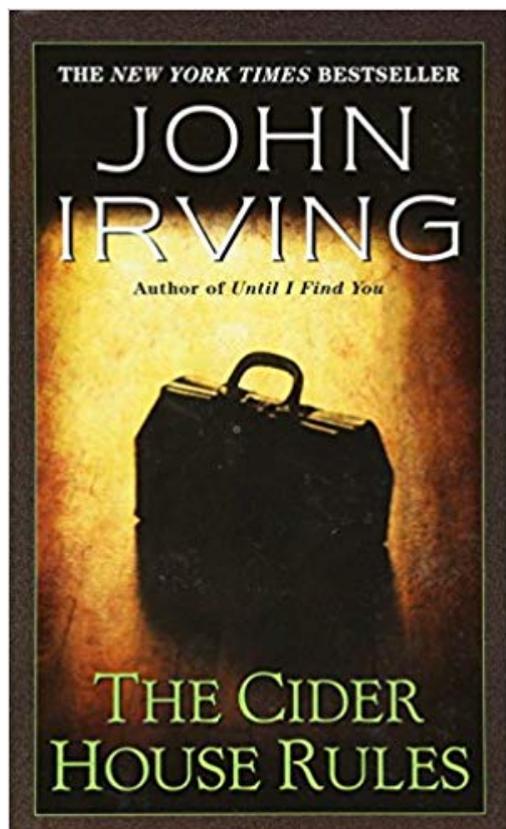


The Cider House Rules by John Irving



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"AN OLD-FASHIONED, BIG-HEARTED NOVEL . . . with its epic yearning caught in the 19th century, somewhere between Trollope and Twain . . . The rich detail makes for vintage Irving."--The Boston Sunday Globe
"The Cider House Rules is filled with people to love and to feel for. . . The characters in John Irving's novel break all the rules, and yet they remain noble and free-spirited. Victims of tragedy, violence, and injustice, their lives seem more interesting and full of thought-provoking dilemmas than the lives of many real people."--The Houston Post
"John Irving's sixth and best novel . . . He is among the very best storytellers at work today. At the base of Irving's own moral concerns is a rare and lasting regard for human kindness."--The Philadelphia Inquirer
"Entertaining and affecting . . . John Irving is the most relentlessly inventive writer around. He proliferates colorful incidents and crotchets of character. . . A truly astounding amount of artistry and ingenuity."--The San Diego Union



Reviews of the The Cider House Rules by John Irving

Dianantrius

This book is, in my opinion, one of the great novels of the 20th century. It is readable in the way that

Charles Dickens' best work is readable; full of funny, unique, lovable, and quirky characters. It takes its leisurely time to tell the story of Dr. Wilbur Larch and his protégé, orphan Homer Wells, and how the events in their lives shape their opinions, their decisions and their actions. I seriously love this book and it makes me happy that a man could write such a moving testament to reproductive freedom.

It should be taught in every American high school in either English or biology class, say junior year.
inetserfer

An amazing account of an orphanage where the children are truly loved and adopted away with trepidation from the small staff. Although quite different than the movie, which is also terrific, this book has a lot of depth in its characters and nothing is ridiculous.

The main character is a lovable baby whom the doctor takes to loving like a son. The child, Homer, has a rich thirst for knowledge as well as a desire to see the world outside the confines of the orphanage, set in Maine.

When an opportunity arises to accompany a couple his age to join them back to the -----business, the z Doctor believes it quite beneath him, despite the happiness he finds.

Homer's happiness the reader will riot for, because it's written so well, it's impossible not to. His experiences with love, fear, betrayal and other experiences, as well as his deep feelings about-----
- will give the reader something unexpected to ponder in their own belief systems.

Irving's gift of giving almost every character a unique personality. Some pleasant, some despicable, but all believable...like it or not.

Insofar as the orphanage itself, it's written so you'll want to rush there and spend time with all the kids or take a couple home.

All in all, if you enjoy the story as much as I did, you'll wish Mr. Irving had written more. Enjoy the book, and even though different, the movie is one of my favorites.

I sincerely hope you got something from this review. I'm almost too careful not to include spoilers, I'll wind up not giving enough. Enjoy and Good bless.

Boraston

In true Irving style, "Cider House" is an epic opus about society, morality, and how life is really lived. Some may find his subject matter delicate; but readers have a hard time denying Irving's themes. This one is all about family and parenthood -- and how some people (might, remember, it's fiction) adapt to its presence and absence. Irving's characters, as always, are well-painted and painstakingly presented; and the conflicts between them are the plot of this book. The book is tragic in spots, joyous in others, and always thought-provoking. Following good people over hundreds of pages -- decades' worth of story -- is usually an adventure when Irving writes; and Cider House is no different. We are pulling for Homer Wells because we want good people to succeed. But when "other shoes" that haven't dropped after decades are now making loud noises as they fall, which "inner self" will Homer become? A new one? I won't spoil it: you'll have to read the book.

Gerceytone

The Cider House Rules is another brilliant novel by John Irving, one of American's finest novelists. I saw the movie based on the novel about 15 years ago. I remember little of the movie except for Michael Caine who played Dr. Larch. I liked the movie at the time and will now have to watch it again. Irving is a phenomenal storyteller who tells his stories in a circular fashion. Each circle reveals more of the story. Detail after detail is slowly added to the story.

The story is about abandonment — about orphans and abortions and about unwanted children. Dr. Larch has spent a lifetime doing what he calls: "God's work." He delivers unwanted babies, raises them in the orphanage until he can find a home for them. He also provides abortions to women who are early enough in their pregnancies. At the heart of the story is Homer Wells for whom Dr. Larch could never find a home. Larch teaches him how to deliver babies. Homer ventures out into the world and his life becomes entangled with the lives of Candy and Wally.

This is a novel that everyone should read.

Winasana

This review is made upon my second reading of *Cider House Rules*. I first read it in 1986 and it was my first John Irving novel. Having studied literature in college, I'd already read my fair share of classics as well as contemporary lit, and yet, upon finishing *Cider House Rules*, I was stunned (and so very pleased) to experience an odd sadness - as if I was leaving a group of friends behind. That's the beauty of John Irving's writing: his ability to draw characters so vividly and with such warmth, that as a reader, you feel you know them intimately. While there is a good, strong plot, it feels secondary to the people you are reading about.

Quite honestly, a person with strong pro-life leanings is probably not going to enjoy this book. The narrative on abortion can be hard to take. Personally, I believe heartily in the sanctity of life, yet I felt the subject of pro-life vs. pro-choice, overall, was handled fairly and in a balanced manner. More so than the movie, which I detested.

If you love character-driven novels, definitely read *Cider House Rules*, along with other John Irving novels. Especially *The World According to Garp*, *Hotel New Hampshire*, and *A Prayer for Owen Meany*.

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