



Discussion Questions

Regeneration by Pat Barker

Source: Sparknotes.com and Madison Public Library

1. What do you make of the title *Regeneration*?
2. Is *Regeneration* an anti-war novel? Why or why not?
3. Barker is obviously interested in the issue of emasculation. How do the characters address issues of emasculation caused by the war? Rivers, for one, comments on the shared experience of women as homemakers in peacetime (bored, confined, powerless) and men in the trenches, waiting, in wartime. Are there other places in the novel where this is addressed?
4. Describe the role of fathers and mothers (and father and mother figures) in the novel. How do they help or undermine the healing of the patients?
5. How is Owen portrayed in the novel? In what ways is he like and unlike Sassoon?
6. Is Prior's relationship with Sarah romantic? Can it be described as love? How does the war affect it?
7. Which characters change throughout the course of the novel, and which remain static? What are the larger implications for this personal growth or stagnation?
8. Are you aware that some of the characters in this novel are based on real people? How does that effect your reading (if it does)?
9. Rivers and Yealland are very different kinds of doctors—both in demeanor and in medical philosophy. Are either or both doing their "duty"?
10. Now almost 20 years old, Pat Barker's *Regeneration* remains read and recommended—surely on its way to a classic, if not already considered one. What sets this novel apart? Theme? Style? Characters? Place and time? All of that?