

Stagecoach

Essay #1 – The representation of teamwork in *Stagecoach*

In the 1939 film, *Stagecoach*, produced by Walter Wanger, starring John Wayne, is subtly centered around the concept of teamwork. The characters show elements of both good and poor teamwork during their stagecoach journey from Tonto to Lordsburg.

Stagecoach showed that team members have to 'stick together'. Everybody brings something to the team that makes the job easier if they can all work together. For example, Dallas is able to take care of Mrs. Mallory's newborn baby while she is still unwell, and Doc Boone, although seemingly perpetually drunk, delivers the baby. Samuel Peacock often offers sound advice, and the Ringo Kid has useful local knowledge.

The characters also realize that they have to treat each other equally and consider how each other feels in order to complete their journey across Apache land. For example, when the stagecoach makes a brief stop at Dry Fork and they're deciding whether to continue to Lordsburg without the troops, they vote to see what each individual wants to do. The men even ask the ladies for their opinions first, showing courtesy and respect towards all members regardless of gender. Even though Dallas was run out of Tonto town for being a prostitute, the other members of the stagecoach grow to respect her for her contribution to teamwork along the journey.

The banker, Gatewood, was notably selfish during the journey from Tonto to Lordsburg. He insisted on continuing to Lordsburg the morning after Mrs Mallory had given birth only because he wanted to get there before a telegram from Tonto describing his robbery of \$50,000 could reach Lordsburg. If the stagecoach had have gone along with his selfish requests, their fate may have been very different.

That the stagecoach managed to defeat the Apache people when they encountered them on their way to Lordsburg, can be attributed to the way that the stagecoach members worked as a team. In a sense, the moral of the film, *Stagecoach*, could be that of teamwork.