

# Informative essay on the boy in the striped pajamas

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The Boy in the Striped Pyjamas, based on the novel of the same title, directed by Mark Herman, set in Germany during World War II in the early 1940s. It follows the story of Bruno, an eight-year-old boy living in Berlin, currently under the rule of Adolf Hitler. His father is a commandant at a concentration camp. When his family moves to Auschwitz (or as Bruno believes it to be pronounced: 'Out-With') near the concentration camp for his father's work, Bruno finds himself confined to the front yard of his new home and longs for a friend and an adventure.

After finding a way out of the property, he discovers a concentration camp, although at this stage he believes it to be a farm rather than a prison. Bruno quickly develops a friendship with Schmel, a Jewish boy living in the concentration camp who is the same age as him. Bruno makes several visits to the camp, despite being told by his parents that he is not to venture outside the back gate. Schmel tells Bruno that his father is missing, while Bruno is informed that he and his sister will go to live with his Aunt. Instead of leaving his home in the country to go back to Berlin, Bruno decides to help Schmel find his father.

He dons striped "pyjamas" and crosses the fence, with horrific consequences. A character I disliked in the movie was Bruno's father, Ralf. Ralf is a stereotypical German Nazi commandant in charge of the nearby Auschwitz concentration camp. He is very much in support of Adolf Hitler, believing that the Jewish are bad people. He tries to convince his family that he is making the world a better place. Bruno's sister, Gretel, supports her father's views on the matter, and explains to Bruno about the Jewish. "But Dad just sat there!" "What did you expect him to do? The Jew deserved it!"  
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Can I ask you something about the farm? ” “ Bruno, you don't think it is a farm, do you? It's a camp, what's called a work camp, for Jews. ” “ Just Jews, because they are the best workers? ”

“ They're not in because they are good, silly, they aren't good at anything. They are in there because they are evil. They are the enemy, evil dangerous vermin. They're the reason why we lost the Great War. ” Ralf also imposes a fake perception of the concentration camp on his soldiers. He shows them a video that portrays the fact that the camp is a nice place to live and that the Jewish enjoy it there. New arrivals here are happy to discover that life in the camp is not all work and that there's ample opportunity for leisure also. At the end of their day of ironmongery or the build of boot factory, the workers can enjoy the many forms of pastime that the camp has to offer. Organised sport is very popular. Those that don't play certainly enjoy watching. At the end of the working day the centrally located cafe is the ideal place for friends and families to join together for a hearty and nutritious meal. The children in particular enjoy the pastries and cakes on offer.

In the evenings the occasional music concerts either by visiting orchestras or, indeed, by talented musicians from within the camp itself, are always well attended. Other recreations include reading in the library, pottery, cookery, art and horticulture for adult and child alike. Almost any activity one could wish for is available within the camp. ” This description is in stark contrast to what the camp really is like. I find Bruno's father a horrible person for not telling the truth about the camp. Even his wife doesn't know what goes on in

the camp, and when she finds out, Ralf tells her that he was sworn to secrecy.

I think we are lucky that we live in a time when fathers aren't necessarily bound to their job in such a way that it almost destroys a family. Bruno's father was brainwashed into believing that the Jewish were bad people and did not deserve to live, as was Bruno's sister, Gretel. I am glad that in this century we are not so easily led into believing such things. What Ralf did was horrible but in a way he was trying to protect his family - if he had disobeyed Hitler's orders, he may have ended up in a camp himself or even dead - but in this case his efforts to protect Bruno did not turn out so well.

I also think we are lucky that we live in a country where we have enough freedom to disagree with our leaders and have an option to vote them out if necessary. In World War II, if you had a different opinion to Hitler, you were either sentenced to death or put in a concentration camp. Ralf did what was best for his family, but in doing so did some horrific things to other people. I felt extremely sorry for the main protagonist, Bruno, and enjoyed the theme of innocence. Bruno was very young, naive and hardly knew anything about the war.

I think his parents and tutor should have informed him better about what was going on outside of his front yard, as he certainly didn't deserve to die in a concentration camp. If he had known more about the outside world, perhaps he wouldn't have felt so obliged to explore further and in doing so enter the camp. His innocence is portrayed in this instance, when he is talking to Schmuel through the fence. Bruno: " Is everything alright? "

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Schmuel: “ No, we can’t find the Pa. He went on a different work duty with some of the men and they haven’t come back. “ I have got some bad news, too. I’m going away. ” “ How long this time? ” “ That’s what it’s bad. It’s forever I think. Mum says this is no place for children. ” “ It’s just stupid. When do you go? ” “ Tomorrow, after lunch. ” “ So I won’t ever see you again? ” “ Yes, you will. You can come on holiday to Berlin if you like, when everybody is getting on with each other again... I wish I could have helped you find your dad. I really want to make up for letting you down like I did. That would have done it, wouldn’t it? Helping find your dad.

Would have been great, like a secret mission. Hey, I could dig under [the fence]! ” Bruno then proceeded to dig under the fence and dress in striped “ pyjamas” to help find Schmuel’s Dad. He and Schmuel are marched into a gas chamber, where they both die. I also felt sorry for Bruno when he was having lessons with his tutor, Herr Liszt, as he was being taught very difficult things about the war and how Hitler is a good person. For example: “ I don’t understand: a nation’s collapse is only done to this one man? ” “ The Jew here means the entire Jewish race.

If it had been just one man, I’m sure something would have been done about him. ” “ There is such a thing as a nice Jew, though, isn’t there? ” “ I think, Bruno, if you ever found a nice Jew, you would be the best explorer in the world. “ Again, this shows how lucky we are to live in a country where there is no war going on. If we were taught such things in school nowadays, we would have a very different perception of the world. We are not taught biased facts about historical nor current day events, and we are lucky that

we are allowed to develop our own opinions without being sentenced to death.

I think a child's innocence is extremely important to hold on to in most instances because it prevents them from many dangers that the world poses, however in this case it was the difference between life and death for Bruno. If his parents had told him why he was not allowed to go to the concentration camp, he would have been aware of the dangers and perhaps not have persisted on visiting Schmel, but his curiosity and lack of reason from his parents eventually led him to his death.