

FRANK BRUNI

b. October 31, 1964

NEW YORK TIMES COLUMNIST

“It’s a hell of a thing to have your identity, your dignity — your very hold on happiness — pressed into partisan battle and fashioned into a political weapon.”

Frank Bruni is a longtime writer for The New York Times and the newspaper’s first gay columnist. He is the best-selling author of three books. Frank Bruni and Andrew Sullivan are the two most impactful commentators on gay equality.

The middle child of three, Bruni was born and raised in White Plains, New York. His parents dubbed him the “big klutz,” and labeled his brothers respectively as “charismatic and confident” and “crafty and focused.”

He is the first openly gay columnist for the New York Times.

In Bruni’s humorous and poignant memoir, “Born Round: A Story of Family, Food and a Ferocious Appetite” (2009), he recounts his life through the lens of disordered eating. His parents teased him about his weight, joking that his initials (F.B.) stood for “fat boy.” He eventually joined his mother on a series of fad diets.

The incessant focus on food led Bruni to develop multiple eating disorders. Through prep school, he jumped from one weight-loss scheme to another, including extensive fasting, amphetamine abuse and excessive exercise. Realizing he was gay was not terribly unsettling for Bruni, but his struggle with anorexia and bulimia filled him with such shame, he abstained from sexual contact.

In 1986 Bruni graduated Phi Beta Kappa with a B.A. in English from the University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill. He earned an M.S. in journalism with highest honors in 1988 from Columbia University.

Bruni started his career at the New York Post. He moved to the Detroit Free Press in 1990 where, in 1992, he became a Pulitzer Prize finalist for his profile of a child molester.

In 1995 Bruni joined The New York Times. As a White House correspondent, he reported on George W. Bush. His book “Ambling into History” (2002) chronicles Bush’s presidential campaign. Bruni went on to become a restaurant critic for The Times and was named an op-ed writer in 2011.

Bruni has been a career-long LGBT and AIDS activist and has often opined about marriage equality. In 2016 he wrote extensively about Pete Buttigieg, then the openly gay Mayor of South Bend, Indiana, positioning him as a talented and serious potential presidential candidate.

In 2018 Bruni wrote about a rare condition that led to significant vision loss in his right eye. He left his official post at The Times in 2021 to accept an endowed chair in journalism at Duke University.

Bruni received the GLAAD Media Award for Outstanding Newspaper Columnist in 2012 and 2013. In 2016 the Lesbian and Gay Journalists Association presented him with the Randy Shilts Award for his dedication to LGBT Americans.

Bruni lives in Durham, North Carolina. He contributes to The New York Times and CNN.

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