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Teaching Manual

From Here To Eternity James Jones

Audio Brandon Films

Critical Background

The novel, *From Here To Eternity* was published in 1951. It was received as a "blockbuster" book of 860 pages describing life in Army barracks in Hawaii in the last minutes before the attack on Pearl Harbor. It became an immediate Best Seller and received the National Book Award. Reviewers were divided about the book and its place in American literature. The extent of that division is revealed in fragments taken from three reviews:

It is a slovenly, ferocious book. If it is also the most realistic and forceful novel I've read about life in the Army . . . it's because the English language is capable of absorbing and condoning a good deal of abuse from a man who has something to say and wants very desperately to say it. (New Yorker, John Lardner, Mar. 10, 1951, p. 117)

From Here To Eternity is in some ways a difficult book for it faces squarely the agonies of our time. It has a directness, a force, a vigor that cannot be described. Many will think it too brutal. It has no more brutality than a daily newspaper. It is a work appropriate to our age, a novel in the tradition of free inquiry. (N.Y. Herald Tribune Book Review, Gene Baro, Feb. 25, 1951, p. 7)

It is not clear to me how anyone seriously concerned with fiction could praise this novel as extravagantly as it has been praised. The prose alone should make it impossible to take very seriously. In their irresponsible eagerness to elevate inconspicuous merit to genius our critics are willing to mislead the public and, for that matter, the author. (Nation, Ernest Jones, Mar. 17, 1951, p. 254)

The distinguished critic Leslie Fiedler put the author, James Jones, and his novel in the following context:

I take it when a critic says that From Here To Eternity is in the tradition of 'naturalism' he means nothing more spectacular than that it is badly written in a special and quite deliberate way. In a certain sense, this is merely belaboring the obvious: even Hollywood in an all-star production found no difficulty in producing a movie

that was stylistically superior to the book; indeed, the movie-makers are too much the prisoners of their own technical excellence to do anything else. Only bankruptcy could betray them into the sloppiness that Jones has striven for with all the means at his command, striven for on principle. This principle one might just as well call 'naturalism,' though the incautious use of the term has, I am aware, led to a ridiculous sort of civil war among the critics. On the darkling plain which is literary discussion, one army advances under a banner reading, 'Art Is Morality! Without Form Only Confusion!' (signed) HENRY JAMES'; while the other side rallies under the device, 'Not Art But Life! (Theodore Dreiser-his mark).'

The material rendered in this conglomerate style ranges from the documentary 'real' descriptions of barracks life . . . It is the authority of the documentation that is forever saving the book from its own ambitions. Its value as literature, slight, intermittent, but undeniable, lies in its redeeming for the imagination aspects of regular Army life never before exploited, and in making certain of those aspects (the stockade, for instance, our home-grown 'concentration camp') symbols of the human situation everywhere. (The Collected Essay of Leslie Fiedler, "Dead-End Werther: The Bum As American Culture Hero," Stein and Day, pp. 183-86)

Fiedler's analysis of *From Here To Eternity* recognized the book's strength and weakness. Jones is a writer with great descriptive power, especially scenes of violence and brutality (fist fights, knife fights), reaching brilliance in his portrayal of life in the Stockade. His conceptualizations of the Stockade range from the newspaper legend —

The first place where former Public Enemy #1 John Dillinger ever served time in prison was in the Post Stockade at Schofield Barracks in the Territory of Hawaii, where the Schofield Barracks Military Police Company runs what is said to be the toughest jail in the U.S. Army. It was so tough that John Dillinger upon being released from it swore to have vengeance upon the whole

*United States someday, even if it killed him. (which it did) (p. 532)**

to the rationales of its officers —

'We may appear to be unduly harsh in our methods,' Major Thompson said, 'But the quickest, efficientest, least expensive way to educate a man is to make it painful for him when he is wrong, the same as with any other animal.'

' . . . We are not concerned with individual soldiers, we're concerned with the Army.'

'We have the perfect system to carry out this policy,' Major Thompson said, 'You can't beat it. We'll find out if you really don't want to soldier or not.' He turned in his chair toward the other desk. 'Won't we, Sgt. Judson?' (pp. 534-35)

the descriptions of inhuman cruelty —

Blues Berry stood against one of the side walls in his GI shorts under the lights, still trying to grin with a mouth that was too swollen to do more than twist. He was barely recognizable. His broken nose had swollen and was still running blood in a stream. Blood was also flowing out of his mouth, whenever he coughed. His eyes were practically closed. Blows from the grub hoe handles had torn the upper half of both ears loose from his head. Blood from his nose and mouth, and the ears which were not bleeding much, had spotted his chest and the white drawers.

. . . Cpl. Brown stepped into position like a man stepping into the batter's box at the plate and swung his grub hoe handle with both hands into the small of Berry's back. Berry screamed. Then he coughed, and some more blood splashed down from his mouth. (pp. 656-57)

and its ultimate meaning:

In the Stockade, whatever else happened, you worked. You swung your 16 lb. hammer to crush this rock, or you swooped a scoopshovel to load this rock you had already crushed, into the trucks that came. Work without purpose,

*All quotations are from the Scribner edition of James Jones' *From Here To Eternity* (1951). Page reference are listed in parentheses.

work without end, work without pride. Your hands blistered, broke, bled, calloused. They corned up like a mailman's feet. By their blisters, you thought wildly, shall ye know them. Lord, when the day of judgment came. And as soon as you had busted all of this rock available, the Engineers came in and accommodately blasted more slabs of it out of the mountains for you. It was an unlimited mountain. And your muscles ached and toughened. And your mind ached and toughened. And your asshole ached and tightened, when you thought about a woman. You would be a tough, good, dangerous soldier, when you got out of this. (p. 665)

The power of these descriptions hits the reader with the wallop of a documentary from a Concentration Camp. The author's picture of life in the Stockade transcends his own interpretation of it. A favorite technique of Jones' was using characters like the philosopher-soldier Malloy and the intellectual Karen Holmes as the book's interpreters. The Stockade scenes stripped of these interpreters is a portrait of barbarism in a democratic society, and raises questions that nag the reader, questions that the author meticulously avoids for his own purpose of portraying "symbols of the human situation everywhere." The Stockade is the ultimate expression of the Dogsoljer's credo that "life is crummy." Who, for example, is responsible for the murderous death of the prisoner Berry? (pp. 656-7) The official report read:

He died the next day about noon, 'from massive cerebral hemorrhage and internal injuries,' the report was quoted as stating, 'probably caused by a fall from a truck traveling at high speed.' (p. 657)

The whitewash could satisfy the officers but the hero of the novel, Private Robert E. Lee Prewitt, had his own ideas. His reasoning and actions are at the very center of the novel's dilemma. His own code of ethics accepted Army cruelty as practiced by its officers as all being part of the "system." Prewitt accepted the social order, but held individuals on his level responsible — in this case, Fatso Judson, another enlisted man who would end up getting it from Prewitt. At the same time his art, with his fists or with his

music, he considered inviolate. He will not obey what for him is an immoral order — to box, and risk everything, including the Stockade — to preserve that integrity. In maintaining that integrity, Prewitt's conscience will assert itself. Yet these heroics are strictly personal and do not affect his relation to the Army. The Army is still his home. Prewitt is not the voice out of the crowd of human misfits and rejects for whom the Army organization has given a purpose to existence — a human identity. His rebellion is that of a *poete maudit*, who will not be sucked into an evil world even though he will conform up to a point . . . The ending fits his romantic mold as Jones sends him to his death at Pearl Harbor.

While Pearl Harbor is the *deus ex machina* of the novel, the problem of the Stockade has been left for future generations. Is such cruelty indigenous to our system? Is it human aberration? Does our system by its very nature produce these human aberrations? What is the price of the organization? If organization is the source of human value what gives the organization its values? What does the individual do in the face of such evil? These are the unanswered questions that have come back to haunt the national consciousness by revelations of institutionalized cruelty at Mylai, Attica and Kent State, or that emerge as scandals in our prisons, mental hospitals and old age homes. The nagging question persists, "Who is responsible for these or for the Stockade in Schofield Barracks?" (James Jones' intimate knowledge and accurate descriptive powers established the Stockade's bitter reality — yet he never questioned it.) This is the problem collapsed by the attack on Pearl Harbor, that stays on to bother the modern reader. Jones' description of life in the Stockade in 1941 is a literary equivalent to scandalous conditions of modern democracy. If, as an eminent penologist suggests, the prison is our society in microcosm (Thomas O. Murton, *The Dilemma of Prison Reform*, Holt Rinehart and Winston, 1976), *From Here To Eternity* is a relevant read for the 70's and Prewitt's rebellion a permanent symbol of man's aspirations.

The novel *From Here To Eternity* sprawls 860 pages in a style loosely defined as natural-

ism. It is a technique that exacts an intimate knowledge of its subject. The truth of Jones' Army is realized because the accuracy and detail of his descriptions agree with the actions and dialog of his characters. It gets lost when he uses the sophomoric sessions as explanations. The dramatic weakness of the novel is in the author's attempts to explain and philosophize the action. The structural weakness stems from the literary form called naturalism — in this context, defined by Fiedler as "any combination of methods the defects of whose qualities are grossness and clumsiness . . ." Despite these limitations, the novel has produced some of the best descriptive prose in American literature, with power and detail to hold the reader through the end of the book. Jones' description of the pre-World War II career Army man — the "30 year man" — his habits, loyalties, motivations, styles of adaptation to group pressure, and the demands of group identity and loyalty give the book a contemporary relevance.

In a sense, the book is a period piece out of the postwar generation, a contemporary of Mailer's *The Naked and The Dead*, Shaw's *The Young Lions*, Sartre's *Les Chemins de La Liberte*, documentaries of Auschwitz, the Bataan Death March, Nuremberg and Hiroshima. At home (1951) it was the time of the House Un-American Activities Committee and the beginning of our own witch hunting (McCarthyism). It was the time of a postwar generation that had become witness to the horrors of Jones' Stockade in the reality of World War II. The recognition that these conditions still might, and indeed do exist in democracy, frees the book from its time and makes it relevant for any age.

Film Interpretation

The film *From Here To Eternity* is a remarkable achievement and in the opinion of several critics is superior to the book. It won several honors — The Academy Award, The Screen Directors Guild Award and the New York Film Critics Award.

The author of the movie script, Daniel Taradash, himself a pre-World War II draftee, took a year for reducing the 860 pages into a 364-page shooting script. Taradash described his work in the following terms:

I sort of had a bead on the story — the Stockade brutality could be more effective if suggested rather than literally duplicated. The blowing of the bugle, which had great meaning in the characterization of Private Prewitt was shifted to make it a climax, so to speak, of the second act of the screen play. . . (New York Times, Aug. 6, 1953, p. 46)

In shaping the screenplay from the slice-of-life novel, Taradash centered the drama on the two protagonists, Private Robert E. Lee Prewitt and Sergeant Warden, condensing scenes and events of the novel into the action of their friends and associates. He omitted the book's interpreter-philosopher Malloy as well as all the author's attempts at explaining away the action. The technique enabled the film to recreate the atmosphere of the Army barracks as described by Jones, with the plot flowing from the characterization and the action giving the drama its meaning. Taradash himself said that he had retained at least two main points from the novel: "the story of an individual fighting against the group and the story of a man killed by the thing he loves, in this case the Army." (*Ibid.*)

Writing in the *Saturday Review*, Arthur Knight described the film in the following terms:

Probably no one who has not himself served time in the Army can fully comprehend the curious and very special kind of pride a soldier takes in his outfit, the unreasoning, defensive loyalty that leads frequently to barroom brawls, occasionally to deeds of glorious heroism. The true soldier finds a home in the Army. His Company becomes his family, and a new kind of blood relationship

is born. Fierce, strong, demanding, it knows no compromise. Whenever a new man joins the outfit he is either with or agin' it — and woe to the man this family refuses to accept.

Daniel Taradash, carving a screenplay out of Jones' massive story, has splendidly captured this naively complicated state of mind, holding it as the psychological background for his characters. Only with this setting firmly established could the people of this film ring as true as they do. Far more important, far more exciting than any single incident in this action-filled picture is the steady evolution of strong, real personalities from an established point of departure. In the two hours of its running time, From Here To Eternity permits us to know intimately Prewitt and Warden, Holmes and Maggio. We come to know their strengths, their weaknesses — and the women who link together the lives of these men in the hours snatched away from Army routine. The contrast yet basic similarity between Prewitt and Warden is artfully suggested by the intercutting of their separate love affairs. (Saturday Review, Aug. 8, 1953, p. 25)

The point of departure is firmly established in the opening shots of the film as the camera pans the shadowy grey walls of the Army post, quickly passes over soldiers marching and focuses on the solitary figure of Private Robert E. Lee Prewitt being transferred to the Schofield Barracks at Pearl Harbor. In quick succession, he meets his old drinking buddy Maggio, Sergeant Warden and Captain Dynamite Holmes. The personality of each of the characters emerge in that opening sequence: Maggio with his penchant for trouble is first seen mopping a floor; Prewitt's talents as a boxer and bugler also reveal an iron-willed individuality in his refusal to box for the company team. Captain Holmes' ambitions for promotion show his pompous vanity and Sergeant Warden, "the man in charge," tells how things really get done in the Army by describing his boss, Captain Holmes, with the words, "He'd strangle in his own spit if he didn't have me around." The dialog in that opening scene establishes the characters, defines the nature of the conflicts and gives the drama its central structure:

- (1) Captain Holmes (to Prewitt): I pulled strings to get you in Prewitt. All I need is a top middle (weight fighter).
- (2) Sgt. Warden (to Prewitt): You'll fight, Prewitt, if not for Captain Holmes, then for me.
- (3) Prewitt (to Warden): If a man don't go his own way, he's nothing . . .
- (4) Captain Holmes (again to Prewitt): In the Army it's not the individual that counts.



The drama flows from those visual and verbal opening statements and tension mounts as Prewitt gets the "treatment" for his refusal to box, Maggio goes to the stockade for neglecting guard duty, Sergeant Warden has an identity crisis caused by his affair with Captain Holmes' wife Karen, and the absent Captain Holmes stays busy partying and politicking for his promotion.

While the film deals with the routine and bureaucracy of Army life, at the center are the characters of Prewitt and Warden: Prewitt, the artist with his fists and the bugle, who will not box because he once blinded an opponent; and Warden, the "old time Sergeant," who runs the Company in the Captain's absence and is being cajoled by Karen Holmes into becoming an officer.

An early scene at a G.I. bar surfaces their exceptional talents and rising mutual respect for each other. Prewitt sitting next to a soldier polishing a bugle takes the mouthpiece and blows some hot chords as Warden and the group listen

From Here to Eternity
(B&W) / 118 mins. / U.S. / 1953 / Dir. Fred Zinnemann / Burt Lancaster, Montgomery Clift, Deborah Kerr



in admiration. Fatso Judson enters, picks up the photograph of Maggio's sister, gets hit over the head by Maggio and taking out his knife says, "I'm gonna cut this wop's heart out." It's now Warden's turn. In a flash he's on his feet, a broken bottle in his hand telling Fatso to drop the knife, "because if it's killing you want . . ."



With that, the fight is broken up and Prewitt and Warden go staggering off into the night, comrades in arms. Around these two are Maggio — the rebel against a system he doesn't understand, the vain Captain Holmes, the evil Fatso Judson and the women, Karen and Alma.

The film also connects the fates of Prewitt and Warden with their romances. The roles of the two women in the film, Alma, the prostitute of the New Congress Club who dreams of returning to respectability in the States (Prewitt's girl friend), and Karen Holmes, the estranged wife of the Captain (Warden's girl friend), are keys

to understanding both men and their attachments to the Army. The scenarist Taradash has explained his conception of the romances: "I had the notion of intercutting the two love stories to give a feeling of the unconscious interrelation of their lives."

In the film, the romantic encounters between the couples are presented interchangeably, shifting from one to the other in the same scene. The technique reaches brilliance in a shot from the famous love scene on the beach between Warden and Karen when the roar of the ocean dissolves into the din of the New Congress Club on a busy Saturday night. The unsatisfactory ending of both love affairs further reveals the identities of Prewitt and Warden and reach at the very heart of the novel's portrayal of the loyalties of the "30 year man." The love affairs represent the world outside. They can exist so long as they do not threaten the career man's identity and his relation to the Army. In Warden's case the threat meant giving up his security. After his explanation to Karen Holmes as to why he could never be an officer ("I hate officers"), she rebuffs him with the insight, "You are married to the Army."

For Prewitt the threat meant giving up his identity. After the knife fight with Fatso Judson, Prewitt recuperating at Alma's must suddenly get back to the base — even at the risk of getting killed. There occurs the following dialog:

Alma: Please don't go. You'll get killed.
Why go back to the Army?

Prewitt: I'm a soldier.

It is at this point that we recognize the personalities of Prewitt and Warden and the ultimate meaning of the Army for their lives. They cannot function without it. Even Prewitt, a victim of the Army's brutality, whose credo is "a man who doesn't go his own way is nothing," at the end must go the way of the Army.

The film, *From Here To Eternity* was considered a motion picture with magnificent direction, superb acting and brilliant photography.

Direction

There is a description of the director Fred Zinnemann's approach to the selection of the actors for the film in *The Films of Fred Zinnemann*.

When Harry Cohn bought the screen rights to James Jones' 860-page From Here To Eternity, the purchase was laughed at over Beverly Hills dinner tables as 'Cohn's folly,' and for the better part of a year it seemed that this property was likely to gather dust forever in the company's files. Then Dan Taradash, little-known except for his work on Army films, produced the compact, balanced script on which the two-hour film was based. Director and studio head took one another's measure from the start, the first matter of controversy being casting. Cohn was for casting Aldo Ray or some similar hard-boiled type as Robert E. Lee Prewitt, and was shocked at Zinnemann's suggestion of Montgomery Clift, until the director pointed out that Prewitt is described in the first paragraph of the book as a 'very neat and deceptively slim young man,' and that it would be just that deceptive slimness that could give edge to Prewitt's decision to take all the Army could dish out to him. The role of Karen Holmes was so obviously a gutsy part that it seemed equally obvious that it should go to Joan Crawford, until Deborah Kerr's agent, Buddy Ehrenburg, casting about for a way to revive her faltering career, pointed out to Zinnemann how effective her frigid gentility could be with a slight coat of tarnish. The role of Angelo was Frank Sinatra's first straight acting part; it is hard to remember today, after his many fine performances, what a nine-days-sensation his appearance in a non-singing role created.

Zinnemann does this kind of casting not alone because it freshens the narrative formula in a new view of familiar personalities, but also because of the effect on the players themselves of playing roles not based on mannerisms and associations which had made them successful. Here their interaction on one another is particularly conspicuous, especially in the case of Montgomery Clift who, says Zinnemann, 'has the effect of keying the other actors to his level, giving them all a lift.' (The Films of Fred Zinnemann, Museum of Modern Art, p. 14)

About Zinnemann's selection of Montgomery Clift as Prewitt, Frank Sinatra as Maggio, and Donna Reed as Alma (Lorene), the critic Manny Farber wrote in the *Nation*:

The laurel wreaths should be handed to an unknown person who first decided to use Frank Sinatra and Donna Reed in the unsweetened roles of Maggio, a tough little Italian American soldier, and Lorene, a prostitute at the "New Congress" who dreams of returning to respectability in the states. Sinatra plays the wild drunken Maggio in the manner of an energetic vaudevillian. In certain scenes — doing duty in the mess hall, reacting to some foul piano playing — he shows a marvelous capacity for phrasing plus a calm expression that is almost unique in Hollywood films. Miss Reed may mangle some lines ('You certainly are a funny one') with her attempts of a flat Midwestern accent, but she is an interesting actress whenever Cameraman Burnett Guffey uses a hard light on her somewhat bitter features. Brando must have been the inspiration for Clift's ability to make certain key lines ('I can soldier with any man,' or 'No more'n ordinary right cross') stick out and seem the most authentic examples of American speech to be heard in films. (Nation, Aug. 29, 1953, p. 178)

Photography

From the opening sequences and the long solitary shot of Prewitt entering Schofield Barracks, the film contains brilliant and realistic shots of Army life:



Striking scenes as companies marching without a musical background in cadence step; the painfully sad and haunting taps played by Prewitt for his departed friend Maggio with the notes of martial marching groping their way from stone to stone and from face to shadowy face; an incredible knife fight that follows the exact description in the novel (pp. 670-71); a wild drunken scene of Army men sitting on the road singing the Army's *Reenlistment Blues* and then staggering off into the night, bottles in hand; the sudden ripping explosive attack on Schofield Barracks, showing the total unpreparedness for the attack, with soldiers scrambling in all directions and a bugler blowing an attack charge.



Censorship

The love scene between Warden and Karen Holmes was thought to be daring and faced the possibility of censorship. The following account was published in *Look Magazine*:

Preferring self-regulation to intervention, Hollywood submits movie scripts, film and still photographs for approval to the Association of Motion Picture Producers, better known after its chief as the Breen Office. A sequence played by usually decorous Deborah Kerr and always agile Burt Lancaster in From Here To Eternity was thus censored. With mysterious logic, the Breen Office decreed that the stills shown on the next page were not to be used for publicity, advertising or other purposes. What was objected to according to reports, was the water. (The official ruling read):

TITLE:

From Here To Eternity
(Columbia)

SCENE:

Blowhole Beach, Island of Oahu, T.H.

ACTORS:

Kerr, Lancaster

CREW:

'More than 100 people'

EQUIPMENT:

'Tons (including dynamos)'

SHOOTING TIME:

Three days

COST:

Record in time, manpower and equipment for a single movie love scene

RULING:

'Objectionable' (Aug. 25, 1955, pp. 42-43)

That scene today would be considered absolutely harmless, and tells us much about the mores of the early 50's.



There are however, other considerations of *From Here To Eternity*. When the script was finished, the producer and screenwriter went to Washington for a session with the Departments of Defense and Army. Later on, the Army assigned a warrant officer as technical advisor to the film. Certain changes had to be made, especially the final outcome of the company commander's military career. In the book he is promoted from captain to major, while in the

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film he is court martialed. Although the change fits the drama, it reveals fundamental mechanics of the movie business and its relation to government.

The Stockade brutality became intensified through the feuds of the characters; thus the charges against the Army became reduced to

the specific conduct of individuals. Within this framework the Stockade scene and the inhuman treatment of Maggio by the evil Fatso Judson are the result of a series of their own personal encounters where the good and bad guys had been clearly defined for the viewer. The changes are minor. They do not affect the structure of the

drama, yet make the most damning point of the book that much stronger. The novel was a blistering indictment of government (Army) organization with its bureaucratic indifference and intense pressures on the individual to conform. In the end, Hollywood, Prewitt, and perhaps the rest of us must go the same route.

Critics' Round Table

Listed below are the sources of major film reviews. These can be used for student analysis and evaluation, and as a guide for students to write criticism.

Sight and Sound, Jan., 1954, pp. 145-46.
Colliers, Aug. 7, 1952, pp. 38-39.
Commonweal, Aug. 21, 1953, pp. 488-489.
Harpers, Oct., 1953, pp. 92-93.
Holiday, Jan., 1954, p. 14.
Library Journal, Sept. 1, 1953, p. 1411.
Life, Aug. 31, 1953, pp. 81-83.
Look, Aug. 25, 1953, pp. 41-43.
McCalls, Oct., 1953, p. 8.
Nation, Aug. 29, 1953, p. 178.
New York Times, May 10, 1953, p. 8; June 14, 1953, p. 24; Aug. 6, 1953, p. 10; Aug. 9, 1953, p. 1.
New Yorker, Aug. 8, 1953, p. 51.
Newsweek, Aug. 10, 1953, p. 82.
Saturday Review, Aug. 8, 1953, p. 25.
Time, Aug. 10, 1953, p. 94.
Cue, Aug. 8, 1953, p. 16.

Here are selected excerpts from reviews. These are to be used selectively in preparation for group discussion, textual analysis and student writing. The selected excerpts are thought-provoking ideas that represent a wide range of divergent criticism.

Time

"This is what Hollywood calls a big picture loaded with production values. It tries to tell a truth about life, about the human spirit, and in some instances it fails. And yet . . . also tries to be something more."

Harpers

"*From Here To Eternity* is in most respects earnest and as honest as one could ask in giving

dramatic life to Mr. Jones' hit-me-again-I-love-it feeling for the Army and in making the book's defects its own."

Sight and Sound

"One sees vaguely that the director may have seen Prewitt's situation as a reflection of the impasse in which the independent citizen is placed by present-day political America. In the novel the events were motivated and cross-indexed by extensive character studies, but the film hardly has time to do more than state the facts: The only element which binds it together is the soldiers' repeated avowal of their almost mystical surrender to the ideals and demands of the Army."

Activities

1. Research the reviews listed in the Critics' Round Table. With which do you agree or disagree? Why? Write your own review of the film.
2. Prewitt's rebellion is one individual's attempt to maintain his integrity in the face of group pressure. What does the phenomenon of Prewitt tell us about man and society?
 - A. What is the nature of his triumph and defeat?
 - B. Why is he an object of persecution?
3. Research conditions that lead to prison riots and compare them with the conditions of the Stockade. Utilizing your research, write a description in the naturalist style of Jones.
4. Analyze each character in the movie and determine his or her relationship to the Army.

Nation (Manny Farber)

"It was my impression that the performances were often too fancy and the camera work too arty for a convincing study of tough Americans."

Saturday Review

"A soldier's life, unattractive at best is here made more so by the ever-present possibility of being trapped in a system that commands unquestioning obedience and builds conformity through harsh authority."

Cahiers du Cinema

"One cannot ignore the fact that the only visible officer on the scene until his downfall, is an ignoble Captain, debauched and especially absent. (translation from vol. 34, p. 57)

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