

Resume of Ralph Cipriano
Author and journalist
ralphcipriano.com

Ralph Cipriano is a veteran muckraking reporter who has exposed corruption in city and county governments, the Philadelphia D.A.'s office, local police departments, Ivy League Football and the Catholic Church. He's a former newspaper reporter for the Albany Times Union, Los Angeles Times and Philadelphia Inquirer who now works as an author, blogger, and freelance journalist.

Author:

Target: The Senator; A Story About Power And Abuse of Power, published November 2017. The rise and fall of the "Vince of Darkness," former Pennsylvania Senator Vincent J. Fumo, who personified a bare-knuckles, take-no-prisoners style of politics, and reigned for nearly a generation as a power broker.

Courtroom Cowboy, The Life of Legal Trailblazer Jim Beasley, published December 2008. The law school at Temple University is named after Beasley, a legendary Philadelphia trial lawyer who, before he went to college on the GI Bill, was a high school dropout driving a Greyhound bus.

The Hit Man; A True Story of Murder, Redemption and the Melrose Diner, published in 2012, about the life of John Veasey, a former Mafia hit man who survived three gunshots in the head to become a federally protected witness who brought down the Philly mob.

Free-lance writer:

Sins of the Fathers; Philly's Version of Spotlight Saw Pedophile Priests Walk And The Innocent Sent to Prison; Newsweek cover story, Dec. 8, 2017.

Catholic Guilt; How four men in a lurid rape case were sent to prison by a lying, scheming altar boy; Newsweek, cover story Jan. 29, 2017. My investigation resulted in a Catholic schoolteacher falsely accused of rape being set free nearly a dozen years before his sentence was up.

The Billion Dollar Boondoggle, Philadelphia City Paper, April 22, 2010 cover story about a Philadelphia pension perk known as DROP that allows retiring municipal employees to collect lump-sum cash payments of up to \$581,777, in addition to their regular salaries and pensions. Story documented how the city is paying out more than a billion dollars in DROP bonuses. The Billion Dollar Boondoggle prompted editorials from the Philadelphia Inquirer, Philadelphia Daily News, and Fox 29 calling on the city to abolish the program. The political firestorm over DROP resulted in the resignations of five City Council members who were taking cash bonuses.

Vince Fumo After the Fall, Philadelphia magazine, September 2009, an exclusive interview with Fumo, and an examination of how jurors in the case were influenced by saturation media coverage, finding out things the judge didn't want them to know.

Horsehead Talks, Philadelphia Weekly June 7, 2006 cover story about the life and times of former mobster and government informant Gaetano "Tommy Horsehead" Scafidi.

Chile's Garden of Eden, Uncorked, Los Angeles Times, Jan. 9, 2005, an intimate tour of Chile's wineries, re-published by Newsday and the Chicago Tribune.

The L&I Files, Philadelphia City Paper, Sept. 21 to Nov. 23, 2000, a series that documented how Philadelphia's Department of Licenses and Inspections did a favor for a politically connected developer, namely making 100 fire code violations disappear at 15 buildings, including high-rise apartment towers, a college dormitory and a day care center. The violations included open elevator shafts, missing sprinkler systems, uncertified fire alarm systems, and inadequate standpipes supposed to carry water in event of a fire.

TV:

Fox 29 News in Philadelphia: eight appearances in 2009-10 as guest commentator on the trial and conviction of former state Senator Fumo, and another dozen appearances in 2010-11 as a commentator on DROP.

Live with Geraldo: on-camera 2006 interview regarding former mobster "Tommy Horsehead," once ordered by the godfather of the Philadelphia mob to knock off TV reporter Geraldo Rivera. The story went viral, resulting in Jay Leno cracking Horsehead jokes on the *Tonight Show* ("See, you never hear about the good work the Mafia does. It's always the bad.") and Bill O'Reilly suggesting on *The O'Reilly Factor* that Horsehead's next target should be Maury Povich.

Dominick Dunne's Power, Privilege and Justice: Maternal Instinct: guest commentator in 2003, discussing "The Heir, the Girlfriend, the Stepfather and the Murder," a November 1999 Philadelphia magazine story about the contract murder of a prostitute by a member of the wealthy duPont family.

Newspaper reporter:

Philadelphia Inquirer (1987-98); covered South Philadelphia, writing features about Mummers and mobsters, and butchers and bricklayers who moonlighted as actors and opera singers. Also worked as religion reporter and lead obituary writer. Wrote the final word on Frank Rizzo, John Heinz and Hope Montgomery Scott, the Main Line socialite who inspired *The Philadelphia Story*.

Documented a "sleazy" maneuver by the athletic department of the University of Pennsylvania to preserve the eligibility of Mitch Marrow, a 6-foot-5 285 pound all-star Ivy-League defensive tackle. The Nov. 27, 1997 article resulted in the forfeiture of five games by the Penn Quakers football team, dropping their record from 6-4 to 1-9.

Wrote cover stories for the former Sunday Inquirer magazine, including: *Of Crooks and Choir Boys*, June 2, 1996, about the meteoric rise and fall of a Philadelphia reformer, former L&I Commissioner Bennett Levin; *The Party's Over*, Jan. 29, 1995, a series of mysterious arson fires destroys Palumbo's, a legendary nightclub once frequented by Frank Sinatra, Jimmy Durante and Frank Rizzo; and *Drawn to the Spirit*, Dec. 12, 1993, a skeptic's journey to the Holy Land with TV faith healer Benny Hinn.

Los Angeles Times (1984-87) covered local government, wrote features and exposed police brutality in a Southeast Los Angeles municipal police agency, resulting in a grand jury investigation by the district attorney of Los Angeles and the arrest of two officers for repeatedly using a Taser to torture a teenage burglary suspect.

Albany N.Y. Times Union (1982-84) Wrote a series, "The Machine's Expensive Friends," that documented corruption in municipal and county governments, resulting in the cancellation of \$2 million in wasteful contracts. Exposed ward leaders with no-bid contracts like the plumber who was billing the city to have three plumbers install one toilet, and five plumbers fix one leaky pipe. Caught trash haulers with political connections secretly dumping thousands of tons of commercial trash for free in the Albany County landfill. Articles resulted in numerous reforms in purchasing practices and the hiring of employees to do work formerly done by no-bid contractors.

Danbury Ct. News-Times (1976-81) Covered local governments, wrote features and also covered the New York Jets and Giants.

Journalism professor: adjunct faculty, Temple University, investigative reporting, 2008, introduction to news writing, 2000.

Education: Bachelor of Journalism, University of Missouri, Columbia, Mo., December 1975. News-editorial major.

Awards:

Society of Professional Journalists, Sigma Delta Chi Award for Excellence in Journalism:

2010 Non-deadline reporting (non-daily publication) *The Billion Dollar Boondoggle*, Philadelphia City Paper.

Gerald Loeb Awards, 2011 Finalist, UCLA School of Management:

Medium & Small Newspapers, *The Billion Dollar Boondoggle*, Philadelphia City Paper.

City and Regional Magazine Awards:

2010, Feature Story, "The Hit Man," Philadelphia Magazine. "Ralph Cipriano's engaging yarn about a Mafioso hit man's improbable metamorphosis into a Midwestern family man and ace car salesman and ultimately, a federally-protected witness on the lam, is a triumph of reporting and story-telling."

Catholic Press Association of the United States and Canada:

First Place, Investigative Reporting, 2014, National Catholic Reporter, April 29, 2013, "Star Witness' Story in Philadelphia Sex Abuse Trials Doesn't Add up."

First Place, Best News Writing national event 2006, *Grand Jury Findings*, National Catholic Reporter, Oct. 7, 2005, "Philadelphia cardinals 'excused and enabled abuse, covered up crimes.' "

First Place, Investigative Reporting 1999, *Lavish Spending in Archdiocese Skips Inner City*, National Catholic Reporter. June 19, 1998. At the same time he was closing poor minority churches and schools in inner-city parishes, supposedly because of a lack of money, Cardinal Anthony Bevilacqua, archbishop of Philadelphia, secretly spent \$5 million on grandiose capital projects that included building himself a new multi-media conference center with a 25-foot long conference table, redecorating a 30-room Main Line mansion that served as the cardinal's private residence, and renovating a seaside villa that was the cardinal's vacation home.

Society of Professional Journalists, Greater Philadelphia Chapter:

Excellence in Journalism, First Place, Ongoing News Coverage 2000, *The L&I Files*, Philadelphia City Paper.

New York State Publishers Association:

First prize, 1983, Community Service Award of Excellence.

First prize, 1982, Distinguished Local Reporting.

New York State Associated Press:

Third Prize, 1983, In-Depth Reporting.

First Prize, 1982, In-Depth Reporting.

Four Hearst Newspaper Awards:

1982-83 Local and Enterprise Reporting.