

Schindler's List (reflection)

By : MelodyAnn

Hi, this is for my History class - we just finished watching the film Schindler's List and we were required to give a reflection paper. My prompt is: The little girl in the red coat was the only part of the movie, other than the ending, that was in color. Why did the director, Steven Spielberg, use color here? What was his message?

What did she represent? Was it effective? Explain. Directions were: 300 words approx., express personal opinion on the issue -- use any examples: historical or present-day, that you like. I would really love some input -- questions/suggestions would be great. Thank you!



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World History

4/5/13

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The Red Coat

[Schindler's List Reflection]

What does the color red symbolize? In most cases, especially in this one -- it mainly represents death, war, and hatred in which the Jewish had to go through. In the black and white film, Schindler's List, Spielberg reveals a young girl in a red coat in a few scenes, seen by Schindler himself. At first in the film, Schindler was doing his job as a businessman and accomplishing what was practical -- hiring Jewish people to work because they could do it without pay. This ended up extricating the Jewish from the camps with the help of his accountant, Itzhak Stern -- which aggravated Schindler at first, because he feared persecution. But as the young girl in the red coat came into view, Schindler's mentality slowly came to a turning point. He realized that the act of annihilating Jewish people was inhumane, which is why Spielberg revealed a young girl rather than an adult -- it pushed the message of innocence being destroyed, serving as a "wake up" call to Schindler. His expression was full of remorse as the deceased child was carried away and he began to realize what he was capable of. I also believe that the red coat displayed the last bit of hope the Jewish had -- that spark of faith and confidence walking around until they came across their fate (hence the death of the child).

However, the death of the child could also display a new beginning -- because after the fact, Schindler began to salvage more Jewish people. It benefitted him for business and the lives of a thousand. The child could have portrayed the burdens the Jewish carried on their shoulders, and her death could have been a foretold act of their freedom. Watching Oskar Schindler's mentality transform from beginning to end -- I would say revealing the child was very effective. Each moment she came into view, Schindler expressed great distress for he could not do anything for her. But knowing what he could do for about a thousand Jews, changed him in the end.

This doesn't only apply to this situation -- the little girl represents innocence in a general aspect, and war is what destroys it. The debates we covered in class about whether it was just to kill an innocent in battle if they were in the way, questions the morality of the man behind the trigger. Does one think about this? Has a soldier (or German) ever sat there behind their gun and question their notion? Has one ever capitulated because he realized that everyone is human -- none higher nor lower? "If you saw a dog going to be

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crushed under a car, wouldn't you help him?â (O.S) Schindler did it -- he could have been the same as every other German who followed Hitler, but Itzhak Stern was said to be able to bring out the strong moral side of him. Itâ s also based off of what the superior we look up to feed us for us to become blind followers -- and following the intuition in our gut that tell us otherwise.

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