

# The Cider House Rules, 1999

Miramax Collector's Series

Director Lasse Hallstrom

Screenwriter John Irving

Producer Richard N. Gladstein

Budget: \$24 million

## Chapter 1: Opening Credits/Homer The Orphan

**Biography for Lasse Hallstrom**

**Date of birth** 2 June 1946, Stockholm, Sweden

**Birth name** Lars Hallström

**Spouse** Lena Olin 1994-present



**Biography from Leonard Maltin's Movie Encyclopedia:** After almost two decades of making various TV and feature films in Sweden, Hallstrom finally attracted worldwide attention (and Oscar nominations for Best Director and Best Screenplay) for his adaptation of *My Life as a Dog* (1985), a warmhearted yet poignant look at the antics of a mischievous 12-year-old. His early films, including *A Lover and His Lass* (1974), *Father-To-Be* (1979), *The Rooster* (1981), and *Happy We* (1983), were never released in the U.S. After the success of *My Life as a Dog* Hallstrom's American debut, *Once Around* (1991), revealed an impressive grasp of character if not a flair for strong narrative. An American production of *Peter Pan*-a pet project of Hallstrom's didn't come to pass, 1991's *Hook* effectively co-opting it. His most recent films are *What's Eating Gilbert Grape* (1993), with Johnny Depp, and *Something to Talk About* (1995).

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### Director - filmography

1. Harry & Caresse (2005)
2. Untitled Casanova Project (2005)
3. Unfinished Life, An (2004)
4. ABBA: The Definitive Collection (2002) (V)
5. Shipping News, The (2001)
6. Chocolat (2000)
7. Cider House Rules, The (1999)
8. Lumière et compagnie (1995)
9. Something to Talk About (1995) (as Lasse Hallstrom)
10. Making Gilbert Grape (1993) (TV)
11. What's Eating Gilbert Grape (1993)
12. Once Around (1991)
13. "Alla vi barn i Bullerbyn" (1987) TV Series
14. Mer om oss barn i Bullerbyn (1987)
15. Alla vi barn i Bullerbyn (1986)
16. Mitt liv som hund (1985)
17. Två killar och en tjej (1983)
18. Kom igen, nu rå! (1981) (TV)
19. Tuppen (1981)
20. Jag är med barn (1979)
21. ABBA: The Movie (1977)
22. "Semlons gröna dalar" (1977) (mini) TV Series
23. Kille och en tjej, En (1975)
24. Flyttningen (1974) (TV)
25. Ska vi gå hem till dej eller till mh en till sitt? (1973) (TV)

### Writer - filmography

1. Mitt liv som hund (1985)
2. Två killar och en tjej (1983)
3. Kom igen, nu rå! (1981) (TV)
4. Tuppen (1981) (screenplay)
5. Jag är med barn (1979)
6. ABBA: The Movie (1977)
7. Kille och en tjej, En (1975)
8. Ska vi gå hem till dej ler var och en till sitt? (1973) (TV)

### Editor - filmography

1. Två killar och en tjej (1983)
2. Tuppen (1981)
3. Jag är med barn (1979)
4. ABBA: The Movie (1977)
5. Kille och en tjej, En (1975)
6. Ska vi gå hem till dej er var och en till sitt? (1973) (TV)

### Producer - filmography

1. Open Window (2004) (*in production*) (executive producer)
2. Harry & Caresse (2005) (*announced*) (producer)
3. What's Eating Gilbert Grape (1993) (executive producer)
4. Big Five, The (1988) (TV) (co-executive producer)

### Cinematographer - filmography

1. Kille och en tjej, En (1975)
2. Ska vi gå hem till dej er var och en till sitt? (1973) (TV)

### Actor - filmography

1. ABBA: The Definitive Collection (2002) (V) (uncredited)

This is a Morality Play that will question your morals on one of life's topics, presents the audience with a moral dilemma. The topic that will be addressed is abortion, and they are going to present to what America looked like previous to the legalization of abortion.

The beautiful score playing in the background and that you are listening to, is performed by Rachel Portman.

**Biography for Rachel Portman**

**Date of birth** 11 December 1960, Haslemere, England

**Birth name** Rachel M. Portman

**Trivia**

- First female composer to win an Oscar
- Started composing on the piano at age 13



**Composer - filmography**

1. Because of Winn-Dixie (2005) (*post-production*)
2. Manchurian Candidate, The (2004)
3. Mona Lisa Smile (2003)
4. Human Stain, The (2003)
5. Nicholas Nickleby (2002)
6. Truth About Charlie, The (2002)
7. Hart's War (2002)
8. Emperor's New Clothes, The (2001)
9. Chocolat (2000)
10. Legend of Bagger Vance, The (2000)
11. Closer You Get, The (2000)
12. Cider House Rules, The (1999)
13. Ratcatcher (1999)
14. Other Sister, The (1999)
15. Beloved (1998)
16. Home Fries (1998)
17. Beauty and the Beast: The Enchanted Christmas (1997) (V)
18. Addicted to Love (1997)
19. Marvin's Room (1996)
20. Emma (1996)
21. Adventures of Pinocchio, The (1996)
22. To Wong Foo, Thanks for Everything! Julie Newmar (1995)
23. Palookaville (1995)
24. Smoke (1995)
25. Pyromaniac's Love Story, A (1995)
26. War of the Buttons (1994)
27. Road to Wellville, The (1994)
28. Only You (1994)
29. Sirens (1994)
30. Great Moments in Aviation (1993) (TV)
31. Friends (1993)
32. Joy Luck Club, The (1993)
33. Benny & Joon (1993)
34. Ethan Frome (1993)
35. Used People (1992)
36. Mr. Wakefield's Crusade (1992) (TV)
37. Rebecca's Daughters (1992)
38. Cloning of Joanna May, The (1992) (TV)
39. Flea Bites (1991) (TV)
40. Antonia and Jane (1991)
41. Where Angels Fear to Tread (1991)
42. Life Is Sweet (1990)
43. Shoot to Kill (1990/I) (TV)
44. "Storyteller: Greek Myths, The" (1990) (mini) TV Series
45. Widowmaker, The (1990) (TV)
46. Oranges Are Not the Only Fruit (1990) (TV)
47. Living with Dinosaurs (1989) (TV)
48. Monster Maker (1989) (TV)
49. Precious Bane (1989) (TV)
50. Young Charlie Chaplin (1989) (TV)
51. Woman in Black, The (1989) (TV)
52. Loving Hazel (1988) (TV)
53. Sometime in August (1988) (TV)
54. High Hopes (1988)
55. 1914 All Out (1987) (TV)
56. 90 Degrees South (1987)
57. Falklands War: The Untold Story, The (1987) (TV)
58. Short and Curlies, The (1987) (TV)
59. "Storyteller, The" (1987) TV Series
60. Good as Gold (1986) (TV)
61. Little Princess, A (1986) (TV)
62. Sharma and Beyond (1986)
63. Four Days in July (1985) (TV)
64. Last Day of Summer (1984/I)
65. Reflections (1984) (TV)
66. Experience Preferred... But Not Essential (1982) (TV)
67. Privileged (1982)

The opening shot is actually a mistake, but it ended up in the movie. This tracking shot was supposed to end up picking up two passengers getting off of this train. But the train missed its mark, as a result you get this empty shot that turns out to be wonderful.

As the camera pushes in towards the orphanage up on the hill there, it is a computer digital shot, and the only one in the movie. Now you can see the two passengers that were missed on the first shot.



This opening sequence was not in the script when the director got involved with the project. This montage of Homer growing up was deleted from the novel, and the director urged Irving to put it back in.

The directors main desire was for the writer, John Irving to bring back some of the episcopo of the story. He had spent fourteen years writing this story. Lasse Hallstrom the director felt it was important to show the passage of time, and to see Homer growing up in the orphanage in the beginning of the

movie. What it establishes and reinstates for the viewer of the movie is the bleakness and passage of time for an un-adopted kid.

The first chapter of the book is called "The Boy Who Belongs to Saint Cloud's" and this helps them prove that this is the boy who does belong to St. Cloud's. You also get a chance to see Michael Caine, the Doctor growing older. When the film begins and you get to see him taking in the first child, you then get to see how he has aged.

There was more than one adoption in the novel that was slated to be shot, but they never got to it. The third adoption, when his parents are swept away on a raft. It is a wonderful image in the novel that they never were able to get to for the movie. There was also a fourth family, where Homer gets caught having sex with his stepsisters, that also never got shot. So what they wanted to show you was that Homer had four failed adoptions, but they were only able to show you two on screen. They never thought it would actually work with two.

In these shots of Tobey Maguire, (*Spiderman* salary \$17 million for the sequel) playing the role of Homer, he has make-up on him to make him look younger. Old age make-up is a lot easier than making someone look younger. It is a wig he has on here, a little reminiscent of the Beatles.



#### Biography for Tobey Maguire

**Date of birth** 27 June 1975, Santa Monica, CA

**Birth name** Tobias Vincent Maguire

**Height** 5' 8"

**Mini biography** Tobey's parents were 18 and 20 and unwed when he was born. His father, Vincent, was a cook. His mother, Wendy, was a secretary. They split two years after his birth. This resulted in his moving constantly as a youth, spending time in California, Oregon, and Washington. He quit school in the 9th grade and pursued child actor roles. He did several commercials and bit roles on various TV shows before landing a starring role on the Fox comedy "Great Scott". That role lasted 9 weeks before the show was cancelled. Although avoiding drugs and alcohol, he still is known for running with the party set, including Leo DiCaprio's group. Tobey is a vegetarian and studies yoga.

#### Trivia

- Is a vegetarian.
- Enjoys yoga and cooking.
- Originally wanted to be a chef, but turned to acting after his mother offered him \$100 to take drama rather than home ec. in high school.
- Packed on several pounds to fit his role in *Spider-Man* (2002).
- May, 2002: Bought a \$3.5 million dollar Beverly Hills mansion with his *Spider-Man* (2002) earnings.

**Salary** *Spider Man 2* \$17 million, *Seabiscuit* \$12.5 million, *Spider Man 1* \$4 million

#### Actor - filmography

1. *Spider-Man 3* (2007) Peter Parker/Spider-Man
2. *Spider-Man 2* (2004) Spider-Man/Peter Parker
3. *Spider-Man 2* (2004/II) (VG) Peter Parker/Spider-Man
4. *Seabiscuit* (2003) Red Pollard
5. *Spider-Man* (2002) Spider-Man/Peter Parker
6. *Spider-Man* (2002/II) (VG) (voice) Spider-Man/Peter Parker
7. *Cats & Dogs* (2001) (voice) Lou the Beagle
8. *Don's Plum* (2001) Ian
9. *Wonder Boys* (2000) James Leer
10. *Ride with the Devil* (1999/I) Jake Roedel
11. *Cider House Rules, The* (1999) Homer Wells
12. *Pleasantville* (1998) David Wagner/Bud Parker
13. *Fear and Loathing in Las Vegas* (1998) Hitchhiker
14. *Deconstructing Harry* (1997) Harvey Stern/Harry's Character
15. *Ice Storm, The* (1997) Paul Hood
16. *Joyride* (1996) J.T

17. *Duke of Groove* (1996) (TV) Rich Cooper
18. *Seduced by Madness: (1996) (TV) Chuck Borchardt*
19. *Empire Records* (1995) (scenes deleted) Andre
20. *Healer* (1994) Teenager
21. *Revenge of the Red Baron* (1994) Jimmy Spencer
22. *Child's Cry for Help, A* (1994) (TV) Peter Lively
23. *S.F.W.* (1994) Al
24. *Spoils of War* (1994) (TV) Martin
25. *This Boy's Life* (1993) Chuck Bolger
26. "Great Scott!" (1992) TV Series Scott Melrod
27. *Tales from the Whoop: Hot Rod Brown Class Clown* (1990)
28. *Wizard, The* (1989) Lucas' goon at video armageddon

#### Producer - filmography

1. *Rock of Ages* (2003) (TV) (executive producer)
2. *Seabiscuit* (2003) (executive producer)
3. *Whatever We Do* (2003) (producer)
4. *25th Hour* (2002) (producer)

0:05:45 You get a quick shot here of the operating room pail, that is a significant reveal, where the door is closed on Homer.

## Chapter 2 (0:06:05) Two New Patients

On Screen, "St. Cloud's, Maine, March 1943." Filming location is for the interior shots of the orphanage are North Hampton, Massachusetts.

Rack focus from the gramophone to Dr. Larch on the bed as he inhales the ether.

They establish right in the beginning that Homer is more than willing to assist in the delivery process, but not in the abortions. They, the director, writer and producer, discussed for a long time when to introduce the subject of abortion to the audience, and they decided it would be best if they got it out there right in the beginning of the film. So here we get the discussion with Homer and the doctor about performing abortions at the orphanage. By confronting the issue immediately it makes it less obtrusive and but it also makes it plain what you are talking about. This scene also establishes the relationship between Homer and Dr. Larch. This is also verbatim with the way the scene appears in the book.

## Chapter 3 (0:09:11) "I'm Not A Doctor!"

There was a classroom scene that was cut here, as the boys walk out to the incinerator, where you got a shot in the classroom and Buster plugs his nose from the smell of ether, from Dr. Larch.

## Chapter 4 (0:09:41) Bedtime

*The Ukulele Lady* was a suggestion from Peter Hliddal, Production Sound Mixer, it is a great atmospheric song emitting from source sound.

Fuzzy, (Erick Sullivan, from *Malcolm in the Middle*) the boy with the breathing problem spoke both English and Swedish, the director being Swedish, stated that it was like they had a secret language that no one else on the set understood. This did cause a few problems as in one example were Lasse gave a direction to the boy, told him to get up and walk somewhere, the cameraman didn't know what was happening, when in the scene the boy all of a sudden began to move to a new location.

### Biography for Erick Sullivan

**Date of birth** 12 July 1991, Worcester, MA

**Birth name** Erik Per Sullivan

**Height** 4' 11"

**Mini biography** Erik Sullivan was born in Worcester, Massachusetts, USA. He is a 1st Degree Black Belt in Taekwondo, loves to ski, boogy board, build obstacle courses, play games of paintball, and travel. His debut was an uncredited role in *Armageddon* (1998). His breakthrough was the role of "Fuzzy" in *The Cider House Rules*, (1999) and "Dewey" in *Malcolm in the Middle* (2000). Erik's mother is from Sweden, he is fluent in Swedish and English. Erik has always been an honor student and enjoys time with his classmates.

### Actor - filmography

1. **Christmas with the Kranks (2004)** Spike Frohmeyer
2. **Finding Nemo (2003) (voice)** Sheldon
3. **Finding Nemo (2003/II) (VG) (voice)** Sheldon the Seahorse
4. **Unfaithful (2002)** Charlie Sumner
5. **Joe Dirt (2001)** Little Joe Dirt
6. **Wendigo (2001)** Miles

7. **"Malcolm in the Middle" (2000) TV Series** Dewey
8. **Cider House Rules, The (1999)** Fuzzy
9. **Armageddon (1998) (uncredited)** Kid with Rocket Ship

### Himself - filmography

1. **Searching for the Wendigo (2002)**
2. **Nickelodeon Kids' Choice Awards '02 (2002) (TV)**
3. **53rd Annual Primetime Emmy Awards, The (2001) (TV)**

**Notable TV Guest Appearances**

1. "Knock First" 14 April 2004
2. "King of Queens, The" 20 May 2002
3. "Black of Life" 26 August 2001
4. "Wonderland" p30 March 2000

0:11:02 The pray being given here by Nurse Edna, was John Irving grandmother's favorite prayer, which was written by Cardinal Newman.



John Irving stated that he did about 18 months of research on Orphanages prior to writing the book. He began his research at the Yale Medical Historical Library and the discovered that so many of these children were never adopted, unless they were infants. He also discovered that the procedure of abortion was so inseparable from the life of an orphanage hospital, or the decision making process of an Orphanage physician at this time.

**Biography for John Irving**

**Date of birth** 2 March 1942, Exeter, New Hampshire

**Birth name** John Wallace Blunt Jr.

**Mini biography** Born in New Hampshire, Irving is married and has three sons. He lives in Vermont and Toronto.

**Trivia**

- Wrote the adaptation of "The Cider House Rules" over a period of 13 years.
- Won an American Book award for "The World According to Garp."
- Inducted into the National Wrestling Hall of Fame in 1992.

**Writer - filmography**

1. Door in the Floor, The (2004) (A Widow for One Year)
2. Cider House Rules, The (1999) (novel) (screenplay)
3. Simon Birch (1998) (A Prayer For Owen Meany)
4. Hotel New Hampshire, The (1984) (novel)
5. World According to Garp, The (1982) (novel)

**Actor - filmography**

1. Cider House Rules, The (1999) St. Clouds Stationmaster

2. World According to Garp, The (1982) Referee

**Miscellaneous Crew - filmography**

1. Streetwise (1984) (thanks)

**Himself - filmography**

1. 72nd Annual Academy Awards, The (2000) (TV) Himself
2. Cider House Rules: The Making of an American Classic, The

**Notable TV Guest Appearances**

1. "Studio 57" 11 March 1956



0:11:55 There is a quality to this film, which is referred to as "Dickenesque," which is of course reference to the comparison with the great British writer Charles Dickens. You will even notice here, that he is reading from Dickens to the children.

Presenting the notion that, once a hero always a hero, John Irving stated, "That the whole concept from *David Copperfield*, that first sentence, 'Whether I shall turn out to be the hero of my own life, or whether that station will be occupied by someone else.' That whole premise seemed to be Homer's story. Either he was going to achieve heroic stature of his own or he was always going to avoid taking responsibility. It was pretty applicable to the story. He also stated that he had a desire to pay a kind of homage to his favorite writer."

## Chapter 5 (0:13:03) A New Home For Hazel

The director got a little upset on this day with the costume people putting so many hats and mittens on the kids. Lasse was not on set the day that this was done, and he was not happy to see the finished shots with the orphanage kids so well covered for the elements. He was right, they all look just a little too cute in this scene, complete with neatly tied scarfs. One has to question not only how the kids would get the wardrobe, but also who put all of these clothes on the children. They really don't show a lot of employees here either.

Nurse Edna, played by Jane Alexander presented at the 2007 Arts Advocacy Day in Washington DC.

**Biography for Jane Alexander**

**Date of birth** 28 October 1939, Boston, MA

**Birth name** Jane Quigley

**Trivia**

- Received an Honorary Degree from Smith College in Northampton, MA. [1999]
- Named to head the National Endowment of the Arts in August 1993.
- Received the Women's International Center (WIC) Living Legacy Award in 1988.

**Biography from Leonard Maltin's Movie Encyclopedia:** Perhaps one of the finest actresses working in America today (in *any* medium), this proudly unglamorous actress is noted for her finely delineated characterizations, both in supporting performances and starring turns. After studying at Sarah Lawrence College and at the University of Edinburgh, Alexander joined Washington's Arena Stage in 1966, playing 15 different roles over the next three seasons. She made her Broadway debut in 1969's "The Great White Hope," playing the doomed lover of prizefighter Jack Jefferson; it was a Tony winning portrayal she reprised in the 1970 film version, snagging an Oscar nomination in the process. She subsequently picked up two other nominations, as a reluctant informant in *All the President's Men* (1976) and as Dustin Hoffman's steadfast friend in *Kramer vs. Kramer* (1979). Alexander appeared to good advantage in several prestigious TV movies as well, playing Eleanor Roosevelt in two Emmy-winning dramas, *Eleanor and Franklin* (1976) and *Eleanor and Franklin: The White House Years* (1977).



She won unanimously excellent notices and another Oscar nomination for her role as the indomitable mother in *Testament* a 1983 film chronicling the aftermath of a nuclear attack. Most of her best opportunities have come in made-for-TV movies: *Playing for Time* (1980, which won her an Emmy), *Calamity Jane* (playing the title role), *Malice in Wonderland* as legendary gossip columnist Hedda Hopper (both 1984), *Blood & Orchids* (1986), *In Love and War* (1987), and *Daughter of the Streets* (1990). Like other actresses of her caliber who have been frustrated by the paucity of well-written, suitable female roles, Alexander turned to producing with *Square Dance* (1987), a charming if not altogether effective coming-of-age story in which she played Winona Ryder's saucy mother. She also appeared, uncredited, as Matthew Broderick's mother in *Glory* (1989). More recently, she played on Broadway in "The Sisters Rosensweig," and in 1993 was named by President Clinton to head the National Endowment for the Arts.

OTHER FILMS INCLUDE: 1971: *A Gunfight* 1972: *The New Centurions* 1978: *The Betsy* 1980: *Brubaker* 1984: *City Heat* Copyright © 1994 Leonard Maltin, used by arrangement with Signet, a division of Penguin Putnam, Inc. Jane Alexander: Internationally known actress, Jane Alexander, has starred in such acclaimed films as "Testament", "Playing for Time" (Emmy), "Eleanor and Franklin, The White House Years" (Emmy Nomination and TV Critics Circle Award), "All The President's Men" (Academy Award Nomination) and "In Love and War", among many other memorable films. She is also a successful film producer, writer and translator.

She is dedicated to world peace, wellness and wildlife conservation. She serves on the Boards of Wildlife Conservation International, Project Greenhope, the National Stroke Association, and Women's Action for Nuclear Disarmament. She is a recipient of the Israel Cultural Award and the Helen Caldicott Leadership Award. As a child, Jane Alexander grew up knowing the necessity for wellness. Her mother was a nurse and her father an orthopedic surgeon. Today she devotes her considerable efforts on behalf of stroke patients. She has four children to remind her that each of us is responsible for making this earth a finer place to share.

**Actress - filmography**

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|--|--|
| 1. Carry Me Home (2003) Mrs. Gortimer                      | 19. Calamity Jane (1984) (TV) Calamity Jane (Canary)       |
| 2. Ring, The (2002) Dr. Grasnik                            | 20. When She Says No (1984) (TV) Nora Strangis             |
| 3. Sunshine State (2002) Delia Temple                      | 21. Testament (1983) Carol Wetherly                        |
| 4. Bitter Winter (2001) (TV)                               | 22. In the Custody of Strangers (1982) (TV) Sandy Caldwell |
| 5. Jenifer (2001) (TV) Jenifer's Mother                    | 23. Night Crossing (1981) Doris Strelzyk                   |
| 6. Cider House Rules, The (1999) Nurse Edna                | 24. Dear Liar (1981) (TV) Mrs. Patrick Campbell            |
| 7. Stay the Night (1992) (TV) Blanche Kettman              | 25. Playing for Time (1980) (TV) Alma Rose                 |
| 8. Marriage: Georgia O'Keeffe (1991) (TV) Georgia O'Keeffe | 26. Brubaker (1980) Lillian Gray                           |
| 9. Daughter of the Streets (1990) (TV) Peggy Ryan          | 27. Kramer vs. Kramer (1979) Margaret Phelps               |
| 10. Glory (1989) (uncredited) Sarah Blake Sturgis Shaw     | 28. Lovey: A Circle of Children, Part II (1978) Mary       |
| 11. Open Admissions (1988) (TV) Ginny Carlsen              | 29. Question of Love, A (1978/I) (TV) Barbara Moreland     |
| 12. Friendship in Vienna, A (1988) (TV) Hannah Dournenvald | 30. Betsy, The (1978) Alicia Hardeman                      |
| 13. Square Dance (1987) Juanelle                           | 31. Eleanor and Franklin: (1977) (TV) Eleanor Roosevelt    |
| 14. In Love and War (1987) (TV) Sybil Stockdale            | 32. Circle of Children, A (1977) (TV) Mary MacCracken      |
| 15. Sweet Country (1986) Anna                              | 33. All the President's Men (1976) Judy Hoback, Bookkeeper |
| 16. Blood & Orchids (1986) (TV) Doris Ashley               | 34. Eleanor and Franklin (1976) (TV) Eleanor Roosevelt     |
| 17. Malice in Wonderland (1985) (TV) Hedda Hopper          | 35. Death Be Not Proud (1975) (TV) Frances Gunther         |
| 18. City Heat (1984) Addy                                  | 36. This Is the West That Was (1974) (TV) Sarah Shaw       |
|  | 37. Miracle on 34th Street (1973) (TV) Karen Walker        |

38. *New Centurions, The* (1972) Dorothy Fehler
39. *Welcome Home, Johnny Bristol* (1972) (TV) Anne Palmer
40. *Gunfight, A* (1971) Nora Tenneray
41. *Great White Hope, The* (1970) Eleanor

**Producer - filmography**

1. *Square Dance* (1987) (executive producer)
  2. *Calamity Jane* (1984) (TV) (producer)
- Miscellaneous Crew - filmography**
1. *Chelsea Walls* (2001) (special thanks)

The older gentleman, Patrick Donnelly, getting out of his car, is from the Massachusetts Film Office; Lasse cast him in this role as a way to thank him for the help in utilizing all of the locations in Massachusetts.

The snow on the ground was man made from big blocks of ice.

The lunchroom set was filmed in North Hampton State Hospital in North Hampton, Massachusetts; the hospital was no longer in use. The Production Designer, David Gropman, was responsible for decorating this shell of a building and making it look like a state orphanage of this period. The exterior of the orphanage was located in Lenox, Massachusetts. Historically it was the summer home of J. P. Morgan's sister. J. P. Morgan established the J. P. Morgan financial empire here in the states. When you use two different locations for your interior shot and your exterior shot, you worry about the matching and consistency of the two. They felt that the interior shots were much larger than the actual exterior of the building and that the audience might question them.

Michael Jackson joke about wanting Curley.



Great shot of the two looking out of the window, but as you follow the shot you have to ask, how did they do that? Oliver Stapleton the Cinematographer placed a pane of glass in front of these two actors in the actual corridor that they are standing in. Thus as they stand up the window disappears and the camera is able to follow them down the hall. Very seamless as they come into the hall, great shot.

Stapleton's work on this film is really wonderful, as it supports the work and it isn't showy.

## Chapter 6 (0:15:50) Movie Night

The music you are listening to hear, as you view this very famous clip from *King Kong* (1933), is a re-recording, thus the quality is extraordinary. The orphans get to watch the movie *King Kong* (1933) with a certain scene intact (the giant ape peels off Anne Darrow's garments). That scene was cut from *Kong* shortly after its premiere and was not publicly available anywhere (until 1971), so whoever lived in 1940's Maine could only see the cut version of *Kong*. The scene was thought to be too sexual, it hints of bestiality, suggesting that *Kong* would like to have sex with Ann Darrow, a painful impossibility.

There is no movie night in the novel, but John Irving wanted something that was different from all of the reading that is done to the children in the novel. He also wanted to set up the Drive-In

scene which appears later with Candy, and it just seemed to John Irving, that children who don't know their parents and are thinking about being adopted, would see any manifestation of love, as love coming from a parent. But a child with a parent might never assume that the giant ape would think that Ann Darrow would be his mother. But here an orphan might always be looking for his mother, clearly a big stretch on the part of the screenwriter.

0:18:18 Look how they answered this problem with Michael Caine's British accent creeping into the film now and again. They have this conversation with Fuzz, about his mother being an immigrant thus that would answer why occasionally Michael Caine has traces of an English accent, instead of the New England accent he should possess as this character.

#### Biography of Michael Caine

**Date of birth** 14 March 1933, St. Olave's Hospital, Rotherhithe, London, England

**Birth name** Maurice Joseph Micklewhite

**Height** 6' 2"

**Mini biography** Maurice Micklewhite in London, Caine was the son of a fish-market porter and a charlady. He left school at fifteen and took a series of working-class jobs before serving with the British Army in Korea, where he saw combat. Upon his return to England, he gravitated toward the theatre and got a job as an assistant stage manager. He adopted the name of Caine on the advice of his agent, taking it from a "Caine Mutiny" marquee. In the years that followed, he worked in more than 100 television dramas, with repertory companies throughout England and eventually in the stage hit, "The Long and the Short and the Tall," as Peter O'Toole's understudy, a role he later assumed on tour. The 1964 African adventure film *Zulu* (1964) brought Caine to international attention. Instead of being typecast as a Cockney soldier, he played an effete, aristocratic officer. Although "Zulu" was a major success, it was the role of Harry Palmer in *Ipcress File*, *The* (1965) and his title role as *Alfie* (1966), which made Caine a star of the first magnitude. He epitomized the new breed of actor in mid-sixties England, the working-class bloke with glasses and a down-home accent. However, after initially continuing to star in some excellent films, particularly in the sixties, including *Gambit* (1966), *Funeral in Berlin* (1966), *Play Dirty* (1968), *Battle of Britain* (1969), *Too Late the Hero* (1970), *Last Valley*, *The* (1970) and especially *Get Carter* (1971), he often seemed to take on roles in below average films, simply for the money he could by then command. There was some gems amongst the dross, however. He gave a magnificent performance opposite Sean Connery in *Man Who Would Be King*, *The* (1975) and as a German colonel in *Eagle Has Landed*, *The* (1976), *Educating Rita* (1983) and *Hannah and Her Sisters* (1986) (for which he won his first Oscar) were highlights of the eighties, while more recently *Little*



*Voice* (1998), *Cider House Rules*, *The* (1999) (his second Oscar) and *Last Orders* (2001) have been widely acclaimed.

#### Trivia

- Awarded British Variety Club Award for Best Film Actor 1987
- Awarded CBE (Commander Of The Most Excellent Order Of The British Empire) in 1993.
- When formally knighted at Buckingham Palace on 16 November 2000, he was knighted under his real name of Maurice Micklewhite. He will be known professionally as Sir Michael Caine.
- He owns seven restaurants: six in London, one in Miami.

**Biography from Leonard Maltin's Movie Encyclopedia:** How does one evaluate the oeuvre of an actor who frankly admits that he chooses his film projects (a) for the locations on which they're to be shot, and (b) on the amount of money he's to be paid? (He's certainly honest, if nothing else.) It would be difficult in most cases, but a prodigiously talented actor such as Caine makes it even more so. He's frequently far better than the films in which he appears: He's given stellar performances in the likes of Woody Allen's *Hannah and Her Sisters* (1986, winning a Best Supporting Actor Oscar in the bargain), *Alfie* (1966), *Sleuth* (1972), and *Educating Rita* (1983)—Oscar nominees all. But these outstanding credits must be lumped in with his appearances in such lesser films as *Beyond the Poseidon Adventure* (1979), *Blame It on Rio* (1984), and *Sweet Liberty* (1986, in which Caine's performance was pronounced the "only redeeming feature" by some critics). Born to a poor Depression-era London family, Caine spent his early childhood years in a two-room Camberwell flat without electricity. During World War 2, he and his mother and brother were assigned to an evacuee home in rural Norfolk. At 16, the rebellious lad quit school and eventually went on to serve as a private in the British army, being posted abroad during the Korean War. Back in London, facing bleak job prospects, he answered an ad in "The Stage" and joined the Horsham Repertory Company in Sussex as assistant stage manager. He graduated to acting via bit parts, which led to bigger roles, and at the end of the season, Caine (now Michael Scott) joined the Lowestoft Theatre in Suffolk, where he met his future wife, actress Patricia Haines. A movie marquee for *The Caine Mutiny* inspired his new name-and, seemingly, brought him better luck: By the late 1960s, Caine had appeared in more than 100 TV shows and films such as *A Hill in Korea* (1956, his first movie), *How to Murder a Rich Uncle* (1957), *The Day the Earth Caught Fire*, *The Wrong Arm of the Law* (both 1962), *Zulu* (1964, in a standout role as an insouciant army officer), *The Ipcress File* (1965, the first of three appearances as master spy Harry Palmer), *Funeral in Berlin*, *The Wrong Box* (both 1966), *Hurry Sundown*, *Woman Times Seven* (both 1967), *The Magus* (1968), and *The Battle of Britain* (1969).

The success of *Alfie* and the *Harry Palmer* movies made Caine an international star, but he squandered his standing by accepting roles in a string of undistinguished 1970s efforts, including *Get Carter* (1971), *X, Y, and Zee*, *Pulp* (both 1972), *The Black Windmill* (1974), *Harry and Walter Go to New York* (1976), and *The Swarm* (1978), to name a few. But he frequently got choice roles in better films as well, making the most of his

opportunities in *Sleuth* (1972, opposite Laurence Olivier in a lighthearted tour de force), *The Man Who Would Be King* (1975, opposite Sean Connery in a rugged adventure story), and *California Suite* (1978, delivering a deft comic performance). The 1980s found Caine continuing the same trend; how to reconcile the abovementioned *Hannah and Her Sisters*, *Educating Rita* Brian DePalma's stylish thriller *Dressed to Kill* (1980), *The Whistle Blower* (1986) with the likes of *The Hand* (1981), *Water* (1985), and *Jaws the Revenge* (1987)? Toward the decade's end, Caine got two bright comic roles: as a sophisticated con man in competition with Steve Martin in *Dirty Rotten Scoundrels* and as a bungling Sherlock Holmes perpetually "rescued" by the brilliant Doctor Watson (Ben Kingsley) in *Without a Clue* (both 1988). In his finest performance in years, Caine played a chillingly ruthless, beleaguered businessman who casually eliminates his wife, boss, and business rival in *A Shock to the System* (1990), a delicious black comedy that enjoyed only limited box-office success. He was also good in *Noises Off* (1992) and the cable telefilm *Blue Ice* (1993), and played an unobvious villain in *On Deadly Ground* (1994). Aside from his remarkably prolific and consistent acting career, Caine has also dabbled in the restaurant business, as part owner of London's Langan's Brasserie. He has written two books, "Michael Caine's Moving Picture Show" (1988), a collection of anecdotes, and his autobiography "What's It All About?" (1993). In addition, his master class, *Acting on Film*, was turned into a successful videotape and book.

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Michael Caine: On March 14th, 1933, Maurice Joseph Micklewhite was born. After changing his name to Michael Caine, lil' Maurice earned audiences love and respect as a versatile, hard-working actor. His international film career was launched by 1966's *Alfie*, playing a womanizing Cockney in swinging London. Still playing a working-class character, Caine completed a trilogy of espionage movies, playing Len Deighton's bespectacled agent, Harry Palmer, in *Ipcress File*, *Funeral in Berlin* and *The Billion Dollar Brain*. Michael Caine obviously loves working on films because he's made dozens of them ranging from excellent (*Mona Lisa*) to truly awful (*Blame It on Rio* and *Jaws: The Revenge*). He's got such a good attitude about him that audiences forgive him in the dreck and love him in the good stuff. The "good stuff" has done quite well for him and he's either won or been nominated for the Emmys, the Oscars®, and the Golden Globes. His latest Golden Globe nod was for his role in Miramax's *Little Voice*. He was also a big hit with the press on the 9th and 10th days of the 1998 Toronto International Film Festival. Totally enjoyable in both comedies and dramas, Michael Caine still has many roles left to play, and we're all better off because of that. With so many characters under his belt, Caine is an excellent study for young actors who want to get into film. His book *Acting in Film: An Actor's Take on Movie Making* gives the student actor valuable tips on acting in front of the camera. Michael was nominated for the 57th Annual Golden Globe Awards for his role in *The Cider House Rules*. He later won both the SAG and Academy Awards. At the Oscars®, Caine paid tribute to his fellow nominees in a very touching speech. In June of 2000, he became Sir Michael Caine, when the Queen gave him a knighthood in her annual birthday honors list.

#### Actor - filmography

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| 1. Bewitched (2005) Nigel                                       | 39. Jaws: The Revenge (1987) Hoagie Newcombe                 |
| 2. Batman Begins (2005) Alfred Pennyworth                       | 40. Whistle Blower, The (1986) Frank Jones                   |
| 3. Weather Man, The (2005) Robert Spritz                        | 41. Half Moon Street (1986) Lord Bulbeck                     |
| 4. Around the Bend (2004) Henry Lair                            | 42. Mona Lisa (1986) Mortwell                                |
| 5. Statement, The (2003) Pierre Brossard                        | 43. Sweet Liberty (1986) Elliott James                       |
| 6. Secondhand Lions (2003) Garth                                | 44. Hannah and Her Sisters (1986) Elliot                     |
| 7. Actors, The (2003) O'Malley                                  | 45. Water (1985/I) Baxter Thwaites                           |
| 8. Quiet American, The (2002) Thomas Fowler                     | 46. Holcroft Covenant, The (1985) Noel Holcroft              |
| 9. Austin Powers in Goldmember (2002) Nigel Powers              | 47. Blame It on Rio (1984) Matthew Hollins                   |
| 10. Quicksand (2001/I) Jake Mellows                             | 48. Jigsaw Man, The (1983) Philip Kimberly/Sergei Kuzminsky  |
| 11. Last Orders (2001) Jack Dodds                               | 49. Honorary Consul, The (1983) Charley Fortnum              |
| 12. Miss Congeniality (2000) Victor Melling                     | 50. Educating Rita (1983) Dr. Frank Bryant                   |
| 13. Get Carter (2000) Cliff Brumby                              | 51. Deathtrap (1982) Sidney Bruhl                            |
| 14. Shiner (2000) Billy 'Shiner' Simpson                        | 52. Hand, The (1981) Jonathan Lansdale                       |
| 15. Quills (2000) Dr. Royer-Collard                             | 53. Victory (1981/I) Capt. John Colby                        |
| 16. Debtors, The (1999)   | 54. Dressed to Kill (1980) Doctor Robert Elliott             |
| 17. Cider House Rules, The (1999) Dr. Wilbur Larch              | 55. Island, The (1980) Blair Maynard                         |
| 18. Curtain Call (1999) Max Gale                                | 56. Beyond the Poseidon Adventure (1979) Captain Mike Turner |
| 19. Little Voice (1998) Ray Say                                 | 57. Ashanti (1979) Dr. David Linderby                        |
| 20. Shadow Run (1998) Haskell                                   | 58. California Suite (1978) Visitors from Sidney Cochran     |
| 21. 20,000 Leagues Under the Sea (1997/II) (TV) Captain Nemo    | 59. Swarm, The (1978) Brad Crane                             |
| 22. Mandela and de Klerk (1997) (TV) F.W. de Klerk              | 60. Silver Bears (1978) Doc Fletcher                         |
| 23. Midnight in St. Petersburg (1996) Harry Palmer              | 61. Bridge Too Far, A (1977) Lt. Col. J.O.E. Vandeleur       |
| 24. Blood and Wine (1996) Victor Spansky                        | 62. Eagle Has Landed, The (1976) Col. Kurt Steiner           |
| 25. Bullet to Beijing (1996) (TV) Harry Palmer                  | 63. Harry and Walter Go to New York (1976) Adam Worth        |
| 26. On Deadly Ground (1994) Michael Jennings                    | 64. Peeper (1975) Leslie C. Tucker                           |
| 27. Muppet Christmas Carol, The (1992) Scrooge                  | 65. Man Who Would Be King, The (1975) Peachy Carnehan        |
| 28. Blue Ice (1992) Harry Anders                                | 66. Romantic Englishwoman, The (1975) Lewis Fielding         |
| 29. Noises Off... (1992) Lloyd Fellowes                         | 67. Wilby Conspiracy, The (1975) Jim Keogh                   |
| 30. Bullseye! (1990) Sidney Lipton/Doctor Hicklar               | 68. Destructors, The (1974) John Deray                       |
| 31. Mr. Destiny (1990) Mike the Bartender at Joint Bar/Angel    | 69. Black Windmill, The (1974) Maj. John Tarrant             |
| 32. Shock to the System, A (1990) Graham Marshall               | 70. Pulp (1972) Mickey King                                  |
| 33. Jekyll & Hyde (1990) (TV) Dr. Henry Jekyll/Edward Hyde      | 71. Sleuth (1972) Milo Tindle                                |
| 34. Dirty Rotten Scoundrels (1988) Lawrence Jamieson            | 72. Zee and Co. (1972) Robert Blakeley                       |
| 35. Jack the Ripper (1988) (TV) Chief Insp. Frederick Abberline | 73. Kidnapped (1971) Alan Breck                              |
| 36. Without a Clue (1988) Sherlock Holmes/Reginald Kincaid      | 74. Get Carter (1971) Jack Carter                            |
| 37. Surrender (1987) Sean Stein                                 | 75. Last Valley, The (1971) The Captain                      |
| 38. Fourth Protocol, The (1987) John Preston                    | 76. Too Late the Hero (1970) Pvt. Tosh Hearne                |
|   | 77. Battle of Britain (1969) Squadron Leader Canfield        |

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>78. <i>Italian Job, The</i> (1969) Charlie Croker</li> <li>79. <i>Saturday-Night Theatre: Cornelius</i> (1969) (TV) Cornelius</li> <li>80. <i>Male of the Species</i> (1969) (TV) Guest</li> <li>81. <i>Play Dirty</i> (1968) Capt. Douglas</li> <li>82. <i>Magus, The</i> (1968) Nicholas Urfe</li> <li>83. <i>Deadfall</i> (1968) Henry Clarke</li> <li>84. <i>Billion Dollar Brain</i> (1967) Harry Palmer</li> <li>85. <i>Woman Times Seven</i> (1967) Handsome Stranger</li> <li>86. <i>Hurry Sundown</i> (1967) Henry Warren</li> <li>87. <i>Funeral in Berlin</i> (1966) Harry Palmer</li> <li>88. <i>Gambit</i> (1966) Harry Tristan Dean</li> <li>89. <i>Wrong Box, The</i> (1966) Michael Finsbury</li> <li>90. <i>Alfie</i> (1966) Alfie</li> <li>91. <i>Ipress File, The</i> (1965) Sergeant Harry Palmer</li> <li>92. <i>Hamlet</i> (1964/III) (TV) Horatio</li> <li>93. <i>Other Man, The</i> (1964) (TV) George Grant</li> <li>94. <i>Zulu</i> (1964) Lt. Gonville Bromhead</li> <li>95. <i>Funny Noises with Their Mouths</i> (1963) (TV)</li> <li>96. <i>Wrong Arm of the Law, The</i> (1963) Bit Part</li> <li>97. <i>Solo for Sparrow</i> (1962) Paddy Mooney</li> <li>98. <i>Compartment, The</i> (1961) (TV)</li> <li>99. <i>Day the Earth Caught Fire, The</i> (1961) Policeman</li> <li>100. <i>Ship That Couldnt Stop, The</i> (1961) (TV) Helmsman</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>101. "Walk a Crooked Mile" (1961) (mini) TV Police constable</li> <li>102. <i>Foxhole in Cairo</i> (1961) Weber</li> <li>103. <i>Ring of Truth</i> (1961) (TV)</li> <li>104. <i>Bulldog Breed, The</i> (1960) (uncredited) Sailor cinema fight</li> <li>105. "No Wreath for the General" (1960) TV Police constable</li> <li>106. <i>Danger Within</i> (1959) (uncredited) Bit part</li> <li>107. <i>Blind Spot</i> (1958) .... Johnny Brent</li> <li>108. <i>Passport to Shame</i> (1958) (uncredited) Bit Part</li> <li>109. <i>Two-Headed Spy, The</i> (1958) Gestapo Agent</li> <li>110. <i>Woman of Mystery, A</i> (1958) (uncredited) Bit Part</li> <li>111. <i>Carve Her Name with Pride</i> (1958) (uncredited) Extra</li> <li>112. <i>Key, The</i> (1958) (uncredited)</li> <li>113. <i>Steel Bayonet, The</i> (1957) (uncredited) Bit Part</li> <li>114. <i>How to Murder a Rich Uncle</i> (1957) Gilrony</li> <li>115. <i>Requiem for a Heavyweight</i> (1957) (TV) Boxer</li> <li>116. <i>Hill in Korea, A</i> (1956) Pvt. Lockyer</li> <li>117. <i>Sailor Beware</i> (1956) (uncredited) Bit Part</li> </ul> <p><b>Producer - filmography</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. <i>Forever After</i> (2001) (executive producer)</li> <li>2. <i>Blue Ice</i> (1992) (producer)</li> <li>3. <i>Fourth Protocol, The</i> (1987) (executive producer)</li> <li>4. <i>Pulp</i> (1972) (producer) (uncredited)</li> <li>5. <i>Get Carter</i> (1971) (producer) (uncredited)</li> </ul> |
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That little trick saved them from having to re-due scenes whenever Michael would make a mistake with his accents, which are numerous. Michael Caine was not interested and even reluctant to do that scene, as he wanted to get the accent done correctly all of the time. By doing the scene, he sort of admits that he could not get the part down correctly. However, the scene is important, as it is one of the most intimate moments that he has with Fuzz, which will have its consequences later.

## Chapter 7 (0:19:51) Hard Being An Orphan

Here we have a montage to suggest the passage of time, from winter to spring. And a hint that the good doctor is a sexual being and does have an interest in his nurse assistant. In the book this is dealt with in a much different manner, and much broader, we simply don't have time to do it in the movie. So read the book.

Kieran Culkin, playing the role of Buster is really great, and yes, that is Maculley Culkin's brother.

### Biography for Kieran Culkin

**Date of birth** 30 September 1982, New York, NY

**Birth name** Kieran Kyle Culkin

**Height** 5' 9"

**Mini biography** Kieran Kyle Culkin was born September 30, 1982, and started working in 1990. He worked with his brother, Mac several times. His debut was playing Mac's cousin, Fuller, in *Home Alone* (1990). He went on to do lots of films on his own. He starred in *Father of the Bride* (1991) playing Steve Martin's young son. Then a few years later they offered him a special role in *Mighty, The* (1998). After his wonderful performance, he went on to bigger movies like *Cider House Rules, The* (1999) and *Music of the Heart* (1999).

### Actor - filmography

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. <i>Igby Goes Down</i> (2002) Jason 'Igby' Slocumb, Jr.</li> <li>2. <i>Dangerous Lives of Altar Boys, The</i> (2002) Tim Sullivan</li> <li>3. "Go Fish" (2001) TV Series Andy 'Fish' Troutner</li> <li>4. <i>Magical Legend of the Leprechauns, The</i> (1999) Barney</li> <li>5. <i>Cider House Rules, The</i> (1999) Buster</li> <li>6. <i>Music of the Heart</i> (1999) Lexi at 15</li> <li>7. <i>She's All That</i> (1999) Simon Boggs</li> <li>8. <i>Mighty, The</i> (1998) Kevin 'Freak' Dillon</li> <li>9. <i>Amanda</i> (1996) Biddle</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>10. <i>Father of the Bride Part II</i> (1995) Matty Banks</li> <li>11. <i>My Summer Story</i> (1994) Ralph 'Ralphie' Parker</li> <li>12. <i>Nowhere to Run</i> (1993) Mike 'Mookie' Anderson</li> <li>13. <i>Home Alone 2: Lost in New York</i> (1992) Fuller McCallister</li> <li>14. <i>Father of the Bride</i> (1991) Matty Banks</li> <li>15. <i>Only the Lonely</i> (1991) Patrick Muldoon Jr.</li> <li>16. <i>Home Alone</i> (1990) Fuller</li> </ul> <p><b>Himself - filmography</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. <i>Abby Singer</i> (2003) .Himself</li> <li>2. <i>Igby Goes Down: In Search of Igby</i> (2003) (V) Himself</li> </ul> |
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Notable TV Guest Appearances

1. "Frasier" 15 October 1996



Cameo appearance by the author John Irving playing the role of the stationmaster.

The location of this train station is Bellows Falls, Vermont. It was a rush filming at this location, they even had some interior shots in the train that they were not able to get, and one of the reasons was that Kieran got some cinder in his eye, and it was rather painful, it took a large portion of the filming day to take care of that problem. By the way, film companies take out insurance policies for such things, in case an actor is sick, and you have to cancel a day or more of filming, it is very expensive, thus you carry insurance for such reasons.

### Chapter 8 (0:22:55) She Died Of Ignorance

The children you are looking at are all locale kids, with one exception, that being young Erick, Keiran and Paz, they placed ads in the locale newspapers to get the kids for the large group shots at the orphanage. They were lucky to accomplish this, but Lasse is very good with working with young inexperienced children.

0:26:45 They are very careful about the medical information that they convey to the audience. John Irving took extensive care to do that in the novel and then when they began filming they had several doctors on the set to walk them through this information, and make sure that they would be accurate.

Notice a choice by the director here, not to have music while they are digging the grave and then again in the car while they are driving back to the orphanage, not to have the radio playing. That would have been called source music, where the musical instrumentation comes from a prop within the story.

In this shot with the car, there are crew members behind the car on the trailer, bumping it to give the impression that the road is bumpy. Here in the car Homer makes the one point for which there is no answer, that being, "I could have ended up in the incinerator." Notice how they talk about Buster as if he is not present, then all of sudden, the car swerves and Buster is present.

### Chapter 9 (0:25:57) Wally And Candy

Look how out of place Candy and Wally look upon their arrival, not only the car, but also the characters themselves.

One of the statements that John Irving made about the movie is that everything that happens in the film is because abortion is not legal at this time. What he means by that, if abortion was legal at this time period there would be no story, there would be no orphanage, Homer would never have been born, and he certainly would have never meet Candy. The whole story evaporates at a time like this that permits that procedure. It is a way of making the abortion argument strictly from an historical perspective.

Not today's argument, but to say, "Let's look at what it was like, when you couldn't have an abortion." Of course at this time period depicted in the movie, this procedure was largely unsafe, largely illegal, and largely unavailable.

Paul Rudd, playing Wally Worthington.

**Biography for Paul Rudd**

**Date of birth** 6 April 1969, Passaic, New Jersey

**Height** 5' 9"

**Mini biography** Rudd traveled with his family during his early years because of his father's airline job. Rudd attended the Shawnee Mission West High School in Kansas City and then attended the University of Kansas, majoring in theater. He graduated from the American Academy of Dramatic Arts/West in Los Angeles and participated in a three-month intensive workshop under the guidance of 'Michael Kahn' at the British Drama Academy at Oxford University in England. Rudd helped to produce the Globe Theater's production of Howard Brenton's "Bloody Poetry", which starred Rudd as Percy Bysshe Shelley.

**Mini biography** Paul Stephen Rudd was raised in Overland Park, Kansas. His father is American, but his mother is English. He has one sister, three years younger than he. Paul attended Broadmoor Junior High and Shawnee Mission West High Schools. He graduated from High School in 1987 and had been Student Body President. He then attended the University of Kansas to find that he wasn't overly academic. Turning to his native charm and charisma, he applied to, and was accepted at, American Academy of Dramatic Arts in Los Angeles. Paul Rudd: Paul Stephen Rudd was born in 1969 in Passaic, New Jersey. He attended the University of Kansas, where he began his acting career. Upon graduating from the University with honors, he received the Spencer Tracy Scholarship to the American Academy of Dramatic Arts. He also spent a semester studying at the British Drama Academy at Oxford England. There, he portrayed the title role in "Hamlet," directed by Ben Kingsley. Paul then went on to television. He starred in the CBS's "The Fire Next Time," and also appeared several times on the NBC series "Sisters" as Kirbie Philby, and starred in the Fox comedy series "Wild Oats." Paul played Jimmy Rusoff in "Runaway Daughters," On stage, Rudd produced and starred in the Old Globe's critically acclaimed production of "Bloody Poetry."



**Spouse** Julie Yaeger 2003-present

**Trivia**

- Was classmates with Matthew Lillard at American Academy of Dramatic Arts
- Attended the University of Kansas

**Actor - filmography**

1. Cordless (2005) Guy
2. OH in Ohio, The (2005) Jack
3. Baxter, The (2005)
4. Tennis, Anyone...? (2004)
5. Wake Up, Ron Burgundy (2005) (V) Brian Fantana
6. P.S. (2004) Sammy Silverstein
7. Anchorman: The Legend of Ron Burgundy (2004) Brian
8. House Hunting (2003) Daniel
9. Two Days (2003) Paul Miller
10. Shape of Things, The (2003) Adam Sorenson
11. Stella Shorts 1998-2002 (2002) (V) John
12. On the Edge (2001/II) (TV) Kenneth
13. Château, The (2001) Graham Granville
14. Wet Hot American Summer (2001) Andy
15. Great Gatsby, The (2001) (TV) Nick Carraway
16. Tejing xinrenlei 2 (2000) Ian Curtis
17. Bash: Latter-Day Plays (2000) (TV)
18. Reaching Normal (1999) Kenneth
19. Cider House Rules, The (1999) Wally Worthington
20. 200 Cigarettes (1999) Kevin
21. Twelfth Night, or What You Will (1998) (TV) Duke Orsino
22. Object of My Affection, The (1998) George Hanson
23. Overnight Delivery (1998) Wyatt Trips
24. Locusts, The (1997) Earl
25. Size of Watermelons, The (1996) Alex
26. Romeo + Juliet (1996) Dave Paris
27. Halloween: The Curse of Michael Myers (1995) Doyle
28. Clueless (1995) Josh Lucas
29. "Wild Oats" (1994) TV Series Brian Grant
30. Runaway Daughters (1994) (TV) Jimmy Rusoff
31. Moment of Truth: Stalking Back (1993) (TV) Scott
32. Fire Next Time, The (1993) (TV) David
33. "Sisters" (1991) TV Kirby Quimby Philby (1992-1993)
34. Question of Ethics, A (1992) (as Kenny Chin)
35. Jamie's Secret (1992) (V)

Going back to the large interiors of this building, they do connect to that exterior in an emotional level, if not a physical level. The emptiness of the place brings a rich atmosphere to it. They wanted to have these long corridors and the institutional feel, yet not completely institutional, but they really don't match the exterior shots of the building.

Finding this exterior building was not an easy find, they couldn't have a house and they couldn't have a hospital, but a big building where kids would live. It is such an improvement over the building of St. Cloud's in the novel. In the novel St. Cloud's is an abandoned logging camp. This would have been so confining and so uninteresting to look at visually, especially when you got inside of it. For the movie it was important to make a change there.

### Chapter 10 (0:32:55) Homer Leaves Home

The "Princes of New England," John Irving stated that he wanted Dr. Larch to say a sort of benediction to the boys each night, something to bless them, and that is what he came up with. He didn't want it to be religious, since Larch is not particularly religious. But one in his own way that is slightly mocking, as these kids are the last thing in the world and the farthest thing in the world from princes and kings. But he is not mocking them in his instinct to make them feel good about themselves. He is building the boys up each night by saying this line, stating that they are special, as special as anybody else in the world.

So much of the dialogue from the book remains intact in the film. However, Michael Caine's delivery of the lines for this character is much gentler than they are on the page. He actually softens the character to Larch more than the screenplay even hints at for this character. It was Michael Caine's choice to be restrained and low key in his delivery, it really helps enhance the sympathy feel for the character, especially given how much bigger Michael is than Toby, physically, if he had been shouting too much of the time, he would have seemed like a bully.



They give the audience that chaotic scene with Fuzzy throwing up and the kids screaming as the final straw for Homer to make his decision to leave. This is something that was created for the screenplay. Here is a little bit of adlib here from Michael Caine, when he

mentions Honolulu and the moon. John Irving walked in on this scene as they were doing it and heard the line being improvised and kindly kept his cool as his script was being added to right in front of his face.

A two sided event taking place here. Dr. Larch gives him the x-ray of Fuzzy as a way of making sure that Homer will not have to go and fight in the war. But when he gives him the paper he says the line, "Here is your heart, take it with you." It is a great metaphor on life, always remembering that you have a heart to love and learn to love with, as you go out into this big cruel world.



There was a review in one of the Washington papers that stated how shocking it was that anyone would try to keep a young man out of the war for any reason. That is a strange level of patriotism directed to a fictional movie. The critic even went on to say that this action was more shocking than incest.

**Biography for Paz de la Huerta**

**Date of birth** 4 September 1984, New York, NY

**Mini biography** Born and raised in New York City, Paz de la Huerta has been acting since the age of four, having trained at the SoHo Children's Acting Studio. Aside from acting, Paz is a skilled artist, designer, and writer who enjoy listening to punk rock music. She currently resides in Tribeca, New York, with her mother and sister.

**Trade mark** Combat boots and leopard skirt.

**Actress - filmography**

1. Fierce People (2004)
2. Sup 2down (2005) Allie
3. Steal Me (2005) Lily Rose
4. Light and the Sufferer (2004) Annette
5. Homework (2004) Sara
6. Rick (2003) Vicki
7. Bringing Rain (2003) Dakota Cunningham
8. Girl's Guide to the Galaxy, A (2002) Maxie
9. Walk to Remember, A (2002) Tracie
10. Riding in Cars with Boys (2001) 1st Phone Call Flirt

11. Chelsea Walls (2001) (as Paz De La Huerta) Girl
12. Bailey's Mistake (2001) (TV) Becca Donovan
13. Looking for an Echo (2000) Nicole Delgado
14. Cider House Rules, The (1999) Mary Agnes
15. Luminous Motion (1998) Beatrice
16. Object of My Affection, The (1998) 13-Year-Old Sally

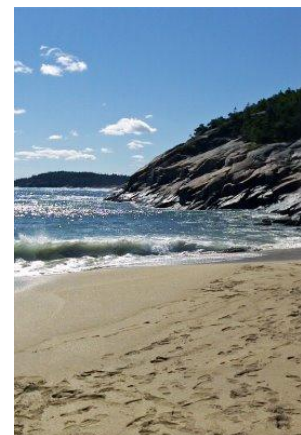
**Notable TV Guest Appearances**

1. "Law & Order: Special Victims Unit" 14 April 2000
2. "Practice, The" p 2 April 2000
3. "Law & Order" 5 January 2000

As this scene ends we do have a slight continuity problem here, Notice that Candy gets in the car and is laying down, then we cut to this elevated view and she is sitting up, now watch as we switch back to the car view, she is once again laying down. They jokingly referred to that car going off in the distance as the *Wizard of Oz* shot, I think you can tell why. It is reminiscent of the shot of Dorothy and Toto heading down the yellow brick road as the camera is elevated and the music escalates. Little director's touch as Homer reaches out his hand in the wind to feel the breeze, Lasse Hallstrom liked that touch.

The ether addiction was not that common among doctors, but at the same time it was not something that was completely unknown to the medical profession. Irving stated that he didn't want the doctor to be an alcoholic, and thus he interviewed numerous doctors from this time period about addictions to prescribed or un-prescribed medications. In John Irving's research, ether turned up to be a relatively mild and conservative addiction, and relatively safe as an inhalation, similar to nitric oxide. It would be hard to kill yourself with this drug, or anyone you administered it to also.

It was imperative to give the doctor a flaw, any character that appears to be saintly; you also want to ground them in the world. So you give the character a flaw to deal with or live with. So this makes the character ground, because of this little nick in his character, a weakness and/or kind of tiredness. When Homer comments on the ether early in the movie, he states that he is "too tired to sleep." That creates a facade for the audience to look at this character, an individual "too tired to sleep."



### **Chapter 11 (0:39:37) Apples and the Ocean**

The scene with the car moving through the night was all shot in a garage, and the car was not moving at all. They were just shaking the car and moving the headlights.

0:40:59 Location for this scene is Sand Beach, Arcadia National Park, Maine. It is in the northeasterly part of Maine. There was a lot more dialogue between Wally and Homer, both in the car and on the beach, but Lasse did some serious trimming to get the movie to pick up here and move a little faster.

### **Chapter 12 (0:43:00) A New Home**

Lisa Zeno Churgin did the editing of this picture, and Lasse stated that after seeing the first cut, which is the first editing of the film; he knew that they had a really good film on their hands. A lot of director will go through some sort of depression when they view their first cut of a movie, as it many times is nothing like they had first envisioned and also that many scenes filmed, become unusable.

In the book Homer lives in the house in Wally's room for 15 years and not in the bunk house with the migrant workers. However, also in the book Homer has fifteen years here that he got to know the workers and their families, but in the movie they just didn't have that amount of time to deal with, thus they moved Homer to staying in the bunkhouse so that the relationship with the workers could develop faster.

This move also helps separate Wally from Homer and changes the dynamics of the relationship with Candy, because now we aren't so much dealing with a love triangle of three. Also it makes a more noted difference in Homer, that Homer never has a traditional home in his lifetime.

Another change from the novel is the ownership of the orchard. In the movie Wally's family, the Worthington's, owns this orchard, but in the novel Homer goes to work for an arbitrary orchard. Also in the first draft of the screenplay, Wally, Candy's relationship only existed to get Homer out of the orphanage and to the coast. They were to drop him off at the orchard and then Wally finds his own way from there. What happened to facilitate the change is that the audience spends forty-five minutes getting attached to the orphanage and then we thrust upon them all of these new characters. Now you can see how they are keeping the pace of the story moving fast, so that you can get to know all of these characters, as quickly as possible and to care for them.

### **Chapter 13 (0:46:50) First Night At he Orchard**

### **Chapter 14 (0:48:31) Learning The Ropes**

This scene is interjected to show Homer experiencing the world and also seeing a boy-girl relationship for the first time, observing normal life in other words.

While in the real world, Dr. Larch warns Homer that he will see poor people who are worse off than the poor kids left at the orphanage, this of course is a prophecy that Homer experiences right away.

In that same tone, there was a scene right here where Wally talks to the women sorting the apples and miss treats them, degrades them. The scene was cut, giving Wally this nice personage, instead of the uppity rich boy attitude. But again, it is important to keep the pace going at this point in the movie.

The orchard-sorting house was the first day of principle photography on the film. Toby's performance is a little different in this scene. The movie was shot in reverse order, due to the weather. Thus the first half of the film takes place in the orphanage and that was shot last, and the second half of the film takes place in the orchard and that was shot first.

0:51:26 Here is a nice crane shot that took one day to get on to film, Richard Gladstein the producer sweated a lot about the shot and the cost of the shot. They had about two or three takes of the real apples being picked, then the prop crew had to come in and re-fasten the apples to the tree so that they could make another take. If you look real careful, you can see a cable or two attached to the branches, the apples are all real.

## **Chapter 15 (0:53:00) Homer Has Credentials?**

## **Chapter 16 (0:55:00) Dinner Date with Candy**

A little cheat here by the director, if you know anything about orchard work, empty boxes were only stacked two high on a cart, as they would fall off if they were any higher. However, they needed three boxes to block the expression on Homer's face at the invitation to go lobster fishing. So it becomes a director's cheat to fulfill the need of the camera's eye.

Now you see Homer on a bike, but no introduction of the bike or how he gets a bike. Something you can do in a movie, but you cannot do it in a book. In a movie, the audience makes an assumption in their mind as to how the character gets or receives a new prop. But in a book, the reader would question, "How did he get a bike? Where did he get a bike?"

Two types of errors in a film, Continuity and Anachronism, the drive-in movie theatre is an anachronism, (an error in chronology in which a person, object, event, etc. is assigned a date or period other than the correct one) the screen is suited for wide-screen movies, and wide screen movies didn't appear in theatres until the early 1950's.

Great comment by Homer, "*King Kong*, it's really good." the expert reviewer, from someone who has only seen one movie.

The use of the prop of a cigarette here was Charlize Theron's idea, but is an amazing idea, and adds a lot to the scene.

### **Biography for Charlize Theron**

**Date of birth** 7 August 1975, Benoni, South Africa

**Nickname** Charlie

**Height** 5' 9½"

**Mini biography** Charlize Theron grew up on a farm outside Benoni, South Africa, as the only child. She got an education as a ballet dancer and has danced both *The Swan Lake* and the *Nutcracker Suite*. There wasn't much for a young actress or dancer to do in South Africa, so she soon travelled to Europe and USA where she



# Literature to Film lecture on the film *The Cider House Rules* (1999)

Compiled by Jay Seller

got job at the Joffrey Ballet in New York. She was also able to work as a photo model. However, an injured knee put a halt to her dancing career. At the age of 18 her mother made her go to Los Angeles to try a career in the movie industry. She came to LA without knowing anyone in the city but after two weeks when she was standing in line on Hollywood Boulevard an agent gave her his card. After eight months in LA she got her first part. Since then she has taken acting lessons and her career has skyrocketed, most lately in *Devil's Advocate*, *The* (1997).

**Mini biography** Charlize Theron was born in Benoni, a little farming community outside Johannesburg, South Africa on August 7th, 1975. Her mother, Gerda, is German, while her late father, Charles, was French (she was named after her him). Charlize began her modeling career in 1991, at 16, when she won a local modeling contest. She started modeling in Europe, and came to New York a year later. She didn't like being a model though, and decided to try her luck with ballet, which had been her biggest passion as a child. Unfortunately, a knee injury prevented her from dancing. Her mother bought her a one-way ticket to Los Angeles in 1994, and Charlize started visiting all of the agents on Hollywood Boulevard, but without any luck. She went to the bank to cash a check for \$500 she'd gotten from her mother, and became furious when she learned that the bank could not cash her check because it was an out-state check. She made a scene, and an agent gave her his card, in exchange that she learn the language, which she did by watching soap operas on TV. Her first role was as a young mother in a park in a B-film in 1995, but it was a non-speaking role with three seconds of screen time. Her next role was as Helga in *2 Days in the Valley* (1996), which landed her the role of Tina in *That Thing You Do!* (1996). Since then, she has starred in movies like *Devil's Advocate*, *The* (1997), *Mighty Joe Young* (1998), *Cider House Rules*, *The* (1999), *Legend of Bagger Vance*, *The* (2000) and *Italian Job*, *The* (2003). An important day in her life was February 29th, 2004, when she was awarded with her first Academy Award for her performance in *Monster* (2003).

## Trivia

- When she was 15, her father attacked her mother, and her mother shot her father in self-defense. Her father died, and her mother was not charged in the incident.
- First language is Afrikaans, English is spoken as her second language.
- Appeared in the May 1999 issue of *Playboy Magazine*
- Became a fashion model at age 14.
- Both her parents are Afrikaans, born and raised in South Africa. However her father is of French descent and her mother of German descent.
- Measurements: 36B-24-36 (Source: *Celebrity Sleuth* magazine)
- She gained 30 pounds to play Aileen Wuornos in *Monster* (2003)

Charlize Theron: While it's hard to imagine that anyone could have made the disastrous T&A spectacle that was *Showgirls* worth watching, moviegoers who got a charge out of seeing actress Charlize Theron open a can of whup-ass in *Teri Hatcher's* face in *2 Days in the Valley* may agree that it's a bit of a shame the statuesque South African beauty didn't quite beat out Elizabeth Berkley for the *Showgirls* lead role. Not that Theron herself ever shed any tears over that particular missed opportunity — as she later explained of her failure to land the high-profile part, "It was like I had some guardian angel." And though it didn't exactly vault her onto Hollywood's A-list overnight, Theron's energetic, well-reviewed performance in *2 Days* — her feature-film debut and her very first professional acting gig — ensured that Hollywood casting directors would most definitely remember her name. The only child of Afrikaaner parents who owned both a road construction company and a farm, Theron was born and raised in Benoni, South Africa, where she experienced a thoroughly rural upbringing that included (naturally) getting up at the crack of dawn to milk the cows. At age 6, young Charlize began studying ballet, a pursuit that would command her attention throughout the next decade of her life. Whenever she was out of toe-shoes, the agile youngster devoted her free time to a consuming passion for American movies: She first experienced them at a drive-in located a 45-minute drive down the road from the family farm, and later cajoled her parents into purchasing a VCR. "I screamed and I yelled and we got one," she later recalled. "And this little video store opened in town with, like, 20 videos. I saw everything about 50 times." A particular favorite was the Tom Hanks-Daryl Hannah mermaid romance *Splash*, which caused the wide-eyed Theron to develop a huge crush on the hunky Hanks. Eventually her study of ballet landed the talented teen at a school for the performing arts in Johannesburg, where she occasionally sat in on drama classes. As a result of that casual interface, the striking 16-year-old stumbled upon a modeling contest, which she entered and won. Just weeks before her wholly serendipitous introduction to the world of modeling, Theron's father had passed away, and when an Italian fashion scout informed her that there was a modeling contract awaiting her in Milan, the unassuming South African farm girl was seized by a sudden ambition to travel and try something new. Though a moderate success on the runways, Theron was unable to land any major modeling contracts or cover shots, and eventually the newness of her latest endeavor wore thin. When an American magazine flew her to New York for a photo shoot, she decided to stick around and make a new life for herself in the States. As she later told one interviewer, "I went, did the job, and never made it back to the airport. I was thrilled." On her own in the Big Apple at age 18, Theron worked modeling jobs whenever she could get them and swiped bread from restaurants when she couldn't. The cold, wet winters proved especially trying for the South African expat, who was accustomed to much milder seasons, and she found herself continually intimidated by the city's maze of towering skyscrapers. New York's Joffrey Ballet provided a respite from her woes, but the security of taking up her childhood passion once again was abruptly withdrawn in 1995, when a career-ending knee injury forced her to fall back on modeling. She confided her troubles to her mother, who recalled Theron's childhood passion for cinema and suggested her intrepid daughter go to Southern California and try to break into movies. Mom sent her money for that one-way ticket to the big city, and Theron booked a flight to "Hollywood," only to discover, to her dismay, that her travel agent had put her on a plane to "Los Angeles."



Once arrived at her destination, Theron checked into a low-rent L.A. motel and spent the next two weeks blundering around town attempting to make connections. She eventually ended up in line at a bank with the final check from her various employments in New York, and threw an impressive tantrum when the teller refused to cash the check because it was drawn on an out-of-state bank. Hollywood talent manager John Crosby happened to be standing in line behind her, and, after helpfully explaining that she could cash her out-of-state check at any post office, asked if she were, perchance, an actress. Somewhat flustered, Theron replied that she wasn't, but that she fully intended to become one. Crosby, who earlier in his career had discovered Rene Russo at a Rolling Stones concert, offered his card. Friends told Theron she'd been taken in, but

after asking around and discovering that Crosby was entirely reputable, she got in touch with him, and he agreed to take her on as a client. Thereafter, Theron underwent countless auditions for television commercials, but was unable to land a single gig; as she later put it to *Interview* magazine, "I could've sooner gotten arrested." Her perseverance eventually resulted in her *2 Days* role, which was immediately followed by a chance to work with childhood crush Hanks on his directorial debut, 1996's *That Thing You Do!* Hanks raved over her audition, blushed when told of the bright young neophyte's youthful infatuation, and eventually signed her for a small role as an all-American every girl who finds love with the dentist of her dreams after her drummer boyfriend starts spending too much time with his band mates. The following year, Theron logged prominent roles in decidedly different lawyer flicks; the Michael Richards farce *Trial and Error* and the Keanu Reeves-Al Pacino thriller *The Devil's Advocate*. Though absent from theaters during most of 1998, she turned heads with her bang-on portrayal of a callow supermodel in Woody Allen's *Celebrity* that fall, and made her debut in a starring role, opposite Bill Paxton, in Disney's remake of *Mighty Joe Young*. No stranger to the ups and downs of celebrity romance, Theron dated actor Craig Bierko for two years before moving on to Third Eye Blind vocalist Stephan Jenkins; she is currently linked with Irish actor Stewart Townsend. The career front has also delivered a consistent stream of handsome men. In 1999, Theron starred opposite a trio of Hollywood hotties: the New Line horror flick *The Astronaut's Wife* paired her with Johnny Depp; she joined Tobey Maguire in an adaptation of John Irving's *The Cider House Rules*; and she wrapped the crime drama *The Yards* (released in 2000), which matched her with Joaquin Phoenix. Next came *The Legend of Bagger Vance*, with Matt Damon and Will Smith, and the 2001 release *Sweet November*, which paired her in bittersweet romance with Keanu Reeves.

**Actress - filmography**

1. *Ice at the Bottom of the World, The* (2006)
2. *Italian Job II, The* (2006) Stella Bridger
3. *Class Action* (2005) Josie Aimes
4. *Aeon Flux* (2005) Aeon Flux
5. *Head in the Clouds* (2004) Gilda Bessé
6. *Life and Death of Peter Sellers, The* (2004) Britt Ekland
7. *Monster* (2003) Aileen
8. *Italian Job, The* (2003) Stella Bridger
9. *Waking Up in Reno* (2002) Candy Kirkendall
10. *Trapped* (2002) Karen Jennings
11. "When I Was a Girl" (2001) TV Series Narrator
12. *Curse of the Jade Scorpion, The* (2001) Laura Kensington
13. *15 Minutes* (2001) Rose Hearn
14. *Sweet November* (2001) Sara Deever
15. *Legend of Bagger Vance, The* (2000) Adele Invergordon

16. *Men of Honor* (2000) Gwen Sunday
17. *Yards, The* (2000) Erica Stoltz
18. *Reindeer Games* (2000) Ashley Mercer
19. *Cider House Rules, The* (1999) Candy Kendall
20. *Astronaut's Wife, The* (1999) Jillian Armacost
21. *Mighty Joe Young* (1998) Jill Young
22. *Celebrity* (1998) Supermodel
23. *Devil's Advocate, The* (1997) Mary Ann Lomax
24. *Trial and Error* (1997) Billy Tyler
25. *Hollywood Confidential* (1997) (TV) Sally
26. *That Thing You Do!* (1996) Tina
27. *2 Days in the Valley* (1996) Helga Svelgen
28. *Children of the Corn III* (1995) (uncredited) Young Woman

**Producer - filmography**

1. *Ice at the Bottom of the World, The* (2006) (producer)
2. *Monster* (2003) (producer)

## Chapter 17 (0:58:44) A Handpicked Gift

### Chapter 18 (0:59:28) The Nicest And Most Beautiful Girl

Notice the use of colors, in the orphanage they use a black and white scheme of colors, then as Homer goes out into the world, they use a wider range of colors, really filling the screen with bright and vivid colors for the real world.

Filming in a theatre is always an interesting choice, as you have a difficult light variable to work with. Theatres are dark, but you have to light the faces of the actors you are working with. Again, research has to be done to select the correct films for this time period. *Wuthering Heights* opened in theatres in 1939, redone in 1992, a movie based on a classic novel written by Emily Bronte and published in 1897. This was take number two of twelve as they walk down the sidewalk, Lasse said, "I don't know why we didn't just go with this take from the beginning."

### Chapter 19 (1:01:39) A First-Rate Candidate

Look again at the color quality here in the boardroom scene, even the costumes repeat the black and white dull scheme of color variation.

This scene is a bit of a grasp and broad writing by the screenwriter, but it works because of the payoff that Dr. Larch is able to do with the board members, as a result audiences embrace this type of bravado, and we love to see the little guy win by this type of cunning. Great line, "What's his name?"

## Chapter 20 (1:04:00) “What Business You In?”

Another scene cut out here, one that took place at a dance hall, with Homer and Candy.

This scene with the processing of the apples began at 7 a.m. and ended at 3 a.m. the following day. Everything that could go wrong did go wrong, the trucks got stuck in the mud, due to the rain. Other trucks were used to drag the stuck trucks out of the mud, and tore down trees.

There are numerous refrains in the novel that needed to be repeated in the movie, (1) the cider house rules, and (2) the benediction to the kids at night, and here the (3) idea of business, which will be repeated by Homer in a final stanza of the movie, where he says, “Doctoring is my business.”

Rack focus between Mr. Rose and Jack, as he throws the cigarette into the vat.

John Irving actually picked in an orchard as a kid, thus he received his knowledge about picking apples and even meet an individual similar to the character of Mr. Rose. The culture of these individuals working in the orchard was all researched and John Irving also researched the incidents of incest, and family relations among rural migrant workers. Migrant workers suffer a large degree of isolation and get cut off from society in general, thus the incidents of incest.

Homer is passive with Mr. Roses cut.



## Chapter 21 (1:07:07) What A Drive-In Is Really For

The drive-in day shots were shot in two different locations, with the close-ups in one field and the wide shots at the drive-in theatre.

## Chapter 22 (1:09:16) Fuzzy Gets Adopted

To go from the drive-in theatre to the viewing of *King Kong*, is a nice transition to take us back to the orphanage.



Hard moment here for Fuzzy (Erick) to get these three seconds of stillness, hard for a little kid to endure that kind of stillness, especially with a crew of sixty watching him.

This headstone, now sits in the office of Richard Gladstein the producer of the film, possibly a little morbid. In the book Homer is still at the orphanage when Fuzzy dies, but he knew that in the movie if Fuzzy dies prior to Homer’s return, there would be on last physical thing to come back to. So here you see Fuzzy death from Dr. Larch’s point of view, where as in the book you see it from Homer’s point of view. It is also Homer who

makes up this story for the kids, not Buster. Kieran had trouble holding it together in this scene, at that is one of the reasons the scene comes across so touching.

### **Chapter 23 (1:11:33) A Package from the Past**

The script had Dr. Larch packing the bag for Homer, but it was cut out.

### **Chapter 24 (1:12:40) A Kiss As Sweet As Candy**

This was Charlize impulse here to jump on Tobey's back, and it ended up being on the poster advertising the movie. This embrace here is supposed to allude to the King Kong embrace, but no one really makes that connection, unless the writer, John Irving, points it out to you.

The producers really wanted this film to have a PG-13 rating so they had great difficulty in doing this scene to maintain the rating that they wanted on the film. They wanted to share this film with as big an audience as they could, especially with how they deal with the abortion issue, so editing of this scene became crucial. They had to remove a few thrusts here, in order to keep the PG-13 rating. In the end it seems rather ridiculous, as the audience can certainly figure out what is happening here.

### **Chapter 25 (1:15:51) Homer Stays Behind**

Kind of a mistake here, that no one really pays attention to, that is Arthur still has the bandage on his hand, making you question, how long did he have those stitches in for? Also an opportunity missed, where Homer could have demonstrated his ability at being a doctor.



The individual folding the blanket is the transportation coordinator on the set, Jimmy Flynn from Boston.

Now we get a montage of time passing. It does echo what happens in the opening credits, so it a nice circle.

### **Chapter 26 (1:17:28) Letters**

There also was a breast shot of Candy that had to be removed to retain that PG-13 rating. The rule with the MPA is that if they showed the breast, you couldn't have them hug.

Stroke of luck, they were supposed to shoot them driving with the top down on a sunny day, and it started to rain and they were able to get that shot. Lasse is very adaptive with things like this, simply instructed the actors to turn on the windshield wipers and he continued to film, it works wonderfully.

All of the narration in the movie is verbatim from the book. The poison for the field mice was also an experience that John Irving had, while working in the orchards as a boy. John Irving stated in one of his first drafts of the book, he actually stated the information about the mice

incorrectly, and had a friend in the orchard business that read it and corrected him. He stated that he was so concerned about getting all of the details of the doctors business correct, that he had selfishly assumed he would remember everything correctly about his own days in the orchard business, thus didn't check all of his facts on that line of work.

### Chapter 27 (1:21:35) The Orchard men Return

In the writing they leave a mystery here for the audience with Jack not returning, you can tell that Muddy doesn't approve, but you get no answer. Good writing will do this; force the audience to make up events or situations for characters as they are out of the picture. makes the work broader, if you can do this.

"Jack, didn't know what his business was." The line is repeated here, about "His business."

### Chapter 28 (1:23:28) A Blooming Rose

Wonderful shot here, following Wally and ending up with Homer and Rose in perspective that is a fairly intricate shot to achieve, notice no cut-away, really marvelous.

This bunkhouse scene was shot at the orchard in a real bunkhouse. This was one of the really nice things about this location, the orchard was right there, the bunkhouse, the mill, and there really is no trickery in the camera locations between the interior shots and the exterior shots. They were able to shot 360 degrees and not change a thing, and stay correct to the period. This also works for what is called weather cover shots, if the weather got bad outside, they were able to move inside and continue shooting for the day.

This scene is important with Rose, as Homer instincts are to help her before he even knows who the father is. There were some slow reviewers who missed this give away; one reviewer even said that this almost made Homer a republican on the pro-choice issue that he only agrees to help her get an abortion because she is a victim of incest, maybe rape. But it is quite clear that when he does find out he says I know where you can go. But Homer makes the judgment to help her immediately.

Here is a revealing mistake, several of the wooden lobster traps, including the one that Candy picks up, are missing their cement weights in the bottom on the traps, thus making them unusable.

#### Biography for Erykah Badu, playing Rose Rose

**Date of birth** 26 February 1971, Dallas, TX

**Birth name** Erica Abi Wright

**Height** 5'

**Trivia** Attended Booker T. Washington High School for the Performing and Visual Arts. Is a vegetarian.

#### Composer - filmography

1. Brown Sugar (2002) (song "Love of My Life")
2. Erykah Badu Live (2001) (songs)
3. Bamboozled (2000) (song)
4. Hav Plenty (1997) (song)

#### Actress - filmography

1. House of D (2004)
2. Cider House Rules, The (1999) Rose Rose
3. Blues Brothers 2000 (1998) Queen Mousette



### Chapter 29 (1:28:00) The Father

They wanted to do this scene with no dialogue as Candy learns who the father of the child is, something you can do in a movie, so you will notice very little dialogue between the two women and then an embrace which reveals all. They tried several versions of this reveal, one where she whispers that the father of her child is her own father, and yet another, where she openly reveals it. I think the look is all that is needed.

Great work by Delroy Lindo, Mr. Rose, as he walks out here, you sense his guilt in his gate and manner.

**Biography of Delroy Lindo**

**Date of birth** 18 November 1952, Eltham, London, England

**Nickname** The KFC guy

**Height** 6' 4"



**Mini biography** On stage & on the big screen, Delroy Lindo projects a powerful presence that is almost impossible to ignore. Though it was not his first film role, his portrayal of manic/depressive numbers boss West Indian Archie in Spike Lee's *Malcolm X* (1992) is what first attracted attention to Lindo's considerable talents. Since then his star has slowly been on the rise. The son of Jamaican parents, Lindo was born and raised in Lewisham, England until his teens when he and his mother moved to Toronto, Canada. A little later, they moved to the U.S. where Lindo would graduate from the American Conservatory Theater in San Francisco. After graduation, Lindo landed his first film role, that of an Army sergeant in *More American Graffiti* (1979). He would not appear in another film for ten years. In the meantime, Lindo worked on stage and in 1982, debuted on Broadway in *~Master Harold and the Boys~* directed by the play's author Athol Fugard. In 1988, Lindo earned a Tony nomination for his portrayal of Harald Loomis in *~Joe Turner's Come and Gone~*.

Though he was obviously a talented actor with a bright future, Lindo's career stalled. Wanting someone more aggressive and appreciative of his talents, Lindo changed agents (he'd had the same one through most of his early career). It was a smart move, but it was director Spike Lee provided the boost Lindo's career needed. The director was impressed enough with Lindo to cast him as patriarch Woody Carmichael in Lee's semi-autobiographical comedy *Crooklyn* (1994). For Lindo, 1996 was a big year for he landed major supporting roles in six features including a heavy in Barry Sonnenfeld's *Get Shorty*, another villainous supporting role in Lee's *Clockers*, and still another bad-guy in *Feeling Minnesota*. Lest one believe that Lindo is typecast into forever playing drug lords and gangsters, that year he also played baseball player *~Satchel Paige~* in the upbeat *Baseball in Black and White* (1996) winning himself a NAACP image nomination in the process. Lindo won the prestigious award for his work in *Malcolm X*. Since then, the versatile Lindo has shown himself equally adept at playing characters on both sides of the law. In 1997, he essayed an angel opposite Holly Hunter in Danny Boyle's off-beat romantic fantasy *A Life Less Ordinary*.

**Actor - filmography**

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| 1. Hounddog (2005)   | 21. Feeling Minnesota (1996) Red                       |
| 2. Exonerated, The (2005) (TV) Delbert                       | 22. Winner, The (1996) Kingman                         |
| 3. Sahara (2005) CIA agent Carl                              | 23. Soul of the Game (1996) (TV) Satchel Paige         |
| 4. Wondrous Oblivion (2003) Dennis                           | 24. Broken Arrow (1996) Col. Max Wilkins               |
| 5. Core, The (2003) Dr. Ed 'Braz' Brazzleton                 | 25. Get Shorty (1995) Bo Catlett                       |
| 6. Profoundly Normal (2003) (TV) Ricardo Thornton            | 26. Clockers (1995) Rodney Little                      |
| 7. One, The (2001/I) MVA Agent Harry Roedecker               | 27. Congo (1995) (uncredited) Captain Wanta            |
| 8. Last Castle, The (2001) Gen. Wheeler                      | 28. Exil du roi Behanzin, L' (1994) Behanzin           |
| 9. Heist (2001/I) Bobby 'Bob' Blane                          | 29. Crooklyn (1994) Woody Carmichael                   |
| 10. Book of Stars, The (2001) Professor                      | 30. Mr. Jones (1993) Howard                            |
| 11. Gone in Sixty Seconds (2000) Det. Roland Castlebeck      | 31. Bound by Honor (1993) Bonafide                     |
| 12. Romeo Must Die (2000) Isaak O'Day                        | 32. Malcolm X (1992) West Indian Archie                |
| 13. Pros and Cons (1999) Kyle                                | 33. Bright Angel (1991) Harley                         |
| 14. Cider House Rules, The (1999) Arthur Rose                | 34. Hard Way, The (1991) Captain Brix, NYPD            |
| 15. Strange Justice (1999) (TV) Clarence Thomas              | 35. Mountains of the Moon (1990) Mabruki               |
| 16. Glory & Honor (1998) (TV) Mathew Henson                  | 36. Blood of Heroes, The (1990) Mbulu                  |
| 17. Life Less Ordinary, A (1997) Jackson                     | 37. Perfect Witness (1989) (TV) Berger                 |
| 18. Devil's Advocate, The (1997) (uncredited) Phillipe Moyez | 38. 42nd Annual Tony Awards, The (1988) (TV) Performer |
| 19. First-Time Felon (1997) (TV) Calhoun                     | 39. More American Graffiti (1979) Army sergeant        |
| 20. Ransom (1996) Agent Lonnie Hawkins                       | 40. Voice of the Fugitive (1978)                       |
|  | 41. Find the Lady (1976) Sam                           |

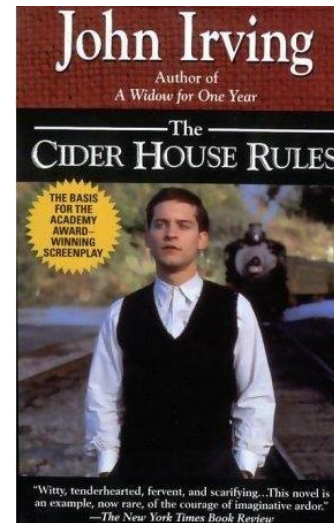
Again an action by Delroy here that shows the power of the moving picture, the swallow in his throat revealing his guilt. At the table here, now the guilt of everyone is exposed, they are all

guilty of denying it, they are all guilty of ignoring the incest that was taking place right under their own noses, and yes, they were aware.

### Chapter 30 (1:33:00) Injured In The Line Of Duty

For this perspective, he is way up on a ladder, with a fake apple tree, for this shot.

Now we have a cameo by Colin Irving, the son of author John Irving playing the role of Major Winslow, who delivers the news about Wally. With the news arriving, we get another chance for Homer to disclose his knowledge of medicine, but he remains quiet and gives only the look. John Irving wanted Homer to ask a question that only a doctor would ask, about the degree of the paralysis, implying whether or not, if Wally could have children. However, director Lasse felt that the look was all that was needed. Lasse felt that it would be terrible insensitive to ask that question at this time, so they decided to omit it.



### Chapter 31 (1:38:00) The Doctor Business

Pivotal Point, here is the point where our passive hero becomes an active hero. Much of what you see Homer do are small passive options, up to the moment when he asserts his authority, which is his medical training. From the moment you see him after this scene, he is in charge.

In the book, John Irving describes the sounds of the clasp on the doctor's bag, the sounds of the surgical instruments, and the sound of the clinking enamel. Irving describes these sounds from his own childhood memories of his hospital visits, doctor's office visits, and a frightening thing to not only a child but to a layman. Tools that you don't know what they do, they are foreign, but they have kind of a frightening quality, because you don't know what they do and the sound is so impersonal.



Drastic change here from the book as Homer says to Mr. Rose, "No you stay." As if to say I am going to make you see this. Then Mr. Rose says, "I'm staying Homer." Then Homer turns it to, "If you are staying you are going to be of use." Just like Dr. Larch did to him as a child.

### Chapter 32 (1:41:00) The Cider House Rules

Now Candy echoes the same statement that Homer made to her, only this time it is to Rose.

Now we finish the rules scene. John Irving stated that in the Orchards that he worked they did post rules like these, however the rules here are not very relevant to the workers, and that was done on purpose. This is of course where both the title of the



film and the novel comes from. The real issue is that the pickers couldn't read, so they couldn't read the rules that were meant for them to follow. In the novel Mr. Rose was able to read. For the movie, they thought it would be almost perversely cruel that he would not make an attempt to teach others to read, especially his own daughter.

In the novel also, Mr. Rose sucks on a pacifier. Delroy wanted to carry this action into the film, but it was also dropped. In a book it is one thing to read it for a moment, and then to read on, than it is to actually see him sucking a pacifier. It would have quite a different effect in a film, than it would in a book.

Burning the rules was Lasse's idea, at the spur of the moment, while filming this scene.

From the review reading, "If Irving's story nevertheless treats the rules as "outrageous" and "irrelevant," then the plausibility of the pickers' attitude can be understood only on the basis of the democratic principle that no person or group of persons should ever be required to live by rules that are not made or agreed to by themselves. Even sensible rules are not good if they are imposed on people without their explicit consent." The crew that worked for Wally's mother was not a gang of reckless scofflaws, but a self-governing body that basically did not need any outside governance to function rationally and effectively.

From the review reading, "By making that decision, by performing the abortion, he assumed an adult person's responsibility—his moral autonomy. He also set an end to his years of wandering and growing up: he actively and consciously determined his basic station in life and thus defined himself as the genuine hero of his own story."

### **Chapter 33 (1:46:00) Nothing is Nothing**

From the review reading, "It is clear that this has implication for the anti-abortion laws that were in effect in the 1940s. Those laws had been passed by almost exclusively male legislatures, and then imposed on that part of the population that had to bear the main consequences of their enforcement. They represented a case of legislation without representation, and thus a flagrant case of undemocratic procedure."

From the review, "The following of moral rules by moral idiots is akin to the behavior of certain soldiers who will do anything as long as they are "just following orders." Such thoughtless or uncomprehending following of rules is the very opposite of what Kant implied by insisting on moral autonomy and personal responsibility. Delegating responsibility to rules, instead of making thoughtful decisions oneself, is exactly the sort of self-degradation that renders a person a passive object, not a human individual characterized by self-determination and autonomy."

### **Chapter 34 (1:46:30) Putting Things Straight**

At the first screening there was a laugh here, when they saw the pickers on the roof, something that the producers didn't think would happen.

This is interesting, as we bring sympathy to a character that has done such an unsympathetic thing, also a very difficult acting moment. Difficult to bring dignity to a character that has raped his own daughter, but he does it here.

### **Chapter 35 (1:52:12) It's Hard To Say Goodbye**

(Director's commentary was recorded March 27, 2000, the day after the Oscars.) This film was nominated for seven Academy Awards, winning Best Actor in a Supporting Role, Michael Caine, and Best Writing, Screenplay based on Material Previously Produced or Published, John Irving, it was also nominated for countless other awards, he was knighted in 2000 by the Queen.

A little context note, in the rear you see all of those tall ladders with the small tops, they don't use these kinds of ladders any more, as the trees are all dwarf trees now in orchards. The point of the ladder is made to fit into the crotch between two tree branches high up.

The death of Dr. Larch had to be carefully executed as it is difficult to overdose and die from either, you would have to have a situation something like this to have it happen, the contents of the complete bottle spilling, the open window to fan the odor directly on the individual, etc.

There were two previous directors who worked on this screenplay with John Irving; they were Richard Phillips-Orso and Michael Witerbaums.

There was discussion to have Dr. Larch die, prior to Rose receiving an abortion, that giving Homer a reason to do the abortion, since the doctor would not be around. They wanted it to be Homer's decision, and solely his decision, thus the death of Mr. Rose and Dr. Larch, after the abortion has been performed on Rose. Thus, whether Larch was around or not, it does not effect Homer's decision to give an abortion to Rose Rose.

### **Chapter 36 (1:55:00) Homer Returns Home**

Once again you can see the author, John Irving on the platform.

Anachronism: In the last scene, railroad cars from the 1960's or newer are on the adjacent track at the railroad station.

John Irving states that of all of his novels this is the one that feels like it has a rope running through it, tugging you to the end, and a return to the orphanage, the predestination of this orphan to return to the orphanage and make it his home. This returning to your origins, the completion and return cycle is one of the reasons why this works so well as a film, the journey home, one of the great themes in American literature. Essence of the story, the journey home!

Continuity: Homer is gone from the orphanage for two years (according to the montage of passing seasons which includes two apple harvests). Yet when he returns to the orphanage at the end of the film, none of the children who welcome him back (Curly, Buster and Mary Agnes for example) haven't aged a day.

By having the same kids here, when Homer returns is a reminder, that so many of these kids were not adopted.

When the audience sees these fake credentials they tended to chuckle.

The American Dicken's here, and if you were a Dickens scholar you would recognize that Homer is reading the abridged version of the end of the chapter, of *David Copperfield*.

From the review, "There are other, more subtle, ways in which the idea of autonomy is placed into the center of the story as well. Both Dr. Larch and Homer like to read to the boys in the orphanage the story of Charles Dickens' *David Copperfield*--particularly the weighty words at the beginning of that novel: "Whether I shall turn out to be the hero of my own life, or whether that station will be held by anybody else, these pages must show." The hero of a story is its protagonist, its most important actor. If in the course of the story this central figure does not really take any decisive action, if he or she is weak, passive, only reacting to others and external events, and in the end incapable of assuming control of his or her life, then the central person of such a story is not a genuine hero or heroine. Someone or something else than the protagonist will play that role, someone or something that makes all the important decisions and that effectively controls the failed hero's life. Most classic novels live, indeed, out of the tension that exists between the protagonist's attempt to become the hero of his or her life and the possible failure of that attempt."

"Goodnight you princes of Maine, you kings of New England."

From the review, "In "*The Cider House Rules*" Dr. Larch proves himself as a moral person by courageously defying the law."

## **Chapter 37: End Credits**

### **DVD includes:**

Deleted Scenes (Do not show the class.)

**The Cider House Rules: The Making of an American Classic 25 minutes.**

Cast and Crew Bios (Do not show the class.)

TV Spots (Do not show the class.)

Theatrical Trailer (Could show this if time remains.)

## **Saints, sinners, and the Dickensian novel: the ethics of storytelling in John Irving's 'The Cider House Rules.'**

Author/s: Todd F. Davis, Issue: Summer, 1998

The intention of a novel by Charles Dickens is to move you emotionally, not intellectually; and it is by emotional means that Dickens intends to influence you socially. - John Irving, "The King of the Novel"

In addition to affording readers the critical machinery for exploring the nature of concepts such as community, stylistics, and goodness in narratives, ethical criticism provides us with a useful

rhetoric for examining the function of storytelling in literary works. The act of narration - or what Adam Zachary Newton refers to in *Narrative Ethics* (1995) as the "performative function of storytelling" (58) - can itself offer significant insight into the ethical properties of a given text. Ethical criticism presupposes that through their depictions of so many morally disparate heroes and villains, works of art necessarily implore us to render value judgments based upon our experiences as readers and members of the larger human community. Yet the act of storytelling - the manner in which writers deliberately construct their narratives so as to register moral or social impacts upon their readers - remains largely unexamined in the considerable and growing literature devoted to the interpretive mode of ethical criticism.(1) In *Story Line: Exploring the Literature of the Appalachian Trail* (1998), Ian Marshall notes that literary criticism's purpose "is not simply to help us understand literature but to help us understand our lives, and sometimes our lives and the literature we read help us understand critical theories" (8). Marshall's observation about the reflexivity of literary criticism underscores one of ethical criticism's principal functions: to provide readers not only with a mechanism for comprehending the vicissitudes of human experience, but also with the interpretive tools for recognizing the ways in which writers create meaning through storytelling.

In *Cultivating Humanity: A Classical Defense of Reform in Liberal Education* (1997), Martha C. Nussbaum reminds us "a central role of art is to challenge conventional wisdom and values" (99). In his novels, John Irving continues to experiment with a narrative voice that seeks to thwart deliberately his readers' expectations, to upset our notions of conventionality, and to blur the boundaries that linger between good and evil, right and wrong. From the life-affirming presence of the "good, smart bears" in *The Hotel New Hampshire* (1981) and Owen Meany's shrill voice of reason in *A Prayer for Owen Meany* (1989) to the convoluted sexual politics of *The 158-Pound Marriage* (1974) and the conspicuous proximity of the "Under Toad" and the tragedy of the Ellen Jamesians in *The World According to Garp* (1978), Irving adorns his fictions with a host of ethical signifiers that challenge readers at every turn throughout his labyrinthine, deliberately Dickensian fictions. Irving makes little secret of his affinity for Dickens and in particular for the Victorian writer's eye for complexity of narrative and literary character. In "King of the Novels," Irving writes that "Dickens was abundant and magnificent with description, with the atmosphere surrounding everything - and with the tactile, with every detail that was terrifying or viscerally felt" (364). As with Dickens, because Irving loads his own narratives with considerable detail and description, he makes it virtually impossible for readers to render facile ethical decisions in the face of so much information about a given character's humanity. Irving self-consciously adopts the literary form of the Dickensian novel - with its multiplicity of characters, its narrative mass, its overt sense of sentimentality, and its generic intersections with such modes as the detective story - as the forum for constructing the fictions that intentionally challenge his readers' value systems. In short, for Irving the choice of the narrative form of the Dickensian novel itself represents an ethical move.

The essential formulation of the Dickensian novel as a narrative form finds its origins in Dickens's dynamic approach to literary character. In *Poetic Justice: The Literary Imagination and Public Life* (1995), Nussbaum remarks that Dickens endows his characters with "physical and moral attributes that make it possible for us to distinguish every one from every other. We are made to attend to their ways of moving and talking, the shapes of their bodies, the expressions on

their faces, the sentiments of their hearts. The inner life of each is displayed as having psychological depth and complexity," she adds, and "we see that as humans they share certain common problems and common hopes" (27). Yet Dickens's characters are far more than mere vessels of transport for the essential elements of genuine human behavior. The effectiveness of Dickens's characters as human representations lies in their peculiar lack of ethical certainty, in their capacity for mimicking the elusive qualities that often define human nature. Dickens's "characters do not so much recreate actual individuals as re-create the reactions to actual individuals, and particularly the difficulties and dilemmas," Brian Rosenberg writes in *Little Dorrit's Shadows: Character and Contradiction in Dickens* (1996); "his doubts about the potential for understanding others capture a nearly universal uncertainty, and his struggle to make sense of conflicting, unreliable pieces of information mirrors a struggle we undergo daily. Shunning the rounded and definite, he leaves the reader," Rosenberg continues, "like many of the figures in his novels, always contending with the elusive and irreconcilable" (30).

As a literary model, the Dickensian novel provides the narrative structure for Irving's own ethics of storytelling. In *The Cider House Rules* (1985), Irving avails himself of many of the Dickensian form's classic narratological elements, including its intentionally conflicted melange of characters, its intricate layering of plots, its penchant for the detective story, and even its frequent depiction of orphans, the occupants of society's most innocent and vulnerable stations. *The Cider House Rules* also affords Irving a venue for challenging our assumptions, fears, and prejudices about abortion, that most fractious of social issues. Rather than merely rendering an overt decision about the ethics of abortion, Irving, using the Dickensian mode of characterization, chooses to confront his readers with detailed, fully realized visions of the complications and uncertainties that comprise the human condition.<sup>(2)</sup> Despite Irving's careful and deliberately indeterminate depiction of human nature in his novel, Carol C. Hatter and James R. Thompson argue that as a polemic *The Cider House Rules* "is seriously flawed," and because "Irving's 'correct political vision' sometimes distorts the book's larger theme - the problematical nature of personal and social 'rules' - the difficulties with Irving's new fiction are considerable" (134).<sup>(3)</sup> Yet Hatter and Thompson's critique of *The Cider House Rules* neglects to allow for the tremendous import of Irving's ethics of storytelling in the novel. As an essentially Dickensian novelist, Irving simply refuses to permit his readers to resort to easy and obvious decisions about either his own ethos or the ethical systems of his characters. With its variegated landscape of humanity - and the elusiveness and uncertainty that genuine humanity necessarily entails - the Dickensian novel functions in *The Cider House Rules* as the ethical vehicle via which Irving challenges his readers to consider the abortion debate from a host of vantage points, rather than merely adopting a "correct political vision."

In *Ethics, Evil and Fiction* (1997), Colin McGinn writes that "the fictional world is really the ideal world in which to go on ethical expeditions: it is safe, convenient, inconsequential, and expressly designed for our exploration and delight" (177). Irving's own approach to storytelling - his technique, as well as his understanding of its purposes - demonstrates the ethical force of the narrative act as he conceives it. "Art has an aesthetic responsibility to be entertaining," Irving argues. "The writer's responsibility is to take hard stuff and make it as accessible as the stuff can be made" ("An Interview" 186). In contrast to the contemporary direction of much poststructuralist literary criticism, however, Irving does not mean to suggest that those narratives

that entertain are somehow less serious or less ethically challenging. On the contrary - as Dickens's Victorian-era canon and Irving's late twentieth-century oeuvre seem to demonstrate - to entertain one's readers is to capture their hearts and minds in such a way that draws them into the lives of characters who populate stories that truly matter within the larger narrative of our shared humanity. "John Irving belongs to a small group of American writers," Terrence Des Pres suggests in *Writing into the Worm* (1991), "whose work has inspired respect for the plainest of reasons - these people write a kind of fiction useful, as genuine art must always be useful, to spiritual need" (102). In his attempt to entertain and enlighten readers, as Irving creates texts rich with the vibrancy and contrariness of existence, he portrays not only our "spiritual need" but also ways of coping with that need. In fact, the very form of Irving's storytelling seems to suggest a means for coping spiritually, for it offers a process that brings no final answers but invites us to take part in an unforgettable journey. As he tells his story, Irving moves his readers beyond the present moment in the text into a deep history of both the characters in the story and the communities in which they live; he compels his readers to wrestle with the same ethical dilemmas that the story's characters must confront; he causes us to see and feel the joy, anger, and sorrow that inevitably visits itself upon the saints and sinners who populate the landscape of his fiction. Like the wrestler he was - indeed, he is - Irving deliberately weaves his tales into the emotional lives of his readers. Snaking his characters' arms and legs around one another, he leaves us in the most improbable and compromising positions: entwined on the mat of his story, struggling not to be pinned by the weight of the lives we enter vicariously.

How, then, does Irving achieve this kind of connection with his readers, and why do the characters within Irving's fictional world remain vivid in the minds of both his devoted popular readership and the literati? Writing against the grain of much contemporary artistic practice, Irving grounds his achievement in his use of the particular and his consistent desire for the subject of his fictions to be recognizable in the world beyond the text.<sup>(4)</sup> In his published interviews and memoirs, Irving laments the shift in contemporary fiction away from the actual world in which we live toward the world of metafiction. In a 1979 interview, Irving addresses the debate taking place during that era between John Gardner and William Gass about the "necessity or irrelevancy of art's allegiance to morality": "Gardner has been very careless about a number of things he's said, so it's easier to pick on Gardner than it is to pick on Gass," Irving explains; "on the other hand, it seems to me that Gardner has tried to say a lot more about literature than Gass, and I have to admire him for that. I'd also have to agree with Gardner that literature should be a sign of life rather than a celebration of death," Irving concludes, "and if a novel doesn't address itself to something of human value, I don't see much worth in it" ("*An Interview*" 187). Irving's insistence that the novel as literary form should address "something of human value" continues to determine many of his narrative practices, especially his use of the particular.<sup>(5)</sup> By chronicling several major and minor characters' histories in his novels with an uncanny precision and attentiveness, Irving creates an ethical construct that for the purposes of this essay we shall refer to as "characterscape."

While novelists must in some manner establish character for their readers, not all writers agree about its import or the techniques necessary to produce it. In *Find You the Virtue: Ethics, Image, and Desire in Literature* (1987), Irving Massey contends that the ethics of particularity, the ability to see the individual rather than the universal, illustrates the folly in ideas of repetition

and categorization: "Things just do not repeat themselves, unless we are passive to them: if they exist for us fully, we do not experience them under the aspect of sameness or uniformity. Categories have something of the fraud about them" (34).<sup>(6)</sup> The ability to see human events and experiences for what they are, to be fully attentive to their originality, is a central concept in Irving's creation of characterscape.<sup>(7)</sup> In order to understand more fully the notion of characterscape, it should be noted that this construct does not differ significantly from the creation of character in terms of technique, but it does differ radically in terms of intention. As with the creation of character, characterscape requires the description of specific incidents that reflect the inner life of a given character's personhood; fundamental elements of anatomy, dress, physical movements, professional habits, and the like must be foregrounded for readers. In contrast with mere characterization, however, characterscape operates upon a scale of grand proportion. This is not to say that a given character is necessarily grandiose or ethical in his or her own right; on the contrary, in *The Cider House Rules* Irving borrows from Dickens by making an orphan of diminutive and humble stature a central figure in the action of his novel. Instead, the concept of proportion relates to the amount of narrative space used to create a vivid rendering of a particular character. This process might best be compared to William Least Heat-Moon's appropriation of landscape in *PrairieEarth: A Deep Map* (1991). The subtitle of Heat-Moon's opus underscores the issue at hand: we must examine what lies within the deeper structures of the worlds that we inhabit to understand fully what lives before our eyes. By probing beneath the surface of Chase County, Kansas, and viewing it from nearly every imaginable position, Heat-Moon confronts his readers with a mental image that transcends landscape; it is as if the writer has found a way not only to transform the two-dimensional art of words on the printed page into a three-dimensional representation, but also has discovered a vehicle to transport readers into other dimensions that fuse the physical and the spiritual, the animal and the human into a single landscape.

As with Heat-Moon's work of creative nonfiction, Irving's fictional-world characterscapes offer multidimensional perspectives. Certainly, *The Cider House Rules* might be told more succinctly if we were not presented first with the history of St. Cloud's - including such ephemeral facts as how the town's name acquired an apostrophe - and then with the history of Wilbur Larch and his circuitous journey into medicine and the practice of abortion. Yet if such material were excised, the novel's range would be radically truncated and Larch's complicated motivations for performing abortions would not be fully realized. Characterscape demands that many of the issues and incidents to which we are not privy in our workaday lives beyond the confines of the text - specially such wonderful artifice as *The Cider House Rules*'s epilogue that permits us not only to see the past, but also the past in the context of the future - be presented in such a way that our understanding of the fictional persons that we encounter as we consume the story expands voluminously toward an ethical illumination of far-reaching consequence. Of course, not all readers will accept the invitation to enter fully into Irving's fictive world, but because of its narrative mass the sheer number of hours that such storytelling requires makes possible this kind of revelatory relationship.

By carefully and expansively layering his presentation of character, Irving satisfies his own demand that philosophical issues be subservient to the ways in which people live. Characterscape functions as Irving's central ethic: the physical world of human activity - which he attempts to

make as vibrantly alive as possible - must never be lost in a philosophical debate about notions of right and wrong. As with William Carlos Williams, Irving dismisses the abstract and embraces the physical. In *The Call of Stories: Teaching and the Moral Imagination* (1989), Robert Coles explains that Williams's "repeated call to arms, the well-known phrase 'no ideas but in things,' is a prelude to distinctions he kept making between poetry and life; between ideas and action; between the abstract and the concrete; between theory and practice; and not least, between art and conduct" (193). In similar fashion, Irving also proclaims adamantly that fiction must originate in the concrete and the physical as opposed to the philosophical, and he offers a litany of complaints against those novels that seem more about a particular ideology than about the lives that transpire within a given text: "I guess another way to put this," explains Irving, "is that I don't like to see a thesis about life, or people, disguised as a novel. I don't think the greatest novels of our time or any other time are theses. Great novels succeed much better when they are broad expressions or portraits than when they confine themselves to the singularity of an idea" ("An Interview" 195).

Although *The Cider House Rules* has been both criticized and lauded as an "idea" book, one that crusades for a singular position on the abortion issue, we would do well to note the author's own account of the novel's genesis: "I wanted to write an orphan novel. It was a year before abortion entered the story," Irving remarks, "but it made perfect sense. In the early part of the century, what doctor would be most sympathetic to performing abortions but a doctor who delivered unwanted babies, then cared for them in an orphanage?" (Fein 25). Repeating his litany in an interview with Alison Freeland - "a novel is not single-issue politics, or if it is, it's not a novel" (140) - Irving derides those critics who read *The Cider House Rules* in terms of a single political vision. This narrowness of vision, of course, demonstrates precisely the problem with Harter and Thompson's critique of the novel as "polemic." While Irving admits that *The Cider House Rules* is perhaps his first polemical novel, Harter and Thompson's understanding of Irving's use of the polemic fails to account for the significance of the characterscapes that undergird Irving's fictions. Undoubtedly, Irving proffers a novel that sets forth an argument of great controversy, but, as is his practice elsewhere, the lives of his characters and the events that transpire remain too broad and various to represent a single, essentialist position within the abortion debate. Irving's confession that the novel has a polemic quality merely asserts the reality that the historic stage upon which his players strut has for its backdrop an orphanage where, in the words of Larch, some babies and some mothers are "delivered." Arguing that this notion functions as the political vision of the novel neglects the character motivations and histories of both Wilbur Larch and Homer Wells. While Larch indeed crusades in covert and overt ways for the right of women to choose, he remains in the novel but one character among many whose past seems to compromise his ideological position in the present. The same may be said of Homer as he grapples with his role in performing abortions, as well as of the many different women who receive abortions during the course of the novel and their markedly different motivations for seeking out such a dramatic and final solution. In his review of *The Cider House Rules*, Benjamin DeMott contends that the value of Irving's novel lies in its treatment of abortion as a subject rooted both in our collective past and in the heterogeneous ways in which we live in the present. Irving's approach to this subject actually demonstrates the impossibility of rendering a facile ethical decision when confronted with such a divisive issue. In "an age ill at ease with the notion that art can have a subject" (25), DeMott praises Irving for his awareness of human

relationships where abstract philosophies and political ideologies play themselves out. "Irving draws the readers close in the space of his imagination," says DeMott, "to an understanding of essential links, commonalties - even unities - between factions now seething with hatred for each other" (1).

For this reason, Irving focuses significant time and energy upon narrating intricate accounts of numerous characters' lives. In *The Cider House Rules*, Irving offers detailed histories not only of the novel's two main characters, Wilbur Larch and Homer Wells, but also of Melony, Wally Worthington, and Candy Kendall, among others. In "The King of the Novel," John Irving observes that "you cannot encounter the prisons in Dickens's novels and ever again feel completely self-righteous about prisoners being where they belong; you cannot encounter a lawyer of Mr. Jaggers's terrifying ambiguity and ever again put yourself willingly in a lawyer's hands - Jaggers, although only a minor character in *Great Expectations*, may be our literature's greatest indictment of living by abstract rules" (349). The same might be said of Irving's own depiction of abortion and the figure of Wilbur Larch, obstetrician and abortionist, in *The Cider House Rules*. Like Dickens, Irving derides the notion of living by abstract rules, and in the person of Larch he begins his assault upon the "rules" that govern the concept of abortion.

Although his associates at the orphanage refer to him as St. Larch, Irving makes perfectly clear that Larch's sainthood comes with a price. Upon Larch's admission to and imminent departure for medical school, Larch's father purchases for Wilbur an evening with a local prostitute, Mrs. Eames. This rather embarrassing evening of sexual initiation concludes with Wilbur dressing in the glow of a cigar being smoked by Mrs. Eames's daughter, who enters unannounced while Wilbur drowns in post-coital bliss. What Larch seems to take from this experience - in addition to gonorrhea, which he studies in bacteriology at Harvard Medical School - is a substantial measure of remorse. Wilbur compounds his guilty conscience through a series of events that bring Mrs. Eames and her daughter back into his life. While working as a young intern at the South End Branch of the Boston Lying-In, Lurch treats Mrs. Eames, whom he discovers has been taking an aborticide that leaves her organs in a state of "fragile jelly." After six days of Larch's care, Mrs. Eames dies, and in the ensuing autopsy Larch learns from the pathologist that she has expired as a result of scurvy. A day later, as only happens in the fabulistic world of Dickens and Irving, where coincidences are indispensable to the connective tissue of characterscape, Mrs. Eames's daughter visits Lurch. She shows him the aborticide that her mother ingested - a "French Lunar Solution" said to restore "Female Monthly Regularity!" (57) - and asks him to perform an abortion for her: "I ain't quick! I ain't quick, I said!" she screams at Lurch (59). But the consequences of the procedure frighten Lurch and he hesitates. A week later Lurch finds her beaten and in grave condition after receiving an abortion at the shady clinic known only as "Off Harrison." He discovers a note pinned to her battered body: "DOCTOR LARCH - SHIT OR GET OFF THE POT!" (60). As with her mother only days before, Mrs. Eames's daughter also dies in the care of Lurch, but her death prompts him to visit "Off Harrison" and confront the abortionist who runs the clinic, an elderly woman known locally as Mrs. Santa Claus. This scene allows readers to see the tools of abortion, and, along with Larch, to be shocked by the awful conditions and misguided methods under which illegal abortions are conducted. This experience also serves as the catalyst for Larch's ultimate role as abortionist in the novel. In short, the kinds of metaphorical gifts that Mrs. Claus delivers challenge Lurch to

seek a practical and immediate solution for such women in need as Mrs. Eames and her daughter - a solution generated out of the pragmatics of physical circumstance as opposed to legalistic ideology.

With each horrific incident, Irving adds one more layer to Larch's characterscape, but, in so doing, Irving refuses to render any overt value judgments and offers nothing more than the precarious elements of human storytelling. Although abortion clearly lies at the center of these passages, Irving carefully avoids entering into a philosophical debate about when life actually begins or whose rights must be protected. Irving eschews any theological discussion that might affect the actions of his characters or the manner in which readers might interpret those actions. Interestingly, Larch's decision seems to spring from his understanding of his own fallibility, his own fallen nature. Through his interaction with Mrs. Eames and her daughter he recognizes the culpability of his own conduct, as well as that of a society that tacitly condones the creation of orphans, prostitutes, and unwanted pregnancies. In a particularly telling moment of reflection, Larch contemplates the peculiar interrelationship between celibacy and moral condemnation:

On his mind was Mrs. Eames's daughter's last puff of cigar breath in his face as he bent over her before she died - reminding him, of course, of the night he needed her puffing cigar to find his clothes. If pride was a sin, thought Dr. Larch, the greatest sin was moral pride. He had slept with someone's mother and dressed himself in the light of her daughter's cigar. He could quite comfortably abstain from having sex for the rest of his life, but how could he ever condemn another person for having sex? (61)

Larch's unspoken vow of celibacy and his assumption of sainthood, like the disorderly nature of all genuinely human activity, finds its roots in interpersonal relationships, and in his relationships with women, Larch continually falters. As with his addiction to ether - which begins as a practical remedy to the gonorrhea he contracts from Mrs. Eames and later becomes a means for both relaxing and, perhaps, escaping temporarily from his guilt - his response to abortion represents the actions of a pragmatic doctor doing the practical things necessary for his patients and the community in which he lives. After denying Mrs. Eames's daughter an abortion, he never again pauses to consider the legal or ethical ramifications of abortion when faced with a mother in need. Instead, as Larch explains in *A Brief History of St. Cloud's*, "Here in St. Cloud's we would waste our limited energy and our limited imagination by regarding the sordid facts of life as if they were problems" (34). For Larch, pragmatism reigns; because the "sordid facts of life" can never be changed, one's moral position must never be lorded over the physical needs of another.(8) Later within the very same chapter, "The Lord's Work," in which he offers his first pronouncement of celibacy and his confession that moral pride amounts to the worst of sins, Larch reaffirms this notion in the precise language of the earlier passage. In this manner, the saint of both orphans and mothers establishes a mantra that allows him to carry on with his duties:

Later, when he would have occasion to doubt himself, he would force himself to remember: he had slept with someone's mother and dressed himself in the light of her daughter's cigar. He could quite comfortably abstain from having sex for the rest of his life, but how could he ever

condemn another person for having sex? He would remember, too, what he hadn't done for Mrs. Eames's daughter, and what that had cost.

He would deliver babies. He would deliver mothers, too. (75)

Yet the most significant test of Larch's resolve comes not with the first abortion he performs for the young girl he rescues from "Off Harrison" or the subsequent requests by others in the neighborhood community who find themselves in similar straits, but from a wealthy family, the Channing-Peabodys of Boston, who summer in Portland, Maine. Larch has gone to Maine to apply for a position in obstetrics, escaping Boston where he "had become, in the view of the erring, the sanctuary to which to flee" (69). Larch ostensibly visits the Channing-Peabodys's palatial mansion for what he assumes will be a dinner party. Neither poor nor downtrodden like the women who sought out Larch in South Boston, the Channing-Peabodys prove insufferable in their moral superiority and in their presumption that their money can relieve them of any set of unpleasant or undesired circumstances. Despite such arrogance, Larch still cannot bring himself to pass judgment upon Missy, the woman in need of his services. Instead of refusing the Channing-Peabodys, he insists that the young man responsible for impregnating Missy be sent in to watch the procedure - and, as Larch hopes, the young man vomits all over himself. Additionally, taking the money with which the Channing-Peabodys attempt to "buy" his services and his silence, Larch chooses to distribute it among the servants who help him perform the abortion, as well as among those others who work throughout the great house. Such a scene, particularly important in the creation of Larch's own characterscape, demonstrates his ethical determination to refuse to judge the woman in need of his care. While Larch indeed passes judgment upon those characters who seem to stand in supposed moral superiority over Missy for becoming pregnant and over him for becoming a doctor who would perform abortions, he will not deny any woman, in this instance Missy, whom he clearly sees as a victim.

By availing himself of the ethos of characterscape, Irving establishes the motivations and the ideology of Larch, a man who claims to do both "the Lord's work and the Devil's work." (9) He further complicates our understanding of Larch as both saint and sinner by introducing the figure of Homer Wells, the eternal orphan who becomes a surrogate son for Larch, as well as his professional successor. Homer's presence in the frame of Irving's story exemplifies the ethics of characterscape by illustrating the marked importance of human interrelationships in the construction of characterscape. Just as a landscape artist needs a horizon and a sky, a foreground and a background to capture properly the spirit of a place, the writer who hopes to achieve a fully articulated portrait of a character must place the person in close relation to another character of consequence within a given narrative. While Irving devotes the bulk of *The Cider House Rules*'s narrative space to Homer's story, the orphan would not achieve his full semblance of personhood without the character of Larch to bring him into bas-relief.

As the boy whose adoption never comes to pass, Homer undergoes a trial by fire of sorts that consists of several horribly fantastic adoptive experiences, including in one instance his "buggering" by a sibling and in another case the death of his new parents in a thunderous rushing flood of logs and water on a camping expedition. As he inevitably returns to St. Cloud's, he develops a special relationship, unique and full of mutual love, with Larch. Because Homer

grows to the age of "usefulness," as Larch calls it, while still residing at St. Cloud's, Larch initiates him into the world of the orphanage, first as a caregiver and later as an obstetrician. For example, Larch assigns Homer the nightly task of reading works by Dickens and Bronte to the orphans in both the girls' and boys' divisions.<sup>(10)</sup> In this capacity, Homer develops a relationship with another "older" orphan, Melony, who, like himself, has yet to be adopted successfully. Melony functions as the first female character to affect Homer's understanding of the world of sexuality and trust. As with Larch, Homer's feelings about abortion, sex, and procreation become fundamentally altered by his relations with women. In the Dickensian tradition of the detective story, Melony's character provides Irving with the means for availing himself of the generic conventions of the detective mode to trace one of the principal desires of many orphans: to know the identity of their parents and to know who loves them. Melony's menacing attitude toward her undiscovered parents, as well as her promise to Homer that she will perform fellatio upon him if he locates the records of her parents' identity in Larch's office, inaugurates the quirky commitment that exists between Melony and Homer. Although her first investigation as Irving's de facto detective fails because Larch makes it a practice not to maintain adoption records, Melony searches for love in the person of Homer, whom she coerces into a promise that, in the fleeting world of St. Cloud's, must inevitably be broken:

"If I stay, you'll stay - is that what you're saying?" Melony asked him. Is that what I mean? thought Homer Wells. But Melony, as usual, gave him no time to think. "Promise me you'll stay as long as I stay, Sunshine," Melony said. She moved closer to him; she took his hand and opened his fingers and put his index finger in her mouth. (105)

While Homer and Melony develop a sexual relationship, even a loving relationship of sorts, Homer ultimately breaks his commitment to Melony when he goes to live at Heart's Rock upon the invitation of Wally Worthington and Candy Kendall.

Irving later reintroduces the Dickensian detective story after Melony searches for Homer and finally confronts him in the Worthington's orchard. In addition to immediately recognizing Angel as Homer and Candy's son, Irving's orphan cum detective later succeeds in finding Homer, despite her untimely death, when her cadaver tracks Homer to St. Cloud's and metaphorically unravels his secret identity as Dr. F. Stone. While Irving employs the detective mode to entertain his readers with suspense - as with the detective story that undergirds the latter third of his most recent novel, *A Widow for One Year* (1998) - the ethics of storytelling insists that Irving employ Melony's investigation to establish a layer in Homer's characterscape that will eventually contribute to his return to St. Cloud's as Larch's replacement. While Melony's detective tale allows Irving to establish the gravity of Homer's betrayal of her, as well as that of his subsequent betrayal of Wally Worthington, it also affects the manner in which he sees the "sins" of others. As with Larch's convoluted relationships with women in *The Cider House Rules*, Homer's broken promise to Melony and his secret love for Candy teach him to see life's variegated shades of meaning, to understand the foibles of human interaction, and to recognize that a legalistic approach to "rules" never reveals the full complexity of any situation.

Yet for Homer such a lesson comes slowly. To this end, Irving offers three extraordinary scenes that demonstrate Homer's exceptional compassion, his devotion to the delivery of babies and

their mothers. The first encounter takes place when Homer is relatively young but old enough to have been instructed by Larch to be of some "use." Because of orphan Fuzzy Stone's coughing and the noise the machines make that help Fuzzy breathe, on certain nights Homer roams the halls of the orphanage, often seeking out the baby room or the mothers' room. On this particular night, while standing in the mothers' room, a mysterious pregnant woman asks Homer if he would, at his age, leave the orphanage with a family who wishes to adopt him. He replies that he would not. Of course, the woman asks this question because she wants to be reassured that her baby will find an adoptive home and be cared for in ways she cannot offer. Homer does not sense this at first, however, and despite several attempts on the mother's part to elicit a "yes" from Homer, he seems fixed in his opinion that St. Cloud's is the only home he will ever know. The mother begins to cry and asks Homer if he wishes to be of "use" and touch her pregnant belly:

"No one but me ever put a band on me, to feel that baby. No one wanted to put his ear against it and listen," the woman said. "You shouldn't have a baby if there's no one who wants to feel it kick, or listen to it move." (87-88)

The woman asks Homer again if he wishes to be of use and suggests that he "sleep right here" where the baby rests beneath her stomach. Homer feigns sleep until the woman's water breaks. After the birth of the child, Homer plays a game with himself. Because of his "nighttime vigil with his face upon the mother's jumping belly" he hopes to recognize her child. This incident profoundly affects the way Homer looks at not only the women who come to St. Cloud's to be delivered of some of their problems - "Importantly, Homer knew they did not look delivered of all their problems when they left. No one he had seen looked more miserable than those women" (30) - but also the way that he looks at their pregnant bellies, the potential lives that will either be aborted or delivered by the hands of St. Larch. Because of his sympathetic vigil upon the belly of this mother, Homer cannot bring himself to believe what Larch preaches about abortion. At the same time, because of his relationship with Larch he cannot condemn his "father's" actions either.(11)

Shortly before his departure to Heart's Rock, Homer experiences an epiphany of sorts about his own right to choose what he will believe regarding abortion. In this second scene, Homer examines a fetus that bled to death during a failed delivery performed by Larch:

Homer felt there was nothing as simple as anyone's fault involved; it was not Larch's fault - Larch did what he believed in. If Wilbur Larch was a saint to Nurse Angela and to Nurse Edna, he was both a saint and a father to Homer Wells. Larch knew what he was doing - and for whom. But that quick and not-quick stuff: it didn't work for Homer Wells. You can call it a fetus, or an embryo, or the products of conception, thought Homer Wells, but whatever you call it, it's alive. And whatever you do to it, Homer thought - and whatever you call what you do - you're killing it. [. . .] Let Larch call it whatever he wants, thought Homer Wells. It's his choice - if it's a fetus, to him, that's fine. It's a baby to me, thought Homer Wells. If Larch has a choice, I have a choice, too. (169)

Later at Heart's Rock, after Candy becomes pregnant and mentions a trip to St. Cloud's for a possible abortion, Homer - motivated by his intense convictions about the sanctity of human life - tells her that "it's my baby, too" (386), that he also bears responsibility for the life that they created together and in which he wishes to participate. Unlike Latch, who in his later years withdraws more deeply into his ether addiction and his medical routine because he believes that "love was certainly not safe - not ever" (381), Homer self-consciously shares his love with others and cannot imagine a life without Candy or his newly conceived baby. Because he believes that Wally died in the war, Homer avoids confronting his guilt over the love he has shared with Candy or his betrayal of his best friend. Soon after the birth of Angel - baptized symbolically by a drop of Larch's sweat as he delivers him - the news that Wally has been found alive tests Homer's love for Candy, Wally, and Angel. Yet Homer's real challenge comes fifteen years later, shortly after the death of Larch by an accidental ether overdose.

In the third scene, Irving - using relational characterscape in conjunction with the Dickensian grand style of convergence - assembles all of the characters who have affected Homer's life most profoundly. In the novel's final chapter, aptly entitled "Breaking the Rules," Homer faces multiple, nearly simultaneous decisions regarding various "rules" of ethical behavior. The impact of these decisions upon those characters that he loves and lives with make these issues especially difficult. As the title of the chapter intimates, Homer will "break the rules," and, in so doing, he will come to understand that ethical law cannot be approached legalistically, a point that Irving underscores via his own method of storytelling. While certain rules once governed Homer's silence about his love for Candy and their true relationship to one another and their son Angel, in the end Homer recognizes - courtesy of Melony's recognition of the child's lineage - that the truth must be told. Similarly, such remarkably human situations force Homer to contemplate the possibility that certain abstract rules cannot be reconciled with the practical, physical needs of the moment, that human suffering cannot be judged or sacrificed to legalism. As the foreman of the orchard for the last fifteen years, moreover, Homer bears the responsibility for posting "the cider house rules." At times, the fact that the work crew does not follow the rules bothers Homer. In a conversation with Mr. Rose, however, Homer begins to realize that the ways in which people live together in human community actually govern the "rules"; those rules established by forces outside the community cannot produce this same effect. Mr. Rose explains, for example, that within the black community of migrant workers who live at the orchard during harvest there emerge unwritten rules engendered from human relationships that have nothing to do with Homer's rules. Yet Homer cannot bring himself fully to accept the relational as well as contextual aspects of ethical rules; he finds it difficult to comprehend that those rules imposed from without "never asked" but "told" (429) - a fact that itself explains the ineffectiveness of legalistic codes in contrast with ethical rules.(12)

Ultimately, Homer's decision to perform an abortion for Rose, Mr. Rose's pregnant daughter and Angel's first love, alters his perspective about the procedure, but Homer does not reach this decision easily. A few weeks before Rose's crisis, Homer writes to Larch in order to refuse his invitation to come to St. Cloud's and replace St. Larch in the operation of the orphanage. As he writes in his laconic, numbered letter to Latch:

1. I AM NOT A DOCTOR. 2. I BELIEVE THE FETUS HAS A SOUL. 3. I'M SORRY. (513)

In short, Homer refuses to break the "rules" that govern the practice of medicine. He also feels that he cannot perform an abortion because of an ethical belief in the sanctity of the human soul. At the same time, he regrets these decisions because of his loyalty and love for his "father," St. Larch. While both his belief in the sanctity of the human soul and his conviction that the fetus is fully human remain static, Homer, when faced with Larch's untimely death and his own status as the only person available to perform a safe abortion on Rose Rose, simply cannot refuse his patient's wish to abort her pregnancy. Although Irving depicts Homer's first abortion as representative of the most extreme and awful form of conception - Rose Rose has been impregnated by her own father, breaking all of the rules - Homer nevertheless believes as strongly in the sanctity of Rose Rose's fetus as he would in the sanctity of any other fetus conceived under less ethically challenging circumstances. As he confesses to Candy, Homer finds abortion problematic, for he considers it tantamount to "killing" a human being:

"I'm a little nervous," Homer admitted to Candy. "It's certainly not a matter of technique, and I've got everything I need - I know I can do it. It's just that, to me, it is a living human being. I can't describe to you what it feels like - just to hold the curette, for example. When living tissue is touched, it responds - somehow," Homer said, but Candy cut him off. (533-34)

Homer's decision to perform the abortion illustrates the ethical imperative embodied by Irving's act of storytelling. Clearly, *The Cider House Rules* should not be read as a novel that finally embraces the act of abortion. Homer's own belief system radically contradicts such a conclusion. The novel demonstrates the conflicted nature of human dealings and the inadequacy of legalism as a means for responding to our most pressing needs. While Homer decides to assume the constructed identity that Larch invents for him - as Dr. F. Stone, a missionary obstetrician newly arrived from India - Homer recognizes that he cannot deny strangers what he would give freely to those he loves and those he knows: "Because he knew now that he couldn't play God in the worst sense; if he could operate on Rose Rose, how could he refuse to help a stranger? How could he refuse anyone? Only a god makes that kind of decision. I'll just give them what they want, he thought. An orphan or an abortion" (535). For Homer, then, rules do not account for the fact that we are all saints and all sinners, rather than being one or the other. Legalism offers no true, compassionate, or humane answers to the abortion issue because it operates from the abstract, not from the tangible. Irving's ethics of storytelling makes all too clear that the ways our lives intersect and the impossible decisions that the business of living forces us to make cannot be handled under a single system of rules. In Irving's fictive universe - and, indeed, in our own corporeal world - only the sanctity of individual choice in relation to human community can determine the system of ethical values that governs our lives.

In this manner, Irving's appropriation of the Dickensian form establishes - especially through its use of extensive narratological and characterological detail - an ethics of particularity in which a multiperspectival history comes to bear upon our understanding of a given narrative situation. The Dickensian novel as literary mode demands that we see the ethical dimensions of the lives represented in the text as something that ethical "rules" - whether they be the rules that dictate life in a cider house or rules that govern a promise between orphans - cannot adequately address. Using the abidingly fractious issue of abortion as the background for his story of an orphanage, Irving refuses to conclude his novel with any facile statement either for or against abortion.

Rather, as storyteller he insists that any genuine contemplation about the abortion issue must take place within the context of human relationships, and, as a disciple of Dickens, he paints characterscapes of such layered detail that we see the conflicted nature of human resolution. Only by providing his readership with fully realized portraits of humanity can Irving construct an adequate fictional tableau for narrating the moral dilemmas that trouble our society and the ways that we live now. As with Dickens, Irving intuitively recognizes that readers "want catharsis, they want to be stretched and tested, they want to be frightened and come through it, they want to be scared, taken out of their familiar surroundings - intellectual, visceral, spiritual - and to be reexposed to things" ("An Interview" 187). In *The Cider House Rules*, Irving offers precisely such an ethically complex and conflicted narrative. While some form of judgment must inevitably be rendered in the novel, clearly Homer's decision to return to St. Cloud's as Dr. E Stone is not motivated by any "rule" about the goodness of abortion or the absolute belief that women must have a choice in the matter. As with Dr. Larch's initial decision to perform an abortion, Homer's return to St. Cloud's and all that it entails finds its origins in his genuinely human relationships with women - with Candy and Melony and Rose Rose - not out of any ideologically pure ethic. By delivering his compelling narratives and vast characterscapes through the artifice of the Dickensian novel, Irving narrates the equally captivating and convoluted stories of our own lives.

#### Notes

1 In his discussion of the responsibilities that writers and readers implicitly share in the reading process, Wayne C. Booth provides us with a useful foundation for considering the ethical implications of storytelling, particularly regarding literature's frequently debated didactic function. Booth reminds us that the "distinction between genuine literature (or 'poetry') and 'rhetoric' or 'didactic' literature is entirely misleading if it suggests that some stories, those that we seem to read just for enjoyment, are purged of all teaching." For instance, Booth reasons, "every joke about stupidity depends upon and reinforces the value of being clever, and most of them depend upon and reinforce our sense that certain kinds of people are most likely to be stupid" (151-52).

2 In an interview with Alison Freeland, Irving underscores the significance of literary character in the act of storytelling: "What you remember about a novel is the emotional effect that the characters had on you. Long after the story, the plot, the intricacies of what happens, to whom, when - long after that stuff is out of your mind, out of memory, and you really need to read the book again in order to familiarize yourself with exactly how the story unfolds, a novel keeps working its magic on readers because of the emotional impact of characters that just can't be duplicated in a short story, even a short novel" (139).

3 In his review of *The Cider House Rules*, Christopher Lehmann-Haupt concurs with this thread of Hatter and Thompson's argument, contending that the novelist's central point "is driven home with the sledgehammer effect that John Irving usually uses" (20).

4 In his essay "Against the Under Toad," collected in *Writing into the World: Essays, 1973-1987* (1991), Des Pres also stresses the intimate relationship between fiction and the world beyond in a moving passage of great ethical force: "Fiction speaks to us, touches our deepest fears and wishes, in so far as it articulates our embattled sense of being in the world, thereby confirming the self in its struggle to face and endure the besetting difficulties of a time and condition" (102-03).

5 While Irving attacks many avant-garde, postmodern writers, he avails himself nevertheless of some of the metafictional tools of postmodernity. In several instances, he employs metafiction to critique what he deems most vacuous and least admirable in contemporary fiction. Speaking about the minor character Helmbart who appears in both *The Water-Method Man* (1972) and *The 158-Pound Marriage* (1974), Jerome Klinkowitz contends that Helmbart's name is an "obvious play on the occasional duo-syllabic pronunciation of Donald Barthelme's last name," and like Barthelme and Gass, Helmbart is an advocate for "the new novel." Klinkowitz contends that "Irving's objection to Helmbart's work and his contrary method in his own establishes the central purposes of Irving's art: that fiction cannot be just about the act or theory of writing, but must incorporate the act or theory into a fiction that's still about life. His favorite writer is Charles Dickens, who balanced sentimentality with the attractive and persuasive powers of life itself" (36).

6 In an interesting but insightful coincidence during an interview conducted by Image, Irving echoes Massey's denouncement of categorization: "I have a horror of the instinct to categorize; I don't do it, and when I feel it's being done to me, I behave as perversely opposite to the offensive presumption as I can" (49).

7 Reflecting upon his own time spent in Europe as a young writer, Irving suggests that what was most significant about his days as an expatriate has little to do with location. Going so far as to suggest that Alaska or Tokyo would have been equally conducive to his maturation, he suggests, rather, that the dislocation accompanying any move into unfamiliar surroundings served as the catalyst for his transformation. "What I felt very strongly happen to me," Irving explains, "is that the European experience - again, it could have been the Tokyo experience, or I could have gone to Alaska, and I think Alaska would have become a kind of Vienna for me - I just needed to be someplace that removed me from looking with complacency at all the trivia of my surroundings - suddenly it made things not trivial anymore" (Miller 181). Irving's capacity for not overlooking the details of everyday existence, for taking on a perspective that elevates the mundane and the commonplace, allows him to use detail - much as Dickens did - to render ethical statements about the ways in which we approach the act of living. For a novelist like Irving who hopes to make his characters incredibly alive and indispensable to his readers - so much so that, as he explains in an interview with the *New England Review*, "what you remember about a novel is the emotional effect that the characters had on you" (139) - the gathering of detail and its placement within the narrative take on a level of importance not found in all forms of storytelling. For example, the minimalist school of fiction, as well as the postmodernist metafictionists - both openly abhorred and denigrated on numerous occasions by Irving in essays and interviews - do not work toward what Irving calls "exuberance," the vitality of life somehow represented on the page. "Exuberance is unfashionable," Irving remarks in an interview with

Image. "I point to the recent foolishness regarding 'minimalism' in the novel. [. . .] The idea of a 'minimalist' novel makes me gag. A novel is as much as you can bite off; if it's minimal, that says what you are" (49).

8 While Larch believes that he has a duty to perform abortions for the women who request his services during the course of *The Cider House Rules*, he does not argue for the ethical correctness of the procedure. In fact, as Larch explains to Homer Wells, "I'm not saying it's [abortion] right, you understand? I'm saying it's her choice - it's a woman's choice. She's got a right to have a choice, you understand?" (115).

9 Early in his life as an obstetrician, Larch realizes that much of the world wishes to categorize and dichotomize what he does. Larch instinctively fights such arbitrary definitions: "He was an obstetrician; he delivered babies into the world," Irving writes; "his colleagues called this 'the Lord's work.' And he was an abortionist; he delivered mothers, too. His colleagues called this 'the Devil's work,' but it was all the Lord's work to Wilbur Larch. As Mrs. Maxwell observes in the novel: "The true physician's soul cannot be too broad and gentle" (75). Later, during his tenure at St. Cloud's, the terms "Lord's work" and "Devil's work" prove helpful in distinguishing for Larch and his nurses between the kinds of procedures they are preparing to perform. After serving as a physician in World War I, moreover, Larch adamantly claims to have seen the genuine work of the Devil: "the Devil worked with shell and grenade fragments, with shrapnel and with the little, dirty bits of clothing carried with a missile into a wound. The Devil's work was gas bacillus infection, that scourge of the First World War - Wilbur Larch would never forget how it crackled to the touch" (76). Larch finds it difficult to understand how a nation could proudly support the Devil's work in war, yet outlaw the abortions he performs at the orphanage during peacetime. In a letter to his nurses sent from the military hospital where he works, Larch asks that his replacement at the orphanage, a doctor who refuses to perform abortions because he believes them to be immoral and unethical, be told that "the work at the orphanage is all the Lord's work - everything you do, you do for the orphans, you deliver them!" (76).

10 The narrative significance of the Orphanage's nightly readings has been noted by several critics, including Debra Shostak, who observes that "Irving's debt to Dickens is repaid in a variety of ways - the bizarre or eccentric characters who populate his fictional terrain, the comic names, the homage in *The Cider House Rules* by way of numerous allusions to David Copperfield and *Great Expectations*, which are bibles to the orphan Homer Wells" (133).

11 Irving emphasizes the bond between Homer and Larch so that later in the novel we are not surprised by Homer's return to St. Cloud's or his decision to perform an abortion. In order to achieve such an effect, Irving makes use of relational characterscape, a form of characterscape in which we come to understand better both characters within the same scene because of their interaction. In a dramatic sequence that includes the first father-son kiss shared by Homer and Larch, Irving depicts Homer saving a woman suffering from eclampsia, a condition that threatens the life of both the mother and the unborn child because of puerperal convulsions. Absent because he has gone to track down a cadaver that he plans to use in Homer's medical training, Larch upon his return discovers Homer asleep and the mother and infant in good health after the exhausting thirty-hour ordeal. Proud of Homer's fine performance, Larch is moved to

kiss Homer as he sleeps. At the scene's conclusion, we are told that Homer only feigns sleep while Larch kisses him: "Homer Wells felt his tears come silently; there were more tears than he remembered crying the last time he had cried. [ . . . ] He cried because he had received his first fatherly kisses. [ . . . ] If Homer Wells had received his first fatherly kisses, Dr. Larch had given the first kisses he had ever given - fatherly, or otherwise - since the day in the Portland boarding house when he caught the clap from Mrs. Eames. [ . . . ] Oh God, thought Wilbur Larch, what will happen to me when Homer has to go?" (138-39).

12 For additional discussion about legalism and its dramatization in Irving's novel, see Bruce L. Rockwood's "Abortion Stories: Uncivil Discourse and 'Cider House Rules.'"

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### **The Cider House Rules, 1999, John Irving Biography**

My first encounter with John Irving's work was when my son, Steve, then a freshman in college, pressed *THE WORLD ACCORDING TO GARP* into my hands and said, "Mom --- you have to read this!" Steve had been an avid reader since preschool when he used to read off the ingredients of breakfast food cereals, which made me wonder if he might not someday become a chemist. In high school he never left home without a flowered towel --- on the advice of author Douglas Adams (when I asked why, he pressed *THE HITCHHIKER'S GUIDE TO THE GALAXY* on me and I enjoyed it), so I read *GARP*. Besides, I had just stayed up for two nights reading Ayn Rand's *ATLAS SHRUGGED*, and he thought I needed to expand my horizons.

Expand them I did. The only comparison I can reach between John Irving and Ayn Rand is that they both render long, thought provoking novels. When I entered the world of Garp, I was hooked as a full-fledged Irving fan. From there I progressed to *THE HOTEL NEW HAMPSHIRE* and laughed and cried with the beleaguered Berry family. "Don't pass by any open windows" has stuck with me through many a trying time in the years since Franny and Susie the Bear and Sorrow defined dysfunctional families in ways undreamed of in my banal life.

*THE CIDER HOUSE RULES* was his next venture and remains, alongside *OWEN MEANY*, my favorite of his nine novels. *CIDER HOUSE* is about to be released as a movie, starring Michael Caine as Dr. Larch. Irving wrote the screenplay and discusses in *MY MOVIE BUSINESS: A MEMOIR*, the agonizing process of choosing which characters and plot lines to keep and which to abort to fit the confines of two hours on the silver screen. *MY MOVIE BUSINESS* is due for publication at the same time the movie is released in November of 1999. Irving discusses screenwriting not only for *CIDER HOUSE* but also *HOTEL NEW HAMPSHIRE*, *GARP*, and *A SON OF THE CIRCUS*.

By the time *A PRAYER FOR OWEN MEANY* was published in 1989, I was in a state of high anticipation for any new offering from Irving. I was unprepared, however, for the impact that

OWEN MEANY would have on me, and apparently, over the years, on thousands of other readers. Thought by many to be Irving's tour de force, OWEN MEANY tops the lists of all-time favorite books by many TBR readers. Some of the faithful refused to see the movie *Simon Birch* because it was based on one small segment of OWEN MEANY and they knew it could never hold up to the original. I was not dissuaded, however, and enjoyed *Simon Birch* on its own merits as a variation on a theme and a tribute to Irving's genius.

I was immediately enchanted by the sensitive, East Indian ex-patriot orthopedic surgeon in *A SON OF THE CIRCUS*, who, through his zeal to discover the gene for dwarfism, gets caught up in the strange, destitute, painful underworld of the land of his ancestors. Nowhere is Irving's diligent research as evident as it is in *CIRCUS*. A thread of his personal background runs through most of his other novels. He was born and raised in Exeter, New Hampshire, where *HOTEL*, *GARP*, *OWEN MEANY*, and *A WIDOW FOR ONE YEAR* are loosely based. He says that his books are not autobiographical, but admits of OWEN MEANY, that if there is a "voice" that is his, it's that of the grandmother.

*THE 158-POUND MARRIAGE* and *THE WATER-METHOD MAN* are rooted in one way or another in Iowa, where Irving spent many years in post graduate work in Iowa City, and are related to wrestling which remains a passion. He says that writing only what you know would be boring. He asks rhetorically in a recent interview: "Stay in Vermont and write about a writer watching the snow falling or teaching his youngest son how to ski? Boy, that would be interesting!" *CIRCUS*, however, takes place in Toronto, and India --- an India of Irving's fertile imagination. The characters in *CIRCUS*, as in all the other Irving novels, stay with you. Is this not a mark of a great storyteller?

*A WIDOW FOR ONE YEAR*, Irving's latest full novel, is pure Irving from cover to cover. Somehow, though, my awe in Irving's inspired writing in *OWEN MEANY* and *CIDER HOUSE* was not rekindled with *WIDOW*. Clearly, he did his usual yeoman's work in exquisite research which translates into characterizations of great depth and Quixotic personalities --- the Amsterdam cop and the prostitute stand out as the strongest and most compelling characters. But isn't that the charm of Irving's work? His characters are usually afflicted in some debilitating way, be it emotionally or physically. Their conflicts, trials and often heroic approach to life, as twisted and tormented as they are, usually prove to be uplifting, often in a tragic-comic way.

Irving does not hint at a new novel. He has been hard at work over the past ten years on getting *SON OF THE CIRCUS* and *A WIDOW FOR ONE YEAR* into print, and *CIDER HOUSE RULES* onto film. He's still working on the screenplay for *SON OF THE CIRCUS*.

He says in *MY MOVIE BUSINESS*, "However many months I spend writing a screenplay, I never feel as if I've been writing at all. I've been constructing a story --- that's true --- but without language . . . I always write a lot of letters when I'm working on a screenplay because I miss using language. When I'm writing a novel, I write very few letters; my language is all used up."

We hope that Irving will soon yearn to set his language to work on his next novel. At age 57, he must have at least several more left in him.

--- Roz Shea

## My Movie Business

A Memoir

By JOHN IRVING

Random House

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### The Ether Addict

The plot of *The Cider House Rules* is far more complicated than the compressed version of the story and its characters that I adapted as a screenplay (over a thirteen-year period, and for four different directors). In the novel, I began with the four failed adoptions of the orphan Homer Wells. By the end of the first chapter, when Homer returns for the fourth time to the orphanage in St. Cloud's, Maine, the orphanage physician, Dr. Wilbur Larch, decides he'll have to keep him.

Dr. Larch, an obstetrician and (in the 1930s and 1940s) an illegal abortionist, trains Homer Wells to be a doctor. This is illegal, too, of course. Homer never goes to high school or to college, not to mention medical school. But with Dr. Larch's training and the assistance of Larch's faithful nurses, Angela and Edna, Homer becomes an experienced obstetrician and gynecologist. He refuses to perform abortions, however.

The second chapter of the novel describes Larch's childhood and medical-school years, his first internship in Boston, and the experiences that have made him a patron saint of orphans and an abortionist. The history of Homer's failed adoptions and Larch's background are not developed in the screenplay. Larch's ether addiction is developed in both the book and the film, but his sexual abstemiousness, a feature of his eccentricity in the novel, was never in any draft of the script; instead, in the movie, I strongly imply that Dr. Larch may have had (or still has) a sexual relationship with Nurse Angela.

I wanted to make Larch more normal. There is less time for character development in a film than in a novel; a character's eccentricities can too easily become the character. In the movie, I thought Larch's addiction to ether was eccentric enough.

In the screenplay, as in the novel, it is both Homer's conflict with Larch over the abortion issue and Homer's desire to see something of the world outside St. Cloud's that make him leave the orphanage with Wally Worthington and Candy Kendall, an attractive couple who come to St. Cloud's for an abortion. But in the book, Homer spends fifteen years away from the orphanage. In that time, Wally and Homer become best friends, Homer falls in love with Candy, and Wally and Candy get married.

The passage of time, which is so important in all my novels, is not easily captured in a film. In the screenplay, Homer stays away from St. Cloud's for only fifteen months, Wally isn't Homer's best friend, and Candy is the sexual aggressor in her relationship with Homer.

And in the novel, Homer and Candy have a son, Angel, who they pretend is adopted. Wally, out of love for all of them, tolerates this obvious fiction and his wife's infidelity. In the screenplay, there is no child and Wally never knows about Candy's transgressions. Developing sympathy, not unlike developing character, takes time; in the movie, I tried to make Homer more sympathetic by making him less responsible for the affair with Candy. I made less of the affair, too.

But in both the novel and the screenplay, what precipitates Homer's return to the orphanage, where he replaces Dr. Larch as the obstetrician and the abortionist in St. Cloud's, is his discovery of the relationship between a black migrant apple picker and his daughter. Mr. Rose, the picking-crew boss on the apple farm where Wally gives Homer a job, impregnates his own daughter, Rose Rose. In the novel, it is Homer and Candy's son, Angel, who falls in love with Rose Rose and first makes this discovery, but since I eliminated Angel from the screenplay, I made Homer find out about Rose Rose's pregnancy directly.

When Homer acknowledges that he must perform an abortion on Rose Rose, he realizes that he can no longer deny that procedure to other women who want it. All the time Homer Wells is away from St. Cloud's, the aging and ether-addicted Dr. Larch has been plotting how Homer can replace him; in the end of both the novel and the film, Homer accepts the responsibility Larch has left to him. The doctor's young apprentice becomes the orphanage physician.

Left out of the movie was the book-length character of Melony, an older girl who befriends Homer as a young orphan at St. Cloud's. Melony is also the source of Homer's sexual initiation, and she extracts from him a promise he will break—that he won't leave her. But I eliminated her from the screenplay; she was simply too overpowering a character.

Over and over again, the limitation imposed on the length of a movie has consequences. The novel of *The Cider House Rules* was more than 800 manuscript pages long—it's more than 500 book pages. The finished screenplay was a mere 136 manuscript pages. It pained me to lose Melony, but I had to do it.

It helped me that there'd been a precedent to losing Melony. In several foreign countries where the novel was translated, I lost the title. (Of my nine novels, *The Cider House Rules* is my favorite title.) In some languages, *The Cider House Rules* was simply too clumsy to translate. In France, cider is an alcoholic drink; in German, *cider house rules* is one word. I forget what the problem was in Finnish, but the Finns titled the novel *The Hero of His Own Life*—from the beginning of *David Copperfield*, which Dr. Larch reads and rereads to the orphans at St. Cloud's. Homer Wells takes the opening passage from *David Copperfield* personally. *Whether I shall turn out to be the hero of my own life, or whether that station will be held by anybody else, these pages must show.*

The German title, *Gottes Werk und Teufels Beitrag* (The Work of the Lord, the Contribution of the Devil), imitates Dr. Larch's manner of speaking in code to his nurses. (The French made a similar choice for the title: *L'Œuvre de Dieu, la Part du Diable*.) This is Larch's way of indicating to Angela and Edna whether he is delivering a baby or performing an abortion. The point being that, in Larch's view, it is all the Lord's work—either he is delivering a baby or he is delivering a mother. (In the film, Dr. Larch's willingness to give abortions is established in the montage over the opening credits. Homer's reluctance to perform the procedure is expressed in the first scene of dialogue between them.)

I felt that a man who takes on the enormous responsibility of life or no life in an orphanage in poor, rural Maine—a man like Dr. Larch—would be deeply scarred. For this reason I made Larch an ether addict.

Ether was first synthesized in 1846 by a twenty-five-year-old Prussian botanist. People have been having ether frolics—and later, laughing-gas parties—ever since. In the proper hands, ether remains one of the safest inhalation agents known. At a concentration of only 1 or 2 percent, it is a light, tasty vapor; some forty years ago, hundreds of cases of cardiac surgery were done with ether and partially awake (even talking) patients.

Some of Dr. Larch's colleagues would have preferred nitrous oxide or chloroform, but Larch developed his preference for ether through self-administration. You would have to be crazy to self-administer chloroform. It is twenty-five times more toxic to the heart muscle than is ether, and it has an extremely narrow margin of safety; a minimal overdose can result in cardiac irregularity and death.

Nitrous oxide requires a very high (at least 80 percent) concentration to do the job, and it is always accompanied by a degree of what is called hypoxia—insufficient oxygen. It requires careful monitoring and cumbersome apparatus, and the patient runs the risk of bizarre fantasies or giggling fits. Induction is very fast. Coleridge was a laughing-gas man, although the poet was certainly familiar with ether, too. It was unfortunate for Coleridge that he preferred opium. Ether is a kinder drug addiction to bear. But no drug addiction is without risk—and no self-administered anesthesia is safe. After all, in both the novel and the film, Dr. Larch accidentally kills himself with ether.

When I first thought about the grounding for Dr. Larch's character, I kept one principle foremost in mind: he goes to extremes. In the novel, he has sex just once, with a prostitute who gives him gonorrhea. He starts taking ether to numb himself to the pain of the gonococci; by the time the bacteria burns itself out, Larch is addicted to the ether. I thought that he should be no less extreme as a doctor.

In the movie, Larch's onetime experience with the prostitute, his case of the clap, and his subsequent sexual abstemiousness are gone. What remains is his ether addiction; without a history, it seems more desperate, more extreme. Homer defends Larch's reasons for taking ether by saying that Larch needs it to help him sleep (‘He’s too tired to sleep’), but the ether numbs Larch's overall pain. He takes it to relieve his angst, his *Weltschmerz*.

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