

Medill - Northwestern University: Dan Baum Wins John Bartlow Martin Award for New Yorker Article

Story by Medill

The winner of the 17th annual John Bartlow Martin Award for Public Interest Magazine Journalism is Dan Baum, whose "The Price of Valor," published in the July 12 & 19, 2004 issue of *The New Yorker*, was a powerful examination of the psychological consequences of soldiers becoming trained killers. The story editor was John Bennet. Final judge Amy Gross, editor in chief of *O* magazine, said of the piece: "I was knocked out by the concept—the ramifications of killing on the killer. Perhaps if disseminated it could change men's minds about war (the optimistic, female p.o.v.)"

The John Bartlow Martin Award for Public Interest Magazine Journalism was established in 1988 to encourage outstanding stories in this crucial area. Last year's winner was Wil S. Hylton, for his August 2003 Harper's article, "Sick on the Inside:" Correctional HMOs and the Coming Prison Plague," a powerful investigation of the horrors of the prison health care system and the devastating consequences they may have on the general population. Previous winners have included articles published in the Miami New Times, Newsweek, The New Yorker and The Village Voice.

Second place also went to *The New Yorker*, for Katherine Boo's "The Churn," published in the March 29, 2004 issue, a moving story that follows the fortunes of a family looking for work in the Rio Grande Valley, and in doing so also explores the "churn" of capitalism at all levels of society. This is the third time Ms. Boo has been one of the top three finalists in the contest.

"Private Stites Should Have Been Saved" by Maximillian Potter, which appeared in the June/July issue of *5280*, Denver's city magazine, took third place. The article exposed how the Army has abused its own soldiers who request psychological counseling, sometimes driving them to suicide. Wil S. Hylton, last year's winner and a final judge, said about the article, "He takes us to a place where the human soul can either be forged or crushed, and reminds us that we too bear the burden for those lost." Potter is a 1994 alumnus of Medill's magazine publishing project.

The research and reporting in these pieces were entirely consistent with the kind of journalism practiced by John Barlow Martin. In the 40s and 50s, Martin's in-depth articles on racketeering, poor working conditions, racism and false convictions appeared in *Life*, *Look*, *Collier's* and other major U.S. magazines. He served as U. S. ambassador to the Dominican Republic under Presidents Kennedy and Johnson. For ten years Martin taught at Medill, capping his career in journalism and government.

This year's winners were chosen by Jon Gluck, Deputy Editor of *New York Magazine*; Kristen Godsey, Editor-in-Chief of *Writer's Digest*; Amy Gross, Editor-in-Chief of *O* magazine; and Wil S. Hylton, last year's winner and a contributing writer to *GQ* magazine.



Photo courtesy of Dan Baum

Winner Dan Baum with wife and working partner Margaret L. Knox and their daughter, Rosa (center).

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