

# Free movie review on cool hand luke

[Entertainment](#), [Movie](#)



Stuart Rosenberg, the director of the film, *Cool Hand Luke* (1967), is one of the most noted filmmakers in the history of world cinema. Born in 1927, Rosenberg completed his graduation and started his training as an editor on television programs. At the age of thirty, he graduated from being an editor to a director. After directing close to as many as 50 episodes, he moved to making movies. Thus, he went on to make memorable films like *Cool Hand Luke*, *The Amityville Horror*, *Voyage of the Damned* and *The Pope of Greenwich Village* that immortalized him as a stalwart of the cinematic medium of art and aesthetics. The film *Cool Hand Luke* is his most famous work. He adapted Donn Pearce's 1965 novel by the same name to make this movie. The movie went on to be nominated in many categories at the Oscar, and came to be marked as his best work and an American classic.

([rottentomatoes.com](http://rottentomatoes.com)) Stuart Rosenberg met with his demise in 2007 in a heart attack.

The article on the film *Cool Hand Luke* penned by J. M. Anderson (found in the online library of New York Film Academy) goes on to express the quintessential performance of the male protagonist of the movie. The article talks about the “unforgettable” opening scene of the movie in context and then gives a brief description of the plot of the movie. The critique delves into the characteristic traits of the protagonist, and hails the screenplay of the film. The most memorable dialogue of the film finds a mention in the course of the writing. The excellence of the cinematographer, Conrad L. Hall, is explicated in the following description. Thus, the article goes on to discuss about the film holistically taking into context the cinematic techniques and mechanisms that are involved in the process along with the content and

acting that all work together to raise the affective appeal of the cinematic work.

This film in context is surely one of the most important cinematic works of the 1960s that was a decade marked by the thematic content of the protest against the established powers. One of the dialogues of the film got very famous all over. Strother Martin is found to opine, “ What we've got here is failure to communicate.” The film, Cool Hand Luke, is embedded with religious symbolism all through along with the references and images that are placed aptly within the narrative of the film. Many of the film critics have opined that Luke, the protagonist of the movie, is representative of the modern-day, Christ-like figure in the society who even gets a number of followers or disciples. He refuses to give in to the oppression that is meted out to him and his followers.

The thematic content of the film shows an outsider-protagonist who goes on to change the occupants of this Southern chain gang institution. The male protagonist finally sacrifices himself quite tragically at the end of the movie. The film can be seen as an allegory of anti-establishment about this rebellious person who get sentenced to prison. The cinematography of the film in context shows signs of experimentation with the very art of imperfection. The aesthetic appeal of the film, the content, symbolism and acting comes together leaving a mark on the minds of the audience.

The previous era of filmmaking had testimony to the kind of cinematography that aimed to portray visual perfection. The cinematography showed the images of the characters where their skinned glowed with a sort of surreal perfection. There was use of beautiful lighting while shooting previous

films. Then, things started to change a bit. Hall, the cinematographer of this film inculcated both these types of cinematographic style.

The film shows the scenes being shot with a naturalistic sense of the real world that was definitely gritty and in keeping with the changing times of the world of cinema. The cinematographer went on to utilize certain techniques in the mentioned film in context that were considered to be mistakes in the previous times in the art of cinema. Thus, the film is marked with styles of photography that include a flare in the lens of the camera or an “inappropriate” move.

These effects are used dramatically in the course of the movie to enhance the effect on the minds of the audience. The usage of this sort is abundant in the film, and these can be particularly found in the scenes that show the chain gang as they slave under the scorching heat of the sun. The cinematographer goes on to allow the rays of the sun to ricochet off the inner lens of the zoom. This goes on to portray the immense misery of the midday sun through the creation of zingers of flare on the screen.

A very famous scene from the film is the egg-eating scene. This scene is so famous that there is allusion to it quite often in many other movies or shows on television. In this particular scene in context, Luke who is a prisoner in the small prison of Southern chain-gang accepts the bet on whether he is able to eat as many as fifty hard-boiled eggs in the span of an hour. The mentioned starts with the combination music of drums, piano, horns and fiddle. This serves the purpose of adding the comedic element to the scene so that the immense foolishness of the bet can be supplemented with the music.

The eggs get prepared and are taken to the prisoner barracks. There, the

audience can see this exposed bulb that hangs over the picnic table, while all the prisoners gather around the table. The shot is framed by the prisoners in context. The light that can be seen hanging overhead along with the attention of all the prisoners on the picnic table aim to make the audience focus their attention on Luke who would soon enter the scene of the film. The audience can listen to a lot of sound in the background. All the other prisoners present in the place start saying things that go on to show their apprehensions on the bet. Every time the uncertainty gets expressed, the prisoners go on to talk about their renewed confidence that devouring as many as fifty eggs in the span of an hour is totally impossible.

The sound of the chains of the prisoners can be heard in the background. However, the sound in the background gets interrupted quite often by dialogues. These dialogues serve the purpose of providing the audience with very important information. Thus, the audience comes to know that one small syndicate is seeing all those bets. Also, every cent in the camp is riding on the bet in context. As Luke enters the scene, he goes on to become the center of attraction for the audience. At this juncture, the director goes on to use a number of close-up shots that show Luke eating the eggs. Apart from this, close up shots of the prisoners are also incorporated in the sequence, and these shots go on to expose the nervousness of the prisoners present there.

One can take a note of the fact that the camera does not make much movement. The camera can be found to tilt, pan, as well as change the focus quite rarely. The cinematographer opts to keep the camera in a fixed spot usually. Thus, the camera works in the portraiture as a neutral observer. This

in turn aids the process of conveying the fact that the characters present are the prisoners. These people are present in an enclosed place, and thus lack the freedom to roam about freely. Hence, the camera also does not move much in the sequence.

The final shot is in fact a bird's eye view that shows Luke who is laid out across the picnic table. Luke is seen as if he is spread out like Christ on the cross. This particular image that gets combined with some other scenes in the movie aims to portray Luke's character and draw the parallel with Christ. Luke is portrayed as a person who is stubborn with the convictions, self-sacrificing, not willing at all to conform and intrepid. Thus, one can also comprehend that the aesthetic elements of the film point to the theme of redemption that can be described to be Christ-like in nature.

Luke goes on to redeem himself as a person as he runs away after getting broken by the guards present. Apart from this, it becomes quite evident that he has successfully redeemed his other inmates' decreasing faith in humanity. However, the comparison with Christ can be debatable as Luke is found to be a person with religious skepticism. There are many prominent examples of his skepticism as he goes on to yell at the sky though the rains. He also converses with the Almighty in the church before he gets killed- something that points to his skepticism once again.

Moreover, there are times when the guards at the prison suggest that Luke is a sort of impediment and ended up in the prison as he did not believe in the Almighty. However, the color composition, lighting, framing all bring in some sort of allusion to Christ, and might be seen as pointing to the fact that Luke is the person who brings modern day redemption in a time when the faith in

God has faced challenges owing to the practical issues of the society around.

Thus, the cinematic techniques with the quintessential portraiture of the stalwart director of the movie in context bring out the cinematic charm of the work of art. The audience across the world is left to revel at the genius of the film that stirs the audience to the innermost core of their hearts. The film excels in use of the elements of cinema that all come together to produce a paramount effect that still lives on overcoming the scythe of time in the history of cinema.

## **Works Cited**

Anderson, J. M. "Review: Cool Hand Luke." Video Librarian Vol. 23 Issue 6 (2008):

p44-44. Web. 13 June 2015.

"Conrad L. Hall ASC." In Theasc. com website. The asc. com, n. d. Web. 13 June 2015.

"Stuart Rosenberg Biography." In Rotten Tomatoes. Rottentomatoes. com, n. d. Web. 13 June 2015.