

= Shiloh (Naylor novel) =

Shiloh is a Newbery Medal @-@ winning children 's novel by Phyllis Reynolds Naylor published in 1991 . The 65th book by Naylor , it is the first in a quartet about a young boy and the title character , an abused dog . Naylor decided to write Shiloh after an emotionally taxing experience in West Virginia where she encountered an abused dog .

Narrator and protagonist Marty Preston lives in the hills of Friendly , West Virginia . After finding an abused beagle owned by his brutal neighbor Judd Travers , Marty defies his society 's standards of not meddling with each other 's business . Marty resolves to steal and hide the dog , naming him Shiloh and fabricating a web of lies to keep his secret . After his theft is discovered , Marty discovers Judd shooting a deer out of season and blackmails him into selling Shiloh to him . Because he lacks the money to buy Shiloh , Marty resolutely works for Judd doing numerous chores .

Primarily a Bildungsroman and adventure novel , the novel depicts the emotional tribulations and maturing of an 11 @-@ year @-@ old boy . Some themes of the novel are ethics , consequentialism , religion and morality , and animal ? human relationships . Marty learns that morality is confounding and must choose between two unpalatable choices : rescuing the abused Shiloh through stealing and lying and allowing Judd to keep abusing Shiloh .

Reviewers generally gave positive reviews of the book and were impressed by the novel 's suspense and vernacular language . In addition to the Newbery Medal , Shiloh has received several state awards voted upon by children , including the Sequoyah Children 's Book Award , the Mark Twain Readers Award , and the William Allen White Children 's Book Award . In 1996 , the book was adapted into a movie of the same name . The novel spawned three sequels , Shiloh Season , Saving Shiloh , and A Shiloh Christmas published in 1996 , 1997 , and 2015 , respectively . Shiloh is taught in many elementary school courses in the United States .

= = Background and publishing = =

Born in 1933 in Anderson , Indiana , Phyllis Reynolds Naylor was raised in Indiana and Illinois in the 1930s during the Great Depression . During her childhood she was hardly given any toys . Instead , with her parents reading to her every night , books formed a major part of her early years ? " the happiest part " . Her parents read a variety of literature to her , including Bible stories , The Wind in the Willows , and Mark Twain 's novels , until she was 14 . After she became a parent , she read to her children in the mornings because of their evening activities . At 16 , Naylor wrote a short story for a church magazine , and in her early thirties she published her first book . She has published over 100 books . When she wrote and published Shiloh , her 65th novel , she was living in Bethesda , Maryland with her husband Rex , a speech pathologist whom she married in May 1960 . She has two adult sons and four grandchildren .

Naylor writes books for children , teens , and adults . Writing sporadically , Naylor typically takes several years to finish a book . With about 10 notebooks next to her workspace , she writes down story ideas and character traits when she thinks of them . She considered Shiloh to be a deviation from the norm because she finished the first draft in just eight weeks .

Edited by Jonathan Lanman , Shiloh was published by Atheneum Books on September 30 , 1991 . The novel has been translated into at least 10 languages : Chinese , Dutch , French , German , Hebrew , Italian , Japanese , Korean , Spanish , and Swedish .

= = Plot summary = =

The novel is set in the small town of Friendly , West Virginia , where an eleven @-@ year @-@ old boy named Marty Preston finds a stray beagle wandering in the hills near his house . The dog follows him home , and Marty names him Shiloh , a tribute to a neighborhood schoolhouse . Shiloh 's real owner is Judd Travers , who owns several hunting dogs . Fearing for the dog 's safety because Judd drinks and treats his hunting dogs poorly , Marty does not want to return Shiloh . His father insists that Shiloh be returned to his rightful owner and they take the dog home to Judd .

Shiloh returns to Marty who hides him from his family . Concealing Shiloh in the woods in a wire pen he builds , Marty smuggles some of his dinner to the dog each evening . After his mother discovers Marty feeding the dog , he persuades her not to reveal the secret . That night , Shiloh is attacked by a German Shepherd Dog while in his makeshift cage and his family discovers Marty has been lying and hiding the dog . After taking the dog to the town doctor , the family must return Shiloh to his rightful owner by Sunday .

Before doing so , Marty travels up to Travers ' house to try to convince Travers to allow him to keep Shiloh . Judd does not see Marty approaching , and shoots a doe out of season , which would mean a stiff fine Judd cannot afford . Marty lets Judd know he knows , and attempts to blackmail him out of Shiloh . Judd and Marty eventually negotiate a deal in which Marty will earn Shiloh for 40 dollars , paid with 20 hours of working for Judd . At the end of the first week , Judd says that he will not keep his end of the deal because the evidence of the dead doe has with the passage of time disappeared . Second , the contract that Marty had him sign is worthless in the state of West Virginia without the signature of a witness . Despite Judd 's pointed disapproval of his work , Marty continues to work for him . They begin discussing dogs and Judd 's father who began physically abusing Judd when he was four years old . In the end , Judd warms to Marty , relents , and lets him keep Shiloh .

= = Autobiographical elements = =

In a 1992 interview about Shiloh , Naylor said : " Like a patchwork quilt , a novel is made up of things that have happened to me and things I have heard or read about , all mixed up with imaginings . " Naylor 's characters are frequently based on herself and her two sons . She penned the novel following an excursion with her husband , Rex , to visit their friends , Frank and Trudy Madden , in West Virginia . Naylor and Rex were strolling along a river when they discovered a dog in the grass following them . Dejected and frightened , the dog was " the saddest , most mistreated @-@ looking beagle I 'd ever seen " , Naylor later said . Because the dog frequently shuddered and slunk forward on her belly , Naylor suspected she had been abused . On a whim , Naylor whistled and the dog rushed forward , lapping Naylor 's face . Tailing them until they reached the Maddens ' house , the beagle remained under a tree , her paws cushioning her head during the drizzly afternoon . Naylor cried during her and her husband 's trip home that night .

Rex asked her if she would have a " nervous breakdown " or if she would " do something about it " . That " something " referred to writing a book , which she did . She believed that someone had abused the dog and was confronted by a series of questions :

What if I knew who was abusing it ? What if I knew who it belonged to ? What if the dog kept running to me ? Then , if you write for children , you think about what if I was 11 years old ?

The Maddens resided near Shiloh , West Virginia , where Naylor found the abused dog in 1989 , so she decided to name the book 's dog Shiloh . Because the Maddens ' post office address is in Friendly , West Virginia , Naylor chose the town as her book 's setting . Trudy and Frank Madden adopted the abused dog Naylor had seen . Trudy Madden said in a 1997 interview that Naylor 's description of Shiloh , West Virginia , was precise . By following the directions in Shiloh and its sequels , the town 's houses , mill , and schoolhouse could be located easily .

= = Style = =

Shiloh is told in the first person in main character Marty Preston 's voice . The prose has perceptible grammatical errors and a bucolic tone . Arlene Perly Rae of Toronto Star wrote that the novel is written in the " uncomplicated style " for which Naylor is distinguished . Jane Langton of The New York Times Book Review stated that the novel was written in a " comfortable , down @-@ home style " . Writing that the main story in Shiloh is Marty 's struggle in his mind with morality , Langston noted that it is " presented simply , in a way any third- or fourth @-@ grade reader can understand " . Scholar Kathie Cerra praised the novel for its " vivid sensory detail " , which enables readers to experience Marty 's " inner life of thought and feeling " . In Marty 's " teem [ing] with life " first @-@ person narrative , he shows how he feels when he tells lies to his parents and when he embraces

the wriggling Shiloh .

Academic Leona W. Fisher wrote in Children 's Literature Association Quarterly that the novel employs a seldom used yet ingenious literary technique : the story is told with " the sustained internal monologue presented almost exclusively in the present tense " . The mores of his society and the actions of adults are strained through Marty 's mind concurrently with his emotional agony and ethical judgments . The dialogue of the other characters tempers but does not counteract the " exclusivity of his linguistic point of view " because Marty is the sole narrator . Shiloh has a " compacted time @-@ frame , bounded by the past @-@ tense opening and closing " . Fisher noted that because the novel 's events are confined to several weeks in the summer , there is no need for a " panoramic sweep " of the actions . The reader can concentrate solely on Marty 's ethical crisis . Conveying the mood of the novel is also mostly confined to Marty 's thoughts and current action . Naylor uses the past @-@ perfect verb " had " on several occasions to depict the tones of the scenes . This usage conveys turning @-@ points in the story , transferring the reader from the " immediate tension " of the present to a growing cognizance .

Scholars Alethea Helbig and Agnes Perkins wrote that the " Appalachian setting is well evoked , in both its beauty and its code of ethics that Marty must defy to save the dog " . Reviewer Ellen Mandel of Booklist wrote that the " West Virginia dialect richly seasons the true @-@ to @-@ life dialogue " . Kenneth E. Kowen of School Library Journal perceived an incongruity in Naylor 's depiction of Marty 's family . He noted that Marty 's father is a postman , one of the best paid jobs in suburban settings . In the novel , however , the family is poverty @-@ stricken .

Reviewer Cecilia Goodnow noted that Shiloh is a Bildungsroman and adventure novel . Marty undergoes a physical and emotional transformation in his quest to save Shiloh . After confronting an abusive adult , he mentally grows , concluding : " I saved Shiloh and opened my eyes some . Now that ain 't bad for eleven . " Salem Press 's Carol Ann Gearhart has characterized the novel as domestic realism .

= = Themes = =

= = = Abuse and love = = =

Physically abused as a child , Judd wants to keep Shiloh because he does not comprehend why people are so interested in rescuing the abused dog . No one cared to rescue Judd when he was harmed throughout his youth . Despite Judd 's growing into a harsh man , reviewer Hary Sheehan noted , he preserves a glimmer of empathy . Journalist Kate Cavanaugh wrote that Judds ' inability to love and cherish Shiloh is borne because of the love his family nurtured in him .

= = = Animal ? human relationships = = =

Author Timothy Morris wrote that the plot and themes in Shiloh had many parallels to the 1940 novel Lassie Come @-@ Home by Eric Knight . In both novels , boys fall in love with dogs owned by others . The dogs repeatedly return to the children in " mirror imag [e] scenes " , while the ethical fathers try to convince them not to betray their morals and fall for the dogs .

Morris wrote that Shiloh 's faithfulness to Marty is portrayed in " affective human terms " . In the secluded , bucolic West Virginia , Shiloh becomes the masculine friend Marty did not have . The beagle adopts the persona of the brother Marty never had . Marty doggedly believes that Shiloh and other animals are creatures with feelings . Attune with Marty 's emotions , the beagle is considered by Marty to be a confidante . On the other hand , in pastoral West Virginia , some adults consider animals to bring only economic benefits to humans . Morris stated that children like Marty defy their rural culture and advance to an upper @-@ class mindset .

Scholar Claudia Mills wrote that Marty 's parents subscribe to the belief that because Shiloh is Judd 's property , they should not be concerned with how Judd treats Shiloh . They tell Marty : " You 've got to go by the law . The law says that a man that pays money for a dog owns that dog . " At odds

with this philosophy , Marty strongly believes that love ? not money ? should determine ownership .

= = = Ethics = = =

In *Shiloh* , Naylor does not impart an explicit meaning of " honesty " to her juvenile readers , journalist Nancy Gilson observed . Instead , she conveys how " confusing and unanswerable " morality is using main character Marty 's ethical predicaments and plot twists . To harbor *Shiloh* from the antagonist Judd and his principled parents , Marty must steal food and tell falsehoods . His dishonest actions serve as a contrast to his conscientious persona and his benevolent rescuing of the dog . Every night , Marty prays , " Jesus ... which do you want me to do ? Be one hundred percent honest and carry that dog back to Judd so that one of your creatures can be kicked and starved all over again , or keep him here and fatten him up to glorify your creation ? "

According to Judith B. Rosenfeld of the Knoxville News @-@ Sentinel , Naylor makes the statement that children raised in healthy families make ethical choices and ultimately thrive . In a 1994 interview Naylor said :

One of the pluses of writing for children is that the child may very well be reading about the subject for the first time . In *Shiloh* , there 's a moral dilemma with no black or white answer ; the character compromises . It may be the child 's first time to realize that there are not sure answers . It 's sort of thrilling to have a child meet a problem like this for the first time . "

Naylor believes that there is much " gray area between right and wrong " . Instead of following the straightforward correct path , Marty is forced to select between two unpalatable choices . Reviewer Matt Berman of The Times @-@ Picayune believed that the book 's main moral is that " nothing is as simple as it seems " . Entertainment Weekly 's Michele Landsberg praised the novel , writing that *Shiloh* is a " strongly persuasive story of moral growth , told without a hint of moralizing and with acute insight into a preadolescent 's inner life " .

In the children 's literature journal The ALAN Review published by The Assembly on Literature for Adolescents , Edgar H. Thompson , Connie B. Blevins , and Allison Fitzgerald argued that protagonist Marty " consistently behaves " at levels 5 and 6 of Kohlberg 's stages of development . For instance , on his walk to Judd 's house , he wonders : " Easy as pie for Judd Travers to put a bullet hole in my head , say he didn 't see me . " Despite his fears , Marty continues walking to Judd 's house , persistent on protecting *Shiloh* despite potential bodily harm and even death to himself . The authors brooded over whether an 11 year old could attain such an elevated level despite most adults ' never being able to do so . Ultimately noting that the Newbery Committee and thousands of readers consider Marty to be realistic , they concluded that Marty is a positive role model for children to strive to be .

= = = Consequentialism = = =

In her essay " The Structure of the Moral Dilemma in *Shiloh* " for Children 's Literature , Claudia Mills wrote that *Shiloh* deals with " consequentialism pitted against deontological respect for moral duty " . Taught from his youth to be respectful to others and worship God , Marty is confounded by the injustice of *Shiloh* 's being abused . He seeks to justify his unethical actions by thinking that " [a] lie don 't seem a lie anymore when it 's meant to save a dog . " Consequentialists base the worthiness of a person 's act on its result . Marty 's act of saving *Shiloh* is worse for *Shiloh* 's well @-@ being . After *Shiloh* is concealed in the woods , a German shepherd attacks the beagle , causing to become permanently lame . Marty laments : " Worst of all , I 'd brought *Shiloh* here to keep him from being hurt , and what that German shepherd done to him was probably worse than anything Judd Travers would have brought himself to do , short of shootin ' him , anyways . "

Mills noted that consequentialism does not merely expect that the consequences to one entity is determined . It requires a review of the consequences to all . When Marty observes Judd 's out @-@ of @-@ season shooting of a deer , he uses the incident to blackmail him to sell *Shiloh* to him . However , this places deer in the future in danger of Judd 's hunting . Marty sadly reflects : " By lettin ' him get away with this , I 'm putting other deer in danger . He kill this one out of season , he 'll

figure maybe he can kill some more . To save Shiloh , I 'm making it harder for deer " . In essence , he selects the " domestic love over the grander principle " .

= = = Religion and morality = = =

Reviewers observed that religion plays an influential role in Marty 's moral decisions . After Marty takes a forbidden bite from his sister Dara Lynn 's chocolate Easter rabbit and refuses to own up , his mother is disappointed . She tells him : " Dara Lynn don 't know who ate the ear off her candy rabbit and I don 't know who did it , but Jesus knows . And right this minute Jesus is looking down with the saddest eyes on the person who ate that chocolate . " Marty 's very religious mother teaches him that people should not sin or they will be " separated forever from God 's love . "

Academic Claudia Mills wrote that Marty determines to save Shiloh in a scene that is reminiscent of Huckleberry Finn 's well @-@ known resolution to save Jim from slavery : " All right , then , I 'll go to hell . " Thinking about the falsehoods he has told to save Shiloh , he believes he is bound for hell . He reflects :

If what Grandma Preston told me once about heaven and hell is true , and liars go to hell , then I guess that 's where I 'm headed . But she also told me that only people are allowed in heaven , not animals . And if I was to go to heaven and look down to see Shiloh left below , head on his paws , I 'd run away from heaven sure .

Near the novel 's conclusion , Judd refuses to honor his agreement with Marty because there was no witness . When Marty asks his mother what a witness is , she responds : " Somebody who knows the Lord Jesus and don 't mind tellin ' about it . " Despite Judd 's refusal to honor the agreement , Marty persistently maintains his part of it . He decides : " I got no choice . All I can do is stick to my side of the deal and see what happens . All in the world I can do . " After ultimately ceding Shiloh to Marty , Judd asks : " What you going to do with that dog once he 's yours ? " Marty 's simple reply is : " Love him . " Scholar Claudia Mills noted that : " The resolution of the stand @-@ off comes when Marty , in essence , stands witness , in his mother 's religious sense of witness , for an ethic of love , crystallized in his love for Shiloh . "

= = Reception = =

The News & Observer 's Elizabeth Ward listed Shiloh as one of the best children 's books in 1991 . She called the book a " heartstopping , but tough @-@ as @-@ steel story of a boy and an abused dog in the hardscrabble hill country of West Virginia " . Author Timothy Morris deemed Shiloh to be the " most celebrated dog novel of the nineties " . Michele Landsberg of Entertainment Weekly called Shiloh a " compelling read " and rated the novel an A. Equating Shiloh to classics like Charlotte 's Web , author Laura Elliott praised the novel 's " voice , suspense , and layer of themes " .

After Shiloh received the Newbery Award , Jane Langton wrote in The New York Times Book Review : " Did Shiloh really deserve the prize ? Surely there must have been a book more important than this agreeable but slight story . " Langton opined that Shiloh was " a good book , not a great book " and that there must have been few worthy children 's books that year . The Sacramento Bee 's Judy Green disagreed , believing that Shiloh was " worthy of its award , which labels it the best fiction for children written last year " . Green lauded Naylor for her " excellent portrayal of Marty 's introspection and superb storytelling in the area 's vernacular " .

The Booklist 's Ellen Mandel extolled the novel for its " moving and powerful look " at the virtues and vices of human nature and the murky moral choices in conflicts of everyday life . In her favorable review of Shiloh , Betsy Hearne of The Bulletin of the Center for Children 's Books wrote that " readers will be absorbed by the suspenseful plot , which will leave them with some memorable characterizations as well as several intriguing ethical questions " . K.B. Cartwright of The Reading Teacher also praised the novel for providing a " gripping account of family conflict and honesty " . In a similarly positive review , Kirkus Reviews praised the book for being a " gripping account of a mountain boy 's love for a dog he 's hiding from its owner " . Calling it " unusually warm and moving "

, Heather Vogel Frederick of The Christian Science Monitor praised the novel for being an "excellent choice as a family read @-@ aloud" .

Censors have objected to the profanity in Shiloh . Naylor received an angry letter from the parents of a 10 @-@ year @-@ old boy , who were angered by the language in the book . The character Judd had sworn , " dammit " . The author replied in an interview with The Virginian @-@ Pilot that some people in the world " speak crudely " and " you can 't put your child in a glass bubble and protect him always " . Several West Virginian book reviewers have complained about the dialect in the novel , believing that West Virginians do not speak with a dialect . In one review , a newspaper writer said that when she read the book to her children , she chose not to read with the dialect .

= = Honors = =

In 1992 , Shiloh received the John Newbery Medal . The annual award , bestowed by the children 's librarians division of the American Library Association , is given for " the most distinguished contribution to American literature for children " . Shiloh was a dark horse for the award . Ohio State University Professor Rudine Sims Bishop , a member of the 1992 Newbery committee , said in an interview that Shiloh was a " sleeper " that surfaced as a serious contender deep in their debate . After the January 27 , 1992 announcement of Shiloh 's winning the Newbery Medal , Naylor was flooded with numerous phone calls , requests for interviews , and mail . In an April 1992 interview , Naylor said : " Frankly , to go the bathroom , I have had to take the phone off the hook . " The book was also selected as an American Library Association Notable Children 's Book .

In January 1994 , over 60 @,@ 000 third ? sixth graders in the state of Oklahoma selected from Shiloh 23 nominees as the winner of the Sequoyah Children 's Book Award . The Sequoyah Award was presented to Naylor in April 1994 during the yearly Oklahoma Library Association conference . On April 14 , 1994 , at the annual conference of the Missouri Association of School Librarians , Shiloh received that year 's Mark Twain Readers Award . The Mark Twain Award is decided annually through a vote by fourth ? eighth graders in the state of Missouri . On October 29 , 1994 , Naylor received the William Allen White Children 's Book Award for Shiloh . The award is decided through the tallying of over 55 @,@ 000 children in the state of Kansas .

In 1997 , The Virginian @-@ Pilot chose Shiloh as the subject of a " community @-@ wide effort to get people of all ages reading and talking about books " . Beginning in October , the newspaper serialized Shiloh , publishing two chapters every week until the end of November . It also created a book guide about Shiloh and printed 1 @,@ 000 copies for parents and teachers . A chat room was created for children to direct questions and comments about Shiloh . In 1999 , Shiloh was selected as a recommended novel for children ages nine to twelve in the Read Across America initiative . In 2000 , the Shiloh trilogy placed at number seven on the National Education Association 's Children 's Top 100 book list . Naylor was delighted that children had given her work such a high ranking . Shiloh is taught in many American elementary school courses .

= = Sequels = =

Shiloh has three sequels , Shiloh Season , Saving Shiloh , and A Shiloh Christmas published in 1996 , 1997 , and 2015 respectively . In Shiloh Season , Naylor renews the strife by restoring Judd 's hostility and aggravating it with a bout of drinking issues . Marty fears Judd will take back Shiloh and be faithless to the deal they made . Whereas in Shiloh Marty confronts the confusing and ambiguous concept of morality , in Shiloh Season he must face the notion of wickedness .

In the third book , Saving Shiloh , Marty 's parents persuade Marty that people who have wronged are worthy of forgiveness . In the midst of several robberies and a murder , the community hastily faults Judd . Willing to grant Judd a second chance , Marty attempts to help him . Meanwhile , Marty and his family must face the intricacies of life such as death , hostility , and sibling rivalry .

Published on September 22 , 2015 , the fourth book , A Shiloh Christmas , was published by Atheneum , which printed 200 @,@ 000 copies . A ferocious drought strikes Marty 's community , and a new pastor joins blaming remorseless sinners for instigating it . Looking for a scapegoat ,

community members lie the responsibility squarely on people like Judd , an alcoholic and animal abuser who has reformed . A fire ravages multiple houses , including Judd 's , prompting Marty and his family to help the homeowners reconstruct their homes . One day , Marty and a friend stumble upon Rachel , the pastor 's daughter , confined to the pastor 's toolshed . The incident forces Marty 's parents to determine whether the disciplinary action has crossed the line from being disciplinary to being abusive . The book ends with characters who have vehemently differing views having a therapeutic Christmas meal together .

Naylor penned the sequels in response to " the surprising degree of hatred which children show toward Judd Travers " . Noting that Judd 's life had been molded by the abuse he suffered as a child , she hoped that the novels would enable children to see Judd as a person like Marty who must make difficult moral choices .

The first three books in the quartet each were made into a movie : *Shiloh* in 1996 , *Shiloh Season* in 1999 , and *Saving Shiloh* in 2006 .

= = Adaptations = =

= = = Film = = =

In 1996 Warner Bros. Pictures released *Shiloh* , which was directed by Dale Rosenbloom . The first of Naylor 's more than 100 juvenile and adult works to be adapted into a movie , it starred Blake Heron as Marty and Scott Wilson as Judd Travers . Budgeted at less than \$ 2 million , *Shiloh* was filmed in 30 days in October 1996 at Topanga , California .

Rosenbloom 's film differed from Naylor 's novel in several key aspects . In the novel , Marty 's family is poor and economic opportunities are limited . The family 's four @-@ room homestead is ancient and has not seen remodeling in decades . In the film , the family is wealthy and there are numerous economic opportunities . The family 's two @-@ story house is a " stunning showplace of hardwoods , elegant color schemes , and tasteful appointments " . Marty makes money very quickly by doing various chores . By transforming Marty 's family from being poor to being well off , Rosenbloom makes the conflict between Marty and Judd an emotional , instead of an economic one . In the novel , Marty and his family hunt animals , while in the film , his father does not hunt . Author Timothy Morris states that " [t] he force of the film 's ideology is to blur all distinctions between humans and animals " . Judd is transformed from a native in the novel into an interloper in the film who holds the contrarian view that humans and animals are different , that " [a] nimals were put here for us . They ain ' got no other purpose or feelin 's . "

Instead of being about Marty 's love for *Shiloh* , most of the novel occurs in Marty 's thoughts such as when he ponders about telling falsehoods to his parents . Because the book was considered " very internal " by the major film studios , director Dale Rosenbloom labored over making the film more external . Rosenbloom added new characters and scenes to the story and faxed each change to the novel 's author . Naylor was neither fearful of Rosenbloom 's changes nor unhesitant at suggesting changes . After the film was released , Naylor said that Rosenbloom " did a very good job " , and Rosenbloom said , " We did do right by the book and her ... She lives by her code and if you honor it , she appreciates it . " By June 1997 , Naylor had seen the film six times . In an interview that month , she noted that she was always struck by the hush of the theater and by how the film entrances everyone , even the children .

Despite an underwhelming performance in the movie theaters , the film received high video sales . Ranking *Shiloh* as one of his top 10 selections , Roger Ebert praised the film for being a " remarkably mature and complex story about a boy who loves a dog and cannot bear to see it mistreated " , depicting " the real world with all of its terrors and responsibilities " . *Shiloh* was honored with " best film " at the Chicago International Film Festival .

= = = Audiobook = = =

The audiobook version of *Shiloh* was released by Bantam Books in 1992 . Performed by Peter MacNicol , the three @-@ hour @-@ long audiobook is unabridged . Author John Wynne praised MacNicol 's delivery , writing that he " does character voices well ? both male and female ? and creates a folksy atmosphere appropriate to the material " .