

HEAR WHAT OTHERS HAVE TO SAY ABOUT PENNY PEARLMAN AND *Pretty Smart: Lessons from our Miss Americas*

On Amazon

★★★★★ **Far More Than a Beauty Contest**, June 8, 2009

By [Karen L.](#) (Enfield, NJ)

Because Penny was such an inspiring speaker, I bought her book, *Pretty Smart*. I thought it would be a compilation of bios of the former Miss Americas, but it was much more than that. You assume these women had it easy, as they were blessed with good looks. But you find out that many faced obstacles (like deafness, diabetes and incest) that would have seemed insurmountable to someone with less drive and determination. This book motivated me to reach for my dreams, as these women have done, and don't let anyone place limits on what you can achieve. Believe in yourself and anything is possible!

★★★★★ **A Classic Look Behind Some American Icons**, July 22, 2009

By [King Calcio](#) (Weston, CT)

Like Roger Kahn's "Boys of Summer," Penny Pearlman's "Pretty Smart" belongs to that important genre that takes us behind the one-dimensional image we have of our heroes (1950s baseball champs and Miss Americas) to reveal the real and imperfect but inspiring people we have idolized. In these books, familiarity does not breed contempt. Rather, we learn of the struggle behind those apparently effortless performances on the great American stage, and the effort to carve out meaningful lives in the aftermath of celebrity. These authors have the skill to take our American heroes and sweethearts, and to reveal something even more inspiring in the fully fleshed out human being. Although honest to the core, these books are not your plebian tear-down biographies in search of the widest and most venal audience. They leave our iconic images essentially in place while revealing life lessons for the reader. Welcome to this important genre, Penny Pearlman. I hope we hear more from you.

★★★★★ **A Must Read for All Women -- and some guy types too**, May 24, 2009

By [Exercise Edna](#) (New York, NY)

Pretty Smart: Lessons From Our Miss Americas]]

After reading this book, I'll never be quite the same when watching another beauty pageant. I grew up watching the pageants, having memorable sleepovers selecting our favorites to win. *Pretty Smart* has changed my whole attitude and puts the focus where it belongs -- on how smart, creative, persistent and determined successful women need to be and have been throughout history. Great book! Get it, read it, give it to your girlfriends.

★★★★★ **Not Just For Pageant Lovers**, February 1, 2009

By [P. Boyle](#) (Westport, CT)

This book is not just for pageant lovers, but for anyone who longs to take that next step, reach for new heights, and achieve their potential. A provocative, in-depth look at how to be a winner in any field, "Pretty Smart" presents 12 overarching lessons that the author took away from her interviews with 22 former Miss Americas. A Wharton School graduate and accomplished business consultant, Pearlman's considerable intelligence and friendly writing style make this an inspiring, engaging read.

★★★★★ **Smart, Pretty, Useful**, January 22, 2009

By [Ramona](#) (New York, NY)

This book uses the interesting life-stories of the women who became Miss America to

illustrate smart, helpful ideas for achieving your best life. It's fun to read with many surprises about the life of a beauty queen.

★★★★★ **A wonderful wise and witty read.**, January 20, 2009

By [Carmen F. Effron](#) 

I loved reading this wonderful, wise and witty book. It shattered all my preconceived notions of who the "Miss Americas" are and how they think, feel and act. If you are a mom thinking of entering your child into the pageant world, a teenager wondering if being thought of as attractive must be dictated to you by the current fashion magazines or simply a person that needs some inspiration, this is the place to go.

FROM FORMER MISS AMERICAS

"Penny has woven our stories into a rich tapestry of wisdom and inspiration. Here you will find the encouragement and guidance you need to follow your heart all the way to your dreams."

Phyllis George, Miss America 1971, wrote the foreword for *Pretty Smart*

*"If you follow the lessons in *Pretty Smart*, you'll be inspired to pursue your own dreams of success. Penny has captured the character, courage and intelligence of my Miss America sisters. It's a reach that shatters the stereotypes of Miss America contestants and takes you inside the lives of some of the most goal achieving women of our time."* **Gretchen Carlson**, co-host of the cable morning news program, "Fox and Friends," and Miss America 1981

*"I read *Pretty Smart* on a flight home from New York. I loved it! I couldn't put the book down and I just thought what a tremendous job you did in pulling all my Miss America sisters' stories together. If I were a contestant all over again your book would be the one I'd want to read to help prepare me for the title of Miss America. Congratulations on a job well done. You inspire me!"* **Angie Baraquio**, Miss America 2001

*"*Pretty Smart* will help you change the way you think, and then the way you act and, ultimately, empower your life in ways you never dreamed possible. I would recommend this book to anyone committed to being successful. It will change your life for the better."* **Tara Holland**, Miss America 1997

*"I just received '*Pretty Smart*,' your very impressive book. How grateful I am for all the time and effort you have given for something good and positive."* **Jean Bartel**, Miss America 1943

*"Ian and I are hosting a chapter meeting for Virginia Tech here at Mediterra and I plan to read from your book. I thought '*Pretty Smart*' was very inspiring and I learned so much about my Miss America sisters."* **Kylene Barker**, Miss America 1979

"Congratulations! You did a wonderful job. I thought you wove all the girl's observations and reflections into a truly inspirational whole. Thank you too for your accuracy,. I so appreciate your diligence in getting all the quotes right. The book is articulate and insightful." **Lynda Mead**, Miss America 1960

*"Through the voices of the women who become Miss America, *Pretty Smart* provides you with important strategies for making the changes in your life to achieve the success you desire."*

Penny's message about following your dream is powerful and practical.” Sam Haskell, Chairman of the Miss America Organization and author of “Promises I Made My Mother”

FROM AUDIENCE MEMBERS

“Thank you for your wonderful talk at the EWN luncheon. The most important thing that you said for me was your age and how you’ve only just begun. That was so inspiring and so important for me to hear right now. I just wanted to mention it to you so you see that you just never know what might be the thing that someone needs to hear in a day.” Lynn Tempesta

“I loved your stories. You can move a crowd in record time – very powerful – and deliver a lot of heart and soul with a dash of common sense. Your book is a B12 shot for anyone who reads it. You empowered everyone there to follow their dream!” Teri Gaberman

“Your talk was thoroughly engaging, inspiring and well-thought out. You honor your audience. I loved your stories, especially the advance/retreat around approaching the eight Formers.” Jane Pollack, life coach and author of Soul Proprietor

“You were fabulous at the Passion Project. What a great speaker you are and what a mesmerizing, engaging talk! You reflected the enthusiasm you had for your project so fully and at the same time expressed so many critically important life lessons. You absolutely wowed the crowd!” Jessica Bram, President, Westport Writers Workshop, author of “Happily Every After Divorce”

“Thank you for that fantastic speech you gave at Pageant School. I was so inspired by your journey and those of former Miss Americas. Your ‘bumblebee theory’ is basically me in a nutshell! For a long time, I allowed people to convince me that I could never compete in the Miss America Organization. It was only recently that I believed in myself and realized that I am capable of being Miss Connecticut and Miss America, regardless of what anyone else thinks. And here I am ... pursuing my dream! I started reading your book right away and couldn’t put it down! It was also a hit with my friends – the perfect gift. Thanks again for encouraging me to be ‘pretty & smart’. From the bottom of my heart, thank you for your speech and your book. I will never forget it!” Marie-Lynn Piscitelli, Miss Shoreline 2009

“You gave a wonderful talk that was from the heart and full of the kind of information that educated people about the Miss America pageant while getting to know the process and hard work it took to get it done. Bravo!” Joan Hume, community relations director, Westport Library

“THANK YOU so much for your motivation last night. I got in my car and started calling folks and telling them about you!!! You asked us to write to you about what we found most useful. No surprise, I am going to say that the exercise you inspired us to do with our ‘neighbor’ was amazing. You set the scene with your lecture and then gave us the tools to take the next steps. I was very inspired by you. Thank you.” Anne Farkas, co-chair, American Cancer Society, Relay for Life

“Thank you for your presentation at the Miss Connecticut Pageant School. I truly enjoyed it. Having competed four times previously, your insights gave me a new perspective to my journey this year! I appreciate all you had to say.” Ashley Abat, Miss New Haven County 2009

“I loved your talk, both the substance and the delivery. You are gifted as a speaker, but I know well there is a lot more work to this than just ‘gift.’ Well done!” William Barron, attorney

FROM READERS

“Thank you so much for your lovely words of wisdom. So many quotes and thoughts spoke directly to me that I’ve been highlighting half the book!” Ashley Glenn, Miss Connecticut, 2009

“You may not remember me but we met at Miss America. I am currently on chapter 8 of ‘Pretty Smart’ and I hope to finish the book tonight. I simply can’t put it down! It’s like you wrote it just for me. Thank you so much... you have made a marvelous impact on my life. I would love to keep in touch with you during the next two months before Miss Louisiana. Like the remarkable women you write about, I have had big dreams since I was a little girl and for the first time I feel free to go after them with all my heart. The lesson that has really applied to me over the past two weeks is to constantly keep the passion and the dream in front of you. My dream to be Miss America keeps me up at night. Win or lose, I know I have a purpose to impact lives and this journey through the Miss America system has changed my life for the better. Thank you for being such a big part of it.” Katherine Putnam, Miss Shreveport 2009

“I completed ‘Pretty Smart’ the day after I sent you the email. I am now studying it chapter by chapter. It serves as my morning inspiration and jumpstarts my day! There have been many days when my ‘motivational dial has hovered just above zero’ (especially as of late) and your inspiring book has helped me dust myself off and keep moving.” Follow-up from Katherine Putnam

“I had a chance to read some of your book today and it offers so many good and inspirational lessons! Your concept of Miss Americas as mentors of these lessons was brilliant!” Adair Wheatmann, program director, Pequot Library

“Thank you so much for your book. It was such a “pick me up” whenever I read it and it helped refocus whenever I felt I should give up. You continue to inspire me! They made such wonderful gifts too!!! My friends LOVED them! I may need to purchase more around the holidays.” Marie-Lynn Piscatelli, Miss Shorehaven

“I just got a note from Sam (Haskell). He thought the foreword was beautiful and said he was proud of me – that means proud of you too! I can’t wait to get my copy of the book so I can start talking it up!” Phyllis George, Miss America 1971

“I was reading your book this morning. It is mighty fine and I was inspired to take better care of myself. You did a great job.” Suzanne Sheridan, photographer

“I am extremely excited about reading your book! I was able to speak to you about my dreams and goals and you gave me great words of encouragement! Thank you for our kind words and thank you for this book. I believe all things happen for a reason and I believe it was meant for me to meet you and get this book. Every time I start to read a section, I just can’t stop. This book is exactly what I need. You told me that this book would definitely be an inspiration and you are so right!” Heather Williams

“I just finished your book and found it very enjoyable. So many great lessons about what it takes to be successful that I want to implement them all right now!” Connie Samuels

“I wanted to let you know that I BELIEVE in your book and just purchased books for graduation gifts for special you women I know.” Kay Spenser

“I purchased five books at your vendor’s table at the Miss America pageant this past January. Miss Montana and Miss Montana’s Outstanding Teen will each receive a copy upon their coronation June. The recipient of one copy, which was one of our Miss Montana State Finalist Forum awards, has been well-received by the recipient and her family. And my copy ... well, that one has been through the readership of over 10 people with more on the ‘checkout’ list! Thank you for your inspirational messages. All contestants and their families should take time to read this book.” Arvin Hoff, Director Miss Montana Scholarship Program

“I am on spring break with my family in Florida and wanted to thank you for writing ‘Pretty Smart.’ I loved it – between the book and the ocean it is just what I needed. As soon as I read the last page I just packed up my things and headed to the room to email you. Your book has just made me realize some difficult decisions I’ve known I need to make – I was procrastinating. Thanks to you I will return home from spring break with a new game plan. I loved your book so much I will promote it on my blog.” Chris Fulkerson, Professional Image Consultant