

Schindler's list

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Bound in the publisher's original quarter cloth and paper covered boards with the spine stamped in black. Dust jacket is lightly worn at the extremities and sunned at the spine.

Winner of the Booker Prize

Winner of the Los Angeles Times Book Award for Fiction

Schindler's List is a remarkable work of fiction based on the true story of German industrialist and war profiteer, Oskar Schindler, who, confronted with the horror of the extermination camps, gambled his life and fortune to rescue 1,300 Jews from the gas chambers.

Working with the actual testimony of Schindler's Jews, Thomas Keneally artfully depicts the courage and shrewdness of an unlikely savior, a man who is a flawed mixture of hedonism and decency and who, in the presence of unutterable evil, transcends the limits of his own humanity.

Thomas Keneally was born in 1936 and raised in the rugged expanse of Australia. As a young man, he planned to join the priesthood, but by 1960, on the verge of the Vietnam War, Keneally found the church in such moral turmoil that he decided it was impossible to go through with his ordination.

Keneally received his formal education in Sydney, Australia. Over the past 30 years, he has published over 25 novels, more than a dozen screenplays, and several works of non-fiction. These works include *The Chant of Jimmie Blacksmith*, *The Playmaker*, *Season in Purgatory*, *A Family Madness*, and *Woman of the Inner Sea*. His work has been nominated four times for the Booker Prize, which he won in 1982 for *Schindler's List*. He won the Los Angeles Times Prize for Fiction, The Miles Franklin Award, The Critics Circle Award, and a Logie (Australian Emmy).

A self-described "literary biker," Keneally has traveled through Australia, Iceland, Antarctica,

America, Eastern Europe, roaming across genres and topics, often championing the underdog.

"I'm a writer who's always been hard to pin down," Keneally says, "because I've sometimes written about things that are none of my concern -- like the American South or Antarctica or

Australian aboriginals or the Holocaust. I think I appeal to 'hells angels' kind of writers." Keneally has modeled many of his characters after the traditional Australian hero -- the "battler." "In America everyone admires successful men and women. In Australia, they suspect them. The Australian hero is the person to whom everything has happened -- drought, fire, flood."

Oskar Schindler is a classic Keneally character -- conflicted and flawed, the antithesis of a one-dimensional altruistic saint. And Schindler's story is a classic Keneally story -- an ordinary man placed in a situation of enormous moral dilemma.

While researching *Schindler's List*, the author spent two years traveling to eight countries, where he interviewed many of Schindler's Jews and read the numerous testimonies which are held at the Martyrs and Heroes Remembrance Authority, Yad Vasbem, Israel.

Keneally lives in California where he teaches in the graduate writing program at the University of California, Irvine, where he holds a Distinguished Professorship.

Reading Group Discussion Points

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"Schindler's List". Hollywood's representation of the Holocaust, Seminar paper from the year 2013 in the subject Film Science, grade: 2.7, University of Freiburg, language: English, abstract: "Schindler's List" is certainly one of the most famous works about the Holocaust that has ever been created so far. Since the 1970s the memory of the Holocaust became more and more integrated as an important element not only of Jewish American culture but of American culture in general. The film that was published in 1994 by one of Hollywood's most famous directors can be seen as a milestone in this process of the "Americanization of the Holocaust". Other very successful projects preceded that aimed to preserve the memory of the Holocaust in American culture such as the TV series Holocaust or the opening of the National Memorial Museum in 1993. This process of integrating the Holocaust as an essential part in American culture is described in Peter Novick's study The Holocaust in American Life. I will try to analyze the film as part of this process and raise several questions about its meaning in this context. I will at first examine the historical background of the time when the film was published. I will try to find out what makes Schindler's List typical for an American Hollywood movie and how the film "Americanizes" in this way the subject of the Holocaust. Before that I will examine how the idea of Schindler's List emerged and how it became possible that this delicate topic was chosen by Spielberg who was rather known for his spectacular entertainment movies up to this point. To answer these questions I will also analyze elementary elements of the film: suspense structure, characters, technical aspects and also shortly deal with the reception and critics of the movie. Finally I will discuss the question which impact the movie had or could have for the viewer's perception of the Holocaust and in which way the movie shaped what Novick calls the "collective memory" of the Holocaust.

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