An outline of:

*The Few and The Proud: Marine Drill Instructors In Their Own Words*

By Larry Smith
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**Part One: The Old Breed**

1: Chuck Taliano, Drill Instructor, Poster: “We don’t promise you a rose garden”
   - Being a Marine was the most rewarding thing of my life.
   - Let no man’s ghost say, “If only you had done your job.”
   - We were tough during Vietnam in order to save lives.
   - When those recruits graduate, the feeling is much like fatherhood.

2: Iron Mike Mervosh, Sergeant Major
   - I landed at Roi-Namur, Saipan, Tinian, and Iwo Jima with 1st Battalion, 24th Marines. Thirty-one of us, out of 240 in the company, walked off Iwo Jima.
   - Fear is loneliness, a lack of hope. But there is hope when Marines are around you.

3: SgtMaj Bill Paxton
   - I was born in 1935. I lost my Dad on Iwo Jima as well as my uncle. I wanted to be a Marine.
   - I almost lost two recruits as a DI in 1964. One was Ken Norton, the future heavyweight champion.
   - Training during Vietnam shrank to eight weeks. That was insufficient.
   - If you don’t get discipline in boot camp, it’s too late to get it in combat.
   - The *Known Marine* DI Memorials at both recruit depots are a result of my efforts.

4: Ed Walls, Sergeant Major
   - My DI, PFC Alvarez, broke all the rules in 1954. Ribbon Creek nearly sank the Marine Corps.
   - In 1961, I was a DI. It was very satisfying to see the improvement and results.
   - I never pulled any weird stuff on the recruits. Everything had to have a purpose.

5: SgtMaj Dave Robles
   - In 1958, I was hit twice on the head the first day! There were DIs who were abusive or sadistic.
   - The Marine Corps turned my life around. I tell the kids that.

6: Robert Mastrian, Colonel
   - Human nature is key. The top 20% are good. The bottom 20% are bad. You’re in a constant battle for the middle 60%.
   - In the fleet, a unit with 15% bad guys is paralyzed. Like 1972-1975.
   - In 1975, General Wilson, CMC, discharged the bottom 10%.
   - Boot camp needs to eliminate selfishness, emphasize tradition, cohesiveness, and discipline.
   - Boot camp in 1958 was tough, but there was no brutality.
7: SSgt Eddie Adams

Part Two: Ribbon Creek

8: SSgt Matthew C. McKeon. They were all good kids. Hurting them was the farthest thing from my mind.

9: Morton Janklow, Attorney for McKeon

- The Marine Corps was railroading this guy McKeon. Scapegoating him.
- But Marine Corps training was better. It needed to be done right, by the right people. Not McKeon. That’s why their troops are so much better. In combat, I want to be next to a Marine Drill Instructor.
- Training needs to be tough in order to prepare for combat. That what the Marine Corps does.

10: James Wheeler, McKeon Court Reporter

- The way we left McKeon swinging changed my feelings toward the Marine Corps. Everyone did what he did. He was a scapegoat.
- 80% of my cases were maltreatment by DIs. Twelve or fifteen DIs were convicted before McKeon.

11: SSgt Gene Alvarez, Drill Instructor. I spent thirty years teaching college, but I never got the rewards I got as a DI, the best experience of my life. For a DI to build morale and spirit, he could not use cruelty.

Part Three: Marines and the Movies

12: R. Lee Ermey, Drill Instructor

- Private Joker’s slap in the face, done in the movie, was NOT done in the real Marine Corps.
- DIs are tremendous role models. Their leadership is second to none.

13: Colonel Mike Malachowsky, Chief of Staff

- We survived 1956 Ribbon Creek because we were honest: “We screwed up, but we’re going to fix it.”
- In the movie, “The DI,” Jack Webb considered it an insult if he cannot make a recruit into a Marine. His focus was helping marginal performers. DIs have to have that attitude.
- In the 1930s there was little recruit abuse. Recruits wouldn’t take it. By using PFC drill instructors, we started the trend.
- No one gets smacked around. Parents trust us. DIs are Marines who set the example.
- Letters are important to maintain motivation.
- Officers should have recruit training experience.

Part Four: Montford Point

14: Gene Doughty, Corporal, Iwo Jima. All in all, the DIs were fair and square.

15: Herman Rhett

16: Ellis Cunningham, 1stSgt, Iwo Jima - Vietnam

17: David Dinkins, Mayor of NYC 1989-1993. In 1945, the best way to stay alive was to be better trained, and the way to be better trained was to be a Marine.
Part Five: Women Marines

18: SgtMaj Denise Kreuser, Drill Instructor. Being a DI was the best thing I ever did as a Marine. You’re transforming lives.

19: Doris Kleberger, Lieutenant Colonel

20: Mary Sue League, Lieutenant Colonel

21: Jeanne Botwright, Lieutenant Colonel

22: SSgt Christine Henning

Part Six: The New Breed

23: SSgt Rudolfo Rodriquez. We’re very conscious right now that we’re training recruits who may go to Iraq. There is no time for misconduct.

24: SgtMaj Clint Kreuser

25: Josh Wylie, Sergeant Major. I’d like people to understand how much time and energy DIs put in and how much they care about their recruits. There’s a lot of tough love down here.

26: Rob Bush, Sergeant Major

- Recruits must buy-in to the culture. Make him a believer! He believes. He has heart. Transformation.
- DIs must forget the old days.
- Recruits may forget 90% of what they learn, but they will never forget that they are Marines.
- These DIs are giving everything they’ve got. We’re walking among giants here.
- DIs are the role models, the coach, not the referee, and not the devil.
- When forty-one guys screw up, fix them. Repeating something ten times makes Marines lose heart.
- Truth wins. No cover-up. No damage control. Truth enables fixes.

27: William Post, Sergeant Major

- The Marine Corps exists to kill people. You either pull the trigger, or you support the trigger puller.
- Peacekeeping is horseshit. Warriors fight for their tribe.
- The old Marines were not tougher. Our Marines are tremendous.

28: Major Keith Burkepile

- The DI must be in good shape. He must come to Parris Island to make an impact on the Marine Corps.
- The biggest challenge is getting recruits to believe.
- What does “Back in the old Corps mean?” World War II?

Reviewer’s Comments

*The Few and the Proud* has great stories and insights from impressive Marines, but it reads very much like a collage, without a central unifying theme or lesson.

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