



The March

E.L. Doctorow

[Download now](#)

[Read Online](#) 

The March

E.L. Doctorow

The March E.L. Doctorow

In 1864, Union general William Tecumseh Sherman marched his sixty thousand troops through Georgia to the sea, and then up into the Carolinas. The army fought off Confederate forces, demolished cities, and accumulated a borne-along population of freed blacks and white refugees until all that remained was the dangerous transient life of the dispossessed and the triumphant. In E. L. Doctorow's hands the great march becomes a floating world, a nomadic consciousness, and an unforgettable reading experience with awesome relevance to our own times.

The March Details

Date : Published September 12th 2006 by Random House Trade Paperbacks (first published January 2005)
ISBN : 9780812976151
Author : E.L. Doctorow
Format : Paperback 363 pages
Genre : Historical, Historical Fiction, Fiction, Military History, Civil War, War, Literature

 [Download The March ...pdf](#)

 [Read Online The March ...pdf](#)

Download and Read Free Online The March E.L. Doctorow

From Reader Review *The March* for online ebook

Bart says

This was good, not great.

Such has been my feeling about all three of the Doctorow novels I've read, *Billy Bathgate*, *City of God* and *The March*. All of these novels are well-structured, technically proficient works, and all contain something that makes them above average.

But nothing quite makes them extraordinary.

Some credit has to go to Doctorow, however, just for picking Tecumseh Sherman's march as his topic. This is a controversial subject, even 140 years later. Truthfully, I most enjoyed the parts where Doctorow - a writer who proved in *City of God* that he has a top notch brain - tried to lead us inside Sherman's mind.

The novel may have been better for me if it had been more about marching and obligation and mania than bit players. The Pearl character, specifically, just felt like Doctorow was trying too hard to make a somewhat tired social commentary; the ending of the book - with Pearl being "ahead of her time" - was uncharacteristically trite.

Going into this novel, and knowing the abandon with which Doctorow tackled the existence of God in a previous novel, I expected more marching and more Sherman - and all the horrific choices an otherwise decent, but empirical-thinking, man had to make.

Finally, the supporting cast of *The March* is what makes me hesitate to recommend this novel to historical fiction fans. For now, let's just let contemporary fiction fans enjoy it as an entertaining read that uses very interesting scenery in a pretty good way.

Lyn says

The march.

In E.L. Doctorow's capable hands it becomes more than a collective activity, more than a military composite. The march becomes a thing, a great living mass, whose arms and tentacles extend out for miles, through forests and across streams and down city streets. Each soldier in the march is a cell in a living organism of seek and destroy, a great sprawling entity of military might and objective, but diverse and chaotic enough to encompass stragglers, hangers on, passengers and parasites.

Describing General William Tecumseh Sherman's 1864 march to the sea from burning Atlanta, novelist E. L. Doctorow illustrates a vision of history that comes alive for the reader. Following several characters on the march, including the General himself, the reader is carried along this flowing river of humanity bent on conquest and destruction, but also alive with individual purpose and reason. The march as a collective is a heterogeneous amalgam of moving and sometimes contradictory parts, but each distinctive person as a part of the whole has a clear and separate story of its own and Doctorow masterfully brings the mass to vivid life.

William Tecumseh Sherman

In *The March* by E.L. Doctorow we march with General Sherman through Georgia and then north through South Carolina to North Carolina. As Sherman marched through Georgia, destroying and burning, he accumulated followers of those who lost all possessions and had no where to turn and freed slaves celebrating the days of jubilee that came with emancipation.

We enter the lives of these people as they follow Sherman's march. Sadly some won't make it to the end and we say a reluctant farewell to them. There are many interesting stories within this book and it is constantly changing perspective. I enjoyed it immensely and had trouble putting it down. I gladly recommend it. It won the National Book Award in 2005, among other accolades.

Hurrah! Hurrah! we bring the jubilee!
Hurrah! Hurrah! the flag that makes you free!
So we sang the chorus from Atlanta to the sea
While we were marching through Georgia.
- Henry Clay Work

amapola says

“Questo inferno, il mio inferno, è senza attribuzione. E' la vita quando non è più capace di tollerarsi”.

La marcia è quella che sul finire della guerra di secessione americana, nel novembre 1864, compie il Generale William Tecumseh Sherman alla testa di un esercito di 62.000 giacche blu da Atlanta a Savannah (Georgia), per poi proseguire attraverso il Sud e il Nord Carolina, fino alla resa dell'esercito sudista. Durante l'avanzata nordista – tra saccheggi, scontri a fuoco, incendi, distruzioni – molti civili che hanno perso tutto, completamente allo sbando, si aggregano in coda alla carovana dell'esercito, nel tentativo di sopravvivere in qualche modo alla tragedia che li ha colpiti. In questo romanzo la guerra è vista soprattutto attraverso i loro occhi, gli occhi di chi la subisce e cerca disperatamente di restare vivo, di non perdere la propria umanità in quell'inferno.

Tantissimi i personaggi illuminati dall'autore e, di volta in volta, portati in primo piano nella narrazione: Pearl, negra dalla pelle bianca; Arly e Will, disertori e spie, uniti dalla sorte in una fuga perenne e trascinati in situazioni sempre più paradossali; Emily, travolta da eventi che cancellano in un attimo ogni certezza, in cerca di un nuovo punto d'appoggio; Wrede Sartorius, chirurgo tedesco, dotato di conoscenze e capacità molto superiori per quel tempo, ma freddo, un uomo tremendamente solo nella sua spietata lucidità; il Generale Sherman, dotato di un istinto quasi infallibile per tutto ciò che riguarda tattica e strategia militare, ma perseguitato da un senso di insicurezza che affiora nei momenti di calma, e per questo temuta più di qualsiasi battaglia... Una miriade di personaggi (storici e di finzione) che ci accompagnano per tutto il romanzo e altri che vivono e muoiono nello spazio di alcune pagine, se non addirittura di pochi paragrafi. Nessuno di loro, alla fine, uscirà intatto da questa esperienza, da questa marcia, dalla guerra.

Un romanzo corale, drammatico, in cui Doctorow ci fa passare attraverso atroci sofferenze con una prosa raffinata, mano ferma e sguardo pietoso.

<http://youtu.be/Iw8YjVrRNRU>

Ed Mestre says

A quick read and with so many characters and plot lines it is perfect if you like to channel surf or have ADHD. We follow these characters, from the lowliest freed slave to General Sherman, as they march through Georgia, South & North Carolina. A fascinating cross section of Northern and Southern society we see the Civil War through a very human perspective. Even Sherman emerges from the chiseled daguerreotype image we grew up with into a real human being. At times funny, at times heartbreaking, and always memorable, this is both a portrait of humanity and history. The wonderful storytelling prose will suddenly arise above and beyond the call of duty with rich and haunting sentences. For instance as one character watches Columbia, S.C. burn. "What hell was this? Surely not the composed Hell of priests and nuns. Their Hell was comforting. It meant there was a Heaven. This hell, my hell, is without ascription. It is life when it can no longer tolerate itself."

William2.1 says

Many shifting points of view tell this big story of General William Tecumseh Sherman's famous March to the Sea (1865) which ended the American Civil War in the south. Literary compression is the wonder here. Full characters are brought forth in half a page. It is for the most part a lean and uncluttered style, though with a propensity to swell briefly at times into overwriting. Fortunately, these interludes are few, but they lowered the achievement in my estimation to a mere three stars. The tragedy to both sides, especially the South, which provides the novel's setting, is most affectingly told. There is Pearl, daughter of a white master and slave mother—who—like Joe Christmas in Faulkner's *Light In August*—has trouble knowing exactly who she is. She is drawn to white people because she is white, but feels she is black since she was raised in the plantation slave quarters. Will and Arly are young Confederate soldiers who, in the mayhem of the March, put on the uniforms of the Union dead to save themselves. Then there is Sherman himself, a brilliant, brooding loner respected by his officers but resented for his bond with the rank and file. There is the surgeon Wrede Sartorius—the name is almost certainly an homage to William Faulkner whose Colonel Sartorius appears in *The Unvanquished* and other novels—who works with an almost inhuman intensity to save the dying and thereby drives a woman he deeply cares for from his arms. The doctor is dehumanized by the war, not to the point of madness. Instead, he retreats into cold intellectuality where it is less possible to feel. He is numb. The dispensary scenes—where the casualties await Sartorius's saw—remind me very much of similar scenes in Émile Zola's *La Débâcle*, about the Franco-Prussian War (1870). A Pyrrhic victory for the Union. A terrible, interminable war of brothers killing brothers. The U.S. Civil War continues to shape the identity of America to this day.

Steffi says

Obwohl großer Doctorow-Fan (seine New York-Romane habe ich verschlungen), graute mir vor diesem Roman über den Amerikanischen Bürgerkrieg. Ich befürchtete zu viel Militärstrategie, Kriegsgemetzel, Soldatenpathos. All das kommt auch vor, aber die Hauptrolle spielen die normalen Menschen, deren Alltag zerstört wird: Das hellhäutige Mischlingsmädchen Pearl, das der weiße Plantagenbesitzer mit einer Sklavin zeugte; Emily, die Tochter eines Südstaaten-Richters, die sich, nachdem sie alles verloren hat, als Schwester einem Militärarzt der Yankees anschließt; eben dieser deutschstämmige Arzt Wrede Sartorius, der keinen Unterschied zwischen den politischen Lagern macht, aber merkwürdig emotionslos scheint (diese fast faustische Figur findet sich auch in *Das Wasserwerk*.); die Deserteure Will und Arly, die chamäleon-artig

Fronten wechseln, um zu überleben; das schwarze Liebespaar Wilma und Coalhouse, die von einem besseren, freien Leben träumen (Coalhouse wiederum wohl der Vater der Hauptfigur in Doctorows Ragtime); der Soldat Stephen Walsh, der seine Jugend in Manhattan verbrachte (und daher frage ich mich, ob auch er mir in einem anderen Roman Doctorows bereits begegnet sein mag); und viele mehr. Selbst General William T. Sherman ist ein durchaus zweideutiger Charakter. Aus verschiedenen Perspektiven ergibt sich ein Bild dieser historischen Person, die man folglich bewundern, bemitleiden oder verachten kann.

Und nach und nach werden die Personen eingeführt, die mit ihrer Arbeit die Erinnerung an diesen Krieg für die Nachwelt erhalten werden: Die Fotografen Josiah Culp und Calvin und der Journalist Hugh Pryce. Letzterer stammt aus England und reist in General Shermans Armee mit, sozusagen ein früher „embedded journalist“. So ganz nebenbei bringt er damit den Vergleich zwischen alter und neuer Welt mit ein, wenn er zum Beispiel angesichts der Tatsache, dass Sherman von seinen Soldaten „Onkel Billy“ genannt wird, denkt: „Gott stehe dem armen Schlucker von Gardisten bei, der Cromwell mit Onkel Ollie angesprochen hätte“. Oder, kurze Zeit später, notiert er: „Wenn diese gewöhnlichen Soldaten, keiner von höherem Dienstgrad als dem eines Feldwebels, inmitten ihrer gefährvollen Pflichten, innehalten, um sich mit wesentlichen moralischen Fragen zu beschäftigen, dann schimmerte daran für Pryce die Quintessenz des amerikanischen Geistes auf. Unter gemeinen Soldaten Ihrer Majestät konnte er sich eine solche Diskussion nicht vorstellen“. Nichts desto trotz muss er kurze Zeit später erleben, wie die Zivilisiertheit in ungezügelter Rache umschlägt.

Kleiner Cineastischer Ausflug: Um mich auf die Zeit weiter einzustimmen, habe ich nach dem ersten Abschnitt den Film „Lincoln“ angeschaut. Man mag Steven Spielberg als allzu kommerziellen Blockbuster-Produzenten verurteilen, aber er weiß schon was er tut. Und nur mit seiner (finanziellen) Macht kann man fordernde Stoffe mit einem solchen Star-Angebot auf die Leinwand bringen (mehr noch als „Lincoln“ würde ich hier „Amistad“ nennen). Daniel Day-Lewis ist als Lincoln wie immer fabelhaft, aber auch die mit Tommy Lee Jones, David Strathairn und James Spader besetzten Nebenrollen überzeugen. Nur die stets theatralisch-flennende Sally Field (hier als Mrs Lincoln) geht mir schon seit „Nicht ohne meine Tochter“ auf die Nerven. Der Kampf um den 13. Zusatzartikel der Verfassung, mit dem die Sklaverei in den Staaten abgeschafft wurde, wird eindringlich beschrieben; die Zweifel, die oft unsauberen Tricks mit denen politisch das Richtige erreicht wird (das scheint uns heute so klar, dass die Abschaffung der Sklaverei richtig war, aber auch die Gegenpositionen werden hier nicht vernachlässigt), werden dem Zuschauer nahe gebracht. Und immer wieder erstaunt mich die Tatsache, dass es die Republikaner waren, die sich für diesen Zusatz, gegen den Widerstand der Demokraten, einsetzten. Klar, es ging auch manchem Republikaner nicht unbedingt um ein Ende der Sklaverei, sondern in erster Linie um den Erhalt der Union und den Sieg des modernen, industriellen Nordens über den Süden. Aber dennoch: Heute sind wir es gewohnt, die US-Demokraten als freiheitlicher denkend als die Republikaner wahrzunehmen, und dass nicht erst seit Obama.

Aber zurück zum Buch: Dass oft die Sicht von Zivilisten eingenommen wird, heißt nicht, dass der Krieg nicht eindrucksvoll beschrieben würde. Die Verrohung der Soldaten, die wohl bei jedem Krieg irgendwann einsetzt, spielt auch hier eine Rolle. Und die Vorgesetzten, Offiziere und Generäle, schauen in diesen Situationen weg – nicht aus Gleichgültigkeit, sondern weil sie wissen, dass sie ihre Autorität in solchen Momenten der Plünderung und Zerstörung nicht behaupten könnten. Um ihrem Ansehen nicht zu schaden, lassen sie es bleiben. Und neben den durchaus intelligenten, besonnenen Generälen, hebt der Krieg ja gerade solch fragwürdigen Gestalten wie den Frauenhelden Kilpatrick in den Rang eines Generals, wo er ausgiebig privaten Gebrauch seiner Position macht.

Glaubhaft wird Doctorows Kriegsbeschreibung zudem dadurch, dass er sein Personal nicht, wie man das in Romanen und Filmen oft erlebt, bis zum Ende überleben lässt. Immer wieder sterben Personen, die man lange begleitet hat und gerne länger begleitet hätte. Aber der Krieg kann jeden treffen. Und so sind auch die Wendungen in diesem Roman kaum vorhersehbar.

Dieser Roman macht sich viele Perspektiven zu eigen; er zeigt, dass es im Krieg nur Verlierer gibt, unabhängig vom Ausgang; er führt vor, wie der Krieg das Schlechteste (gelegentlich auch das Beste) aus Menschen herausholt. Der Roman zeigt aber auch, dass die militärische Befreiung von Menschen allein den Befreiten nicht hilft. Die Schwarzen, aus der Sklaverei befreit, bleiben besitz-, bildungs-, -perspektivlos zurück in den niedergebrannten Südstaaten, die niemanden mehr ernähren können. Wenn sie dem „Marsch“ der Soldaten folgen, werden sie von ihren Befreiern vertrieben, zurückgelassen, denn für einen Feldzug sind sie nicht zu gebrauchen und die Nordstaaten wollen sie auch nicht aufnehmen. Es gibt also viele Aspekte in diesem Buch, die einen auch an viel weniger weit zurückliegende Konflikte erinnern lassen.

Ankit Saxena says

This Novel is Actually a Must read, for every native American, at-least.

This is my first full time war novel and I enjoyed it quite much but there was one thing that isn't suits to me was that the writing pattern. That was very hard to read when you don't understand for who was saying what? There was no Quoted statements as the pattern accustomed by now.

For rest the novel was worth reading if you need to understand the Civil war times and how the Confederate states of America become the part of one country as United States of America?

For me its: 3.0/5.0

Will Byrnes says

Although it is not an overly lengthy novel, Doctorow paints a very wide palette. It may be too wide. His cast of characters is broad, including the mandatory historical personalities. Most prominent among these is William Tecumseh Sherman (“Uncle Billy” to his troops), of the eponymous March. Pearl is a white skinned black, a slave fathered by her master. If there is a central character here, I suppose it is her, but not by a large measure. Arly is a petty criminal, who along with his partner, is released from prison by a Confederate general in return for his value as a soldier. He follows a twisted path to what becomes, for him, a glorious end. A photographer, or at least his assistant and his equipment, figure in this tale, as does a family. Two sisters in search of different things, one looking for her lost sons, another for a purpose in life.

E.L. Doctorow - from The New York Times

The March is an image of the road, a literary metaphor as well as a physical one. While all the characters walk the path blazed by Sherman to some degree it is the paths each blaze personally that resonate. Pearl is on her way not only to Washington Square to deliver a letter to a dead soldier’s family, but to make a new life for herself, journeying from slavery to freedom. A German doctor travels a path to give his life meaning, but is unable to engage in his experience in a meaningful way emotionally, and so, in a way, remains where he is. A roué of a colonel enjoys his life as a ladies man while proving his mettle in the field, until he is

Amy says

Like Ragtime, The March portrays a historical episode through a diverse group of characters (including Coalhouse Walker, Sr.). In this case, the piece of history is centered around Sherman's Union Army following the burning of Atlanta. Characters include Union Officers, confederate soldiers, former slaves, and Southern women who join the march as nurses. Although it was well-written, I found that the number of characters made it a little difficult to follow, and I didn't really get attached to any of them.

Jean says

Doctorow turns his masterful writing ability to the 1864 March of Union General William Tecumseh Sherman. Sherman burned Atlanta and then marched his Union Army of sixty thousand through Georgia and up the Carolinas. The troops lived off the land, pillaging and demolishing cities along the way.

Doctorow has provided the reader with an enormous cast of unforgettable characters, white, black, men, women and children. The key cast is Sherman, Colonel Sartorius a Union regimental surgeon, Emily Thompson, the dispossessed daughter of a Georgia Supreme Court Judge, the two misfit soldiers Arty and Will, and last but not least, Pearl the beautiful freed slave girl. The author provides a stunning description of the countless victims swept up in the violence of a country at war with itself.

My mind wanders from Doctorow's descriptions of the families displaced by civil war to what I was watching daily on T.V. of the civil war refugees fleeing Syria to Europe. The book won the National Book Critics Award and the 2005 PEN/Faulkner award and was a finalist for the 2006 Pulitzer Prize. I read this as an audiobook downloaded from Audible. Joe Morton did a good job narrating the book.

Jan-Maat says

[at least in certain places (hide spoiler)]

Geologe says

Der Amerikanische Bürgerkrieg kurz vor der Entscheidung -

im Jahre 1865 führt DER MARSCH von Georgia über South Carolina nach North Carolina.

Den Unionstruppen schliessen sich immer mehr (dann ehemalige) Sklaven an und es wird nur zu deutlich, dass dies nur der Schwächung der "Rebellen" diene und kein hehres Ziel der Nordstaaten war (nachher wurde es dann so "verkauft").

Letztlich sind sie nur zusätzliche Mäuler, die kaum gestopft werden können und es gilt sie loszuwerden. Ihnen wird schmerzlich bewusst, dass ihre neue Freiheit eben auch Heimatlosigkeit bedeutet – in jeder Beziehung.

DER MARSCH ist ein Episodenroman, der unterschiedliche Schicksale beschreibt, die teilweise miteinander verwoben sind.

Die Beweggründe der einzelnen Personen (es gibt keinen Hauptprotagonisten, was wunderbar demokratisch

ist) werden aufgezeigt, es gibt Gewalt, Liebe, Verzweiflung, Überlebenskämpfe, Nachsicht, Mitgefühl, Patriotismus, Opportunismus, Desertation, Verrat, Nächstenliebe.....und wieder grausame Gewalt. Was fühlt eine hellhäutige Ex-Sklavin, was ein Arzt im Lazarett, was ein Gutsherr, was ein Deserteur, was ein General, was eine Mutter, was eine "höhere" Tochter, was ein schon vorher freier Farbiger und so fort ? Ihr Blick auf den furchtbaren Krieg, ihre Art damit umzugehen, ihre Art den Überlebenskampf aufzunehmen, ihre Art das Grauen zu verarbeiten, zu verdrängen.....
davon handelt dieses sehr beeindruckende Buch.

Es ist ausgesprochen spannend, aber keineswegs sensationslüstern oder blutrünstig.
Die Sprache ist präzise, aber nicht kühl – sie ist mitfühlend, aber nicht schwülstig; perfekt getroffener Tonfall.

Ganz fabelhaft sind die Karten im Innendeckel – so kann man den Weg, den Marsch gedanklich besser verfolgen.

Zum Glück wird nicht ausufernd über Kriegsstrategien gefachsimpelt und so kann jedem Leser (auch den nicht sonderlich geschichtlich Interessierten) dieses Buch nur ans Herz gelegt werden. Grossartige Nachhilfe resp. Auffrischung ohne Lehrerattitüde.
