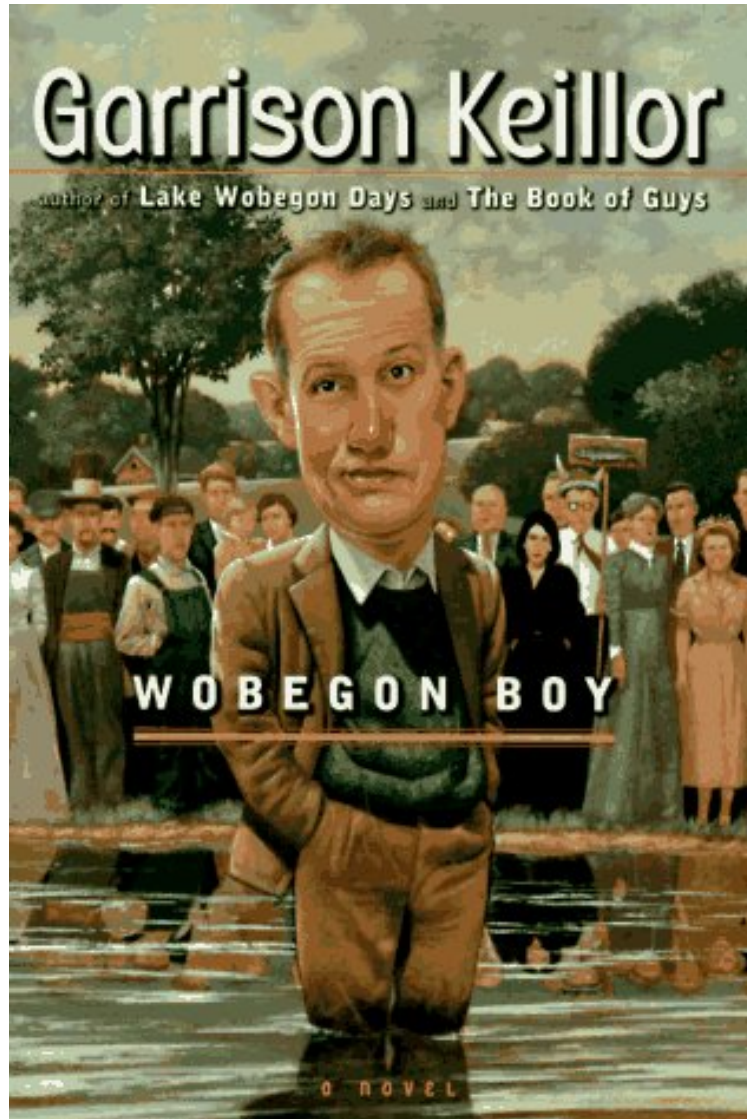


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Wobegon Boy

Garrison Keillor

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#2113818 in Books 1997-11-01 1997-11-01 Original language: English PDF # 1 9.34 x 1.16 x 6.46l, #File Name: 0670878073320 pagesmanage a public radio station at a college for academically challenged children of financially gifted parents | File size: 37.Mb

Garrison Keillor : Wobegon Boy before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Wobegon Boy:

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. What a disappointment! By Lee Witte I have been a fan of Garrison Keillor for years, and I expected this book to be so much funnier than it was! There were glimpses of humor when the main character told stories about members of his family or people from his hometown, but for the most part I found it tedious. There were many interesting characters, however the main character was not one of them. I guess I will stick

to The Prairie Home Companion!0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Five StarsBy IU LeatherneckReceived as advertised0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Good., fun reading. I chose this book because i have always enjoyed Garrison Keillor's books. This met my expectations. I recommend it for the whole family.ommeBy Jst@ehHe has a great sense of humor. He makes small town life come alive for those of us who grew up in a big city.

John Tollefson, the son of Byron and Mary of Lake Wobegon, leaves Minnesota for upstate New York, to manage a public radio station at a college for academically challenged children of financially gifted parents. Free from the Dark Lutherans of his hometown, he makes a pleasant bachelor life for himself in New York. He buys a new house and paints it a deep gold. He has a bright idea for a restaurant specializing in fresh produce. He falls in love with a historian named Alida Freeman. He is presented with public radio's coveted Wally Award. In the midst of plenty, it occurs to John that his life lacks nobility and grace. A consumer of fine food and wine and giver of good parties, he yet has no coherent life story. Compared to his great-grandfather John Tollefson, who finagled his way over from Norway, he feels rootless, restless, joined in no struggle, with nothing at stake. The only true magnificence in his life is Alida, who eludes his courtship and gives him an impassioned speech about the pleasures of living alone. Folded into the romance of John and Alida is the checkered saga of his ancestors - dour butcher, a playboy publisher, a medicine-show politician, Siamese-twin ballplayers, a Texas Pentacostalist, and a bank embezzler - and Lake Wobegon itself, with its bachelor farmers, its stout-hearted burghers and housewives, its simple code: Cheer up, Make yourself useful, Mind your manners, and Avoid self-pity. A useful code, as John discovers in his pursuit of magnificence, especially as the going gets tougher.

.com A decade after he first explored the small-town precincts of Lake Wobegon, Minnesota, Garrison Keillor makes a comical return to his roots. Not that Wobegon Boy takes place entirely within Mist County. The narrator, John Tollefson, made an early exit from his hometown and has spent the last 20 years managing a college radio station in upstate New York. Here he seems to have put a healthy distance between himself and his Wobegonian past. For the author, John's job is a handy pulpit, allowing him to fulminate against radio, New Age affectation, and campus politicking. Keillor remains a master of the cantankerous one-liner, yet there's a romance here, too--between John and a historian named Alida Freeman. And while Keillor can't resist roping Alida into his own pan-Scandinavian schtick--she's writing a scholarly study of a 19th-century Norwegian neuropath who administered high colonics to Lincoln himself--the love story is genuinely touching and gives the novel an extra emotional ballast. So, too, does the magnetic pull of Lake Wobegon. John keeps describing life back in Minnesota as one long exercise in sensory (and emotional) deprivation: "We were not brought up to experience pleasure, so it doesn't register with us, like writing on glass with a pencil. Dullness is our stock-in-trade, dullness honed to its keenest edge." Nonetheless, he returns twice in the course of the novel, and his sojourns among the Lutherans are the source of not only comedy but home truths.From Library JournalWelcomely, this is more of Keillor's patented brand of satirical nostalgia. He picks up the adventures of Lake Wobegon's John Tollefson, now puddled in upper New York State as an NPR station manager and soon to embark on a torrid romance and a midlife crisis with time out for uproariously inconsequential visits home. It's been ten years since the previous Lake Wobegon novel (Leaving Home, LJ 10/1/87), and Keillor?who may, if he keeps this up, soon have to live branded as the worthy successor to Mark Twain and Will Rogers?is once again very consistently very clever, very funny, and, to readers of Mr. Tollefson's age, very wise, right down to the throwaway stuff ("The polka...a Norwegian martial art"). Highly recommended for general fiction collections.?David Bartholomew, NYPLCopyright 1997 Reed Business Information, Inc.From Kirkus sNo, that's not thunder you're hearing. More likely it's laughter from the Hereafter, for if there's any justice here or there, Mark Twain, Will Rogers, and James Thurber have already received their advance copies of this latest installment in the ongoing saga of Minnesota's endearingly phlegmatic Norwegian- Americans. Wobegon Boy isn't exactly a novel, but what the hell, who really wants one from the genial creator and host of public radio's Prairie Home Companion? What we're given here is a shred of a story--narrated by Keillor's protagonist John Tollefson, who escapes the stultifying ``cheerfulness" of his homeland (and the girlfriend he doesn't want to marry) by securing a job as manager of a newly created radio station at upstate New York's nondescript St. James College. Shades of Jon Hassler close about the Horatio Algerlike John, who picks his way in and out of relationships with assorted academic phonies, potential business partners, and--most importantly--the ian Alida Freeman, a lively university historian who isn't above any number of amorous tumbles with the smitten Wobegonian, but won't commit herself to ``the doldrums of marriage." The plot is really only an excuse for comic riffs on such irresistible targets as political correctness, talk radio, feminist militancy, academic unfreedom, the polite impregnability of the Norwegian national character, sexual good manners, New Age music, and Lord knows what all else. There's a laugh on virtually every page of this fresh reimagining of the young-man-up-from-the- provinces novel, even during the truly touching extended sequence that describes John's return home for his father's funeral and reconciliation with exasperating friends and relations he thought he'd seen the last of. And John Tollefson is no mere innocent afoot (consider, for example, his perfectly reasonable theory that the New England Transcendentalists all

suffered from chronic constipation). Drollery raised to the level of genuine comic art. And that's the news from Lake Wobegon. (Serial rights to the Atlantic Monthly; Book-of-the-Month Club main selection; author tour) -- Copyright 1997, Kirkus Associates, LP. All rights reserved.