

English IA5 Draft

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Conflict is something that has plagued humanity for all of human history, and has been described in countless texts, and portrayed from many different perspectives and opinions. One of the worst conflicts in modern history, the Nazi Regime and the Holocaust, has been rigorously documented from many people, who experienced it. And has been retold several times in modern times. Two of these texts, "Jojo Rabbit" (Waititi, 2016), and "Schindler's Ark" (Keneally, 1982) will be explored in this article, highlighting how the author/director of each text represents conflict through the re-telling of events in the Holocaust and the overall Nazi Regime.

"Get your shit together and sort out your priorities. You're 10 Jojo, start acting like it." World War II provoked countless conflicts throughout the world, too many to mention. In the film Jojo Rabbit, the director, Taika Waititi chooses to focus on 2 main conflicts, the conflict within the protagonist, Jojo's mind, and the conflict with Jojo and his mother. Which is arguably a representation & reflection of the internal conflict within Germany at the time. Jojo has an imaginary friend, who is none other than Adolf Hitler himself, or what Jojo thinks he is.

Throughout the film, Jojo goes from a Patriotic Nazi, to a boy grounded in reality, scarred physically and mentally, this is a result of Jojo's internal conflict. Waititi visualizes this conflict literally, with Jojo and Hitler, which is a creation of Jojo's own mind. A key scene that highlights this conflict is the second last time Hitler is seen. Hitler is vividly shown yelling at Jojo when he amused the thought of her being "nice". The quote *"Get your shit together and sort out your priorities. You're 10 Jojo, start acting like it."*, effectively captures the essence of this scene, there is war going on inside his mind, one side has compassion, and the other, unnaturally implanted by propaganda and entertained by his childish mind. The idea that Hitler is a figment of his imagination is further reinforced by the satirical and ironic sentence at the end of the quote *"You're 10 Jojo, start acting like it."*. Jojo thinks that at 10 you are supposed to be a man, he is hard on himself, which originates from the Nazi propaganda, making boys think they are men, giving them guns and grenades. This internal conflict is symbolic of the conflict within Nazi Germany, *The Resistance*, whom Jojo's Mother, Rosie was apart of. When they resist, they get shut down, just like Imaginary Hitler is doing to Jojo. This conflict within Germany is further explored in the novel "Schindler's Ark" (Keneally, 1982) where the story of how a business man named Oskar Schindler used his status and wealth to protect the lives of his Jewish workers.

The conflict within Jojo portrayed in Jojo rabbit is a great representation of the wider German population. Germany was coming out of an economical depression (*Great Depression*, 2024), and Hitler gave them hope, but some of them began to question the moral implications of what they were doing, especially with the Jews. This internal conflict that was happening was thoroughly exposed in the novel, *"Schindler's Ark"* (1982). Where the story of a man, Oskar Schindler, who saved

1,200 Jews from the Holocaust (Oskar Schindler, 2023). The Novel explores the reality of life in those times *"life did not have the value of a pack of cigarettes"*, Oskar Schindler, and through the telling of Schindler's story, the conflict going on inside Germans was exposed.

"I hated the brutality, the sadism, and the insanity of Nazism. I just couldn't stand by and see people destroyed. I did what I could, what I had to do, what my conscience told me I must do. That's all there is to it." (Oscar Schindler, Why, 2010).

Whilst this quote is not directly from the novel, it illustrates what a lot of complicit Germans felt during those times, but did nothing to help. Schindler was not complicit, and risked his life to save 1000+ Jews. During the Novel, Keneally tells the brief story of a Jew, Helen Jonas-Rosenzweig, who is the maid of a man Amon Göth. She was beat almost daily by the man. During a high-up dinner, Schindler met the woman, and he kissed her *"Out of pity"*, *"I'm kissing you out of pity."* Keneally excellently portrays Schindler's Solemn pity, and empathy for the woman, you can almost picture the scene, and feel the emotions they can. This would be the first time Schindler is shown overcoming the conflict he may have felt, *"He'd try to get her out"*. Where he knew that he would get her out no matter the cost, his empathy had overcome the sense of self-preservation. Keneally would show Schindler do similar things many times in the novel. Whilst Schindler had the right combination of power and empathy to achieve this, a lot of Germans did not, and the sense of self-preservation overcame the empathy they may have felt.

Schindler's Ark represents the reality of what the Jews felt, through the story of Helen, and highlights the deep emotions of what Germans may have felt for them, illustrated by the context of Schindler's life leading up to this moment, and deep, vivid visualizations of the scenes where he offers to save them. This novel blended with Jojo rabbit depicts Nazi Germany as a solemn

place of conflict, where people either have internal conflict, or conflict towards Jews and the whole world.

Jojo Rabbit a modern day representation of the conflicts that every-day Germans faced in those times, and used many different symbolisms. The one discussed in the article being, the symbolism of Fake Hitler, and the war/conflict going on in Jojo's mind. The film highlights the transformation of Jojo being a Nazi, to a boy grounded in reality, and portrays the conflict that occurs during this transformation. This conflict within Jojo is a great representation of wider German population, and how they may be feeling. This internal conflict is further explored and represented in the Novel "*Schindler's Ark*", where the author, Keneally, walks the reader through Schindler's story of overcoming the internal conflict, empathy winning over self-preservation.

These two texts combined expose how Germany was riddled with conflict, internal and external. Jojo rabbit visualizes the internal conflict that may go on inside a German, through the depiction of fake Hitler, and conflict that ensues in those scenes. Schindler's Ark expands on this, and rather than depicting this conflict symbolically, it is depicted literally. This is achieved by Keneally through the story-telling of Schindler's life, and the vivid visualizations of scenes where he shows genuine empathy for the victims. These two *Perspectives* together represent conflict to the reader, and effectively communicate the solemnity of the Holocaust.