

Pulitzer Prizes Leaked; Fiction Prize Awarded to Physicist Cvitanovic for *DasBuch*

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NEW YORK The 2005 Pulitzer Prizes, scheduled to be announced next Monday at 3 p.m. Eastern time, were leaked this morning. This marks the 5th year in a row that the Pulitzer Prize board has been unable to withhold their “top-secret” information from our intrepid reporters. The biggest surprise winner this year was Predrag Cvitanovic, the Glen Robinson Chair of Nonlinear Science in the Georgia Institute of Technology’s department of physics, who earned a Pulitzer Prize in fiction for the 11th edition of *Chaos: Classical and Quantum*, which was previously awarded the coveted prize of “Best Book on Quantum Chaos by a Local Author” by *Creative Loafing* and lauded by the *New York Times* as “a wonderful coming-of-age story.”



Before joining the Georgia Tech faculty, Cvitanovic was the director of the Center for Chaos and Turbulence Studies and Carlsberg Foundation Research Professor at the Niels Bohr Institute in Copenhagen, Denmark. His research interests include many topics in theoretical physics—including nonlinear dynamics, chaos, quantum chaos, particle physics, statistical mechanics, and turbulence. Perhaps his best-known work is his introduction of cycle expansions to approximate chaotic dynamics in a controlled perturbative fashion. This technique has proven to be widely useful for diagnosing and quantifying chaotic dynamics in problems ranging from atomic physics to neurophysiology. Cvitanovic is currently working towards a periodic-orbit theory of spatiotemporal turbulence in infinite-dimensional dynamical systems and towards a

deterministic theory of far-from-equilibrium processes in settings such as transport in idealized gases. By combining semiclassical quantization and periodic orbit theory and systematically including diffractive, penumbra, and creeping effects, Cvitanovic hopes that a periodic orbit theory of wave chaos can be transformed into a general tool for practical applications, such as testing shapes of elastic objects by their acoustic spectroscopy. The Pulitzer Prize board applauds these efforts.

The 11th edition of *Chaos: Classical and Quantum*, known affectionately as *DasBuch*, is the culmination of these research efforts. It contains illuminating discussions on numerous difficult and important topics—including billiards, Koopman operators, trace formulae, and even the elusive “Lan trick,” which scientists worldwide have been attempting to understand for more than 300 years. This monograph also includes insightful quotations from luminary scientists such as David Ruelle, Matthias Neubert, and Michael Berry. It also includes quotes from Mason Porter.

DasBuch's devoted fans include President George W. Bush, who upon hearing of Cvitanovic's award, released the following statement: “I extend my heartfelt congratulations to Predrag Cvitanovic. He is a fine product of the brilliant education system in the state of Georgia. I've read his book cover-to-cover three times and consult it daily when coming up with my foreign policy. I must admit that I was a bit disappointed that the book never discusses systems with divided phase space, but in all other respects *DasBuch* is a superb work of art.” E&P also contacted Mason Porter, but he said only that the book was good if one ignored all the grammatical inaccuracies. Upon being pressed, he admitted that the book contained some very beautiful mathematical derivations although he didn't really understand any of them.

Although his award was the biggest surprise, Cvitanovic was not the only winner to be leaked today. Other Pulitzer recipients include Jeff Gannon in the journalism category for his work on investigative reporting on various White House scandals, Slaven Peles in the history category for “Duct Tape: A Brief History of Fetishism,” and Mason Porter in the poetry category for some damn fine physics haikus, which cannot be reproduced here because this is a family publication.

In recent years, E&P has published the top-secret list of finalists before the announcement. Although the Pulitzer board tried extremely hard not to let us know the winners in advance, several judges once again disregarded strong, if hopeless, instructions not to leak the results of their deliberations. Some credit must be given, however, as we had to buy them more bottles of vodka than usual this year. We applaud their restraint.

The Pulitzer Prize, a United States literary award, is given out each April. The prizes are officially administered by the Columbia University Graduate School of Journalism, although the recipients are chosen by an independent board. Joseph Pulitzer, a Hungarian-American journalist and newspaper publisher, established the prizes, which were first awarded on June 4, 1917. E&P applauds all previous winners of this prize.