Book Report

Killer Angels by Michael Shaara

Name

Affiliation

Date

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Michael Shaara, an American science, sports, and historical fiction novelist, authored a novel *The Killer Angels*, based on the historical battle of Gettysburg. The battle was fought between the troops of the Union and Confederate forces, during the American Civil War. The author has described the details of the four days of the war, in his historical account of the book. The book has been described from the perspectives of James Longstreet and Robert E. Lee, who were the Confederate representatives, and John Buford and Joshua Lawrence Chamberlain who were the representatives of the Union forces. The book was published in 1974 and received the ‘Pulitzer Prize for Fiction.’ *The Killer Angels* is one of the most impressive historical accounts of the battle of Gettysburg, which not only shed lights on the circumstances of that time but also provide insight into the hopes, expectations, and fears of both sides of the forces.

*The Killer Angels* provide a detailed account of Gettysburg, located in Pennsylvania on 30th June 1863, and the following three days of 1st, 2nd and 3rd of July, when the battle of Gettysburg was fought. The author has provided a detailed insight into how the Confederate forces were able to get the information about the proceeding of the Union troops through their spy and prepared to fight accordingly. However, the Union troops got the hold of a more strategic position, from where they could easily attack the Confederates and manipulate them of their position in the war. The Confederate forces thought that they had won the war after the initial encounter, however, the Union troops attacked again and forced the Confederates to surrender. Apart from describing the details of the battle, the author has also highlighted the emotional strain of the forces and generals of both sides who had to fight against their own acquaintances, due to the ideological differences of the society (Shaara, 2010).

The analysis and evaluation of the book *The Killer Angels* highlight that the author has achieved his purpose of authoring the book, which was to shed light on the importance of the battle of Gettysburg. The battle was not only important from the political, ideological and strategic point of view, but also from the emotional perspective. The writing is quite effective and powerful, as the author has shed light on the emotional strain of the characters, who had to ensure their victory in the battle, by fighting against their own acquaintances. Moreover, the author has also highlighted the dilemma of General Lee, who initially had to trust the information provided by some other spy and was then manipulated to think that he has won the battle, which he had actually lost (Shaara, 2010).

The strength of the book is the vivid account of the battle and the circumstances during that time, and there is no particular weakness of the book. The authors' qualification of writing the book is that he holds the specialty of writing about the historical topics and I agree with his arguments and conclusions, as he has just described the scenario of the battle, in an effective and impressive manner. My overall response of the book is that it is quite interesting and impressive, as it not only describes the scenario of battle but the feelings and fears of the people involved in it. I would surely recommend it to others, as it is a good mean of exploring history.

*The Killer Angels* is one of the most impressive and effective historical book, which is specifically focused on the detailed description of the battle of Gettysburg. The book has left a very good impression on me, as it was not dull and boring at all, however, kept me indulged and alert. The thing that I specifically want for the readers to know is the authors’ account of the tensions and strain caused between the relations of the general, as well as other members of troops due to the ideological differences of the two parts of the society.

References

Shaara, M. (2010). *The killer angels: The classic novel of the Civil War* (Vol. 2). Ballantine Books.