

Author, Journalist Dominick Dunne Dies At 83

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Dominick Dunne, the American author and journalist best known for his coverage of high-profile court cases such as the O.J. Simpson murder trial, died on Wednesday at the age of 83.

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A former Hollywood producer who turned to writing after years of battling drug and alcohol abuse, Dunne wrote five best-selling novels that centered on scandal and crime in high society.

But he gained an extra measure of fame while chronicling a series of sensational court cases that transfixed Americans during the 1980s and 1990s.

His first major piece for Vanity Fair appeared in March 1984 and offered a gripping first-person account of the trial of the man who murdered his 22-year-old daughter, Dominique, a crime that haunted Dunne throughout his life.

Dunne began to write regularly for Vanity Fair, documenting the trial of Lyle and Erik Menendez, brothers who were convicted of the 1989 shotgun murders of their wealthy Beverly Hills parents after two trials broadcast live on cable television.

When O.J. Simpson, a popular athlete turned TV pitchman, was accused of murdering his ex-wife and her friend, Dunne secured a front-row seat to the so-called "Trial of the Century," filing monthly dispatches for the magazine and appearing regularly on TV as a commentator.

He wrote a novel, "Another City, Not My Own," based on his experiences during the Simpson case and published in 1997.

Dunne also wrote about the attempted-murder trial of socialite Claus von Bulow and the rape case against William Kennedy Smith, and was renowned for his profiles of the rich and famous, including actress Elizabeth Taylor.

Former congressman Gary Condit sued Dunne over his coverage of the disappearance of Washington, D.C., intern Chandra Levy, in which the writer implicated the lawmaker. The case was settled out of court with an apology to Condit from Dunne.

An immigrant from El Salvador, not Condit, was ultimately charged with Levy's slaying.

Dunne, who was born in Hartford, Connecticut, on October 29, 1925, and was awarded the Bronze Star for his service in World War Two, published a memoir, "The Way We Lived Then: Recollections of a Well-Known Name-Dropper," in 1999.

His best-known novels included "The Two Mrs. Grenvilles," "People Like Us" and "An Inconvenient Woman."

The brother of author John Gregory Dunne and brother-in-law of writer Joan Didion, Dunne was married to Ellen Beatriz Griffin from 1954 to 1965.

Source: bdnews24.com