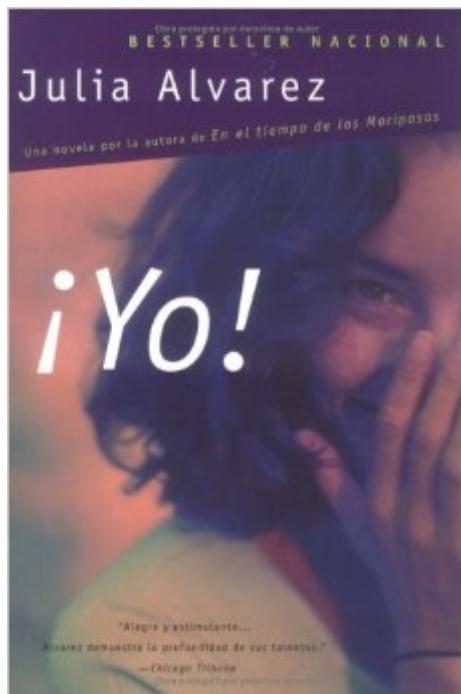


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Yo! (Spanish Language Edition) (Spanish Edition)



Synopsis

Yolanda Garcia's; su apodo es Yo; ha demostrado que es una escritora con una muy exitosa primera novela cuyos "personajes" son su familia, sus amigos y sus amantes. Mientras Yo goza de su celebridad, sus seres queridos se encuentran "desnudos" y reconocibles ante el mundo en su nueva vida publica. Cual es el resultado? Aquellos que fueron "victimizados por la ficcion" quieren contar su lado de la historia. Y asi mismo lo hacen en esta. La nueva novela de Julia Alvarez, alegre, conmovedora y bien concebida, Yo! se trata del conflicto entre el arte y la realidad, el intelecto y las emociones, y el aculturamiento en los Estados Unidos y sus propias raices dominicanas. Aqui, las tres hermanas de Yo, su mama y su papa, sus abuelos, tias, tios, primos y esposos protagonizan sus versiones de la verdadera vida de Yo. Alvarez hace que les creamos a todos y la indomable Yo, cuyo impulso creativo esta arraigado en sus recuerdos infantiles y sus dos contrastantes culturas.

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Customer Reviews

I thoroughly enjoyed this well-written and entertaining novel about Yolanda Garcia, a Dominican-American author and her family. This is the first Julia Alvarez book I've read, so I cannot compare it to her other work, but "Yo!" certainly is capable of standing on its own as a work of fiction. Nor did I feel that I ought to have read "How the Garcia Girls..." first to fully appreciate the novel(although I now would like to, since I enjoyed this book so much). I particularly liked the novel's Rashomon-like technique of telling Yo's story in bits and pieces, through the perspective of the

people who have come in and out of her life. Each chapter is written from a different person's point of view (skillfully rendered) and casts a different light on Yo's character and life. We meet her nearest and dearest - sister, cousin, best friend - as well as more tangential characters - the caretaker on her uncle's estate, a former student. Each person tells us something about Yo's character and about events in her life, and just as in real life, the picture we get of Yo isn't always 100 percent consistent. My only criticism is that I felt that one of the novel's key themes --how an author mines her own life for material, and the effect this process has on those close to her -- wasn't fully realized in the book, taking a backseat to the portrait of Yo that is fleshed out chapter by chapter, person by person. But there's a lot to like in "Yo!": clear and vivid writing, great characterization, emotional impact, a fascinating immigration story, and cleverly shifting points of view.

Julia Alvarez' writing is characterized by her impeccable ability to create convincing characters whose travails and disappointments, joys and triumphs, the reader inevitably experiences as though he were an integral part of the book. In this, the sequel to *How the Garcia Girls Lost Their Accents*, Alvarez once again has taken us in a wild ride that reverberates with the sound of truth. Amazingly, we re-acquaint ourselves with the Garcia sisters, and especially with Yolanda (Yo), while at the same time we meet a whole new procession of characters who--at one time or another--have had an impact in Yo's life. This novel works so well because even though each chapter is told from a different point of view (so that at the end we're looking at a composite picture of Yolanda as seen by these narrators), Alvarez has successfully endowed each narrator with a distinctive, entirely credible voice. As usual, the stories are alternately poignant and hilarious, ponderous and lighthearted, yet regardless of the tone, Alvarez masterfully compels the reader to look at life in a different light, because love, death, failures, triumphs, and dreams is what human existence is all about. In short, a triumph!

The book is arranged in 16 chapters, each one told from the point of view of another character. Yolanda "Yo" Garcia, from the Dominican Republic, is central to each of these chapters, but always through the eyes of someone else. There's the story of the maid in the Garcia household, Yo's professor at college who urges her to get a doctorate, Yo's best woman friend who attends a therapy group with her, her landlady who is abused by her husband and a student whose story she plagiarizes. I felt the best chapters were the ones set in the Dominican Republic, where Yo returns each summer to write. There's the old woman who asks Yo to write a letter for her, there are the

caretakers on the estate, there's the night watchman who can't read or write, and there's a chapter where one of Yo's suitors joins her in the family compound during the time that Yo's uncle is running for president of the country. The book is the strongest when it contrasts the servant class with the privileged class. However, all the supporting characters are much better developed than the central character, Yo. Also, there weren't any real facts about the Dominican Republic so that I could see the story in context of history. And Yo herself never really emerged with the deep characterization the author intended. I wasn't drawn into her personality or her complexities. The book was fast pleasant reading, but I yearned for more depth.

Julia Alvarez is definitely a gifted writer, I have read before "In the time of the butterflies" and "In the name of Salome", both great books, and they were the whole reason I decided to buy "Yo", without knowing that I should have read first "How the Garcia sisters lost their accent", but anyway, this one is a great book, I really liked Yolanda García, I have to admit that in the preface I didn't like her, but as I kept on reading Yo started to grow in me... I liked all the chapters; it is incredible how someone can touch through out an entire life so much people without even knowing. I think Yo was a good person, it seems to me that she just wanted to be accepted and loved by the family she adored and some reassurance that writing was her destiny, and her father gave her that by blessing her with both hands in her head in the last chapter. "The Stalker" was the one chapter I didn't like; it took me days just to finish it... The others were amazing, specially "The wedding guests", I loved the way every invited guest gave their opinion about the others and talk about how their lives have been touched by Yo. Other chapters like "The father" were just a pleasure to read. This is a very good book by a very good writer and I highly recommend it. Now I am going to buy her other novels, in particular "How the Garcia sisters..." and "Before we were free". It is always going to be a pleasure to read one of Julia Alvarez books...

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