

# The lives of others essay sample



Florian Henckel von Donnersmarck's 2007 Academy Award-winning German film, takes its readers' imagination, as the title suggests, in the "Lives of Others." The story, magically filled with enticing characters and thought-provoking plot, further takes the audience in a rollercoaster of suspenseful, ethically exacting drama.

The director and writer, von Donnersmarck, accompanies the movie with "Sonata for a Good Man," giving support and emphasis on the theme of the movie regarding a man's response to a challenging situation where chances for decent behavior is nearly impossible. He successfully creates a magnificent use of visuals and point of view, together with its remarkable narrative vigor. Born and raised in West Germany in the year 1973, von Donnersmarck was able to illustrate the totalitarian past of his native land and over the Berlin Wall, towards the melancholic, atrocious, absurdity of the late German Democratic Republic. He was also able to take the vindictive psychology of socialism into account.

The story was set in 1984 and an East German Secret Police agent, Captain Gerd Wiesler (Ulrich Mühe) as assigned by his Lt. Colonel, vigilantly and cautiously spied Georg Dreyman (Sebastian Koch) who was alleged of Western sympathies. But then, Weisler will soon discover that the playwright, Dreyman, was being scouted because of his actress-girlfriend Christa-Maria Sieland (Martina Gedeck) for a constituent of the Central Committee, Minister Bruno Hempf (Thomas Thieme) was in love with her.

Without the playwright, he can pursue the actress without restraint. As Dreyman became aware that his girlfriend was being blackmailed by the

minister to a sexual intimacy and after his friend Albert Jerska (Volkmar Kleinert) committed suicide, his principle of believing his leaders changed. Weisler, drawn in understanding for the playwright and the actress, will do everything to protect them from the suppressive government.

As the lives of the characters interweave, the movie exposes the flaws of the government before the Berlin Wall buckled. A world of jealousy, corruption and fraud of the administration, which von Donnersmarck has created, touched the hearts of the viewers as much as it focused on the dark side of German history.

The movie as a whole creates two different point of view. First, it would seem that the movie is a simple adventure into the depths of dark Germany as well as the history of its government. Second, through scanning of characters and the series of events in “ The Lives of Others”, it can be said that Florian Henckel von Donnersmarck’s movie can also refer towards the decision making and in choosing one’s true nature rather than the accounted historical context.

In spite of of these two perspectives, von Donnersmarck had thematic parallels to the United States administration, particularly during the time of George W. Bush. “ The Lives of Others” illustrates scenes of domestic wire-tapping as well as worldly principles, which sometimes tend to be tedious and a bit inaccurate. However, whether accurate or not, von Donnersmarck’s style keeps his audience or viewers stuck on the movie, without boring their selves and as if the audience were in the shoes of the characters. Florian Henckel von Donnersmarck is like giving an ice cream, with a sprinkle of

reality and fiction, mounted on a cone, coated with information and served in a plate of suspense and drama that definitely keeps its audience from wanting more.

#### Works Cited

The Lives of Others. 2006. Florian Henckel von Donnersmarck, February 9.