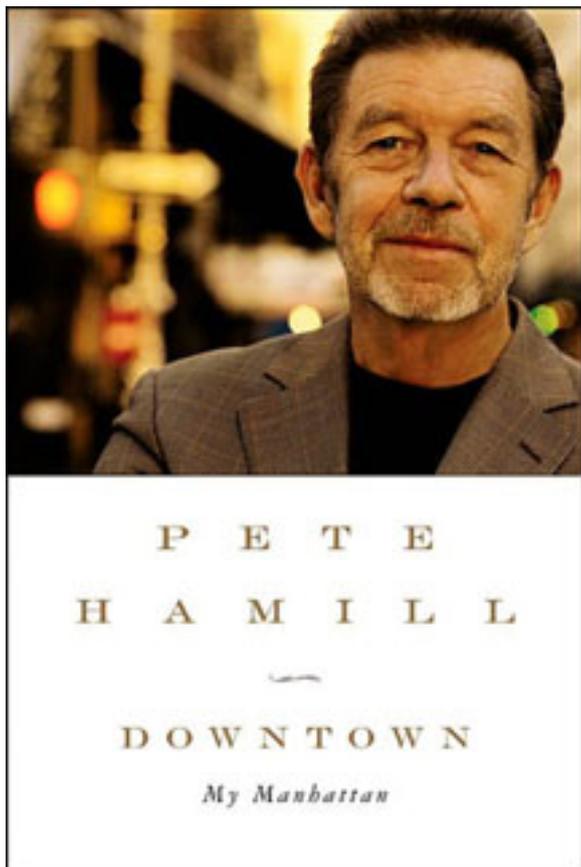


Pete Hamill Named BWAA's Liebling Winner

Written by The Sweet Science
Saturday, 29 January 2011 20:50



NEW YORK – Veteran New York journalist and author Pete Hamill has been selected by the Boxing Writers Association of America as the winner of this year’s A.J. Liebling Award. Bestowed since 1995 by the BWAA, the award honors the elegant New Yorker stylist, who chronicled the sport for decades and whose work was subsequently collected in the timeless boxing books *The Sweet Science* and *A Neutral Corner*. The Liebling Award will be presented at the BWAA’s annual dinner in Las Vegas on May 6th.

“This is a high honor indeed,” said Hamill of his selection. “Joe Liebling was one of the finest writers of his time, whether the subject was war, food, or *The Press*. But his boxing pieces were his masterworks. I’m deeply touched.”

Considered the quintessential New York newspaperman, Hamill has been editor-in-chief of both the *New York Daily News* and the *New York Post*. A reporter and columnist for both of those papers, he has also written for the *New York Times*, *Newsday*, and the *Village Voice*. Currently the Distinguished Writer in Residence at New York University, Hamill has authored 18 books, which range from his novels (*Forever*; *North River*) and his critically acclaimed memoir *A Drinking Life* to a biography of the controversial Mexican artist Diego Rivera. Hamill, 75, has written the screenplays for a number of films. He lives in New York with his wife, the journalist Fukiko Aoki.

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“When I was a kid growing up in Brooklyn, there were only two sports – baseball and boxing,” said Hamill, who has remained close to boxing throughout his career. His first published story was a profile of future light-heavyweight champion Jose Torres, and as a young reporter he covered the first Liston-Patterson fight in Chicago in 1962. Hamill chronicled the twilight of Sugar Ray Robinson’s career (he sat with Miles Davis for Robinson’s 1965 valedictory against Joey Archer) and rise of the young Muhammad Ali for newspapers and magazines, and wrote a boxing-themed novel, *Flesh and Blood*, later made into a TV movie starring Tom Berenger, Suzanne Pleshette, and John Cassavetes. He was the best man at the wedding of Torres, his lifelong friend.

“I knew Jose even before I became a newspaperman,” said Hamill. “He and Cus D’Amato were my instructors.”

Pete Hamill also has a unique personal connection to the man for whom the award is named. He was the editor of *The Library of America’s* two-volume collection of A.J. Liebling’s work, one of which was *The Sweet Science and Other Writings*. Hamill’s latest novel, *Tabloid City*, will be published on May 5th – a day before the 2011 Boxing Writers dinner.

Hamill was chosen by a select committee of veteran boxing writers (all of whom are former winners of the BWAA’s Nat Fleischer Award for Excellence in Boxing Journalism), chaired by George Kimball and comprised of Pulitzer Prize-winner Dave Anderson, Bernard Fernandez, Richard Hoffer, John Schulian, and Ed Schuyler.

Kimball, the chairman of the Liebling Award Committee for each of the past three years, had previously notified BWAA President Jack Hirsch that he would be stepping down for health reasons once this year’s selection process had been completed. Hirsch has appointed John Schulian to succeed Kimball as the Liebling Committee Chairman.

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brownsugar says: I've seen his face and have heard his commentary on many vids about the lives of famous american boxers.

the Roast says: This guy was awesome back in the day when he played Luke Skywalker.