

Download The Armies of the Night: History as a Novel, the Novel as History PDF by Norman Mailer eBook or Kindle ePUB Online free

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Synopsis Books:

'The Armies of the Night is an award-winning nonfiction novel written by Norman Mailer. He essentially creates his own genre for the narrative, split into historicized & novelized accounts of the 10/1967 March on the Pentagon. His unique rendition of the nonfiction novel was one of only a few at the time & received the most critical attention. In Cold Blood ('65) by Truman Capote & Hell's Angels ('66) by Hunter S. Thompson had already been published. Three months later Tom Wolfe would contribute The Electric Kool-Aid Acid Test ('68). The book deals ostensibly with the March on the Pentagon anti-Vietnam War rally in Washington DC. While Mailer dips into familiar territory in his fiction--self-portrait--the outlandish, 3rd person account of himself along with self-descriptions such as a Novelist/Historian, anti-star/hero are made far more complex by the narrative's overall generic identification as a nonfiction novel. Two years before Armies was published In Cold Blood by Capote, who'd just been called by George Plimpton the "inventor" of the nonfiction novel, claimed that the genre should exclude any mention of its subjectivity & refrain from the 1st person. While to some extent satirizing Capote's model, Mailer's role in center stage is hardly self-glamorizing as the narrative recounts the events leading up to the March as well as his subsequent arrest & night in jail. The 1st section, "History as a Novel," begins "From the outset, let us bring you news of your protagonist," with an account made by Time about: "Washington's scruffy Ambassador Theater, normally a pad for psychedelic frolics, was the scene of an unscheduled scatological solo last week in support of the peace demonstrations. Its anti-star was author Norman Mailer, who proved even less prepared to explain Why Are We in Vietnam? than his current novel bearing that title." After citing the entire article, he then closes "1: Pen Pals" with "Now we may leave Time in order to find out what happened." What creates the difference between his example & Capote's isn't only the autobiography of Armies, but the irony which guides the narrator towards the same objective of empiricism as that of In Cold Blood. The nonconformity which he exhibits to Capote's criterion was the beginning of a feud that never resolved between the authors & was ended with Capote's death in '84. Ultimately, Armies was a unique contribution to the newly founded genre, which was otherwise somewhat preoccupied by Wolfe's theories of the new journalism. A departure from Capote's more journalistic example of the form, Armies suggests the historical value of a more contemporary mode of literature. The year of its publication, '68, Mailer would begin work on another project, Miami & the Siege of Chicago, after witnessing the Republican & Democratic Nat'l Conventions that year. His recounting, tho quite different in terms of his self-portrait, takes on a comparable rhetoric approach to evoking what he saw as historical underpinnings.

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