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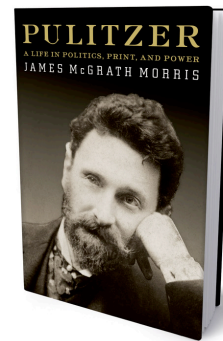
## Author of First Biography of Joseph Pulitzer in 40 Years to Speak at Friends of the Santa Fe Library Annual Meeting

The life and historical importance of media baron Joseph Pulitzer will be the subject of a talk at 2 pm, Sunday, January 30, at the Friends of Santa Fe Library Annual Meeting, by James McGrath Morris, the author of a new and highly praised biography of the most famous figure in American journalism.

The public is invited to this free event in the Main Library, 145 Washington Avenue, and refreshments will be served.

Like Alfred Nobel, Joseph Pulitzer is better known today for the prize that bears his name than for his contribution to history. Yet, in nineteenth-century industrial America, while Carnegie provided the steel, Rockefeller the oil, Morgan the money, and Vanderbilt the railroads, Pulitzer ushered in the modern mass media. In his definitive biography, *Pulitzer: A Life in Politics, Print, and Power* (Harper), author details the epic rise and tragic decline of the American icon who transformed the press and created the modern mass media.

A Jewish Hungarian immigrant, Joseph Pulitzer arrived penniless in America in 1864. Settling in St. Louis, Pulitzer started his career in journalism as a reporter for the local German paper. Soon, Pulitzer became active in Missouri state politics as a party delegate. At the same time, Pulitzer's journalism career in St. Louis continued to grow and eventually, he assumed ownership of the *St. Louis Post-Dispatch*. Despite the *Post-Dispatch*'s continued success and Pulitzer's position as a prominent



“This well-researched, exhaustive biography reads like a novel, with fleshed-out characters...It is the story of a man, but also of a time.”  
—*The New York Times Book Review*

“A major biographical success . . . . A thrilling toboggan-ride tour of history. . . . In this cavalcade of American life and letters, the pages fly by.”  
—*The San Francisco Chronicle*

figure in Missouri political circles, St. Louis soon grew small, and Pulitzer yearned to be at the hub of journalism and politics in America – New York City.

In New York, Pulitzer's influence on the newspaper world continued to grow. As owner and publisher of the *New York World*, Pulitzer recognized the vast social changes of the industrial revolution. Harnessing the converging elements of entertainment, technology, business, and demographics, Pulitzer transformed the role of the newspaper, making it an essential feature of urban life. Employing innovative tactics during a period of great change in the nation, Pulitzer cemented his position as a baron of the media as the nineteenth century began to draw to a close.

Shortly after his relocation to New York, Pulitzer began to use his power and influence to advance a progressive political agenda. Emboldened by his authority, Pulitzer took on those individuals who opposed him. He battled President Theodore Roosevelt – who tried to send Pulitzer to prison – and his rapidly emerging rival in the newspaper world, young William Randolph Hearst. Fighting for freedom of the press and enduring grueling legal battles, Pulitzer's efforts truly transformed the role of newspapers in American politics and life.

The wildly successful *World* thrived as circulation continued to rise, yet precisely when Pulitzer was at the height of his power, tragedy struck. Pulitzer's eyesight began to deteriorate rapidly, eventually leaving him blind. Despite his commitment to overseeing all operations of the *World*, Pulitzer left New York and wandered the globe, seeking any possible remedies available and gradually retreating from the chaotic media world. Although he had accumulated tremendous wealth and power, Pulitzer lived out the end of his life in isolation – a lonely, tormented recluse.

Pulitzer's impact on politics and the press nevertheless remained significant and his legacy endured. Based on years of research and newly discovered documents, Morris's work provides a compelling portrait of an American icon. As today's media world anticipates changes ahead in the information age, **PULITZER** is a timely and important work that offers valuable insights into the development of modern mass media and the ever-changing landscape of American journalism.

#### **ABOUT THE AUTHOR**

**James McGrath Morris** is the author of *The Rose Man of Sing Sing: A True Tale of Life, Murder, and Redemption*, which was selected as a *Washington Post* Best Book of the Year for 2004. He is the editor of the monthly *Biographer's Craft*, and his writing appeared in *The Washington Post*, *The New York Observer*, and other newspapers and magazines.