

Durham Book Festival 2016

Pat Barker's *Regeneration* (1991): Discussion Questions and Further Reading

The 2016 Durham Book Festival celebrates the 25th anniversary of Pat Barker's *Regeneration*. The novel contains a variety of different narratives and themes – from psychological healing to sexuality, to the politics of war. The questions below are designed to open up discussion and debate about *Regeneration*, and to further understanding of its representation of history.

- What is the significance of the novel's title?
- What different kinds of 'regeneration' appear in the novel?
- How does Barker create its anti-war message?
- Why write fiction about real people?
- Why does Barker choose to include the fictional tale of Billy Prior and Sarah Lumb?
- How does Barker address the topic of class, and what does she suggest about it?
- How do the romantic relationships portrayed in the novel differ from each other?
- What does Barker suggest about emasculation?
- There are different professional and personal demands on Dr Rivers. What are these and how does Barker negotiate them?
- Why do you think *Regeneration* became so successful, and remains so popular twenty-five years after its publication?

If you enjoyed *Regeneration* and would like to find out more about it, or to read similar books, see the list of works below.

Pat Barker's other novels:

Union Street (Virago Press, 1982)
Blow Your House Down (Virago Press, 1984)
The Century's Daughter (Virago Press, 1986)
The Man Who Wasn't There (Virago Press, 1989)
The Eye in the Door (Viking Press, 1993)
The Ghost Road (Viking Press, 1995)
Another World (Viking Press, 1998)
Border Crossing (Viking Press, 2001)
Double Vision (Hamish Hamilton, 2003)
Life Class (Hamish Hamilton, 2007)

Toby's Room (Hamish Hamilton, 2012)

Noonday (Hamish Hamilton, 2015)

Other First World War fiction:

Henry Barbusse, *Under Fire* (1916) (Penguin, 2003)

Louis de Bernières, *Birds Without Wings* (Secker and Warburg, 2004)

Louis de Bernières, *The Dust That Falls from Dreams* (Harvill Secker, 2015)

Sebastian Faulks, *Birdsong* (Hutchinson, 1993)

Ford Madox Ford, *Parade's End* (1924-28) (Wordsworth Editions, 2013)

Jaroslav Hasek, *The Good Soldier Svejk* (1923) (Penguin, 1973)

Ernest Hemingway, *A Farewell To Arms* (1929) (Arrow Books, 2004)

Frederic Manning, *Her Privates We* (1929) (Serpent's Tale, 2013)

Erich Maria Remarque, *All Quiet on the Western Front* (1929) (Vintage 1996)

Relevant memoir:

Robert Graves, *Good-bye to All That* (1929) (Penguin, 2000)

Siegfried Sassoon, *The Memoirs of George Sherston* (1937)

Siegfried Sassoon, *Siegfried's Journey* (1945)

Books about Pat Barker and her work:

John Brannigan, *Pat Barker* (Manchester University Press, 2005)

Karen Patrick Knutsen, *Reciprocal Haunting: Pat Barker's Regeneration Trilogy* (Waxmann, 2010)

Sharon Monteith, *Pat Barker* (Northcote House, 2002)

Critical Perspectives on Pat Barker, ed. By Sharon Monteith (University of South Carolina Press, 2005)

Anne Whitehead, *Trauma Fiction* (Edinburgh University Press, 2004)

Books about First World War literature:

Mulk Raj Anand, *Across the Black Waters* (1939) (Orient Paperbacks, 2008)

The Cambridge Companion to the Poetry of the First World War, ed. Santanu Das (Cambridge University Press, 2013)

Samuel Hynes, *A War Imagined: the First World War and English Culture* (Bodley Head, 1990)

The Cambridge Companion to the Literature of the First World War, ed. Vincent B. Sherry (Cambridge University Press, 2005)

Randall Stevenson, *Literature and the Great War, 1914-1918* (Oxford University Press, 2013)

Dan Todman, *The Great War: Myth and Memory* (Hambledon, 2005)