

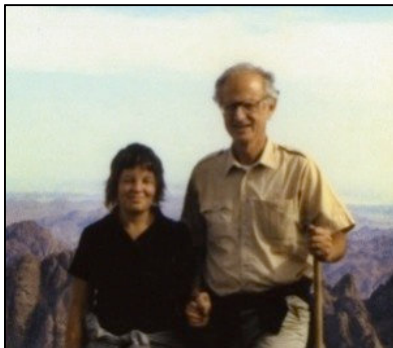
LUCINDA FRANKS

Lucinda Franks graduated from Vassar and then went to London where she got a job as a coffee girl at United Press International. She wrote news stories on her own time, visiting Northern Ireland when civil war broke out. At 22, she found herself dodging bullets and sending back stories to UPI headquarters, which later won several awards.

She then was summoned to New York to investigate a new phenomenon; highly educated young people who had formed a revolutionary terrorist group called Weatherman. Franks entered the radical underground and traced the life of Diana Oughton, who had blown herself up making dynamite bombs in the cellar of a New York town house. The five part newspaper series won Franks and reporter Thomas Powers the Pulitzer Prize for national reporting. Franks was the first woman to win it.

In 1974, she joined the staff of the *New York Times* and then wrote for the *New Yorker*, *New York*, and other magazines. One of her *New Yorker* stories, about the struggle between the adoptive and birth parents of a three-year-old child, was made into a television movie.

She has been a visiting professor at Yale, Princeton, and Vassar and has written four books including *Waiting Out A War: The Exile Of Private John Picciano*, (non-fiction), *Wild Apples* (novel), and *My Father's Secret War* (memoir). She has also won The Society of the Silurians Award twice and the Easter Seal Award.



Her latest book is a memoir of her unconventional marriage to New York's most powerful prosecutor, called *Timeless: Love, Morgenthau, and Me*.

She lives in New York City with her husband, Robert Morgenthau.



LUCINDA FRANKS

Full Biography

<http://lucindafranks.com/full-bio/>

I was born near Boston, in the manicured suburb of Wellesley, a universe away. It was a town, like many others, of wealth, social status, and women who often had raised noses. Wellesley College, one of the famous 'Seven Sisters,' was a separate entity, hardly spoken of. Instead, the guilty pleasure of this upper middle class Republican enclave was the paranoid John Birch Society, mother to the paranoid Tea Party decades later. In my memory, the town remains a collage of slouchy bobby sox (pity to you if you wore thin skinny sox), 'make-out parties' where stubby hands groped underneath shirtwaist dresses the color of popsicles, and boy's big football cleats swinging absurdly from their girlfriends' necks.



I can smell the delicious hamburgers sizzling by the pool at the country club, see the blinding green golf course filled with men in red pants and yellow V-necked sweaters swinging their clubs with a mighty whistle while the wives glided off to Garden Club in little hats that hugged their heads. Divorce never happened. But behind certain curtains, you wondered why it didn't. I knew this because I was a neighborhood babysitter. One smiling couple would come home, pay me, and as soon as I was out the door, the shouts and the smash of glass would begin. I would jump on my bike and pump down the deadly dusky streets.

Proper behavior at all times and intense decorum at charity balls and dinner parties was of prime value, but when I was in college, my father told me about the 'sex trains.' Supposedly, the more repressed and prudish of my parents' friends would have private parties where they stripped, got down on their knees, and formed a circle. The rest was left to my imagination. Was this fact or rumor? It was almost too good to be true.

But, truly, Wellesley was no different than any other suburb – full of well meaning people, men and women of good cheer and good hearts. When called on, they freely gave of themselves to Red Cross Drives and Girl Scout cookie sales. Stacks of casseroles would cover every surface of the homes of the bereaved and hospital rooms were filled with flowers and well wishers. It was a town high on community but low on the ability to see that the fantasies they had created often disguised the nightmares from which they couldn't escape.

When I was 12, I was sent to Charm School. You walked across the stage in front of the class, shoulders back, proceeding toe-heel, toe-heel. When I was 14, I went to Mrs. Ferguson's Dancing School. But I had the coordination of a newborn colt. The boys barely reached my chin and I stumbled all over their feet. One night, Mrs. Ferguson abruptly stopped the music and set forth like a ship cutting through the water. "Somebody is leading the boy!" she said, in her loud guttural accent. You could hear her heels clicking as she walked around the hushed room. Uh-oh, I thought, somebody's in for it. And then, as she got closer, I closed my eyes and sure enough, I felt the prow of her silk bosom grazing my cheek. "You are leading the boy," she declared, her voice carrying up to the balcony where my father happened to be watching.

THE TEEN YEARS

By tenth grade, my mother, still determined to find somewhere which would “knock the rough edges” off me, withdrew me from our public high school and sent me to a private school by the name of Beaver Country Day. But she never saw the ‘sixties’ coming. She pictured me in this social boot camp as supervised, regulated, sanded daily. How could she guess that I had found my dream paradise—a clique of individualistic, rebellious hippies. Guitars round our shoulders, we hung out in funky Cambridge, wore Marimekko dresses, and wandered like minstrels through Harvard Yard singing ‘Kumbaya.’

Meanwhile, mother was putting me up for candidacy in the blue-blooded Junior League, an organization to which she continued to pay my dues until the day she died. New Junior Leaguers had to do volunteer work and for some bizarre reason, probably because it was sponsored by Harvard, The League listed a halfway house called Wellmet as a choice. Here, students helped patients recently released from what they still called ‘state mental hospitals.’ The students were housed in one big attic room, an invitation for young people in that era to have a free for all. The smell of hashish was so strong that it permeated the patient bedrooms below. Lined up outside the room of the housemistress, who was an aging unreconstructed beatnik willing to listen to anyone, were as many students with identity crises as patients.

I was blissfully happy at Cambridge’s Wellmet. My poor mother had been foiled again.

But we worked diligently with the patients; outraged that a few of them had been warehoused in the hospitals simply because their parents had been committed, we succeeded in getting them apartments, jobs and new lives.

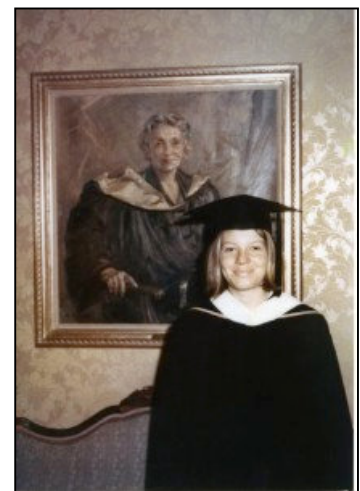
I finally had to bid a tearful goodbye to this haven in Cambridge which suited me so well; my parents had threatened not to pay for my college education if I didn’t come home.



She was as set on seeing me make my debut into Society as I was set on living my own different life. I finally gave in. Before I knew it, I was toe-heeling it down the aisle at the Boston Cotillion, wearing white gloves up to my elbows, hair swept back in a French twist; on my father’s arm I did a full court bow and was ‘presented’ into Society. Afterwards, we had a reception where mother proudly served tea from an elaborate silver tea set, which was said to have been inherited from her dowager ancestor, a Lady in Waiting to Queen Victoria.

I went off to Vassar College, majoring in English, though I spent a great deal of time taking classes at Yale with my new boyfriend. I wanted badly to be a writer, but I got little encouragement. I wrote a poem for my freshman English teacher, and he suggested I try a short story. After I handed in the story, he suggested I take engineering classes.

Then came Professor William Gifford, who became a legend at Vassar; he saw something no-one else had seen and persuaded me to write as much



fiction as I could. He even got one of my short stories published in a small literary magazine.

YOUNG ADULT YEARS

The Vietnam war was meanwhile polarizing America, putting its youth in tumult. Martin Luther King and Bobby Kennedy were to be assassinated. I decided to leave the country, believing as many did, that it was morally bankrupt. So off I sailed on a broken down student freight boat bound for England.



I got a job as a coffee girl at a leading news service, *UPI*, and joined the London Anarchist Club. In my spare time, I dug up unusual news stories which got onto the wires and caught the attention of my boss. He gave me the highest of compliments: “I don’t think of you as a woman anymore, but as a journalist.” And, indeed I became the first female reporter in the bureau.

At first, I was put on the beauty contest and dog show beat, which became mind-numbingly boring. Then one weekend I went to Belfast with some fellow Anarchists and marched from Belfast to Dublin on behalf of civil rights for the Catholic minority. We were ambushed near the Irish border by club wielding Protestant bullyboys. With blood running down my face – from a minor scalp wound – I excitedly called *UPI* London.. “Civil war has broken out here and I’ve got the story!” I shouted through the noise of the crowd. “Get out of there, Franks, “ my boss replied, “and make it quick. Women aren’t allowed to cover war zones. *UPI* rules.” I pointed out that by the time they sent a man to replace me, the story would be over. And that is how I got off beauty contests and spent the next several years dodging bullets in Northern Ireland.

Then one day, on a peaceful leafy street in New York’s Greenwich Village, a gentle woman named Diana Oughton blew herself up in a townhouse that had been turned into a bomb factory. I was brought back to the States to investigate this new phenomenon, a violent anti-war group called Weatherman, comprised of the offspring of the privileged classes who were trying to destroy everything their parents represented. I was young, with a similar background to Diana, and thus was deemed perfect to enter the dangerous radical underground in which she had moved. In spite of my revolutionary credentials, I met my first wave of sheer terror when I was put up against a wall and angrily questioned by a Black Panther who thought I was an undercover agent.



I had been assigned an assistant, Thomas Powers, and he was so helpful, I insisted he share my byline. We wrote a five part newspaper series that won the Pulitzer Prize. I was the first woman to win the Pulitzer for national reporting and the youngest woman to win the prize. It remained like a gold-plated calling card for life.

Back in New York, I joined the staff of *The New York Times*, and after that, I wrote for *The New Yorker*, *New York*, *The Atlantic*, then other media like the online *Daily Beast*. I wrote profiles ranging from Ariel Sharon to Robert Redford, cultivated sources and did what I loved best; investigative reporting. One series of stories exposed and helped close down a corrupt bank and another resulted in a ban of the carcinogenic Red Dye No. 2, which permeated much of our food supply. Later, writing for Tina Brown at *The Daily Beast*, I became for a time the city's Bernie Madoff expert; I kept getting exclusives on the Ponzi scheme he ran courtesy of an impeccable highly placed source who happened to have been a childhood sweetheart.



A *New Yorker* story on the battle between the adoptive and the birth parents for custody of a three-year-old child, Baby Jessica, ended up as a television movie.

I taught investigative journalism seminars at Yale, Princeton and Vassar. My Vassar students were the liveliest. One student uncovered two security guards who were napping on the job. Another found the postmistress stealing student's magazines.



At the time, I happened to be living a life just this side of the law for I was harboring a well-known draft dodger wanted by the FBI. Roger Williams and I had a nice relationship until the day he made a fatal mistake. He suggested I interview this imposing public prosecutor named Robert M. Morgenthau. Reluctantly, I did. But during the interview, I nervously asked so many questions, Morgenthau thought I was either the dumbest or the smartest reporter he'd ever met. When he read my story, he decided I was the smartest. Then he began a quest to reach me at home but he never could get by Roger, who was the gatekeeper while I wrote my first book, *Waiting Out a War*, about Vietnam deserters. Roger never told me Morgenthau had called.

And then a cascade of events took place that would permanently alter my life; change what seemed to be my fate. To find out what these events were, you will just have to read *Timeless: Love, Morgenthau, and Me*.

OTHER ARTICLES

Love, respect bind polar political ties for Morgenthau, Franks (August 15,2015)

<http://www.poughkeepsiejournal.com/story/news/local/2015/08/09/lucinda-franks-robert-morgenthau-politics-timeless-watergate-pulitzer-prize-fishkill-farms/31382737/>

BOOK REVIEWS

“Happy families may be all alike, as Tolstoy has remarked, but happy marriages are not, as Lucinda Franks allows us to know in this beautifully composed, painfully candid, and often very funny double portrait of the author (Pulitzer-prize winning journalist, writer, radical activist) and Robert Morgenthau (legendary district attorney of Manhattan for 35 years), who were married in defiance of nearly everyone who knew them after Franks, a young woman of 26, met Morgenthau, a widower of 53. *Timeless* is something of a defiant memoir as well, yet it also brims with tenderness, good humor, and a good deal of inside information about a number of Morgenthau’s most famous criminal cases including something of the background of 9/11.

As an intimate depiction of an unusual marriage, *Timeless* is unique; yet, in its delineation of the ever-shifting contours of married love, it is universal and archetypal—indeed, ‘timeless.’”

—**Joyce Carol Oates, novelist, playwright, essayist; author of the new novel, *Carthage***

“It’s rare for a book this candid and revealing to be so well written. The combination makes this a marvelous memoir, one with an honesty and exuberance that is unforgettable. With a reporter’s eye for detail and the narrative talents of a novelist, Franks brings alive a love story, a behind the scenes look at a high-profile marriage and the inside secrets of headline-connected criminal investigations. This is a book you don’t want to put down and wish it were longer when you finish.”

—**Dan Rather, author of the memoir *Rather Outspoken*, investigative reporter and newscaster for *Dan Rather Reports***

“This book is a treasure: a shining love story, a fascinating slice of history, a paean to an extraordinary man. And a terrific read—honest, funny, daring, and beautifully written.”

—**Francine Klagsbrun, author and columnist for *The Jewish Week***

“There is a surprise on almost every page of this book. It is a remarkably intimate tale of passion and politics, of growing old and staying young.”

—**Chris Wallace, Emmy-winning political journalist and anchor of Fox News *Sunday with Chris Wallace*.**

“Lucinda Frank’s memoir is truly a “portrait of a marriage” in all its intimacy. “Lucinda” and “Bob” – two highly accomplished, strong-willed individuals from different backgrounds, dedicated to separate professions, widely apart in age, sharply different in temperament – came to be bound together by the power of love. It is said all marriages may be different, with their own unique stresses and strains, but this one is a celebration of life, a reflection of what human spirit can achieve.”

—**Paul Volcker**