic sculptures has he created?

[The Pulitzer Prizes – The Medal](#)

[Daniel Chester French](#)