

The biography and stunning career of charlie chaplin

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Charlie Chaplin

It may be a surprise to some, but Charlie Chaplin's real name is not Charlie Chaplin. His real name is Charles Spencer Chaplin. Chaplin was born in London, England, on April 16th 1889. Charlie had to learn to survive on his own at the age of ten because of the death of his father and the sudden illness of his mother made it necessary for Charlie and his brother to learn to survive on their own.

Knowing that he inherited talents from his parents, Charlie decided that the stage was his best opportunity for a career. " Charlie made his professional debut as a member of a juvenile group called " The Eight Lancashire Lads" and rapidly won popular favour as an outstanding tap dancer."

(charliechaplin. com) At the young age of twelve he starred in his first legitimate show. He played a paperboy in " Sherlock Holmes". He was an overnight success. His growing popularity made him wanted by many different producers. He acted for several different producers until he signed with The Mutual Film Corporation. With them he made 12 two-reel comedies.

After Charlies' contract expired in 1917 he decided to become an independent producer. Charlie wanted more freedom and leisure in the movie process. He built his studio right in the heart of the residential section of Hollywood. (charliechaplin. com) Charlie was also partnered with several organizations to help make his productions more public; one of those corporations being the First National Exhibitors' Circuit.

While searching for a new leading lady, he rediscovered Lillita MacMurray. Lillita was put under contract and re-named Lita Grey. Chaplin secretly had an affair with her. When his film at the time was six months into shooting, Lita discovered she was pregnant. Chaplin found himself forced into a marriage. Having to marry under pressure circumstances both were unhappy, although it produced two sons, Charles Jr and Sydney Chaplin.

As years went by Chaplins' popularity grew more and more. Around the same time of Chaplins' popularity growth Hitler was rising in power. He was in the midst of invading several nations. People all over were afraid of Hitler and what things he was capable of. Many people didn't want to speak out against him because of fear of the repercussions. Chaplin, knowing Hitler was a fan, and would see the movie, spoke for the first time in a film of his called " The Great Dictator". Charlie had only been known for his silent films. Chaplin was one of the first to openly speak out against Hitler and the Nazis. When writing " The Great Dictator" in 1939, Chaplin was as famous worldwide as Hitler, so he knew many would see this.

The film was originally meant to satirize Adolph Hitler and condemn the Nazi party and it's values. The plot circles around two characters, both played by Chaplin. One is a dictator and the other is an amnesic Jewish barber who is a doppelganger for the dictator. The dictator, Adenoid Hynkel, believes in a purely Aryan state and wants nothing more than to be emperor of the world. That power lust lays a merciless grip on the country, which includes sending the Jews to concentration camps and invading a neighboring country, much like Hitler's strategy leading up to World War II. Schultz, a traitorous

commander under the dictator, who was saved previously by the barber, escapes from being sent to the concentration camps with the barber in tow. Ultimately, the barber is mixed up with the dictator himself. The crux of the film is when the barber is given the opportunity to speak to the people of the two warring countries as the dictator. (Bedell)

The speech is more directed toward the viewers of the film, an audience caught off guard by the policies of Hitler, yet supporting a country stance on peace to avoid another conflict like World War I. Taking advantage of a the United States standing on the brink of entry into World War II, Charlie Chaplin uses the film and, specifically, The Great Dictator speech, to express the pessimism, violence, and greed that had overtaken the way of life that is native in human nature. “Chaplin’s use of power and passion in the reflection on the loss of a responsible humanity dedicated to bettering life for all makes for a convincing pathetic,” (Bedell) shows that the audience has the ability to bring back the life everyone deserves.

Furthermore, the release of “The Great Dictator” may have been the catalyst to the decline of his popularity. Although, many thought it was brave, many also thought people wouldn’t be able to separate the politics from Chaplin’s movie star image. In the end, the film was nominated for many awards including Best Picture, Best Original Screenplay and Best Actor.

The years following the commercial success of “The Great Dictator” were a challenging time for Chaplin. It turns out he was having an affair with a woman of the name Joan Barry. Legal troubles began stemming from the

affair. Chaplin met Barry in May 1941, and gave her a contract with his studio. The contract was cancelled after a year. It can only be assumed that is when the affair was put to an end. Barry soon began acting obsessive. On the day of December 1942, she broke into Chaplin's home with a handgun and threatened suicide while holding him at gunpoint. She left Beverly Hills after being arrested for vagrancy, wondering from place to place. In May of 1943 she returned, going to Chaplin's house uninvited again. Barry announced that she was pregnant and believed Chaplin was the father. Chaplin denied and had her arrested. In June, Barry filed a paternity suit against Chaplin and told the press about the affair. The story exploded, and Chaplin went into hiding to avoid reporters.

Chaplin and Barry decided to wait until Barry's child was born before proceeding with the paternity suit, so that blood tests could be used to determine whether he could potentially be the father. Soon after Barry had first filed the suit, the federal authorities became interested in the case. In February of 1944, Chaplin was accused of four criminal acts, three of them for allegedly interfering with Barry's arrest and sentence, and one for allegedly violating the Mann Act, which prohibits the transportation of women across state lines for sexual purposes. If he was found guilty, Chaplin faced 10 years in jail.

Not too long after Charlie ended up marrying another actress, one of the name Oona O'Neil. They had eight additional children and remained married until his death.

By October 1977, Chaplin's health had declined to the point that he needed constant care. The morning of December 25, 1977, Chaplin died in his home after suffering a stroke in his sleep. He was 88 years old. The funeral, on December 27, was as small and private. Chaplin was buried in the Vevey cemetery. The film industry expressed their tributes upon news of his death. Some saying he was one of the biggest contributors in the industry.

On March 1, 1978, Chaplin's coffin was dug up and stolen from its grave by two unemployed immigrants by the names of Roman Wardas, and Gantcho Ganev. The body was held ransom in an attempt to get money from Oona Chaplin. After she refused to pay, they threatened Chaplin's youngest children with violence. Ganev and Wardas were caught in a large police operation in May, and Chaplin's coffin was found buried in a field in the nearby village of Noville, Switzerland. It was re-buried in the Vevey cemetery surrounded by reinforced concrete.

In the end, Charlie Chaplin had a long and successful life that ended on a low note. He made millions laugh with films, and even made people think with his speech in "The Great Dictator". He went through a lot of obstacles in his personal life, which unfortunately became public, but he will always be known for the huge impact he made in the film industry.