



The World According to Garp

By John Irving

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The World According to Garp By John Irving

20th ANNIVERSARY EDITION
with a new Afterword from the author

The *New York Times* bestseller

This is the life and times of T. S. Garp, the bastard son of Jenny Fields--a feminist leader ahead of her times. This is the life and death of a famous mother and her almost-famous son; theirs is a world of sexual extremes--even of sexual assassinations. It is a novel rich with "lunacy and sorrow"; yet the dark, violent events of the story do not undermine a comedy both ribald and robust. In more than thirty languages, in more than forty countries--with more than ten million copies in print--this novel provides almost cheerful, even hilarious evidence of its famous last line: "In the world according to Garp, we are all terminal cases."

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The World According to Garp By John Irving Bibliography

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Editorial Review

Amazon.com Review

"Garp was a natural storyteller," says the narrator of John Irving's incandescent novel, referring to the book's hero, the novelist Garp, who has much in common with Irving himself. "He could make things up one right after the other, and they seemed to fit."

Irving packs wild characters and weird events into his classic--officially recognized as such in a Modern Library edition with a new introduction by the author--while amazingly maintaining the rough feel of realism in every scene and the pulse of life in every heart. Many novelists of his time might have populated a novel with a novelist protagonist whose life and books comment on each other and the novel we're reading. Transsexual football players, ball turret gunners lobotomized in battle, multiple adultery, unicycling bears, mad feminists who amputate their tongues in sympathy with the celebrated victim of a horrifying rape--Irving made them all people. Even the bear is a fitting character.

In a crucial episode, Garp's wife's seduction of a young man coincidentally occurs at the moment when Garp is delighting their young sons with a reckless car trick (one of the few scenes beautifully, eerily, heartbreakingly captured in the film version as well). Many authors would have been content with the harsh comedy of the scene, but Irving respects its integrity, and he builds the rest of the book on the consequences of the event. How does he get away with his killer cocktail of slapstick and horror? Because it's simply what we all face daily, rearranged into soul-satisfying art. "Life is an X-rated soap opera," according to Garp, and who can contradict him?

Rereading *Garp* 20 years later, one is struck by how elegantly Irving structures his bizarre and complex story. Take the two most celebrated bits in the book, the Under Toad and Garp's story "*The Pension Grillparzer*," which shimmers like an exquisite Kafkaesque insect in the amber of the novel. When Garp warns his son about the "undertow" at the beach, the boy imagines a monster out of *Beowulf* who lurks beneath the waves to suck you under: the "Under Toad." It's funny at first, but we soon find that the Under Toad is a metaphor with teeth--he connects with a prophetic dream of death in "*The Pension Grillparzer*," set in Vienna. Garp's son's last words are, "It's like a dream!" And as Irving--who studied at the University of Vienna--can certainly tell you, the German word for "death" sounds precisely like the English word "toad."

All that death, and yet Garp is mainly exuberant. This story is, as Garp's stuttering writing teacher puts it, "rich with lu-lu-lunacy and sorrow." It enriches literature, and our lives. --*Tim Appelo*

From Library Journal

"In the world according to Garp, we're all terminal cases." This sentence ends both Irving's comic and tragic novel and its wonderful audio adaptation, read disarmingly by Michael Prichard. We hear the familiar story of T.S. Garp; his mother, Jenny Fields; and Garp's wife, family, friends, and lovers. We also see Garp's efforts to establish himself as a serious author and his involvement in sexual politics. In contrast, Jenny's memoirs establish her as a feminist leader. This work is funny, sexual, serious, and sad. Prichard's narration adds a wonderful dimension to the story. Plus, Irving opens with a terrific introduction to mark the novel's 20th anniversary. This wise and unique tale is as fresh today as it was when first published in 1978. Obviously, a required purchase for all audio collections and required listening for all Irving fans. Irving's (*A Son of the Circus*, Audio Reviews, LJ 12/94) new novel echoes Garp through tracing the complicated life of novelist Ruth Cole. Divided into three parts, the book views Ruth's life and relationships at age four in 1958, age 36 in 1990, and age 41 in 1995. In the first part, Ruth's mother, devastated by the loss of two sons, leaves

her daughter and womanizing husband after a brief love affair with a teenage boy. Part 2 focuses on Ruth's book tour in Europe while coming to grips with a poor love life and considering marriage to an older man. Part 3 traces Ruth's short widowhood and her marriage to the Dutch policeman who solves the murder to which she was a witness. Like *Garp*, this is a complex, sad, and quite compelling tale. Narrator George Guidall's reading adds to the texture of the story. And like the audio adaptation of *Garp*, this wonderful novel is a required purchase for all audio collections. ©Stephen L. Hupp, Univ. of Pittsburgh at Johnstown Lib., PA Copyright 1998 Reed Business Information, Inc.

Review

“The most powerful and profound novel about women written by a man in our generation . . . Like all extraordinary books, *Garp* defies synopsis. . . . A marvelous, important, permanent novel by a serious artist of remarkable powers.”—*Chicago Sun-Times*

“Nothing in contemporary fiction matches it. . . . Irving’s blend of gravity and play is unique, audacious, almost blasphemous. . . . Brilliant, funny, and consistently wise; a work of vast talent.”—*The New Republic*

“A wonderful novel, full of energy and art, at once funny and horrifying and heartbreaking.”—*Washington Post*

Users Review

From reader reviews:

Dave Thomas:

The ability that you get from *The World According to Garp* will be the more deep you rooting the information that hide into the words the more you get considering reading it. It doesn't mean that this book is hard to know but *The World According to Garp* giving you thrill feeling of reading. The article writer conveys their point in particular way that can be understood by means of anyone who read the idea because the author of this reserve is well-known enough. This kind of book also makes your own personal vocabulary increase well. So it is easy to understand then can go together with you, both in printed or e-book style are available. We highly recommend you for having that *The World According to Garp* instantly.

Thomas Brim:

People live in this new day time of lifestyle always try and and must have the free time or they will get wide range of stress from both way of life and work. So , if we ask do people have extra time, we will say absolutely of course. People is human not only a robot. Then we request again, what kind of activity have you got when the spare time coming to an individual of course your answer can unlimited right. Then ever try this one, reading books. It can be your alternative throughout spending your spare time, the actual book you have read will be *The World According to Garp*.

Lauren Robinson:

Reading a book to be new life style in this season; every people loves to study a book. When you learn a book you can get a lots of benefit. When you read guides, you can improve your knowledge, mainly because book has a lot of information in it. The information that you will get depend on what kinds of book that you

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Christopher Williams:

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