

# Shawshank redemption: critical analysis of subcultures



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## **Critical Analysis of The Shawshank Redemption**

The Shawshank Redemption is a 1994 movie written and directed by Frank Darabont, featuring Tim Robbins and Morgan Freeman. The movie is a classic and is considered as one of the all-time best.

The principal theme of the movie remains around the life of a prisoner, Andy, and tells us about the various circumstances and adversities faced by him and how does he manage to go through all this. The movie skillfully integrates the representation of harsh realities of the prison world and remains successful to a large extent in conveying the intended message to the viewer as to how brutal and harsh a prisoner's life can be.

The media generally portrays prison as an unpleasant and frightening place, and “ The Shawshank Redemption” is a prime case that backs the media's proposal about jails. In the film, we get acquainted with the character Andy Dufresne, played by Tim Robbins, a banker who is wrongfully sentenced for killing his wife and her lover. He is indicted and is sentenced to serve two lifelong incarcerations consecutively. While attempting to survive and discover his jail personality, he meets and becomes friends with Ellis Boyd “ Red” Redding , which is played by Morgan Freeman, a vendor, and Brooks Hatlen, played by James Whitmore, another life prisoner, in addition to other detainees. While trying to establish his place in the jail, he develops a kind of business relation with the guards' in charge named Captain Bryon Hadley, played by Clancy Brown and Samuel Norton, the jail Warden, among several other staff members at the Shawshank jail.

The movie provides an insight into several aspects of the life in a prison. These attributes include jail society; particularly the guard subculture and detainee subculture. Likewise, the film also demonstrates the adjustments to the jail's environment, as start, prisonization or institutionalization and finally rehabilitation. The film also gives a view of the purposes behind utilization of the jail for discipline and how it works as a system.

## **Guard Subculture**

There are various types of guards in prison; these include the rule enforcer, hard liner, people's worker, synthetic officer, and loner (Cesaroni, 2009a).

The rule enforcer is a quite inflexible guard who is mainly focused on maintaining the control. These types of guards are not much interested in negotiations with the inmates; rather they are more interested in displaying their power and authority over the prisoners. The people worker type guard is an older, more seasoned guard who relies on their verbal skills and common sense instead of physical force. The ' Synthetic officer' is a guard who treats the inmate fairly, and follows the rules closely, depending on the situation. The loner type of guard strictly enforces the regulations and is always on the lookout to prove their skills to other guards.

The Warden, Samuel Norton, is portrayed as an individuals' specialist to start with of the movie. This is accepted in light of the fact that the Warden is indicated to be a change oriented person. The Warden is additionally indicated to be a dedicated Christian; in the scene when he is initially acquainted with the gathering of people, he clarifies " I put stock in two things, discipline and the biblical canon". However as the film advances we

see that the Warden Samuel Norton is an extraordinary sample of the hard  
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liner monitor, because of different activities. The Warden demonstrates his actual nature to be that of a hardliner guard, when he plots to have Tommy Williams slaughtered so Andy does not have a shot of escaping from jail. Another case for the Warden thought to be a hardliner guard is that he is utilizing the detainees as free work, while taking influences from contending offices. The film Shawshank Redemption traces the head guard, Captain Byron Hadley to be a decent outline of the tenet authority. At the point when Captain Hadley is acquainted with the group of onlookers he is hollering at another prisoner “ You consume when you’re advised to consume, you crap when we say you poop, you piss when we say you piss” because of the inquiry “ When do we consume?” This delineates that Hadley’s part is to implement the guidelines. Hadley delights in being a horrible and amazing guard who appreciates frightfully beating the detainees. The Captain additionally beats another detainee to death on Andy’s first night in jail.

## **Inmate Subculture**

Inmate subculture is described as the norms, beliefs, values, ideologies, symbols, and language specific to a group of inmates in prison (Ishwawan & Neugebauer, 2001). We will discuss two models for inmate subculture: the deprivation model and the importation model. The Deprivation model suggests that “ the prisoners suffer and get frustrated due to the absence of liberty, privacy, free access to goods and services, heterosexual relationships, autonomy and security” (Stojkovic, Stan & Lovell, 1998). This theory clearly says that inmate subculture is evident through the pains of imprisonment. While the importation model says that the subculture is evident because the prisoners are replicating the outside world. This model

includes the prisoner-staff dynamic, 3 types of inmates, various racial groups within the prison population, type of offence, record of recidivism (re-offending), personality differences (prior to imprisonment), power of “politicians” (top of the inmate social hierarchy), work gangs, work groups, and sexual “deviation” which would directly affect inmate subculture. Both inmate subculture models comprise of a behavior code, a power hierarchy, an economic system for illicit goods and service distributions and “argot” rules.

Argot rules are a set of terms that inmates use to refer to various roles in the prison subculture. The jail language incorporates terms such as fish, rat, gorilla, center-men, merchant, ball buster, tough, real man, wolf, fag and punk. Fish is a new detainee; in the film all the new detainees are called fish by other prisoners. As the new detainees are wandering in, there is another (more seasoned) detainee who is making motions about “reeling-in fish”. A center-man is a disagreeable prisoner who tries to opportunist with the jail power. In the film, Andy would be a good example as he helps the guards (and the Warden) with their taxes and deals with their cash. However when gotten some information about it, Andy denies the case. Andy is likewise enjoyed by other prisoners, once they get to know him, subsequently he would not be a complete focus man. A rivulet is an alternate illustration of a center man, however in the movie Brooks is well known, and everybody likes him. A merchant is a prisoner who offers things for sale when given the chance, for this situation Red is an impeccable illustration. Red is “the fellow that can get it for you, cigs, liquor, anything inside reason”. A wolf is a detainee that takes the male part in sexual experiences. These people are

exceptionally forceful and are not of gay person introduction outside of jail. In the movie Bogs Diamond the leader of “ The Sisters” group is a good example of this.

## **Prisonization/Institutionalization**

To really comprehend jail and how it influences the individual Goffman depicted it as an aggregate establishment. An alternate approach to ponder jail is as “ a position of habitation and work where a substantial number of like-arranged people, cut off from the more extensive society for an obvious time of time, together lead an encased, formally directed round of life. This is in the feeling of the controlling structure and social association in which the jail capacities. Clemmer expresses that prisonization or regulation is the methodology of socialization of a prisoner into the subculture of the jail. This procedure incorporates researching the jails subculture, for example, values, convictions and practices that test the jail staff. Despite the fact that these guidelines and subcultures are set up to restore the guilty party they may fortify a few sorts of freak conduct too.

Some individuals who enter jail won't completely receive the jail subculture. People who get tied up with the jail society have a tendency to have longer sentences, flimsy identities and have a tendency to not have powerless associations with individuals on the outside of jail (Cesaroni, 2009b). The people who oppose jail society have a tendency to have shorter sentences, stable identities and genuinely great associations with individuals in the public eye. In the movie, many characters had long sentences and effectively got tied up with the prisonization impact. A prime illustration of that is the character Brooks. Streams was in the jail for a long time, been sent to <https://assignbuster.com/shawshank-redemption-critical-analysis-of-subcultures/>

Shawshank Prison in 1905. He began to consider himself a paramount man inside the jail dividers since he had been accountable for the library since 1912. However he had no significance outside of the jail, and he “ couldn’t get a library card on the off chance that he needed to”. Red said all what needed to be said when discussing prisonization and the dividers at Shawshank Prison “ the dividers are clever, first you loathe them, then you get used to them, then you require them”. Streams figured out the hard path while on parole, that following 50 years of being in jail and keeping the jail societies he couldn’t live in ordinary society any longer.

An alternate explanation behind people to get tied up with the prisonization or systematization influences is because of Sykes’ hardship model (Cesaroni, 2009b). This model expresses that the anxiety and troubles are brought about by the denying states of the jail itself which at last prompt the detainees adapting to jail society components. Sykes hypothesises on hardship are not far-removed regarding states of the jail. There is an ache in entering jail significantly after a detainee conforms to their new home. They have lost their privileges of freedom and are denied from merchandise, administrations, security and the choice of a hetero relationship. Prisoners are dealt with like kids by being advised when to consume, when to work, when to rest and actually when they can utilize the washroom. The offices are a poor environment on the grounds that there are rats and a high danger of ailments because of crowdedness with different prisoners. In the film, one of the new detainees asks Captain Hadley when they will consume to which he reacts that “ you consume when we say you consume. You poop when we

say you poo. You piss when we say you piss". This was one of the bitter experiences for Red in the prison.

## **Rehabilitation**

Recovery is a project and an objective that the punitive framework uses to help detainees come back to society without the dread of relapse. In the past it was accepted that culprits perpetrated unlawful acts in light of the fact that they were apathetic hence the prisoners required to buckle down with the end goal them should change. It was accepted that a solid hard working attitude was specifically associated with positive social conduct; consequently instructing prisoners to buckle down was seen as an approach to change them. It is currently accepted that genuine work can prompt restoring a prisoner in light of the fact that they learn abilities and create great work propensities that can be utilized as a part of society. This can likewise help the prisoners when petitioning parole. Prisoners who buckle down while in jail are seen more great by the parole board, since the need to re-irritate is diminished.

Recovery is a science and it began being seen that route in Canada in 1935. It was viewed as that keeping in mind the end goal to restore detainees expert assistance from therapists, specialists and remedial chiefs was required. This functioned admirably until around 1970, when all the rights and activities gatherings began dissenting with the utilization of mobs, killings and prisoner takings. At this point the individuals were requesting a get extreme mentality towards lawbreakers and their wayward kids. After the common turmoil of the 1970s, restoration was brought go into the contemplations of amendments in new ways, it was felt that a few detainees <https://assignbuster.com/shawshank-redemption-critical-analysis-of-subcultures/>



had a place in the group, far from the masters and not bolted away in a correctional facility.

## **Conclusion**

Jail has been delineated in numerous diverse movies through the years, each of them including Shawshank Redemption, has indicated to the world that jail is appalling. Shawshank Redemption has demonstrated that jail is a fierce place by showing how distinctive guards carry on and treat the detainees, and also delineating the way the prisoners associate with each other and the courses in which they attempt to make their day by day carries on somewhat more tolerable.

The film clarifies how detainees change in accordance with jail life from the launch toward the start of their sentence; to restoring the wrongdoer go into typical society and in addition prisonization or regulation the prisoners' experience. The film Shawshank Redemption additionally clarified how jail is utilized for discipline purposes and demonstrated that jail can work as though it were a bit of hardware. The media has constantly portrayed jail to be a negative spot and the film The Shawshank Redemption is a prime sample.

While there are a few suppositions and suggestions that can be produced using the film about society and its convictions, two appear to emerge. The main moral ramification of the movie is the way to go that society takes a utilitarian perspective of morals. Under a utilitarian methodology, choices are focused around their outcomes (Johnson, 2012, p. 154) and “ normal rules don't apply in this situation.” There are feelings that while certain activities,

all by themselves, can be viewed as untrustworthy, the society is eager to view them all the more positively inside a certain setting. Case in point, there is by all accounts an innate requirement for individuals to feel that equity has been carried out, and certain exploitative practices may be adequate in attaining that end. This can be seen throughout the movie. Boggs, the pioneer of the Sisters, is beaten until he is deadened for harming Dufresn. Dufresn escapes from jail and takes \$370, 000 of sick gotten, laundered cash the whole time. Both of these may be viewed as untrustworthy all by themselves, yet the gathering of people is eager to hail both in light of a legitimate concern for equity being served.

We see this same utilitarian view in the utilization of force in the film. The Warden and the guards misuse their energy to varying degrees and the group of onlookers is intended to grimace and look askance. Then again, when Dufresn misuses his budgetary capacities in an illicit action and escape or Red takes part in carrying things into the jail, the crowd praises. In a vacuum, the majority of the demonstrations are dishonest. Notwithstanding, the activities of Dufresn and Red appear to serve, in the eyes if the group of onlookers, to offset a percentage of the ill-uses of force and development the reason for equity. Therefore, they are taken a gander at as being moral in as much as they helped meet the moral standard of equity in spite of being dishonest themselves.

The second ramification is the force of moral administration. This can be seen in the response of the two fundamental gatherings, the administering force of the Warden and the guards and Dufresn's gathering, to their particular pioneers. On account of the guards, we see the impact that the <https://assignbuster.com/shawshank-redemption-critical-analysis-of-subcultures/>

administration of the Warden and Hadley has over them. As was said prior, the guards are roused to act in pitiless ways towards the detainees when around the Warden and Hadley, yet we see more moral and altruistic collaborations when the guards are distant from everyone else with the detainees. Indeed Hadley changes once the “ spell” of the Warden’s initiative is broken, sobbing on and on when he is captured. Hence, one sees the length and force of the shadow that the Warden throws.

Rather than the guards, one sees the positive impact that Dufresn has on Red and other detainees in their gathering. When he arrives, they are useful and sober minded, surrendered to the way things are. Notwithstanding, Dufresn demonstrates to them that moral conduct and rightness can even now exist. This starts with their initially meeting, when he requests the name of a detainee who was beaten to death. This appears immaterial to the others however serves as an image of Dufresn bringing the morals of the outside world with him into the jail. Notwithstanding all that happens amid his stay, he never loses those morals. He never loses trust. Furthermore, all the while, he raises the moral level and level of trust for all parts of the gathering.

Both men lead their particular gatherings through their activities and choice making. One’s activities lead in an unscrupulous way and the other in a more moral one. Through this, it is apparent exactly how persuasive the moral choices of a pioneer and the “ shadow or light” they cast can be (Johnson, 2012).

In this way, against the setting of the microcosmic subculture of Shawshank Prison, one sees the essentialness of equity and reasonable utilization of force to American culture. The saying “ Power adulterates and total force ruins completely,” (Johnson, 2012, p. 11) turns into a reality inside the jail dividers and the characters are left to comprehend it. Eventually and incidentally, it is the apparently exploitative deeds of Dufresn and Red (who breaks his parole to go to Mexico) that restore the parity of equity and power that the crowd is looking for and, in doing along these lines, uncover the paramount part that these moral standards play in the public eye.

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