

# Pulitzer Prize Winners in Fiction

1948 – *Tales of the South Pacific* by James A. Michener

The people and beauty of the South Pacific's coral islands are viewed through the eyes of a young naval lieutenant.

1949 – *Guard of Honor* by James Gould Cozzens

In 1943, a series of incidents at an air base in Florida leads everyone to guard the honor of the others.

1950 – *The Way West* by A. B. Guthrie

Dick Summers and others travel the Oregon Trail from Independence, Missouri, to Oregon in the sequel to *The Big Sky*.

1951 – *The Town* by Conrad Richter

The sequel to *The Fields* shows Sayward Wheeler and her husband moving from a cabin into a mansion and their children moving into their own homes.

1952 – *The Caine Mutiny* by Herman Wouk

An American mine sweeper, the *Caine*, patrols in the Pacific during World War II under a tyrannical skipper until an ensign leads a mutiny against him.

1953 – *The Old Man and the Sea* by Ernest Hemingway

Santiago is a Cuban fisherman who encounters a giant marlin in the Gulf Stream and the battle for his catch becomes one of survival against a band of marauding sharks.

1954 – No Award

1955 – *A Fable* by William Faulkner

An allegorical story of World War I set in the trenches in France and dealing ostensibly with a mutiny in a French regiment.

1956 – *Andersonville* by MacKinlay Kantor

A senile general administering Andersonville Prison in Georgia during the Civil War allows many Union soldiers to suffer from exposure, disease, and starvation.

1957 – No Award

1958 – *A Death in the Family* by James Agee (posthumously published)

When Jay Follet dies in a car accident, his Knoxville family gathers during the days before his funeral.

1959 – *The Travels of Jaimie McPheeters* by Robert Lewis Taylor

Jaimie McPheeters, 14, leaves Louisville with his father in 1849 for California and the gold fields.

1960 – *Advise and Consent* by Allen Drury

Complex study of the events and reasons that govern the Senators' decisions when they must confirm the President's choice for Secretary of State.

1961 – *To Kill a Mockingbird* by Harper Lee

Scout's father defends a black man accused of raping a white woman in a small Alabama town during the 1930s.

1962 – *The Edge of Sadness* by Edwin O'Connor

The narrator is Father Hugh Kennedy, a man who discloses the problems and decisions in his life as he talks of his lifelong connection with the Carmody family dominated by the wily old miser Charlie Carmody who, in a moment of weakness, bares his soul to Father Kennedy.

1963 – *The Reivers* by William Faulkner

Boon Hogganbeck persuades Lucius Priest, 11, to borrow his grandfather's car in 1905, and after they arrive at a bordello, the black Ned McCaslin trades the car for a horse.

1964 – No Award

1965 – *The Keepers of the House* by Shirley Ann Grau

The relationship between Will Howland and his Negro mistress is exposed when their granddaughter marries a segregationist with political ambitions.

1966 – *The Collected Stories of Katherine Anne Porter* by Katherine Anne Porter

Twenty-seven short stories by the Pulitzer Prize-winning writer.

1967 – *The Fixer* by Bernard Malamud

A Jew in Tsarist Russia is accused of murdering a Catholic boy and suffers from mistreatment in prison.

1968 – *The Confessions of Nat Turner* by William Styron

Nat Turner leads a group of slaves in an insurrection during 1831 in Virginia.

1969 – *House Made of Dawn* by N. Scott Momaday

A young American Indian returning from World War II searches for his place on his old reservation and in urban society.

1970 – *Collected Stories* by Jean Stafford

Thirty masterly stories, most previously published in periodicals and collections, that reaffirm Stafford's superb control over the genre.

1971 – No Award

1972 – *Angle of Repose* by Wallace Stegner

Susan and her engineer husband live rough lives in mining camps during the late 19th century, and their marriage cannot survive.

1973 – *The Optimist's Daughter* by Euroda Welty

Laurel Hand is forced to face her Southern past when she returns to Mississippi for her father's funeral.

1974 – No Award

1975 – *The Killer Angels* by Michael Shaara

Robert E. Lee and James Longstreet tell the Southern view of the battle at Gettysburg while Colonel Joshua Chamberlain and General John Buford present the Northern view.

1976 – *Humboldt's Gift* by Saul Bellow

Charlie Citrine, suffering from steadily worsening troubles with women, career, and life in general, receives unexpected aid and comfort in the form of a belated bequest from his onetime friend and mentor, the poet Von Humboldt Fleisher.

1977 – No Award

1978 – *Elbow Room* by James Alan McPherson

Twelve stories explore the borders between black and white America as they are crossed and known by students and Peace Corps volunteers of the 1960s, failed preachers, young punks, jealous lovers, and others.

1979 – *The Stories of John Cheever* by John Cheever

This collection of Cheever's short fiction features *The Swimmer*, *The Enormous Radio*, *The Housebreaker of Shady Hill* and fifty-eight other stories written and published over the past three decades.

1980 – *The Executioner's Song* by Norman Mailer

A reconstruction of the crime and fate of Gary Gilmore, the convicted murderer who sought his own execution in Utah where he was imprisoned, is based on taped interviews with relatives, friends, lawyers, and law-enforcement officials.

1981 – *A Confederacy of Dunces* by John Kennedy Toole (posthumously published)

A fat New Orleans misanthrope who constantly rebukes society, Ignatius Reilly, gets a job at his mother's urging but ends up leading a worker's revolt.

1982 – *Rabbit is Rich* by John Updike

Harry Angstrom, now middle-aged and the chief sales representative of a Toyota dealership, attempts to cope with such problems as inflation, governmental ineffectiveness, the return of his prodigal son, and a chance encounter with an old girlfriend.

1983 – *The Color Purple* by Alice Walker

Two African American sisters, one a missionary in Africa and the other a child-wife living in the South, support each other through their correspondence, beginning in the 1920s.

1984 – *Ironweed* by William Kennedy

In the sequel to Billy Phelan's Greatest Game, Francis Phelan, an old hobo, comes home to Albany, New York, during the Depression.

1985 – *Foreign Affairs* by Alison Lurie

Vinnie Miller, a professor of children's literature, and Fred Turner, an assistant professor at the same American university, pursue their separate affairs in London during the same six-month period.

1986 – *Lonesome Dove* by Larry McMurtry

Former Texas Rangers leave their unsuccessful cattle business when they hear of good opportunities in newly opened territory.

1987 – *A Summons to Memphis* by Peter Taylor

Philip has a new life in New York but is returned to the petty meddling of his family when his two spinster sisters call upon him to help them ruin their eighty-one-year-old father's wedding plans.

1988 – *Beloved* by Toni Morrison

After the Civil War ends, Sethe longingly recalls the two-year-old daughter whom she killed when threatened with recapture after escaping from slavery 18 years before.

1989 – *Breathing Lessons* by Anne Tyler

During a ninety-mile drive to her best friend's husband's funeral, Maggie and her husband, Ira, recall and reevaluate the details of their twenty-eight-year marriage.

1990 – *The Mambo Kings Play Songs of Love* by Oscar Hijuelos

Brothers emigrate to New York City in 1949 and form a band with their popularity peaking in 1956 when they get to perform on I Love Lucy.

1991 – *Rabbit at Rest* by John Updike

Ex-basketball player Harry "Rabbit" Angstrom, now living in a Florida condominium, faces middle age, heart trouble, and a wife who has suddenly gone to work.

1992 – *A Thousand Acres* by Jane Smiley

Larry Cook, an Iowan farmer who has worked a thousand acre plot owned by his family for generations, abruptly decides to leave his farm to his three daughters and retire. His two eldest daughters are pleased with the decision but his youngest daughter has been cut out by her father and is angry. As the daughters' activity on the land progresses, they notice a change in their father. Events begin to unfold that will threaten and destroy the family and their farm.

1993 – *A Good Scent from a Strange Mountain* by Robert Olen Butler

A collection of stories about the residents of Saigon as they face love, loss, and despair.

1994 – *The Shipping News* by E. Annie Proulx

Quoyle retreats to Newfoundland with his daughters after the death of his unfaithful wife. There, as his family begins anew, Quoyle deals with his personal fears.

1995 – *The Stone Diaries* by Carol Shields

Daisy Goodwill Flett, whose mother died during Daisy's birth in 1905, moves from Canada to Indiana with her stonecutter father and lives an ordinary life against the backdrop of 20th-century events.

1996 – *Independence Day* by Richard Ford

Real estate agent Frank Bascombe moves into his newly married ex-wife's old home, and is looking forward to the upcoming Fourth of July weekend, but somehow nothing turns out the way he expects.

1997 – *Martin Dressler: The Tale of an American Dreamer* by Steven Millhauser

Martin Dressler dreams of becoming successful as he carefully and systematically rises from clerk in his father's 1890s cigar store to bellhop, hotel manager, owner of his own cigar store, a large hotel, and a resort.

1998 – *American Pastoral* by Philip Roth

A former athletic star, devoted family man, and owner of a thriving glove factory, Seymour "Swede" Levov finds his life coming apart during the social disorder of the 1960s, when his beloved daughter turns revolutionary terrorist out to destroy her father's world.

1999 – *The Hours* by Michael Cunningham

Virginia Woolf is brought back to life in an intertwining of her story with those of two more contemporary women. In Woolf's life, she awakens one morning in London in 1923 with a dream that will become Mrs. Dalloway. In the present, Clarissa Vaughan is planning a party in Greenwich Village for her oldest love, a poet dying from AIDS. And in Los Angeles in 1949, Laura Brown is pregnant and unsettled, trying to prepare for her husband's birthday, but wanting nothing more than to sit and read Woolf.

2000 – *Interpreter of Maladies* by Jhumpa Lahiri

A debut collection of short fiction blends elements of Indian traditions with the complexities of American culture in such tales as "A Temporary Matter," in which a young Indian-American couple confronts their grief over the loss of a child, while their Boston neighborhood copes with a nightly blackout.

2001 – *The Amazing Adventures of Kavalier & Clay* by Michael Chabon

In 1939 New York City, Joe Kavalier, a refugee from Hitler's Prague, joins forces with his Brooklyn-born cousin, Sammy Clay, to create comic-book superheroes inspired by their own fantasies, fears, and dreams.

2002 – *Empire Falls* by Richard Russo

Milo Roby tries to hold his family together while working at the Empire Grill in the once-successful logging town of Empire Falls, Maine, with his partner, Mrs. Whiting, who is the heir to a faded logging and textile legacy.

2003 – *Middlesex* by Jeffrey Eugenides

Calliope's friendship with a classmate and her sense of identity are compromised by the adolescent discovery that she is a hermaphrodite, a situation with roots in her grandparent's desperate struggle for survival in the 1920s.

2004 – *The Known World* by Edward P. Jones

When a plantation proprietor and former slave--now possessing slaves of his own--dies, his household falls apart in the wake of a slave rebellion and corrupt underpaid patrollers who enable free black people to be sold into slavery.

2005 – *Gilead* by Marilynne Robinson

As the Reverend John Ames approaches the hour of his own death, he writes a letter to his son chronicling three previous generations of his family, a story that stretches back to the Civil War and reveals uncomfortable family secrets.

2006 – *March* by Geraldine Brooks

In a story inspired by the father character in "Little Women" and drawn from the journals and letters of Louisa May Alcott's father, a man leaves behind his family to serve in the Civil War and finds his beliefs challenged by his experiences.

2007 – *The Road* by Cormac McCarthy

In a novel set in an indefinite, futuristic, post-apocalyptic world, a father and his young son make their way through the ruins of a devastated American landscape, struggling to survive and preserve the last remnants of their own humanity.

2008 – *The Brief Wondrous Life of Oscar Wao* by Junot Diaz

Living with an old-world mother and rebellious sister, an urban New Jersey misfit dreams of becoming the next J. R. R. Tolkien and believes that a long-standing family curse is thwarting his efforts to find love and happiness.

2009 – *Olive Kitteridge* by Elizabeth Strout

At the edge of the continent, in the small town of Crosby, Maine, lives Olive Kitteridge, a retired schoolteacher who deplores the changes in her town and in the world at large but doesn't always recognize the changes in those around her.

2010 – *Tinkers* by Paul Harding

A powerful celebration of life in which a New England father and son, through suffering and joy, transcend their imprisoning lives and offer new ways of perceiving the world and mortality.