



## Lionel Shriver

**We Need to Talk About Kevin**  
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### **An Interview with Lionel Shriver**

**Was writing *We Need To Talk About Kevin* a smooth creative process or did you find it to be more difficult -- technically or emotionally -- than you expected?**

It was admittedly draining. And throughout, I was anxious that because I had never had a child myself, I didn't know what I was talking about and readers who were parents would catch me out.

**Why did you decide to write *We Need To Talk About Kevin* as an epistolary novel?**

While I did write my first draft in the second person, addressing it directly to Eva's husband Franklin, the novel did not start out in letters. Later I decided to literalize her appeal to Franklin in order to avoid the implicit self-indulgence of her seeming to write in a journal or something, and also to deliberately help to disguise the nature of my ending.

**How closely did you research people who had actually been involved in these incidents?**

I did lots of online research, but I was mortified by the prospect of interviewing the parents of real-life shooters. So I didn't. I thought, their lives are hard enough without some stranger bugging them to spill their guts for her precious novel. And no amount of non-fiction research was going to tell a good story from scratch for me; there's no substitute for sitting down and making it up. That's my job.