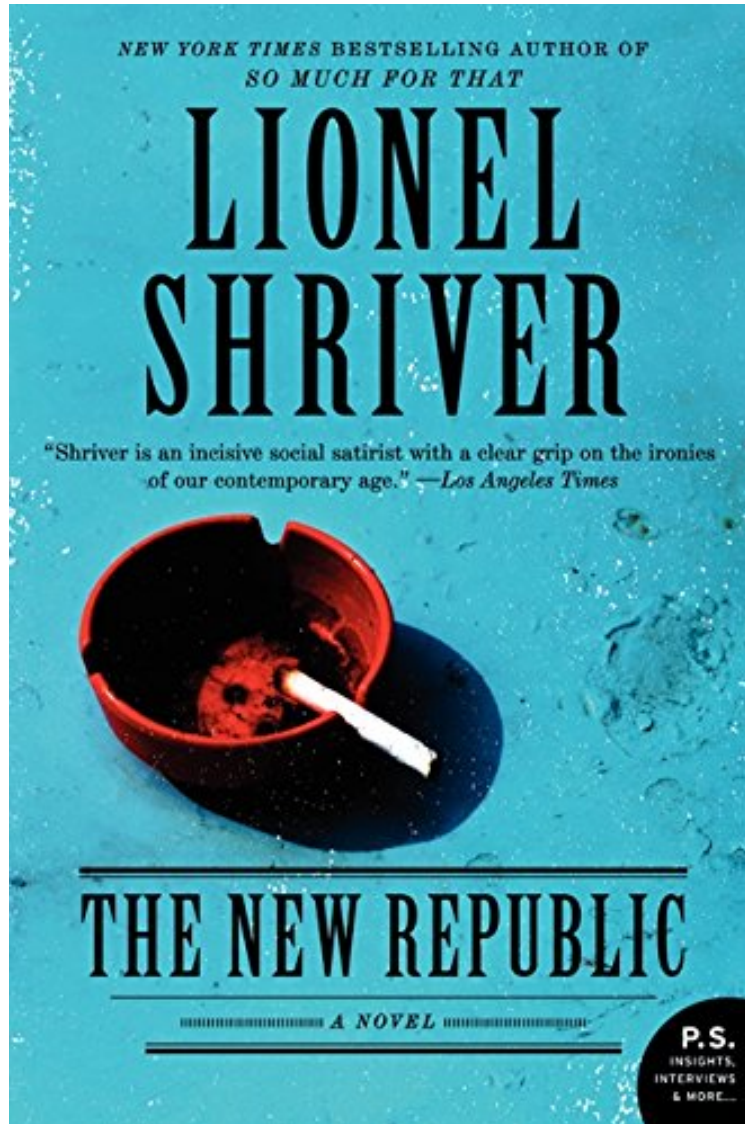


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The New Republic: A Novel

Lionel Shriver

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Lionel Shriver : The New Republic: A Novel before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised The New Republic: A Novel:

2 of 2 people found the following review helpful. Big Big Disappointment By Eric Selby I tried to like this book but gave up when I reached the one-third-through mark. For the first few pages I was really into it, a central character who gives up his position in a Wall Street corporate law firm to become a journalist. Certainly the author knows the newspaper business. So that was all very interesting, how the central character still finds himself being second twenty years after the valedictorian of his prep school class, feeling inferior. So he gets a temporary job in a made-up area of

Portugal. That was okay too even though Barba doesn't exist. But then when he arrives there and the conversations with other journalists begins, it is just awful. The dialogue is so lacking in authenticity. Just horrible dialogue. And that's where I ended it. This needed editing really badly. 2 of 2 people found the following review helpful. Comic? Mystery? Character study? - All of the above. By Larry Constantine Is it a deeply satirical investigation into the roots of mindless terrorism and the jaded journalism that feeds on it? Or is it a finely etched portrait of people whose character flaws run so deep they become merely character? This and more. The New Republic is the story of nonexistent terrorists ineptly bombing their way toward the independence of Barba, an imaginary region to the south of Portugal, a tiny and forsaken peninsula marked by poverty and ennui, cursed by incessant hurricane winds, and blessed only with bitter fruit--peras peludas, or "hairy pears". In this improbable setting arrives Edgar Kellogg, ex-lawyer and journalist wannabe, to join a group of all-too believable journalism hacks hanging around drinking at the Barking Rat, waiting for something to happen, and reminiscing about an absent fellow journalist, the larger than life Barrington Saddler, whose disappearance has brought Kellogg on assignment to Barba. Shriver is a gifted writer who has deftly mixed the pacing and plot turns of a political thriller with mordant comedy and deep character study in way that will not appeal to all readers. It is not like Shriver's other books--and it is. It is written with the same intelligence and insight into her characters, but its tragi-comic narrative will bother some. As a writer on terrorism and sometime resident of Portugal, this novel was virtually assigned reading for me, but it turned out to be a delicious duty. Refreshingly original, impossible to classify, but written with panache, the story is peopled by believable characters in an unreal setting who can say, "You would have thought me gormless," and be convincing. It also turns a bright light on a dark corner of the human psyche, that part that idolizes and imitates, that impels some to pursue the impossible, to try to become someone else and in trying construct an artful but burdensome facade. This is definitely a book that must be approached with an open mind and without expectations. Read without prejudice, it is a rewarding romp that leaves a rich aftertaste and even invites rereading. 1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. An examination of envy By catherine Like all of Shriver's novels, this one examines personality up close. The protagonist is envious, generated from overcoming childhood obesity but was left with a legacy of still being the target of his peers jokes and living on the fringes of social popularity. All his life he has yearned to be popular, and in this novel he makes a mid-life career change into journalism and finds himself covering an alleged terrorist group in the outskirts of a uninteresting peninsula in Portugal with some immigrant issues. He comes involved in a complicated fabrication which makes him the envy of the other bored journalists who are left out of the loop until it all starts inevitably to unravel. Personality examination is woven around a central theme of terrorism incorporating Shriver's trademark sarcasm and exaggeration. It does not disappoint for true Shriver fans who are impressed with her use of language, preposterous stories and satisfying endings.

Acclaimed author Lionel Shriver—author of the National Book Award finalist *So Much for That*, *The Post-Birthday World*, and the vivid psychological novel *We Need to Talk About Kevin*, now a major motion picture—probes the mystery of charisma in a razor-sharp new novel that teases out the intimate relationship between terrorism and cults of personality, explores what makes certain people so magnetic, and reveals the deep frustrations of feeling overshadowed by a life-of-the-party who may not even be present. “Shriver is a master of the misanthrope. . . . [A] viciously smart writer.” —Time

“[Shriver’s] whip-smart observations—about relationships, the role of the media, the cult of personality are funny and on the mark.” (People) “In her latest novel, Lionel Shriver pays homage to Joseph Conrad—examining terrorism, media bloodlust, and the cult of personality through an unexpected lens of satire.” (Marie Claire, *Four New Page-Turners to Keep Bedside*) “A very funny book, but the laughs are embedded in a deeply disturbing subject.” (NPR, “Weekend Edition”) “Shriver is cursed with knowing the human animal all too well. The New Republic is satire of a Shriver kind, that is to say biting.” (Miami Herald) “Lionel Shriver, the author of the harrowing and patient *We Need to Talk About Kevin*, delivers something altogether different: a callous and romping political and journalistic satire.” (The Daily Beast-- *This Week's Hot Reads*) “Shriver is one of the sharpest talents around.” (USA Today) “Witty, caustic and worldly, [Shriver] is a raconteur who could show even Barrington Saddler a thing or two about entertaining a crowd.” (Wall Street Journal) “Shriver has been a National Book Award finalist with good reason: Her page-turners examine serious issues.” (Reader's Digest Recommends) “A wondrously fanciful plot, vividly drawn characters, clever and cynical dialogue, and a comically brilliant and verisimilar imagined land. . . . The New Republic is simply terrific.” (Booklist (starred review)) “The dialogue zings and the writing is jazzy. . . . [Shriver] can toss off a sharp sketch of a passing character in a phrase, and she’s got a gimlet eye for what’s phony, or affected, or even touchingly vain in human behavior.” (Entertainment Weekly) “Shriver is an incisive social satirist with a clear grip on the ironies of our contemporary age. . . . [Her] take on journalism and international politics is wry, insightful and just over the top enough to be fun.” (Los Angeles Times) “[Shriver] is uncannily perceptive [with a] vigorous capacity for compassion. . . . [A] surprisingly tender novel disguised as a clever satire delivered in polished prose.” (Philadelphia Inquirer) “Part *Scoop*, part *Our Man in Havana* and part *Len Deighton* thriller, Shriver’s novel is not just about

terrorism but also about journalism and the nature of charisma. . . . Shriver's Barba is a wonderful creation." (Financial Times)From the Back CoverEdgar Kellogg has always yearned to be popular. When he leaves his lucrative law career for a foreign correspondent post in a Portuguese backwater with a homegrown terrorist movement, Edgar recognizes Barrington Saddler, the disappeared reporter he's replacing, as the larger-than-life character he longs to emulate. Yet all is not as it appears. Os Soldados Ousados de Barba—"The Daring Soldiers of Barba"—have been blowing up the rest of the world for years in order to win independence for a province so dismal and backward that you couldn't give the rathole away. So why, with Barrington vanished, do incidents claimed by the "SOB" suddenly dry up? A droll, playful novel, *The New Republic* addresses terrorism with a deft, tongue-in-cheek touch while also pressing a more intimate question: What makes particular people so magnetic, while the rest of us inspire a shrug?About the AuthorLionel Shriver's novels include *The New Republic*, *So Much for That*, *The Post-Birthday World*, and the international bestseller *We Need to Talk About Kevin*. Her journalism has appeared in *The Guardian*, the *New York Times*, the *Wall Street Journal*, and many other publications.