

HUMANITIES INSTITUTE  
Shawna McDermott, Ph.D.

## Schindler's List (1993)

Steven Spielberg

### OVERVIEW

**Auteur** Stephen Spielberg's work spans many genres. While he is most famous for blockbuster films such as *Jaws* (1975), *E.T. the Extra-Terrestrial* (1982), and *Jurassic Park* (1993), each of which has a firm foothold in horror and science fiction, his filmography also reveals a deep commitment to asking questions about history and humanity. Spielberg's diverse collection of work has been widely recognized as pioneering, frequently engaging with unexplored themes and techniques that have earned Spielberg a reputation as an innovator and a master artist. He has been awarded three Academy Awards, the AFI Life Achievement Award, and the Presidential Medal of Freedom. His films have likewise collectively placed him at the top of the list of the most profitable film directors in history.

**Film** Although Spielberg was lauded for many of his films before *Schindler's List* (1993), this film was the one to earn him the coveted Academy Award for Best Director. Spielberg's engagement with historical drama in this film is a departure from his more recognized genres of thriller and science fiction. However, his engagement does reflect his previous interests in World War Two, as seen in *Empire of the Sun* (1987), and the Nazi party, as seen in the *Indiana Jones* franchise. Still, *Schindler's List* has a darker tone and theme than Spielberg's previous films. The film met critical acclaim and won seven Academy Awards beside Best Director, including Best Picture, Best Original Score, and Best Cinematography. It was also a financial success, earning 96 million dollars in the United States and nearly three times that worldwide.

**Background** Like several of Spielberg's works, *Schindler's List* is an adaptation of a novel (*Schindler's Ark* by Thomas Keneally). Both the film and the book tell of the life and work of Oskar Schindler, a member of the German Nazi Party who used the money he earned during the Second World War to save more than 1,100 Jewish workers from being detained in Auschwitz, where they would have almost certainly been killed. Spielberg first considered adapting the novel in 1983 after reading a review of the book. However, at the time he felt too immature to direct such a serious subject. Ten years later, Spielberg agreed to direct *Jurassic Park* (1993) only if executives at Universal Studios agreed to greenlight *Schindler's List* as well. Of Jewish descent himself, Spielberg declined a salary for the film, instead deciding to make it as a tribute to his family and community.

### SYNOPSIS

In 1939, the German Nazi Party ordered that Jewish persons in Krakow all move together into a tiny portion of the city. Oskar Schindler, a member of the Nazi Party from Czechoslovakia, took advantage of the situation, purchasing an enamelware factory and using Jewish workers to run it at incredibly cheap costs. Schindler hired Itzak Stern, the previous accountant of the factory, to manage it for him. Stern, in turn, used the factory to have many Jewish persons marked as essential workers, even though their age or previous occupations did not give them any particular expertise. Although Schindler initially objects to this practice, when he begins to see the ruthlessness with which his employees are treated by the Nazi Party, he quietly encourages Stern to continue. Schindler grows incredibly rich from the profits of his enamelware factory.

The Krakow ghetto is dismantled in 1943 and all residents are either killed or moved to the Plaszow concentration camp. Angry that his workers are taken from him, Schindler becomes friends with Amon Goeth – the ruthless commandant of the Plaszow camp – and convinces him to let him move his factory to the camp. There, Schindler rehires his workers and continues to make profits. The factory, however, also becomes a haven for the workers. Those who work there are not killed or sent away and generally receive better treatment.

When Goeth receives word that the Plaszow camp will likewise be dismantled and all of its residents sent to Auschwitz, Schindler works hard to create a list of more than 1,100 Jewish workers whom he will take with him to Czechoslovakia to work in a new munitions factory there, thus saving them from Auschwitz. Schindler accomplishes this largely by spending his entire fortune to bribe the officials who allow him to transport his workforce to Czechoslovakia. The group of Jewish workers endures the rest of the war in the munitions factory, which is never profitable and does not produce viable weapons. When war ends, Schindler is declared a war criminal and must flee. The workers give him a ring and send him off with their thanks. Those persons who survived the Plaszow camp and were included on Schindler's list visit his grave alongside the actors who played them in the film. They leave rocks on the grave in Schindler's memory.

## CHARACTERS

<b>Oskar Schindler</b>	A businessman and war profiteer
<b>Itzhak Stern</b>	An accountant
<b>Amon Goeth</b>	Commandant of Plaszow concentration camp

## CHARACTER ANALYSIS

### **Oskar Schindler**

Personable and canny, Oskar Schindler is a war profiteer who makes his fortune off the forced labor of Jewish workers during the Second World War. Over the course of the film, he sees the error of his ways and eventually works hard to ensure that the workers are kept as safe as he can make them.

*Avaricious* – For most of the film, Oskar Schindler is driven by greed. He buys his factory with investments from Jewish prisoners and then pays his Jewish workers next to nothing, if anything. Schindler lives the high life during most of the Second World War, spending money on lavish parties, clothing, and food. By the end of the film, Schindler regrets spending his money like this as the money could have been spent to save more lives.

*Charming* – Schindler does not enter the Second World War as a rich man; instead, he rubs shoulders with the correct members of the Nazi party and throws lavish celebrations to make friends in high places. At the end of the film, Schindler uses these connections and his charm to convince Nazi officials to allow him to “buy” the lives of his Jewish workers, saving them from Auschwitz.

### **Itzhak Stern**

Stern is a hardworking accountant who managed the books of the enamelware factory even before Schindler bought it. He functions in the film not only as the man who truly makes the factory run but as Schindler's quiet conscience throughout. In the end, Stern and Schindler collaborate to make the 'list'.

*Capable* – Schindler immediately hires Stern to run his factory because he is aware that Stern did a good job for the factory owners who came before him. While Schindler makes friends with Nazi commanders who make his factory possible and profitable, it is Stern who runs the actual manufacturing and hiring processes.

*Moral* – Stern is quiet and subtle, using his position in the factory for good when he hires many people as essential workers, even when their age and ability would not generally put them in that category. From the beginning of the film, Stern understands his moral responsibility to the Jewish community and he works hard to save as many people as he can. While Schindler joins this effort and adds his money to the cause, it is truly Stern who is the enduring moral force behind the story.

### **Amon Goeth**

Cruel and ruthless, Amon Goeth is a Nazi commandant in charge of the concentration camp at Plaszow. He views Jewish people as less human than he and other German citizens and treats them as such.

*Cruel* – Very early in the film, Goeth is shown to view the Jewish prisoners in the ghetto and the Plaszow camp with a banal kind of malice. He uses a rifle to callously shoot people from his balcony as if for sport. Likewise, he chooses the prettiest maid from the line of women applying for the job and makes her life miserable with a sequence of mental and physical tortures. Goeth is portrayed as a kind of sociopath with little to no care for other humans' pain.

*Pitiful* – Fiennes' portrayal of Goeth in particular marks him as pathetic rather than simply evil. The character is shown to be lazy, easily influenced by ideas of grandeur, and greedy in terms of money. In many ways, the film suggests that he is constantly seeking power and prestige but knows, deep down, that he is pathetic and miserable. It is a complicated portrayal of an insecure man born into a system of absolute power and the havoc he can wreak on other people's lives.

## THEMES

**Religion** The persecution of the Jewish population by the German Nazi Party is at the center of *Schindler's List*. The film is careful to demonstrate the humanity of the Jewish community which the Nazi party so vehemently denied. Care is given to demonstrate not only Jewish religious customs, but also community life, humor, traditions, and family structure. While making the film, Spielberg was vehement about being honest regarding the true violence that the Jewish community of Krakow faced during World War Two. In filming and editing the fifteen-minute "liquidation" of the Jewish ghetto, Spielberg purposefully crafted the sequence to be almost impossible to watch without flinching. While some of the trials that the characters faced seem almost impossibly inhumane, the film was rigorously researched and built on survivor testimony. As a whole, the film is a tribute to the resilience of the Jewish community through a cataclysmic event.

**Labor** *Schindler's List* carefully juxtaposes scenes of Jewish labor with scenes of Nazi party members enjoying the fruits of that labor. Schindler himself employs Jewish workers in his factory and enjoys lavish parties with his Nazi friends. In contrast, the workers themselves are portrayed as living in squalor and fear, suffering while their captors celebrate. The film makes it quite clear that not only were Jewish persons held captive in Nazi concentration camps, but that they were also forced to perform labor that directly enriched the Nazi party and Jewish citizens like Schindler, who saw the opportunity to make a profit. Schindler comes to regret this choice as the movie passes and he eventually "buys" the lives and freedom of his workers from the Nazi party, purchasing them with the money he earned from their labor.

**Human Rights** In creating *Schindler's List*, Spielberg foregrounded the humanity of the Jewish people who were persecuted by the Nazi party in the mid-twentieth century. The film was made amidst a resurgence of holocaust denials and its production was marred by anti-Jewish graffiti on set. The film itself is a catalogue of vicious atrocities committed against innocent people. Spielberg purposefully crafted the film with a documentary style, shooting it in black and white to look more like newsreels from the 1940s. He also forewent the machinery which balanced the cameras in order to give the footage a more hand-held feel. In doing so, Spielberg hoped to give the film true gravity, to assert that these atrocities did happen to real people, even if actors were hired to portray them. This message comes full circle at the end of the film when Spielberg switches to color and portrays some of the actual people who lived through these events alongside the actors who portrayed them as they visit the grave of Oskar Schindler. This portrayal functions as evidence and testimony to the atrocities suffered by the Jewish community at the time.

**War** While several other Spielberg's films portray war on the front lines, war in *Schindler's List* works more as a backdrop. It is clear that the war is continuing as the movie progresses, but all reports of war and politics come second-hand to the viewer, reported by characters after they have received orders or reported second-hand as gossip. The result of this is a film that focuses on the true human impact of war, suggesting that it affects not only those who are fighting but those who are home, away from the front. The only exception is the scene in which people gather around a radio and directly hear a report that the Germans have conceded their defeat and that the war will be over at midnight. The characters react to this news with shock, looking at each other as if they do not understand the reality of their world outside of the war or what will happen to them. The impact of this news suggests that war truly transforms communities, making it so that their worlds and identities are truly changed even if they never see the front lines.

**Family** The two most flawed and powerful men in the movie, Schindler and Goeth, both represent broken families. While Schindler is married and fond of his wife, he cannot commit to her and instead chooses a life of wanton indulgence in other women. Goeth is unmarried and obsessed with his maid, Helen, whom he confesses he wants to “grow old” with even though he admits that this is impossible, as she is Jewish. In contrast, the strongest families within the film are those which are persecuted. Parents cling to their children and scream when they are taken away. Likewise, adult children put their lives at risk to beg that their elderly parents be taken into Schindler’s factory and be given safety there. The message within the film is quite clear: without family and the human connection therein, it becomes far too easy to exploit and dehumanize other people. The Jewish community is portrayed as so strong within the film in part because of familial commitments across generations.

**Violence** *Schindler’s List* is an incredibly violent film, with many portrayals of characters being ruthlessly murdered. While the film unflinchingly portrays the realities of its subject material, it also is at pains to demonstrate the real humanity of the Nazi commandants who perpetrated that violence. Ralph Fiennes’s portrayal of Amon Goeth is frequently lauded as a masterclass, particularly in his nuanced performance of a man who finds ways to justify the ruthless execution of innocent people. While the character could have been a caricature of evil, Spielberg and Fiennes worked to explore a world and an ideology that gives one man absolute power over thousands of people he believes are less human than himself. As such, it is a film that explores not only the physical violence of the Holocaust, but also the mental and emotional violence as well.

**Power** From the beginning of the film, the imbalance of power is quite clear: the Nazi officials have all of it and the Jewish community is entirely at their mercy. However, *Schindler’s List* is also a strong critique of this kind of this kind of power. The character of Goeth, in particular, demonstrates how easily this level of absolute control over other people’s lives devolves into senseless cruelty. The casual way with which Goeth murders the prisoners within his concentration camp demonstrate how easily injustice can reign when the wrong person is given access to too much power. However, Spielberg is careful to mark Goeth as an unlikable, even pathetic character. He is frequently shown drunk, frustrated by the kindness of others, and unable to control or handle his feelings, especially in connection with his maid, Helen, whom he both hates and loves. In casting Goeth as a powerful man whose power ruins his life as well as others, *Schindler’s List* is a film that strongly critiques situations of absolute power.

**Greed** Both Schindler and Goeth begin the film as greedy characters. Schindler arrives in Krakow relatively poor and unknown, but he quickly works his way up in society and builds wealth through the unpaid labor within his factory. He does not seem to care that he is exploiting the Jewish population as he builds his fortune, instead only caring about the fortune itself. Goeth, likewise, takes Schindler’s bribes throughout the film and uses them to enrich himself personally. However, unlike Goeth, Schindler comes to doubt his greed throughout the film and eventually uses his personal fortune to save lives. As a result, the film ends with him remembered well by the people whom he saved and by their descendants. Goeth, who the film portrays as never coming to regret his greed, ends the film continuing to pay homage to Hitler and being hung by the neck. The very different ends to these two characters’ lives suggest a clear message from the film: continued greed only leads to bad ends, but redemption is possible.

**Entrepreneurship** *Schindler’s List* includes a complicated portrayal of entrepreneurship. The film is very clear that the personal enrichment of Nazi party members by the forced labor within the film is repulsive and exploitative. However, Schindler’s entrepreneurial spirit is lauded in the film. Schindler as a character is shown to be charming, persuasive, attractive, and creative. He admits openly to Stern that he is not good with business, but great with “panache,” an aspect which is true of many successful entrepreneurs. In cleverly choosing to work with Stern, Schindler gives himself the asset he himself is missing: an accountant who is great at business. Together, Stern and Schindler are able to amass a fortune; apart, they both fail. *Schindler’s List* as a whole celebrates this entrepreneurial spirit: without the combination of Stern and Schindler, there never would have been an amassed fortune which could be used to save the workers. Schindler is shown crying at the end of the film, regretting his hedonistic waste of funds that could have been used to save more lives. However, overall, the film does suggest that without Schindler’s panache and drive combined with Stern’s good sense, all of the Jewish characters within the film would have likely been murdered. As such, *Schindler’s List* can be seen as a film that has a complicated portrayal of entrepreneurs and war profiteers.

## PLOT

**Changes** A man says a prayer in Hebrew as two small children look on and a candle burns. When the candle burns all the way down, the scene changes to a train station, where a whistle blows. Words appear on the screen, informing the viewer that German military forces advanced in 1939 and that German Jews were ordered to register their family members and relocate to cities. Many people disembark from the train and give their names to officials, who write down their information.



**Introductions** A man pours himself a glass of gin and sets out his clothing, including fine ties and cufflinks. He dresses and attaches a pin with a swastika to his lapel before attending a fine dinner with dancing and live music. He is seated alone at a table and a woman smiles at him. The man sees a couple enter the room and requests that the waiter send them over some drinks. Although they do not know who he is, the couple are charmed and go and sit with him. The celebrations continue as dancers come out and the people at the table continue to drink, eat, smoke, and joke. Eventually, everyone in the room is gathered around the man's table, laughing and celebrating together. A very fine dressed couple comes into the party and asks who the man is. The waiter answers that it is Oskar Schindler.



**The Council** German soldiers march through the streets, singing songs celebrating German pride and cruelly teasing Jewish persons that they meet on the street. Schindler walks past a long line of Jewish people, entering what subtitles tell the viewer is “The Judenrat” (Jewish Council) that assigns work and housing to the newly entered population. Schindler walks right in and asks for Itzhak Stern, who takes him into a back room to speak privately. Schindler invites Stern to think creatively about what the two could accomplish together if Schindler bought the company Stern used to work for. Schindler suggests that Stern fund the company with investments from the Jewish community and run the company while he, Schindler, works on the company’s “panache” and presentation to the wider community. Schindler insists that these are his talents, not business. Stern declines and Schindler implies it’s a mistake.



**Church** A group of men, all wearing armbands with Stars of David on them, gather in a Christian church during mass. They trade goods and food coupons. Schindler sits with them and inquires about some of the goods. Most of the men leave while others pretend to pray, insisting it is illegal to buy and trade goods on the street. One man stays to talk with Schindler and they agree to do business together.





**The Ghetto** Swarms of people cross a bridge carrying furniture and suitcases. Subtitles reveal that it is March 1941 and that all Jewish persons have been ordered to live in one small area of the city referred to as a “ghetto.” A wealthy family is forcibly ejected from their home. Children stand in the street shouting “Goodbye, Jews!” and throwing rocks at the evicted people. Schindler enters one of the vacated homes and lays down comfortably on the bed. Schindler appears at the ghetto in a car and meets with Stern and some of his colleagues. Schindler offers to bring them household goods in exchange for their money, which he argues is now useless for them. They make a deal and Schindler buys the enamel company for which Stern used to work. Stern finally agrees to run it for him.



**Jobs** Schindler seeks to hire Jewish workers as he can pay them less. Jewish people form long lines, seeking work. Stern helps his friends forge work documents that mark them as essential workers in the factory. The people, intellectuals, and musicians, are retrained to work in Schindler’s factory. Schindler interviews many pretty young women to be his secretary, asking them to demonstrate their typing skills. He cannot choose between them and so hires them all.

**Expansion** Schindler works with his suppliers to import luxury goods, such as caviar, fruit, and alcohol. He uses these to send gift baskets to Nazi officials to advertise his company. Schindler sits down with Stern and they toast to the growing company, though Stern is not enthusiastic and does not drink. Frustrated at his lack of gratitude, Schindler sends him away.



**Wife** A blonde woman appears at Schindler's door and is greeted by a dark-haired woman in pyjamas, who is very embarrassed to see her. Schindler laughs at the dark-haired woman's embarrassment and welcomes the blonde, whom he greets as his wife. Mrs. Schindler is not pleased with her husband's antics but says he's done well for himself. He tells her she looks wonderful. Schindler takes his wife out for dinner and tells her about his factory's success. He muses aloud about how he'll be remembered for his extraordinary financial success. He credits the war for creating the opportunity and the two dance. They go to bed and, when he will not promise to be faithful to her, she leaves on the train the next morning.



**Productivity** As Schindler eats lunch, a man comes to thank him for giving him a job. Schindler hardly pays attention as the man blesses him profusely, though Schindler does note that the man is very old and has one arm. Schindler scolds Stern for hiring a man with one arm in a factory but does not order him fired. On a snowy day, a group of Schindler's workers are stopped and made to shovel snow on their way to work. Schindler complains about his delayed workers, but the Nazi officer with whom he speaks dismisses it, saying the workers are not "his" and instead belong to the state. Despite his protests that he is an essential worker, the man with one arm is taken aside and shot in the head. Schindler complains about the loss of this worker and is told that he can file a complaint, but nothing will come of it.





**The Train** A man comes to Schindler's home while Schindler is sleeping with a young woman. He knocks, and Schindler calls out to ask if it is Stern, but the man says it is "about Stern." Schindler goes to the train station looking for Stern. A man confirms that Stern is on "the list," and that if he were an essential worker he would not be. Schindler insists that he be found. The low-level Nazi soldiers with whom Schindler speaks tell him that the list is correct and cannot be changed. Schindler threatens to have them reassigned to Russia if Stern cannot be found. The men anxiously begin to help Schindler search and the train is stopped. Stern disembarks and explains that he accidentally left his work card at home. Schindler scolds him.



**Luggage** All of the luggage that was meant to be put on the train is taken into a back room where it is stripped and sorted. Items of value are categorized and placed on shelves. A jeweller looks at and appraises jewellery, but takes his glasses off and stares when a bag full of teeth with metal fillings is spilled before him.



**Plaszow** People gather in the ghetto around a trashcan fire and discuss the good and bad aspects of being forced to live in such squalor. A man (who subtitles say is Amon Goeth) is given a tour of the ghetto and then of a forced labor camp that is being built in Plaszow. Goeth protests at the camp's unfinished nature, dismayed that he is to take command of such a place. A group of women lines up before him and Goeth tells them that one of them will keep house for him. He chooses a pretty woman named Helen. Shouts break out from a barracks that are being constructed and a young woman insists to Goeth that the foundation must be repoured. She reveals that she is an engineer and Goeth orders her shot. She is shot in front of her crew and Goeth orders that the foundation be repoured.



**Part of History** Goeth opens the camp at Plaszow and gives a speech saying that Jewish persons have contributed nothing to German culture over time. When he is finished, troops arrive in the Ghetto and begin to gather up Jewish people. Schindler watches this from horseback on a nearby hill. Some people swallow their jewellery while others are pulled from their homes and shot. Some people lower themselves into the sewers to escape. Stern is amongst those who are taken. A doctor delivers poison to several patients at the hospital. They die before the German soldiers enter the hospital and shoot guns at the corpses. Bodies and luggage litter the streets. Some people hide in compartments beneath floorboards.



**Red Coat** Chaos continues in the streets and Schindler continues to watch from the hilltop as a little girl in a red coat wanders alone. The soldiers continue to kill people. Eventually, Schindler turns his horse and rides away. The little girl in the red coat hides beneath a bed. Night falls and the soldiers continue to look for people who hide beneath floorboards, inside pianos, and strapped to the bottom of beds. Everyone who is found is killed. Goeth sighs and says he wishes this night was over.



**Aftermath** Schindler looks out over his factory, which has enamelware heaped in piles and no workers. Shirtless, Goeth looks over his now-full camp, where soldiers are taking roll, with a cigarette in one hand and a rifle in the other. After the roll, everyone begins to work at their designated jobs. Goeth aims at a woman from his balcony and shoots her in the head. The people panic and begin to run. Goeth continues to shoot.





**Breakfast** Schindler arrives at the camp and goes to breakfast at Goeth's house, shaking hands with the officials there. The group discusses moving factories to the camp to take advantage of free labor. Schindler and Goeth discuss business and Schindler complains that Goeth's removal and murder are costing him money and ruining his business. Goeth tells Schindler that what he wants is a "sub-camp" within the camp but that doing so would be a great deal of trouble. Schindler tells Goeth that if he could make it happen, he would be "grateful," a word he says with particular weight.



**Factory in the Camp** Goeth brings Stern into some abandoned buildings within the camp and tells him to begin the work of the factory. Goeth tells Stern that he will have relative independence, but that independence costs money and that Stern must not forget for whom he is working now. Goeth then hosts a party at his house where he drinks a great deal of wine and kisses many women. Schindler attends the party and meets quietly with Stern outside by the cars. Stern tells Schindler a list of things he must do to keep up the running of the factory and Schindler gives him some food from the party. Stern fondly tells Schindler not to let the factory fall apart because he worked too hard to get it going. Stern goes back to his barracks.



**Work** Goeth and other soldiers inspect a metalworks factory inside the camp. Goeth times a man as he makes a hinge and critiques his work output for the day. The man is taken outside to be shot. However, Goeth's gun doesn't fire, and the man set for execution must endure hearing the gun click over and over while pointed at his head. When the gun cannot be fixed, Goeth and his men are frustrated and walk away.



**Factory** Schindler arrives at the camp and begins to employ some of his old workers at his new enamel factory. Goeth questions prisoners about who stole a chicken and begins to shoot them, waiting for an answer. A crying boy comes forward and confesses that a man who was already shot was the one who stole the chicken. The boy arrives in Schindler's factory and thanks him for a job. A woman arrives at Schindler's factory and asks to speak with him. He agrees to speak with her when he sees that she is pretty. She confesses that she is a Jewish person in hiding and asks Schindler to give her family, who live in the camp, a job because people are not killed in his factory. Schindler shouts at her and tells her to leave or he will have her arrested.





**Confrontation** Schindler confronts Stern, saying that he knows that Stern is using the factory to hire people and keep them safe from people like Goeth. Stern counters, asking Schindler if he's losing any money, and Schindler insists that's not the point, rather that Goeth is simply keeping order and following orders. Stern insists that Goeth is a sadist who enjoys killing. After a moment's pause, Schindler tells Stern the name of the family that the pretty woman gave him. Schindler tells Stern to hire them at the factory. The woman watches from the street as her parents arrive at Schindler's factory. She leaves smiling.



**Party** At a party, Schindler meets Goeth's maid, Helen, in the basement. He gives her a bar of chocolate. Overwhelmed by his kindness, she sits quietly with Schindler for a moment and tells him about life in Goeth's home. Helen confesses that Goeth beats her and that she knows that he will one day shoot her. Helen tells Schindler about how Goeth kills people at random, without cause. Schindler tells Helen that she will not be shot because she pleases Goeth too much. After the party, Goeth and Schindler sit on the balcony and talk about power, control, and justice. Schindler says power is when "we have every justification to kill and we don't," that it is more powerful to simply "pardon" people.



**Audit** Stern informs Goeth that officials have come to audit the camp. Goeth rides through the camp on horseback and is more lenient with those people who commit offenses like leaving a saddle on the ground, smoking, and being unable to sufficiently clean a stain. He tells the boy who cannot clean the stain, "I pardon you" and lets him go. But then Goeth looks at the stain again and shoots the boy from his balcony as the boy walks away. Helen gives Goeth a manicure. He leans close and smells her hair as she works.



**Wedding** In the barracks, people gather around as a young man and woman are married. Schindler sits in Goeth's house at a party and listens to a woman singing. Goeth goes into his basement, where Helen is bathing. He compliments her on her work and offers her a reference after the war. He asks her if she's lonely and says he'd like to be there for her in her loneliness, even though he does not think that she is truly a person in the way that he is. He touches her breast and brings his face to hers but does not kiss her. Instead, he slaps and begins to beat her. Upstairs, a worker and her child bring Schindler a cake they have made and wish him a happy birthday. Schindler kisses the child on the cheek and the woman on the mouth as everyone stares at them.



**Work Force** In the barracks, a woman tells a story about gas chambers at a concentration camp. Other women protest that it cannot be true because they are the workforce and the Germans would not kill their workforce. The next morning, the people of the camp are assembled before a group of doctors. Goeth, chatting to a woman, reveals that a new “shipment” of people is coming to the camp and that the sick must be separated from the healthy. People are stripped naked and forced to run in circles. Women cut their fingers and spread the blush on their cheeks and lips like cosmetics.



**Transport** Children, all holding hands, are led out to trucks and loaded onto them. Women begin to scream and cry, chasing after the trucks as they see their children being driven away. Some children escape transport and hide in places like beneath floorboards and in the latrine. Schindler arrives as people are loaded onto trains for transport. People stick their hands out of the train, panting at the heat inside. Schindler casually asks Goeth to hose down the train cars. When Goeth laughs, Schindler does too and asks that Goeth indulge him. The cars are hosed down, but when Goeth sees that Schindler is helping the people inside, not torturing them, he stops laughing.





**Jailed** Schindler is taken from his factory and locked away in a jail cell. When the man he is imprisoned with asks what he did, Schindler replies that he's there because he kissed the Jewish woman who brought him some cake on his birthday. Goeth comes to Schindler's defence before a Nazi official, laughing and saying that Schindler kissed the woman simply because "he likes women" and she was good-looking. Schindler is released and Goeth and another officer scold him, telling him to stay away from Jewish women.



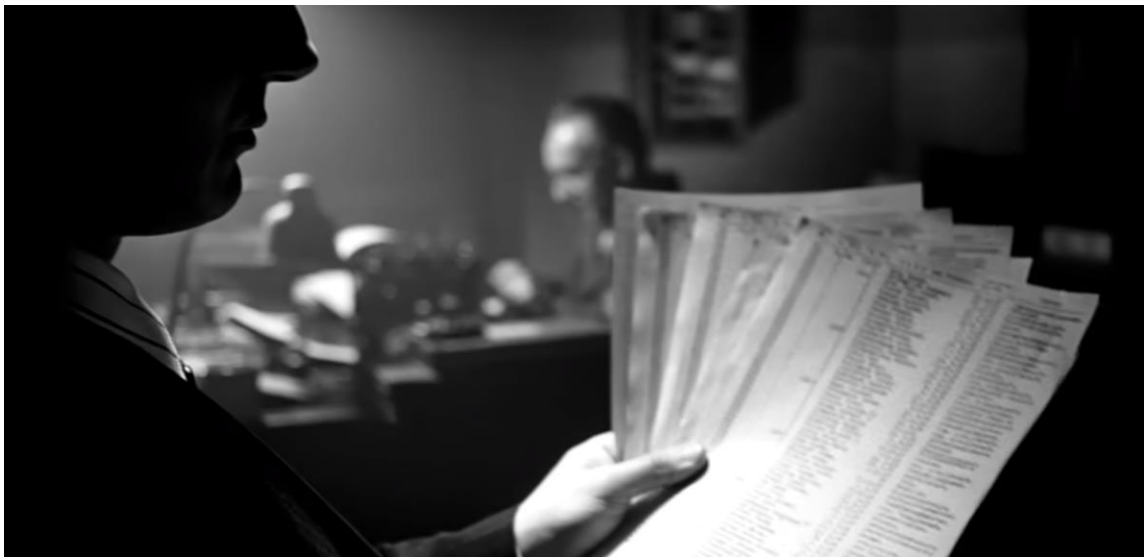
**Ash** Schindler steps out of his home onto a busy street. White flecks fall from the sky, looking like snow. Schindler watches them, scooping them off a car. However, once in his hand, it is clear that the chips are too dark and thick to be snow. A subtitle informs the viewer that the bodies of 10,000 people killed at Plaszow were ordered to be exhumed and burned. Prisoners dig into the ground, transporting bodies into huge pyres and onto conveyor belts to be dumped into pits and burned. Goeth claims about the bother that this task has caused him and tells Schindler that the camp is being shut down and that all of the prisoners will be transferred to Auschwitz in a little over a month. A little girl in a red coat is one of the ones wheeled away on a cart.



**Evacuation Orders** Stern tells Schindler that he is in charge of organizing the evacuation to Auschwitz and puts himself on the last train. Stern asks Schindler what he will do, and Schindler says he will take his money and go home. The two men share a drink. Unable to sleep, Schindler wanders around his room at night and stares out the window. In the morning, he loads a great deal of money into chests and goes to Goeth, telling him that he wants “his people” from the camp to go with him to work in his new factory. Goeth protests that it’s ridiculous, but Schindler insists that it’s good business. Goeth agrees to go along with it, though he doesn’t understand how Schindler intends to make money off of the venture.



**The List** Stern begins to type up a list of names of the people who will be saved as Schindler says them aloud. Schindler tells Stern that he wants all of the children included on the list. When he asks Stern how many people are on the list, Stern says one hundred and fifty and Schindler says “more.” In his house, Goeth opens a suitcase full of money. The list grows to six hundred and Schindler says “more.” Schindler goes to a fellow entrepreneur and persuades him to take some of the people into his sewing factory. The list grows to eight hundred and fifty. Stern asks Schindler if he’s buying the people and Schindler confesses that he is and that it’s costing him a fortune. Schindler orders Stern to finish the page and leave one space at the bottom. Stern tells Schindler that the list is good, that it is life.





**The Last Name** Schindler brings the list to Goeth, who asks about the space on the last page. Schindler tells Goeth that the space is for Helen, who he believes is a better maid than any he will find in his hometown. Vehement, Goeth says no. Schindler brings out a stack of cards and offers to play a game of blackjack for Helen. Goeth says no, that he wants to take Helen to Vienna with him, that he wants to grow old with her. Schindler asks Goeth if he is mad and Goeth says that he knows it's impossible, that it would be kinder to take her to the woods and shoot her.



**Safe Passage** People line up before officials and give their names, checking them off of Schindler's list. Helen is amongst those on the list. Those who are on the list board trains, the men on one and women on another. The trains travel through the snowy countryside. Men inside the first train pull icicles off of the side, melting them for drinking water. The men's train arrives in Schindler's hometown in Czechoslovakia. The men disembark and Schindler greets them, telling them that it is a short walk to the factory where hot soup and bread await them. The women's train arrives in Auschwitz.



**Auschwitz** Dogs bark at the women as they disembark from the train. The women look up at a huge smokestack that spills a great deal of smoke. When he discovers where the women were taken, Schindler immediately gets in his car. The women have their hair cut off and are made to strip naked for a group shower. The women cry and hold each other as they are herded together into a shower room. The lights turn off and they all begin to scream, looking up at the showerheads with fear. The showerheads begin to spray water and the women smile and laugh with relief. The women, dressed again, are led to barracks. Another group of people is led into a door underground. The camera pans again to the smoke stack, above the building into which the other group is led.



**Reclaiming People** Schindler speaks with a man at Auschwitz about reclaiming his people. Schindler offers the man a handful of diamonds instead of logic as his reason why the man should help him. The man accepts the diamonds and offers Schindler three hundred “fresh” people. Schindler insists on having the people on his list. A man stands in the yard saying names, some of which are recognizable from Schindler’s list. Those who are called forward are marked with paint. They run out of the camp together and board a train. The children are torn screaming away from their parents. Schindler appears and insists that the soldiers stop, that the children are his workers and he needs their small hands to polish the insides of metal casings. The children are allowed to board the train.



**Arrival** Schindler walks with a group of women along the road to his factory in Czechoslovakia. The men peer out the windows, emotional when they see their loved ones. Schindler speaks to the German soldiers sent to oversee his factory, telling them that it is illegal to kill his workers. To convince them to cooperate, Schindler gives the German guards beer. Schindler goes to church and sits in a pew behind his wife, promising he will be faithful to her.



**Mrs. Schindler** Schindler's wife comes to the factory with him and meets Stern. Stern, anxious, reports that all of the munitions they are producing are failing the safety tests. Schindler tells him not to worry about it and to continue with production. Stern accuses Schindler of miscalibrating the machines and Schindler says that if the factory ever produces a shell that can be fired, he will be very unhappy. Schindler goes to stand with a Rabbi and reminds him that it is sunset on Friday. Schindler tells the Rabbi that he should be preparing for the sabbath and invites him to his office, where he has some wine waiting. The Rabbi says a prayer around candles with a yellow flame. People in the factory stop what they are doing to listen to the prayer. Subtitles inform the viewer that Schindler's factory successfully employed people and failed at producing munitions for several months while Schindler continued to bribe officials.





**End of War** Stern comes into Schindler's office and asks him if he has any money hidden away anywhere. Schindler says he does not and asks if he is broke. Stern does not reply. In the factory, people sit around the radio, listening to the news that the Germans surrendered to the Allied forces and the war is over.



**War Criminal** Schindler addresses his workers, telling them that they should look for the survivors of their families and not thank him. He confesses that he is a criminal, a member of the Nazi party, and a beneficiary of the labor of enslaved persons. He says that at midnight his workers will be free and he will be hunted. Schindler tells everyone that he plans to flee five minutes after midnight. Schindler turns to address the guards, who have been ordered to kill all of the Jewish workers before midnight. Schindler advises that they return to their families as men and not murderers. All of the guards leave. Schindler calls for three minutes of silence for the fallen. The workers pray together.



**A Gift** Workers gather around and pull a filling from a man's teeth, thanking him for the donation. The metal is melted and formed into a ring. Schindler and his wife leave and Schindler gives Stern instructions about how the final materials in the factory should be distributed amongst the workers. As he leaves, the workers present Schindler with a letter that he can present if he is captured, explaining his deeds and signed by all of the workers. The workers also give Schindler the ring, which is inscribed with a Hebrew phrase, "whoever saves one life saves the world entire." Schindler drops the ring and then, moved, puts it on his finger as he looks around at the workers. Stern and Schindler shake hands and Schindler whispers that he could have "got more out," expressing his guilt for wasting so much money when it could have saved more lives. Stern dismisses the idea, saying that there will be "generations" because of what he did. Schindler cries and he is embraced by the people he helped.



**Generations** Schindler and his wife climb into a car and leave. He looks out the window at all of the people who watch him go. The next morning, many of the workers sleep outside of the factory. A man arrives on horseback and announces that they have been liberated by the Soviet army. The workers ask the man where they should go. He does not have an answer. They ask for food, and the man on horseback tells them to go to the nearby town. The entire group walks together across a wide field. Elsewhere, Goeth is hanged for his crimes against humanity. Subtitles inform the viewer that Schindler's marriage failed, as did several businesses after the war. In 1958 he was declared a "righteous person." The film moves to color images and a subtitle reads: "The Schindler Jews today." People walk to Schindler's grave and, accompanied by the actors who played them in the film, place rocks on the headstone.

