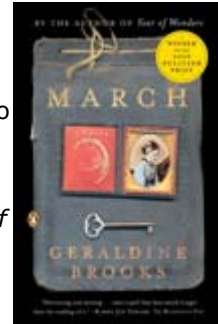


Geraldine Brooks' *March* Wins the Pulitzer Prize for Fiction; The Second Consecutive Year a Penguin Group (USA) Book Has Won a Pulitzer

March by Geraldine Brooks (HC: Viking, March 2005; PB: Penguin, February 2006) was awarded the 2006 Pulitzer Prize for fiction, it was announced on Monday. Recently back from an eight-city tour, Brooks saw her book shoot to #2 from #8,589 on Barnes & Noble.com's Hourly Top 10, with the original hardcover edition right behind at #22. On Amazon, *March* hit the #5 mark among all fiction titles and reached as high as #32 overall. Sales of *A Year of Wonders* (HC: Viking, August 2001; PB: Penguin, May 2002), Brooks' first novel, also rose quickly following the award announcement.



This is the second consecutive year that a Penguin Group (USA) title has won a Pulitzer Prize. Steve Colls' *Ghost Wars* (HC: The Penguin Press, February 2004; PB: Penguin, January 2005) received the Pulitzer for general nonfiction in 2005.

March is centered around Mr. March, the father in Louisa May Alcott's classic novel, *Little Women*, who was away during the war serving as a chaplain for the Union cause. Informed by biographical details from the life of A. Bronson Alcott — Louisa May's father — and by his close friendships with Ralph Waldo Emerson and Henry David Thoreau, March is brilliant, energetic, and flawed — his idealistic nature threatens his marriage and pushes him nearly beyond endurance. His is a character readers champion as he struggles to reconcile his hopes, not only for his family, but for the divided United States, with the harsh and brutal reality of the environment that surrounds him.

The Pulitzer Prize carries with it an award of \$10,000. Brooks will be honored along with other Pulitzer recipients at the annual luncheon held in May at Columbia University. For a book to be awarded this prestigious honor, it must be deemed by the Pulitzer Prize Board as "distinguished fiction by an American author, preferably dealing with American life."

The Pulitzer Prize is named for Joseph Pulitzer, the most skillful of newspaper publishers and a passionate crusader against dishonest government in the latter part of the 19th century. Born in Hungary, Pulitzer reshaped newspaper journalism with his innovative *New York World* and *St. Louis Post-Dispatch*, and was the first to call for journalists to be trained at the university level in a school of journalism. And certainly, the lasting influence of the Pulitzer Prizes on journalism, literature, music, and drama is to be attributed to his visionary acumen.