

ANALYSIS

Another Roadside Attraction (1971)

Tom Robbins

(1932-)

Another hip pastoral novel that displays attitudes popular in the 1960s counterculture is *Another Roadside Attraction* (1968) by Tom Robbins, as simple as a comic book. Other countercultural novelists including Pynchon and Ken Kesey stated that adolescent comic books were a major influence on their writing. Like Richard Brautigan, this *Roadside* dreamer craves “the luxury of being simultaneously involved and detached”—both communal and independent. The intellectual level of the novel is pre-school. The hip dreamer is as naive as most students today in the politically correct educational system run by government liberals. He thinks “The governments of the U.S. and [Communist] Russia are practically the same.” One character in the novel is named Marx, but readers should not expect this book to mean anything: “To look for meaning—or the lack of it—in things is a game played by beings of limited consciousness.” Nevertheless, Jesus is portrayed as “betrayed” by his religion and is not in Heaven but is a mummy hidden in the Vatican, wrapped in linens “as if the Messiah were an immense overcooked weenie in a tattered bun.” Christianity is a lie. “There is no limit to the nonsense some people expect you to swallow.” [such as this novel] Instead of God, Robbins believes in Tarzan. But this was before the onset of feminist Political Correctness when Jane got really mad.

Michael Hollister (2015)