

"TIGERLAND"

When I watch movies it is generally for entertainment only. The exception to this is when I watch movies relating to the military. I watch these movies with a critical eye because I feel a great attachment to the military, and a gratitude to those that sacrifice themselves for our safety. When I stepped foot into the Marine Corps recruiting office over twelve years ago, the staff sergeant talked about how crucial leadership is in the Marine Corps, and how they would make a leader out of me. Serving four years in the Corps gave me a chance to be exposed to a lot of different leadership qualities, some good, some bad. Knowing that the movie "Tigerland" was about a soldier with unconventional leadership qualities' I watched the movie with an open mind trying not to be judgmental but in the end I thought the character of Private Bozz used his leadership in the wrong way. I think the character of Private Bozz was a natural leader, but he failed to lead those that needed him in the right direction. The commanding officer of the infantry school accused Bozz of being scared to be a leader, and I would agree. Bozz is not going to be able to get everyone out on a hardship discharge, and every time someone leaves that puts thoughts into others heads about how they can get out of the Army instead of thinking about how to be a better soldier.

Knowing that the characters in the movie "Tigerland" are not real, I would like us to agree that these characters have real life qualities and flaws like real soldiers that can enable us to dissect the character of Private Bozz. "Tigerland", released

in 2000, stars Colin Farrell as Private Bozz, Cole Hauser as Staff Sergeant Cota, Clifton Collins Jr. as Private Miter, Matthew Davis as Private Paxton and Thomas Guiry as Private Cantwell. It was directed by Joel Schumacher. This movie is not your typical Vietnam movie that tries in some way to avenge our loss of the war, or glamorize events or fictional soldiers. This movie relates more to the everyday soldier and his emotions about heading to war. This was a low budget movie. Director, Joel Schumacher, said that he wanted to get away from the "summer blockbuster" types of movies and concentrate on the story of the individuals. The movie is set in the year 1971 when the nation was divided about the growing war in Vietnam. It appears in the movie that this same division has made its way into the Army also. The movie focuses on Alpha Company, second platoon. This platoon has just graduated boot camp and is now entering infantry school located at Fort Polk, Louisiana. The main character, Private Bozz, has just been assigned to the platoon after doing time in the stockade. After completing infantry school, the platoon will be sent to their final phase of training at Tigerland. Tigerland has been designed to acclimate the young soldiers to the Vietnam War. While at Tigerland, the platoon is no longer assigned to their original drill instructors, but instead will spend time with Staff Sergeant Cota, who has just returned from Vietnam after serving two tours of duty.

Knowing nothing about how the Marine Corps operated, I entered boot camp on February 5, 1989. After one month of being in boot camp and learning how things operated, I was selected to be a squad leader. I spent the next two months learning how to listen to guys in my squad and getting them to do things that they did not want to do. I was promoted to Private First Class as I graduated from boot camp. Ten days later I found myself at Camp Pendleton for secondary training. The first day there our new drill instructors asked who were leaders in boot camp; I raised

my hand and found myself as squad leader again. I was faced with similar problems as before, but this time being a leader was even more challenging as before. This was because the Marines didn't have drill instructors watching over them all the time; they had me. Ten days after graduating school I was promoted to Lance Corporal and found myself in Twenty-Nine Palms Marine Corps Air Ground Combat Center. While there I had the chance of serving under a very good Master Sergeant. A lot of what I learned in being a leader in the Marine Corps I learned from this Master Sergeant. After a year of serving with him I was promoted to Corporal. My final duty station was at Treasure Island Naval Base. I spent a year there under some of the worst leaders I have ever worked with. Although I had poor examples of leaders in my unit, the knowledge I had gained from my previous Master Sergeant helped me be able to teach younger Marines how to be good leaders. Not long before my time ended, I was promoted to Sergeant. Although I wasn't enlisted in the Army during the Vietnam era, I would like to give an opinion on what it is like to be a leader in boot camp and in military school.

I think the character of Private Bozz was a natural leader, but he failed to lead those that needed him in the right direction. (Ag 1) Some people are born natural leaders and others need training. Leaders have the ability to get people to do things that they at first reject. When the platoon was under fire in the trench and Private Miter tried to get the platoon out but Bozz told them to stay in, the other privates listened to him, and he wasn't even their platoon guide. The other privates wanted to listen to him, but instead of communicating with his drill instructor he ran away and was disrespectful in front of the other men. Leaders listen to their subordinates and try to help them. And most importantly, when a leader acts their subordinates follow. I think that the director of the film wanted