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# Crossing the Line: A Discussion of Motives within The Boy in the Striped Pajamas

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CROSSING THE LINE: A DISCUSSION OF MOTIVES WITHIN *THE BOY IN THE STRIPED PAJAMAS*

By  
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B.S., Southern Illinois University, 2010

A Research Paper  
Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the  
Degree of Master of Arts

Department of Speech Communication  
In the Graduate School  
Southern Illinois University Carbondale  
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RESEARCH PAPER APPROVAL

CROSSING THE LINE: A DISCUSSION OF MOTIVES WITHIN THE BOY IN THE  
STRIPED PAJAMAS

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ASHLYN S. HEGG

A Research Paper Submitted in Partial  
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## CHAPTER 1

### INTRODUCTION

For nearly seventy years, individuals have witnessed the atrocities committed by the Schutzstaffel (SS) throughout the Third Reich's reign of terror in the 1930s and 1940s, either through first-hand experience or visual representation. The most notorious examples of these atrocities are the still-standing remnants of the Nazi-run work and death camps scattered across much of Europe. Although hundreds of thousands of individuals visit memorials and museums to pay respect to the lives lost and severely altered each year, these memorials are not seen as the predominantly encountered method of public memory. Film reenactments allow millions to witness the horrors of the Holocaust. These films serve as visual contexts to aid in the understanding of the complex historical, political, and social calamities the Third Reich evoked throughout the 1930s and 1940s (e.g. Blume, 1993; Ginsberg, 2007). While films of this nature often only offer the audience mere glimpses into this historical period, it is vital to understand that film serves as the most accessible medium to reach audience members on a mass scale. These visual reenactments work alongside countless personal narratives and militaristic accounts to provide a more in-depth understanding of the Holocaust and, hopefully, a stronger attachment to the importance of its study.

My personal interest in the history of Nazi Germany and the Holocaust stems from a longstanding passion and curiosity of this era. I find this period in history to be not only one of the most tumultuous, but one from which we as a collective society can learn the most. I have spent years conducting personal research about the Holocaust and Nazi Germany through published texts, documentaries, and public memorials. Areas of Holocaust filmography I find particularly interesting often involve the personal stories of families throughout the time period. I

also tend to direct my interests toward films that focus on the daily lives of children during the reign of the Third Reich. Many of those influenced by the Holocaust are growing older and passing away. Because of this, the continuous teaching of Holocaust education is more important than ever. It is vital to preserve the nature of such discussions in order to protect the future.

My research interests have led me to a film that centers on a child and a family structure that become highly influenced by Nazi party practices. The motion picture *The Boy in the Striped Pajamas* (Heyman & Herman, 2008) was released theatrically in 2008 and produced by David Heyman (Internet Movie Database [IMDb], 2012). The film depicts the life of the eight-year-old son of a Nazi commanding officer named Bruno. A climactic scene of the film shows Bruno crawling under the barbed wire fence that encloses a Nazi-run extermination camp to help his new friend Shmuel, an eight-year-old camp prisoner, find his missing father.

In this project, I pose the following research question: What is the dominant aspect that emerges from a thorough analysis of Bruno's act of crossing under the extermination camp fence? This analysis offers insight and discussion about Bruno's motives for his action: Why does Bruno crawl under the fence? To answer my research question, I selected the film's final scene as my rhetorical artifact and performed a pentadic analysis to identify Bruno's motives toward entering the extermination camp.

First, I provide a literature review that includes a brief history of Nazi Germany and the Holocaust, an examination of previously published Holocaust film studies, and a discussion of communication studies focused on the Holocaust. Second, I provide an explanation of my artifact and discuss the methodology I use to conduct this analysis. Finally, I offer my analysis of the artifact, as well as the results of my study.

## CHAPTER 2

### REVIEW OF LITERATURE

#### **Historical Background**

According to Esler (1997), the Holocaust was the systematic genocide of over six million European Jews by the Nazi party between its initial rise to power in 1933 and the surrender of the German government in 1945. This section provides a brief history of the Third Reich and its rise in power from 1933 to 1945. The Nazi party, led by Adolf Hitler, supported the twelve-year duration through meticulous documentation and the elimination of oppositional coalitions. Although most commonly associated with the liquidation of Europe's Jewish population through extermination and labor camps, the entirety of the Holocaust references the gradual process of excommunicating Jews from societal and legal rights, relocating populations to areas with inhumane conditions, and finally, calculated murder in concentration camps (e.g., Esler, 1997; Wiesen, 2010). According to Wiesen (2010), Jews were not the only targeted victims of Nazi brutality. The Third Reich also targeted individuals identified as Roma or gypsies, Communists, mentally and physically disabled, Polish and Soviet citizens, and many others. These groups were deemed socially undesirable and positioned as enemies of the Third Reich.

Evans (2003) states that after World War I life in Germany was marked by heavy economic inflation, detrimental unemployment figures, and a strong lack of desire to embrace German culture. I feel it is important to begin this historical discussion immediately following the end of World War I. This time period involved great economic turmoil within Germany and allowed the space for an individual and/or political group to take advantage of the weakened German society. According to Evans:

As soon as the First World War had begun, the Reich government had started to borrow money to pay for it. From 1916 onwards, expenditure had far exceeded the revenue that the government had been able to raise from loans or indeed from any other source.

Naturally enough, it had expected to recoup its losses by annexing rich industrial areas to the west and east, by forcing the defeated nations to pay large financial reparations, and by imposing a new German-dominated economic order on a conquered Europe. (p. 103)

The German government's overwhelming assumption that they would win World War I with exerting only limited force caused their reckless borrowing of money to fund the war effort.

Evans explains that after Germany's surrender, the country found itself responsible to pay back not only the money they had originally borrowed, but the additional reparations undertaken by victorious foreign governments.

Evans (2003) continues to explain that after the surrender of the Central Powers (Germany, Austria-Hungary, and Italy) in November 1918, the Treaty of Versailles declaratively placed sole responsibility for the cause of war on the German government. Evans goes on to say that this proclamation of fault forced Germany to pay for all war reparations and to officially take full responsibility for the causes of World War I. Evans declares that throughout World War I, the Weimar Republic (German governmental party) continuously printed monetary notes without suitable financial backing in assumption that an eventual succession of the war would have properly restored funds spent on the war effort. This apprehensive assumption not only led to massive economic debt within Germany itself, but made the ability to pay for all acquired war reparations nearly impossible. By the early 1920s, positive restoration for the German economy seemed entirely impossible. Evans states:



Anyone who wanted to buy a dollar in January 1923 had to pay over 17,000 marks for it; in April 24,000; in July 353,000. This was hyperinflation on a truly staggering scale, and the dollar rate in marks for the rest of the year is best expressed in numbers that soon became longer than anything found even in a telephone directory: 4,621,000 in August; 98,860,000 in September; 25,260,000,000 in October; 2,193,600,000,000 in November; 4,200,000,000,000 in December. . . . Money lost its meaning almost completely. (p. 105)

My summation finds that this severely negative outlook for the continued existence of the Weimar Republic and Germany itself allowed the space for possible manipulation by an interested individual and/or governmental body.

In the early 1920s, the German Workers' Party began to rise in prominence. Adolf Hitler rose in significance along with the party in its entirety, drawing mass attendance through a slew of aggressively produced public speech engagements on behalf of the German Workers' Party (Evans, 2003). I summarize Evans's account: Hitler emphasized the necessity of cultural pride for the preservation of Germany and predominantly used scapegoating tactics to deflect blame for the country's poor domestic state onto others. According to Kaplan (1998), within this deflection, Hitler declared the Jewish population as a dangerous enemy to Germany. He cited Jews as the leading cause for Germany's defeat in World War I and the reason for the country's dismal economic state. Esler (1997) explains:

He condemned Jews for their success in business and the professions and blamed them for Germany's defeat in the First World War. Above all, he defined Jews as a "race" rather than a religious denomination and preached a cosmic struggle between the Aryan 'master race'—meaning Germans—and the Jewish 'race,' the *Untermenschen* or subhumans, for the future of civilizations. (p. 629)

Esler explains that Hitler was able to capture attention by displaying an immense level of confidence both in his public speech acts and personally written literature. Without his ability to manipulate and persuade audiences, it is unlikely he would have been able to create the intense and loyal following he eventually obtained.

Throughout the remainder of the 1920s, the Nazi party grew immensely in popularity. By the end of the decade, the party's popularity, combined with the impending doom of worldwide economic depression, provided an open channel for the succession of Hitler (Evans, 2003). Esler (1997) declares:

Many Germans saw hope in Hitler in 1933. Lower-middle-class people voted for him out of fear of communism and in their own dwindling social and economic status. Students loved his idealistic speeches, and big businessmen gave funds to his party. Nationalists and anti-Semites of all classes supported him, and so did small-town monarchists longing for the return of the good old days of the Hohenzollerns. (p. 629)

After being appointed as Reich Chancellor in January 1933, Hitler quickly took progressive actions to carry out his political and cultural ideals. According to Wiesen (2010), the Reichstag fire of February 1933 led to the cooperation of President Paul von Hindenburg in the allowance of enforcing the Enabling Act, an action that would eventually allow Adolf Hitler and the Nazi party full control of governmental regulations citizenry without limitations. With the issuing of the Enabling Act, Wiesen explains that Hitler and his accompanying party would become unstoppable until the end of World War II in 1945.

In 1935, governmental bodies enforced the Nuremberg Laws, legislative acts that legalized the dissolution of Jewish citizenship and civil rights for German Jews (Evans, 2003). According to Kaplan (1998), the restrictions placed on Jews rapidly intensified preventing

employment, use of public facilities, and human rights. These anti-Semitic laws formed the ideological base of the Nazi-run German government. Furthermore, Kaplan explains that prior to the instatement of these laws; discrimination of individuals of Jewish descent had become evident. However, the establishment of the Nuremberg Laws officially declared such forms of systematic scientific racism legal and enforceable. The *Law for the Protection of German Blood and German Honour* strictly forebode partnerships and extramarital relations between Aryan and non-Aryan individuals. This initial enforcement also illegalized Jewish women to be employed under any circumstances. Kaplan goes on to explain that the *Reich Citizenship Law* declared that those who were considered German were classified as citizens of the Reich, while those considered non-Aryans (holding a dominant focus on Jews) were legally held as subjects of the state. According to Black (2001), any violation of the laws could be treated with a sentencing of forcible hard labor and/or imprisonment. In summation, these laws stripped German Jews of any sense of citizenship and progressively made their existence within Nazi territories increasingly dangerous.

According to Kaplan (1998), by late 1938, the restrictions placed on Jewish life had become so intensified, many felt as if it could not continue to progress. Kaplan defines Kristallnacht, or the Night of Broken Glass, as a series of severely violent attacks on Jewish businesses and individuals. Over 30,000 individuals were arrested and sent to Nazi-supported concentration camps. Jewish homes, businesses, schools, and synagogues were looted and destroyed. Esler (1997) explains:

A primary object of these measures was to force Jews to emigrate, leaving their property to the Nazi state. For the large majority who would not or could not afford to leave,

however, a new policy was developed. By the early 1940s, the Nazis had begun to force Jews into ghettos and intern them in concentration camps. (p. 631)

Although the Jewish people's quality of life in Germany had slowly diminished since Hitler was granted chancellorship, Kristallnacht served as a symbolic mark to the escalation of physical violence towards Jews in Germany.

As time progressed, Jewish populations from numerous European countries were forcibly relocated to overcrowded areas with vastly insufficient living conditions. Black (2001) claims that "[m]any individuals died in the initial stages of relocation due to starvation and rapidly-spreading disease" (p. 184). Esler (1997) describes that from the beginning of Hitler's control over Germany "[c]oncentration camps had been established to imprison vilified prisoners of war and those declared as enemies of the state" (p. 664). Although German governmental officials strategically attempted to keep most of the population unaware of such places, many citizens obtained knowledge of such camps through word of mouth (Kaplan, 1998).

According to Black (2001), the expansion and development of both concentration and extermination camps grew drastically. The important distinction between concentration and extermination camps now becomes vital to the understanding of Nazi ideology. Concentration camps, such as Dachau and Buchenwald, focused on the execution of forcible labor onto prisoners (pp. 351-352). However, simply because those concentration camps were not specifically labeled as places of determinable death, did not mean that prisoners were exempt from Nazi-controlled systematic death. According to Esler (1997), these camps systematically murdered their prisoners through overexertion, starvation, detestable quality of living, and rapidly spreading disease. Black states, "Extermination camps, such as Auschwitz, Treblinka, and others, were used solely for the purpose of extermination; predominantly through mass gas

chambers laced with Zyklon-B, a cyanide-based pesticide” (p. 352). Although not every Nazi-supported camp was established for the sole purpose of immediate extermination, it is apparent through my research that the horrific living conditions and the exhaustive physical labor demanded of prisoners bred ground for disease, starvation, and death at an overwhelming pace. Ultimately, these conditions resulted in probable death for prisoners.

After the invasion of Poland, the Nazi government began the establishment of Jewish ghettos in occupied territories. In regards to research completed about the Holocaust, historians (e.g. Black, 2001; Esler, 1997; Evans, 2003; Kaplan, 1998) use the term *ghetto* in reference to the enclosed districts designed to forcibly concentrate Jewish populations before eventual deportation to concentration and/or extermination camps. The entry entitled “Ghettos” found in the *Holocaust Encyclopedia* (United States Holocaust Memorial Museum [USHMM], 2012a) explains the origination of the term:

The term “ghetto” originated from the name of the Jewish quarter in Venice, established in 1516, in which the Venetian authorities compelled the city’s Jews to live. Various officials, ranging from local municipal authorities to the Austrian Emperor Charles V, ordered the creation of ghettos for Jews in Frankfurt, Rome, Prague, and other cities in the 16<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> centuries. (para. 1)

The term is used to describe the nearly 1,000 districts the Third Reich employed throughout the Nazi occupation of Europe (para. 2). These ghettos acted as a stage in deportation between individuals being evicted from homes and deportation to concentration and/or extermination camps (para. 3). These ghettos were not only logistical tools for effective and seamless Nazi-enforced deportation, but also worked as psychological tools to manipulate the minds of victims to gain reassurance that relocation was only to be temporary.

The Wannsee Conference of 1942 brought together numerous high-ranking Nazi officials and spawned the “Final Solution”; a plan to systematically annihilate the global Jewish population. Esler (1997) describes the employment of Hitler’s final solution: “Ghettos were liquidated, and millions were transported to concentration and extermination camps all across Germany and Eastern Europe” (p. 663). Concentration camps, such as Dachau and Bergen-Belsen, were places of slave labor and incarceration. Esler states:

As the 1940s advanced, the ghettos, too, were emptied as Jews from all over conquered Europe were funneled into half a dozen large camps, most of them in occupied Poland. In these camps, the official explanation ran, the internees would be “resettled” and put to work for the good of the Reich. . . . This effort produced a harvest of death so great that a new term was coined to describe it—genocide, meaning an attempt to destroy an entire race of human beings. (p. 663)

According to Black (2001), thousands of gas chambers were immediately constructed within the confines of camps following the conference. Heinrich Himmler, Reichsführer of the Schutzstaffel (SS), ordered that all prisoners selected for immediate death were to be stripped of all belongings and clothing, herded into a seemingly innocent shower room, gassed to death by inhalation of Zyklon-B, and burned in the intra-camp crematorium.

According to Kershaw (2011), in 1944, German troops were quickly losing ground as Allied Forces (in reference to the American, British, and Russian troops fighting in Europe) began to close in around Nazi territory. Kershaw explains that as Soviet troops approached, camps in eastern Poland were closed and prisoners were forced to march hundreds of miles towards western camps. Furthermore, Soviet, British, and American troops discovered and liberated camps from mid-1944 to the end of World War II on the European front in 1945. The

aftermath of the Holocaust left millions displaced and unable to return to their former homes and lives.

According to the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum (2013), the atrocities of the Holocaust are responsible for an estimated 11 to 17 million casualties. This estimate includes all targeted populations: Jews, Roma or gypsies, Polish and Soviet citizens, and so on. Prior to the Nazi era, nearly nine million Jews resided in Europe. According to statistics produced by researchers at the museum, by the liberation of labor and extermination camps in 1944 and 1945, two-thirds of this population had been murdered. Differentiations of casualty statistics are entirely dependent on the specificity of the definition of victims. Further investigation of victims remains ongoing as new documentation continues to be released. It is estimated that pre-Nazi Germany held just under 250,000 Jews; 90 percent of this population perished. Additionally, the museum cites that although the German Jewish population was the first targeted, Poland holds the highest number of Jewish casualties at an estimated 3 million out of 3.3 million citizens prior to invasion. Over one million of the total death toll of Jews was children.

To this day, memorials and structures are built in remembrance of those who suffered during the era of Nazi Germany and the Holocaust. Within the United States, the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum in Washington D.C. stands as the nation's most highly recognized devotion to those victimized during the Holocaust (USHMM, 2012b). Hundreds of devotional museums and monuments are littered across the country in purpose not only to tell the logistical history and personal narratives of those involved, but also to serve as educational facilities working towards modern day genocidal awareness.

I have found that a predominant underlying theme for such memorials is to educate about the past to protect the future. Most commonly, history is recognized as to ever repeat itself. Such

preventative methods, especially those aimed at adolescents and young adults, seem to be designed to continue awareness within future generations as the numbers of those directly involved or affected by the Holocaust diminish due to the passing of time.

The Museum's primary mission is to advance and disseminate knowledge about this unprecedented tragedy; to preserve the memory of those who suffered; and to encourage its visitors to reflect upon the moral and spiritual questions raised by the events of the Holocaust as well as their own responsibilities as citizens of a democracy. (USHMM, 2012b, Mission Statement)

Such memorials are not limited to modern constructed buildings or statues, but also lie within the remains and preservation of concentration and extermination camps themselves.

### **Holocaust Film Studies**

Film is a significant influence in the construction of public memory of the Holocaust and Nazi Germany. The development, production, and popularization of films regarding the Holocaust have grown exceedingly as time has progressed. Recent studies (e.g., Blume, 1993; Ginsberg, 2007) show a gradual shift in the narrative dynamics of Holocaust films. It appears that focus has moved away from representations of historical and militaristic magnitude and moved toward the telling of individual stories, both of legitimate survivors and realistic fiction allegories. Through my personal research, it seems that this shift has become excessively apparent within the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

Early productions depicting the Holocaust, such as the television miniseries *Holocaust* (1978) and *Schindler's List* (1993) focus on the broader scale of the development of the Third Reich, its reign, and its committed atrocities. I find that the purpose of these films may have been



guided by the desire to accurately represent documented historical events to many individuals, perhaps without prior knowledge of events.

More recent films, such as *The Boy in the Striped Pajamas* (2008), *The Reader* (2008), and *Sarah's Key* (2010), aim to focus on individual stories and the ways Nazi-generated ideologies and barbarity impact the films' main character(s). These films seem to have primarily focused on the use of the Holocaust in film as a backdrop. I find that this particular use often limits historical conceptualization; however, it allows audiences to become intensively connected to a film's characters.

Blume (1993) in her research titled "Absent Mothers, Absent Fathers: Aspects of German Fascism as Seen through the Contemporary Camera" focuses on the recreation of individual memory through film production. In particular, she focuses on four films: *Deutschland, bleiche Mutter*, *Europa, Europa*, *Peppermint Frieden*, and *The Ties That Bind*. Blume explains she chose these films in particular given the ways in which the filmmakers appealed to their own autobiographical accounts to fuel the production. Each film primarily focuses on an individual and/or group somehow affected by Nazi Germany, occupied Europe, or World War II. In these films, the focus is not placed on the large-scale events taking place on a linear scale or military position the same way a documentary might. Instead, a selective focus is placed on societal changes and severely altered experiences faced within daily life, such as personal interactions with others in public and attending work or school.

Blume (1993) opens the piece by discussing the identity of modern German cinema and distinctive features that mark differences from pre-World War II German cinema. Initially referenced are relative concepts from Jean Baudrillard and Michel Foucault, influential philosophers discussed frequently within rhetorical theory and the larger scope of

communication studies. Their references are used to emphasize the difficulty and guilt found within public memory and the attempt at reenactment through film. Blume uses Foucault's notion of the struggle over popular memory to defend the difficulty in the creation of a film that collectively includes memories from numerous, differing groups during the reign of the Nazi party. She goes on to describe elements from each of the four films that emphasize the acts of German fascism throughout the 1930s and 1940s. Blume finds that modern German cinematographers remain highly focused on developing films that feature in-depth visual reenactments and understandings of the historical magnitude of the period in time. She explains that great detail is placed upon authenticity, and historical accuracy emerges as a trend among the four films she analyzes.

Similarly, Ginsberg (2007) discusses the evolution of Holocaust filmography in her book *Holocaust Film: The Political Aesthetics of Ideology*. Particularly in the first chapter, Ginsberg conducts a critique of modern-day Holocaust cinematic culture through the analysis of relative periodic newsreels and military footage. She continues on to discuss the prevalent taboo placed on the academic study of the Holocaust and how this notion has changed over recent years, resulting in a large increase in academic and collegiate study. Ginsberg asks the overarching question: "Is there some underlying or extenuating rationale for the apparent contradiction between an expansive array of Holocaust film production, on the one hand, and a disproportionately minimal amount of serious Holocaust film scholarship, on the other" (p. 3). Throughout the first chapter, Ginsberg discusses the common Western approach to Holocaust film making that tries to make beautiful what, in actuality, is gruesome. She concludes that despite a desire to produce realistic film pieces, the trend of making beautiful what is actually horrific detracts from the historical value and legitimacy of the piece.

## Communication Studies

A growing number of communication studies scholars (e.g., Hasian, 2004; Moyer & Hugenberg, 1997; Welzer, 2008) have developed research and studies concerning rhetorical artifacts centered on the Holocaust. Through my own observation, it seems studies featuring an interweaving of rhetorical theory and Holocaust research were once scarce and infrequent. However, the development of such interests has led to public recognition through essays and presentations in highly regarded communication organizations: Southern States Communication Association (SSCA), Central States Communication Association (CSCA), and National Communication Association (NCA), to be specific. Although I have found the frequency in studies combining rhetorical focus, film criticism, and the Holocaust is far from overwhelming, scholars pinpoint a variety of concentrations.

Welzer (2008) discusses notions of both individual and public memory within German families in his article, “Collateral Damage of History Education: National Socialism and the Holocaust in German Family Memory” and addresses the progressive development of Holocaust education within Germany. In the article, he discusses the ways in which memories of involvement and experiences during the Holocaust have been handed down within German families. In this extensive study, 40 Eastern and Western German families were interviewed. Welzer interviewed the older participants of the study about their roles in the Third Reich, while younger participants were interviewed about what they know about their grandparents’ experiences and involvement.

Welzer (2008) discusses the successful nature of Holocaust education in contemporary Germany through school lessons and dedicated memorials, stating that a predominant majority of the population knows a great deal about key topics within the Holocaust. Additionally, he finds

that until recently a majority of studies were strictly quantitative, offering limited knowledge of personal reactions and emotions (p. 311). Welzer finds that while his original assumption was that those involved would hide many stories of the atrocities committed, many older generation interviewees were open with their families expressing sincere shame and regret (pp. 312-313).

Moyer and Hugenberg's (1997) work entitled "Narrative as Conversation: Motives Revealed through Two Stories of the Holocaust" was presented at the annual meeting of the Central States Communication Association. In their study, Moyer and Hugenberg focus on deciphering motives within two Holocaust stories. The authors use both dramatic and narrative paradigms to effectively identify motives within the two stories: Viktor Frankl's "Man's Search for Meaning" and Adina Szwajger's "I Remember Nothing More." Using Burkeian concepts of identification, Moyer and Hugenberg discuss the stories in relation to each other and identify central themes found within both. Additionally, they use conversation analysis to better understand the motive behind each author's telling of their story and the methods they chose to tell it. Moyer and Hugenberg describe Frankl's emergent motives as those of the desire to share his personal experience in death camps. They also state that Frankl displays a strong desire to profess and market his conception of logotherapy that "focuses on meaning of human existence" (p. 24). Moyer and Hugenberg describe Szwajger's apparent motives as a more personal, grief-relieving motivation. They explain that her literary approach to the telling of her story is less persuasive and serves as a personal recollection of her experiences (p. 32).

Hasian (2004) discusses modern Holocaust consciousness outside of Europe in his article, "Collective Amnesias: The Rudolph Kastner Trial and Holocaust Consciousness in Israel, 1948-1955." Hasian, a professor of communication at the University of Utah, elaborates on the Rudolph Kastner trial and collective memory among Israelis. According to Hasian, Rudolph

Kastner is remembered for negotiating with Adolf Eichmann to allow nearly 1,700 Jews to depart for Switzerland, instead of Auschwitz (p. 136). However, Kastner was eventually tried and executed by an Israeli court for collaborating with the Nazis. Hasian describes the historicity and development of the trial and emphasizes how the cultural influences of the surrounding Israeli population affected the verdict. Hasian discusses the multiple viewpoints Israelis held throughout the duration of the trial. An overwhelming majority of the surrounding population displayed anger, hostility, and resentment towards Kastner regardless of his efforts protect the Jewish population. Additionally, he discusses selective memory and the often forgotten Kastner trial. According to Hasian, although the trial of Rudolph Kastner gained extensive media coverage, it was far overshadowed by the trial of Adolf Eichmann held merely a few years later. This overshadowing caused Kastner's true efforts to become diminished and selectively forgotten among the Israeli people (p. 152).

In these studies, I observe that both film and communication studies follow similar trends in the progression from examining the larger scale of the Third Reich's actions towards a narrower-scoped, more individualistic approach. Additionally, there is an apparent recognition and demand for more and/or extended studies about the direct effects the Holocaust had on children and how such experiences influenced their lives after World War II. I have found that studies that apply pentadic criticism to Holocaust artifacts or texts are scarce. After identifying the need for additional Holocaust film studies, I hope to contribute to the area of study from a communication perspective. The next section offers an explanation of the rhetorical artifact I have chosen for this study.

## CHAPTER 3

### RHETORICAL ARTIFACT AND METHODOLOGY

#### **Explanation of Artifact**

The 2008 film, *The Boy in the Striped Pajamas*, is based on the best-selling novel *The Boy in the Striped Pyjamas* (Boyne, 2006). The film was directed by Mark Herman and features Asa Butterfield, David Thewlis, Vera Farmiga, and Jack Scanlon (*The Boy in the Striped Pajamas*, 2008). Over the past three years, I have become a regular viewer of the film. In this time I have been able to comprise my own personal summary of the film.

The film depicts the life of Bruno, the eight-year-old son of a high-ranked Nazi SS officer. Amidst the backdrop of World War II, the film emphasizes Bruno's gradual learning of the commonly held ideologies and practices of the Third Reich. Bruno's father, Ralf, receives a rank promotion and moves the family from their home in Berlin to a secluded home in the countryside. It is later revealed to the audience that the new house sits on the outer limits of a concentration camp, depicted to be Auschwitz in film and novel. Bruno quickly becomes disinterested and feels isolated, as he is no longer surrounded by his former companions. Although Bruno often seeks comfort from his twelve-year-old sister, Gretel, he finds the idea of playing with dolls abhorrent.

A self-proclaimed love of adventure causes Bruno to disobey his mother Elsa's rules and leads to his exploration of the dense woods behind the new house and, ultimately, his discovery of what he thinks is a farm. Bruno befriends Shmuel, an eight-year-old camp inmate imprisoned for being Jewish. Bruno cannot comprehend the idea that the fenced-in area in which Shmuel resides is a Nazi-run work and extermination camp with which his father is directly involved.

Despite increasing pressure to see Jews as an enemy, Bruno and Shmuel continue to bond throughout the duration of the film.

The end of the film embodies a sharp change in atmosphere. After Shmuel's father goes missing from his assigned barrack, the boys develop and execute a plan in which Bruno tunnels under the camp's electric fence and assists Shmuel in finding his father. Bruno dresses in a spare camp uniform to disguise himself from being identified as an outsider. Whilst searching, the boys become mistakenly immersed into a group of male prisoners being led to the camp's newly instated gas chamber. Meanwhile, Bruno's family discovers that he has ventured far behind the house and frantically run to identify his whereabouts. Bruno and Shmuel are forcibly gathered into the chamber where they perish. Although Ralf attempts to prevent the execution, he discovers that he is too late and is ultimately responsible for his own son's death.

According to IMDb (2012), the historical drama was originally released by Miramax Films in theaters on September 12, 2008 in the United Kingdom and on November 7, 2008 in the United States. Additionally, the filming period spanned from April 29, 2007 to July 7, 2007 and was shot in Budapest, Hungary. The film's gross box office income reached \$9,030,581 by its last weekend in United States theaters in January 2009.

*The Boy in the Striped Pajamas* has received a vast array of personal and professional reviews. Jaafar (2008) describes the movie as "heartwarming, yet alarming" (p. 13). The film has also faced harsh criticism because of its sensitive plot line. Through the film's unique narrative perspective, the audience is able to develop a gradually-increasing awareness to the ideologies of the Nazi era. I personally feel the film's text allows verbalization of Bruno's developing thoughts and knowledge about the events that happen around him. My close reading of the text provides

insight to the evident relational dynamics between the film's family members and offers an opportunity to understand the complexity of Nazi ideologies to an extrinsic population.

*The Boy in the Striped Pajamas* has been recognized for its achievements on numerous occasions, both domestically and internationally. Vera Farmiga, who played Bruno's mother, was awarded the 2008 British Independent Film Award for Best Actress (IMDb, 2012). Additionally nominated were Asa Butterfield for Most Promising Newcomer and Mark Herman for Best Director. The film was also awarded the Audience Choice Award at the 2008 Chicago International Film Festival. In 2009, it was nominated for Best European Film at the Goya Awards, Best International Film at the Irish Film and Television Awards, and Best Performance in an International Feature Film at the Young Artist Awards (IMDb, 2012).

### **Methodology**

Dramatism is an interpretive rhetorical theory centered on discovering a selected rhetorical figure's motives within a specific rhetorical artifact. According to Foss (2009), Kenneth Burke is a well-known literary theorist and philosopher and is noted as a key figure in the development of dramatism and its advancement in practical application through Burke's concept of the pentad and pentadic criticism (p. 355). Burke is recognized as an influential scholar within the fields of rhetorical criticism and literature.

Hart and Daughton (2005) explain that the foundation of dramatism lies within the analysis of human motive. Dramatism emphasizes language as the exploratory pathway of the construction of life. In other words, our identities are constructed from language and therefore define us. According to Hart and Daughton, the use of pentadic criticism has been vastly expanded to cover countless rhetorical artifacts. They also explain that Burke believed life was drama and language was employed as a strategic response. Hart and Daughton also emphasize



that he not only employed the social use of language to examine past events, but also to preemptively decipher use for the future.

The use of dramatism allows insight to the social and cultural implications of one's motives. According to West and Turner (2007), Burke believed the application of this theory granted access to understanding conflicts and possible negotiations and the impact of collusion along with combative measures. West and Turner explain the usefulness of Burke's method:

Drama is a useful metaphor for Burke's ideas for three reasons: (1) Drama indicates a grand sweep, and Burke does not make limited claims; his goal is to theorize about the whole range of human experience. The dramatic metaphor is particularly useful in describing human relationships because it is grounded in interaction or dialogue. . . . (2) Drama tends to follow recognizable types or genres. . . . (3) Drama is always addressed to an audience. In this sense, drama is rhetorical. (p. 358)

West and Turner focus on the fact that Burke does not limit dramatic focus to a specific kind of life event. By allowing room for personal interpretation of what can be employed as a rhetorical artifact, the scope of dramatism can vary greatly.

Dramatism can be used as a method to view one's life as a theatrical production. According to Foss (2009), it is important to remember that Burke expressed a significant difference between action and motion. Additionally, Foss concludes motion can ensue without motive by including biological influence. However, action cannot occur without motive, but it involves participatory effort from an individual and/or group.

Pentadic criticism stems from Kenneth Burke's conception of dramatism (Hart & Daughton, 2005). Foss (2009) describes pentadic criticism as the enactment of applying the dramatistic pentad, a method of identifying motivation, to a specific rhetorical artifact to identify

the motive(s) behind an action. Burke's original dramatic pentad contained five rhetorical elements: act, agent, agency, scene, and purpose. Each element focuses on answering a specific question. Blakesley (2002) states, "The act of a rhetorical situation asks what has happened or what event has taken place" (p. 33). He goes on to explain that "[t]he agent refers to the individual or group who carried out the act" (p. 33). In addition to the definition of agent, Foss states that "[a]ttitude is often included as a part or sub-section of the agent. It asks what attitudes the agent held in pursuit of the act" (p. 357). Furthermore, Blakesley states that "[t]he agency of a rhetorical situation examines the means by which the act took place. It answers how an act was performed" (p. 33). Burke (1945) explains that "[the] scene refers to the physical and ideological setting in which the act took place" (p. xv). Finally, Blakesley (2002) declares, "The purpose of a situation answers why the agent performed the act" (p. 33). The original five elements serve in conjunction with one another to produce a complete rhetorical analysis. According to Burke (1945):

You must have some word that names the *act* (names what took place, in thought or deed), and another that names the *scene* (the background of the act, the situation in which it occurred); also you must indicate what person or kind of person (*agent*) performed the act, what means or instruments he used (*agency*), and the *purpose*. (p. xv)

Not wanting to change the immediate structure of the rhetorical tool, Burke explained that attitude is "[i]n its character as a state of mind that may or may not lead to an act, it is quite clearly to be classed under the head of agent" (p. 20). By applying each of these elements to a rhetorical artifact and deciphering the controlling element, it becomes possible for the apparent motive to emerge.

According to Foss (2009), the primary purpose of pentadic criticism is to accurately apply each element to a selected rhetorical artifact, identify the dominant element by deciding which controls each of the others through ratio analysis (described below), and to determine the rhetor's apparent motive in the creation of the artifact. Additionally, Foss explains although each element is vital to the proper application of the pentad, each element should be individually addressed on its own.

After the identification of each element, the next step is to decipher the controlling element by creating ratios from each of the five elements found within the pentad. Foss (2009) explains that for a complete analysis of any rhetorical artifact, all possible ratios must be applied to the artifact to determine the dominant or controlling term. The determination of the dominant element takes place by comparing each of the elements against the others individually. The critic will first list each of the five elements (act, agent, agency, scene, and purpose). Next, the critic will pair each of the elements with its four counterparts. The pairing of two elements is called a ratio. Foss states, "A ratio is a pairing of two of the key terms that allows a critic to discover the relationship between them by analyzing how the first term in the pair shapes understanding of the second term" (p. 357). In this comparison, one of the two selected elements will appear to control the other within that specific ratio. This control can be identified based on the influences one element may have over the other. The critic must ultimately decide which of the two terms is controlling based on personal interpretation. After applying all possible ratios to the rhetorical artifact, the term that is identified as controlling most often is deemed the dominant element. According to Foss, the employing of ratios to the rhetorical artifact and the identification of the dominant element allows the critic to understand the rhetor's motive in performing the action in question. She goes on to explain that Burke believed that such identification allows insight to the

worldview of the rhetor in the creation of the artifact (p. 363). The recognition of the dominant element and its associated philosophical perspective permits the critic to comprehend the influence of the analyzed event and the rhetor's construction of a rhetorical situation.

Foss (2009) most clearly outlines the process of performing pentadic criticism. The first step is to select an artifact. This involves the selection of a rhetorical piece (text, film, advertisement, etc.). She goes on to explain that practically any piece is suitable for selection. Virtually any artifact is appropriate for pentadic analysis. Foss explains that “[d]iscursive and nondiscursive artifacts work equally well, and the length and complexity of the artifacts generally do not matter in an application of a pentadic method” (p. 357). Given the lack of restrictions placed on choosing a rhetorical artifact, the potential for employing pentadic analyses is practically limitless.

The second step is to analyze the artifact (Foss, 2009). This step involves appropriately labeling the elements (act, scene, agent, agency, and purpose) and discussing each element's position within the artifact. The next part is to create a list constructing all possible ratios from the five elements. According to Foss, after construction, the list should somewhat resemble this:

- Act-Scene
- Act-Agent
- Act-Agency
- Act-Purpose
  
- Agent-Scene
- Agent-Act
- Agent-Agency
- Agent-Purpose
  
- Agency-Scene
- Agency-Act
- Agency-Agent
- Agency-Purpose
  
- Scene-Act

- Scene-Agent
- Scene-Agency
- Scene-Purpose
  
- Purpose-Scene
- Purpose-Agent
- Purpose-Agency
- Purpose-Act

In order for the critic to determine the dominant term each element must be compared to each of the others individually. These pairings will result in twenty different ratios. The critic will then identify which of the two elements controls the other within each ratio. It is important for the critic to remember that the basis of control ultimately depends on his or her careful interpretations that he or she arrives at from rhetorical criticism. However, the critic's reasoning must have probable possibility within the entirety of the project. After the elements in each ratio have been compared against each other, a dominant term should emerge. The critic will be able to recognize the dominant term by identifying which element most frequently controls the others.

Following the identification of the dominant element, the final step is to write an essay documenting the performed work. Foss (2009) states, "The essay should include: (1) an introduction, (2) a description of the artifact, (3) a description of the methodology, (4) the results of the analysis, and (5) a discussion of the rhetorical contributions" (p. 364). Each section of the essay holds its own sense of importance within the analysis. The critic should begin the essay with an introduction explaining the rhetorical artifact chosen and the research question asked within the study. Next, the critic should include a section that offers an in-depth description of the artifact. However, this description should not include findings of the analysis as they pertain to the artifact. Third, the critic must describe the methodology they are using to perform the study. It is vital to include research about the method itself as a concept and for it to remain separate from the inclusion of the rhetorical artifact until the following section. Following a

discussion of the chosen methodology, the critic will discuss the results of the performed analysis. It is helpful to discuss each element separately from the others. This section also includes insight as to the emergent dominant element and an explanation as to how the results were reached. Finally, the critic should discuss the contributions their study provides to the study of rhetoric. For example, the critic may offer insight as to the reasoning and justification of their study.

## CHAPTER 4

### ANALYSIS

For the purpose of this analysis, I have chosen my rhetorical artifact as a climactic scene of *The Boy in the Striped Pajamas*, in which Bruno crawls under the extermination camp fence that, up until this point, has reflected the lifestyle division between Bruno and Shmuel. After successfully positioning himself within the camp's boundaries, he dresses himself in a stolen camp uniform and joins Shmuel in the search for his father.

#### **Act**

After Elsa's (Bruno's mother) discovery of the extermination camp and its close proximity and the realization of the dangerous nature of the camps, she and Ralf (Bruno's father) decide it would be best for both Bruno and Gretel go to live with relatives throughout the duration of the war. Shortly before he and his sister are supposed to leave the house, Bruno attempts to get away to fulfill a plan upon which he and Shmuel previously agreed. Once his mother is not looking, Bruno runs into the backyard and climbs through a small window, allowing him to be outside of the walls of the family's residence. Although the impending thunderstorm visibly begins to frighten Bruno, he continues to travel through the forest to meet Shmuel. His run through the forest shows its immense fruitfulness, almost as if it serves as a place of serenity and peace or, quite literally, a calm before the storm.

Bruno quickly approaches the area of the fence that he and Shmuel have grown so familiar with. Shmuel expresses his concern that Bruno may not have kept his promise to come. Bruno initially thinks that Shmuel has forgotten the extra uniform that he promised to bring for Bruno. Earlier in the film when the boys develop their plan, Shmuel mentions that Bruno can dress to look like a fellow prisoner, thus allowing the two boys to look for Shmuel's father while

remaining undetected by camp guards. Shmuel shakes his head to assure Bruno that he has not forgotten and reveals that he is actually wearing two uniforms, one on top of the other. Shmuel quickly takes off the top uniform and hands it to Bruno through the barbed wire fence.

The immediacy of the quickly approaching thunder and rain causes the two boys to become more urgent in the execution of their plan. Bruno quickly picks up his shovel and begins to dig a deep hole underneath the fence. Up until this point, I have discussed the surrounding nature of the act. The point of the explanation is to understand the nature of the film's climax as a rhetorical artifact. For readers who hold little knowledge of the film, this description holds an important role as a way to further understand where and how the rhetorical artifact fits into the larger span of the film. The following discussion is of the particular act itself.

Once Bruno finishes digging a hole of adequate size to successfully travel through without sustaining injury from the electrified fence, he begins to crawl under. Bruno is careful to move slowly enough so that he does not injure himself on the close-ranging wires, but seamlessly enough as to not get stuck, either in physical or mental fashion. It is important for Bruno to move quickly under the fence, as to prevent either child from getting caught by a camp guard. Eventually, Bruno moves beyond the difficulty of keeping his shoulders and back far away from the fence and is able to use his arms to push his upper body upward and out of the hole, allowing his legs to follow through. The act of Bruno crawling underneath the fence seems almost too easy, almost as if to predict hardships ahead in their search. After taking a moment to seemingly gather themselves, both boys run off together to begin searching for Shmuel's father. While this climactic scene contains numerous acts, the primary focus of this analysis is Bruno's act of crawling under the extermination camp fence.



### **Agent**

Bruno is an eight-year-old boy primarily interested in adventure and exploration.

Through my personal viewing of the film, Bruno is characterized as rather mischievous, in an innocent fashion, and is vastly curious about the developing world around him. Throughout the film, Bruno struggles with trying to understand his particular environment. The beginning of the film shows the family living in Berlin and positions Bruno's father as a heroic soldier. Bruno holds this vision of his father very high and strives to resemble him. However, throughout his developing friendship with Shmuel, he begins to realize that perhaps not all people recognize his father and his occupation as honorable. Positioning Bruno as the agent allows an insight into what it was like to grow up in Nazi Germany. Historical scholars (e.g. Borowski, 1976; Evans, 2003; Kaplan, 1998) have focused on the daily life and growth of Jewish children throughout the Third Reich and rightfully so. However, it is insightful to see the development of a child's life on the opposite end of the spectrum.

After he is separated from his group of friends due to the family's move to the countryside, Bruno craves companionship and adventure. However, he is strictly limited to play inside the new house and in the front yard. It is unclear if, previous to this move, Bruno has ever encountered a Jewish individual before. It is possible that he may have had interactions with Jewish children in school; however, Bruno would have been born just before the issuing of the Nuremberg Laws in 1935, thus, reducing the chance that he had ever even attended school with Jewish children. Perhaps this is why Bruno reacts the way he does when he discovers that Shmuel is imprisoned because he is a Jew. After all, Bruno has heard a number of stereotypical remarks denouncing Jews as an enemy from, what he views as, reliable sources. Even after his discovery, along with the kind and nurturing manner of Pavel (a camp prisoner who works inside

the house), Bruno begins to question the negative information he has heard. Bruno's curiosity allows him to look beyond the stereotypical remarks he has been surrounded with and form a substantial friendship with Shmuel.

It is vital to include a discussion of the agent's attitude. Bruno's attitude in this moment appears to feature excitement, guilt, anxiety, determination, and curiosity. His excitement stems from his passion for exploration and adventure. By fulfilling the plan to crawl under the fence and dress as a camp prisoner, he feels much like an explorer in one of his adventure books, embarking on new territory that he has never had the chance to experience. Bruno's guilt is a result of the previous incident in which he betrayed Shmuel's trust to protect himself. Earlier in the film, Bruno finds that Shmuel has been assigned to polish silverware inside the house. Bruno appears pleased to find his new friend can be found so close. Bruno realizes that Shmuel is very hungry, in which he offers him food. However, one of Ralf's soldiers walks into the room to find the two boys conversing and Shmuel eating. The soldier is convinced that Shmuel has stolen the food and violently asks Bruno if he knows Shmuel. Out of fear, Bruno responds that he does not know Shmuel and that he was already eating when he walked in. Because of Bruno's lie, Shmuel is violently punished and is left with severe facial injuries. After the incident, Bruno feels an extreme sense of guilt and strives to repair his friendship with Shmuel by proving his loyalty.

### **Agency**

The agency is the hardest element to decipher for this artifact. However, I have decided to identify a physical element of agency. I have identified the shovel Bruno brings to dig a hole under the fence as the physical element of agency. This tool allows Bruno to dig a hole deep enough in the dirt to adequately allow him to pass under the barbed wire fence into the extermination camp. The shovel is vital in the execution of the boys' plan. Without it, Bruno

would not have been able to dig the hole so quickly, either forcing the boys to get caught or the impending rain to make entrance into the camp impossible.

### **Scene**

The scene is a hidden back corner of the extermination camp where Bruno and Shmuel have grown accustomed to meeting. This area sits just beyond the dense woods behind Bruno's house. The terrain consists of pliable dirt, tall grass and weeds, and a level terrain. There is very little protection from sight except for a small pile of debris located inside the camp. For most meeting occasions between the two boys, Shmuel sits behind this pile of debris, covering himself from being noticed by camp guards. The division between freedom for Bruno and imprisonment for Shmuel is represented by a barbed wire fence built in order to keep the camp's prisoners from attempting to escape. This fence produces a dangerous electrical shock when any physical mass comes in contact with the wires; thus, it emerges as Bruno's first clue that the area is not a local farm as he originally thinks.

The location of the fence marking the camp's boundaries suggests the camp is located in the middle of a large, flat field. This trend was common in the placement and construction of the Nazis' labor and extermination camps. The large, level terrain was typically surrounded by dense brushery and/or forestry, often on the outskirts of small towns. While the open land allowed for easy construction of buildings on a massive scale, the surrounding forests strived to keep the camps from the prying eyes of local citizens.

As depicted in *The Boy in the Striped Pajamas*, most Nazi-run camps sat on the outskirts of small peasant towns (Kaplan, 1998). According to Kershaw (2011), this commonality in location served numerous functions. Primarily, the distance from town was key in the preservation of the camps. While camps required little food and water for the prisoners, in

adherence to the horrific quality of life the Nazis insisted upon for them, provisions for the camps' guards and officers were convenient to allocate. Esler (1997) explains that guards and officers were notorious for inflicting harsh conditions for prisoners while they lived quite luxuriously. It is apparent in the film that the family's new residence is located merely a few miles from the camp's fence where Bruno and Shmuel originally meet.

Although not much inside the camp boundaries is shown, it is possible to decipher a few points through the quick glances the audience is provided. First, there are large, open labor areas, meaning that this camp had not always served as an extermination camp. Second, although the back fence of the camp is shown, additional borders are not visible and fences appear to go on without end. This could indicate that this camp is large and has the ability to hold hundreds of thousands of prisoners at any given point.

### **Purpose**

Bruno's purpose in performing the act is to: (1) help Shmuel find his missing father, (2) regain Shmuel's trust and restore their friendship, and (3) to fulfill his dream of becoming an explorer. His first purpose is to help his friend with a problem that is causing him great concern. Shmuel expresses his concern to Bruno after his father leaves on a special work assignment and does not return. The reality of what happens to Shmuel's father remains unknown throughout the remainder of the film. It is possible that his father is still on the work assignment; however, this is unlikely. Unfortunately, the realistic causes his father has not returned are either that he was transported to a different camp or he had been included in a group already sent to perish in the gas chambers. Although the likelihood of these answers is devastating, the reality is overwhelming.

Bruno's second purpose is to perform the act to ensure to Shmuel that he is a loyal friend and has great respect for their friendship. By conducting such a dangerous plan, Bruno hopes to show that he will help his new friend at any cost, even his own. Of course, neither boy fully realizes the true danger that this action would include. However, Bruno subsides his thoughts of fear by placing his desire for companionship over his hesitation. After his lie has caused physical harm toward Shmuel, Bruno's desire for this companionship increases greatly. This lingering guilt is the main reason Bruno executes his plan to crawl under the camp fence.

Throughout the entire film, Bruno's passion for adventure and exploration is emphasized through his daily activities, the books he reads at will, and his passive dismissal of historical, non-fiction writing. Bruno aspires to be like the characters in his fiction books when he becomes an adult. In addition to viewing the act as a way to help his friend, Bruno also sees it as a way to prove himself as an explorer. Without Bruno's displayed passion for adventure, the companionship in question would have never developed in the first place.

## CHAPTER 5

### RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Through my analysis of a climactic scene in *The Boy in the Striped Pajamas* I have discovered that the element of purpose emerges as the dominant term. Purpose dominates each of the other elements in the pentad for specific reasons.

The scene is a dominant element as it is applied to the artifact. However, the purpose dominates the scene due to the unusual nature of the boys' friendship. Without Bruno wanting to mend his friendship with Shmuel the scene would have never existed. However, according to the historical value, the friendship between the two boys defies commonalities. According to the historical, social, and cultural elements of the scene, the friendship would have never existed. Without Bruno's desire to help Shmuel (purpose), he would not have disobeyed his mother and not met Shmuel at the fence, thus resulting in the inexistence of the scene.

Purpose controls the act through Bruno's overlooking of the potential danger included by entering the camp. If Bruno did not have the motive to help Shmuel (purpose), he would never have met Shmuel at the camp fence (scene), and without the boys meeting, Bruno would not have crawled under the fence (act). Although Bruno does not understand the danger he puts himself to the fullest extent, he does display his personal feelings that helping Shmuel is more important to him than any of the possible risks he perceives could happen.

In the comparison of purpose versus agency, purpose dominates agency through the allocation of the shovel and spare prisoner uniform. Without the purpose to perform the act, the shovel and uniform would not find any worth within the scene. The materials that comprise the agency require attention and effort to obtain. In simpler terms, the spare uniform and shovel were

not merely lying around next to the fence. The agency is controlled by the act and, in turn, the act is controlled by the purpose.

The comparison of purpose versus agent shows that purpose controls the agent based on the agent's surroundings and background. As the son of a high-ranking Nazi officer, Bruno should have no contact or communication with Shmuel in Nazi ideology. The two boys should be kept separate, both physically and metaphorically. Given the social and cultural construction of Bruno's identity, in theory, the agent would control the purpose. However, the intense desire for companionship and friendship by both boys and Bruno's desire to help Shmuel triumphs over the ideology with which Bruno has been surrounded.

In accordance to the determination of purpose emerging as the dominant element, the observed ideology of the rhetor is mysticism. Foss (2009) states, "Mysticism, the element of unity is emphasized to the point that individuality disappears" (p. 363). I feel that while both boys remain separate individuals, the act allows both to become identifiable with one another by embarking on a dangerous journey and experiences what each other experiences from the same perspective.

Employing pentadic criticism to a film allows additional insight for the audience to understand the motive behind the main character's actions and/or the filmmaker's choice in developing the film. In this pentadic application, the motive behind Bruno's decision to crawl under the fence into the extermination camp becomes apparent. Additionally, Bruno's values and morals are more thoroughly identifiable. For example, through his decision to embark on a dangerous adventure to help his friend, it becomes visible that he values companionship and friendship over physical safety. His loyalty to Shmuel is more important than listening and abiding to the anti-Semitic stereotypes with which he is surrounded.

Rhetorically, I have found that the application of the pentad to an artifact involving the Holocaust and/or the Nazi party allows more interpretive insight to a period of time many still cannot fully comprehend. After nearly seventy years since the end of World War II, the thought processes of individuals involved and influenced is difficult to construct. In this application, numerous altering perspectives are highlighted through a gradual learning process. Bruno holds the perspective of a young, German boy who holds tremendous respect for his parents. He views his father as a hero, both to his family and to his country. However, the gradual revelation of the tasks his father's job truly entails forces Bruno to realize a harsher truth about the practices of the German government. To claim that all drama is constructed through human motive is a strong statement to make; however, it is true. Without any bearing of human motivation, action would never occur.

*The Boy in the Striped Pajamas* is a powerful and complex historical drama created to provide a unique perspective of the Holocaust for the viewer. Using Burkeian elements of dramatism and the pentad, I conducted a pentadic analysis of the film's final scene and discovered that purpose emerges as the dominant element.

The historical magnitude of the Holocaust serves as the backdrop for both the film and the genre of filmography discussed in this project. To achieve a brief, all-encompassing history of Nazi Germany and the Holocaust I used numerous research tools. Wide-ranged historical texts (e.g., Black, 2001; Esler, 1997; Evans, 2003; Kershaw, 2011) provided general background knowledge suitable for a general audience. Additionally, smaller-scoped, specialty texts (e.g., Borowski, 1976; Kaplan, 1998) provided in-depth knowledge about specific events influencing the Holocaust.



Throughout this project, my knowledge of the Holocaust and Nazi Germany has expanded immensely. By intersecting Holocaust filmography and pentadic criticism, I have identified a new perspective through which to view both periodic research and narratives. The process of identifying motives within films allows the viewer to see the complexity of that time period. This complexity can be viewed through actions and interactions that occur within the rhetorical artifact. This project has allowed me to take a step back from simply reading historical texts and opened my eyes to wonder why people do what they do. This perspective has been helpful in attempting to understand why some people acted out against the Nazi party and why others sat idly by. My personal development and use of this perspective has helped me to further my understanding of the complexity and peril that the 1930s and 1940s entailed.

My application of the pentad to the rhetorical artifact shows that purpose emerges as the dominant element. This revelation is due to the enormous influence of Bruno's purpose in conducting the act. His determination to win back Shmuel's trust and prove his loyalty to the friendship, along with his desire to become an explorer, outweighs the social and cultural influences and restraints that construct the scene. According to Foss (2009), considering the dominant element is purpose, the correlating ideology is mysticism. When Bruno enters the camp dressed as a prisoner the boys transform from two separate individuals divided by freedom and imprisonment to a symbolic pair in the embarking on their adventure. This transformation shows the audience that despite physical and cultural barriers, Bruno and Shmuel find their friendship and loyalty to each other more important than the potential consequences of their harrowing adventure. This friendship could have been created to display the innocence of children, even throughout such a tumultuous period in history. Additionally, the audience members are offered an alternative perspective on the lives of German children not often seen in

film. A vital message audience members are given throughout the film is that even in a time of such cultural and physical destruction, heroic individuals still have the potential to emerge.

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