

Boekverslag Scholieren.com

The world according to Garp door John Irving

Diecke

I particularly like the passage where Garp dresses as a woman to be able to go to the funeral of his mother. He wasn't able to go as a man because it was supposed to be the first feministic funeral. Because Garp wanted to be there badly, he dressed like a woman. Pooh Percy (who kills him at the end of the story) recognises Garp and he escapes with the help of Ellen James. At that time she thanks him for writing the book about her life. I find it touching that Garp dresses like a woman to be at the funeral, it's his mark of honour to his mother and it's a funny scene.

Win

een weekend Breda met 3 vrienden en...

ontdek de leukste studentenstad van het zuiden!

KLIK HIER →

OPEN DAG 7 november a.s.

Aangeboden door: **NHTV** internationaal hoger onderwijs Breda

scholieren
.com

I like the fact that the story is not about regular people and things, most people are extremists or just a little bit weird. For example Jenny Fields, she is a very fanatic feminist. Roberta Muldoon is a transsexual ex- footballplayer who loves children. The way Jenny got pregnant is also a bit bizarre, she had sex with a soldier who was dying.

I like the way humour and sadness are used and being alternate in this book, all the things that happen are told in a very realistic and sometimes very funny way. For example: when Helen gives Michael a blow job in his car, Garp crushes the car and Helen bits off Michael's penis. The sad thing of this accident is the fact that Walt, the youngest son of Garp and Helen dies and Duncan, the other son, loses one of his eyes.

I dislike the end of the story, first Jenny dies and later Garp get killed too. I hate that because I wanted the story to end good, this is very sad because Helen has already lost one of her sons and now she loses Garp and Jenny.

I dislike the fact that Jenny wants Garp to be a perfect child (when he's young). She wants to make choices for him, she doesn't want him to get involved with girls or other people that may have a bad influence on her son. She wants to rule his life. In my opinion that is wrong because Garp is a human being and he's perfectly capable of making his own decisions in his own life.

- The moment where Helen says she'd only marry a wrestler if he's a good writer too. At that moment Garp decides to become writer.
- When Jenny's book, *The Sexual Suspect*, becomes a great success her life changes a lot. Since then she is an example for a lot of women and for feminism, she is involved in politics and hated by a lot of men. She becomes rich and starts helping women in trouble (for example the women of the Ellen James movement).
- Garp gets involved in a world of women, of feminists. In fact he becomes one himself. When he is a witness of a rape he's very mad and he wants his second child to be a boy too because boys are not as vulnerable as girls in this world of anger and violence. This incident makes him realise how bad and unfair the world is. He writes a feministic book and from that day he daily receives threatening letters.

In my opinion Jenny Fields is the most interesting character. At the beginning of the

story, when Garp is a young boy, she is an independent woman. She doesn't want to share her life with somebody and in the '40-'50ies people thought that that was weird, not normal. Jenny wanted a baby very much but she didn't want a man who would take over her life and body (because that is what men do, in her opinion). This is why she takes the sperm of a dying soldier to get pregnant. She writes a book about the relationship between men and women and her view on that. A lot of women are inspired by this book and she becomes very famous. She's the figure head of feminism. In the house of her dead parents she starts a clinic for women who are in trouble or need somebody to talk to. Some of these women are members of the Ellen James movement. (Ellen James was a girl who was raped at the age of ten. Her tongue was cut off so she couldn't tell anybody. This movement contains women who cut off their tongue too, as a way of showing their protest.) I think that this is a very bizarre and pervert way of getting pregnant. But I admire her independence, her strong opinion and will to help people in trouble. She fights for what she stands for and eventually dies for it.

I think the relationship between Garp and his wife, Helen, is interesting because in my opinion they don't have a normal marriage. Helen and Garp have two children, they seem a happy family. Garp is at home, he's the "housekeeper" and Helen works as a professor. (This is funny because the role pattern is turned round.) Helen and Garp trade partners with Harrison and Alice, friends in trouble. Garp writes a book about this. Helen has an affair with Michael Milton, a student, and she doesn't tell this to Garp. When he finds out about this he is very mad although he's had an affair with the babysitter himself. They don't talk to each other for a while and they blame each other for the death of their youngest son. They make up after a stay in the reception of Jenny and decide to have another baby. There is so much pain and betrayal in this relation that I don't understand why they are married. They seem to love each other but it doesn't show.

Themes:

1. Feminism: Jenny becomes the figure head of feminism after writing her successful book "The Sexual Suspect". Because of her success Garp gets involved in this world too.
2. Violence: Jenny and Garp are both killed. Ellen James got raped. The world is full of violence and anger. Garp's books are horrible, this is because he uses his writing as a way to escape from society.
3. Happiness and sorrow: When something nice happens, it is followed by something bad. New life is closely connected with death (Walt is dead, Jenny is born). Joy is followed by disaster (an affair turns out in a big disaster with Duncan missing an eye and Michael missing his penis). You can't be safe in a world like this.

The book has some realistic aspects like feminism and violence but mostly it's very unrealistic. I mean, Helen bits off Michael's penis!! Beyond that I find it hard to believe that all bizarre, weird and sad things (trade of partners, dead of their son, losing an eye or a penis) are put in one marriage.

The world according to Garp- The book describes the life from Garp from the day he's born, in 1943 until the day he's killed, in 1976. The story tells about what Garp thinks or fantasises. That is why the story tells about the world ACCORDING to Garp, it doesn't have to be the reality. It's a world of fantasy, fiction.

The story begins in 1942, when Jenny Fields is 22 years old. Garp is born in '43 and when he dies the story is almost over, 1976. The story mostly plays in America but when Jenny and Garp make a trip to Europe (like all real writers do) they go to Vienna for a while.

If I could change something in the story it would be the fact that Garp is killed at the end of the story. I hate that part because in my opinion he's a good man. He was against the Women of the Ellen James movement (just like Ellen James herself) and he was killed by Pooh Percy, a member of this movement, also his former neighbour. In my opinion it's not right to kill somebody for what he believes in, for his opinion. And beyond that, I prefer a good, happy end.