

- So I think that we should start, Julia. Have we let people, we've let people in, right?

- Yes. Yes. People are coming in.

- Okay, good. Alright, so warm welcome on a beautiful day from New York to everybody who's joined us today. And hi guys again. So handing over to you and looking forward to today's presentation. Thank you.

- Thank you so much to Wendy and Dennis and Judy always for helping and being part of this so much.

- And Judy and course, and Judy.

Visuals are displayed throughout the presentation.

- And Dennis and I as always, wonderful conversations during the week to prepare for it and hope everybody is feeling okay as hopefully everyone moving towards being vaccinated. So we are going to do this topic in two sessions, one today and one next week. Representations of the Holocaust in Film. The first section is going to deal with the period directly after the war, up until the late seventies, early eighties, which is really defined by the Claude Lanzmann Classic Shoah and the Spielberg Schindler. So the first session today will go up to then, and then after that next week will be from Schindler onto very contemporary times, literally up to a couple of years ago.

Obviously there are so many extraordinary and ordinary films that have been made. So we've had to be highly selective rather than try and skim over a lot, we've chosen a few to be able to rather go into a little bit more depth with a bit more of a conceptual through line of questions and thoughts about them. It's meant leaving out a lot, which are remarkable and fascinating in their own way and controversial. Some of "The Great Voyage of the Damned", the "Diary of Anne Frank", "The Night Porter", "Seven Beauties", et cetera. There are so many which are extraordinary and ordinary in their own way. So please bear with us.

We've had to be obviously highly selective for each of these. The questions that we begin with is to really ask how do we communicate stories? How do we communicate the memory not only as witness or bearing witness to this memory and the memory of survivors and the memory of the whole horrific experience. How do we represent this in film? How has it been represented? And some of the nuances of the discussion, not just a simple sort of goodies and baddies or of, this is great, this is bad, et cetera. But to try and tease out a few thoughts and really questions about how the films have been achieved because, and I believe two things are important. It's about how do we tell the story. It's such an ancient human trait to tell stories and a vital human trait.

That's how we made sense of the world, hundreds of thousands of years ago, telling the story, ancient oral storytelling, Africa, Asia, the Americas, wherever, it was through the stories hard now using the filmic media of stories told, and especially this particular story and what emerges, second, what's so important is the context. What is the worldview at the time, just after the war? What is the worldview in the seventies, eighties? What is the dominant worldview today? And how is this worldview changing all the time that influences a different way of perceiving and representing something as globally and historically significant as the holocaust.

So I think it's so important to have a sense of how were people thinking at the time when the film was made, what went into it, whether it was literal or more documentary or a mixture or more provocatively. What was bubbling in the zeitgeist as it were? I think the context is so, so crucial. Then we get a broadest sense of how we can assess and understand these films. We must see it in the way that the world viewers of the times. I think that's one of the things that Harari does brilliantly by the way how he puts events in history, understanding it through the worldview of the time. Okay, how do we see the role of documentary and the role of fiction in representing memory of the Holocaust? So important. And I want to suggest that often it is precisely because some of these films are so artistically well done and work so well that they last and they speak to us still today.

And this going to bring in a huge debate on how much should be artistic and artefact and how much had remained documentary and not be involved in some of the artistry of protagonist antagonist, the dramaturgy of plot, narrative structure, the visual images, the editing, the finance, the producing, the ratings, the money made, et cetera. But I want to suggest that some of this cannot be ignored in a profound questioning of this issue today. So it's what Dennis and I decided is we are going to each introduce a little bit of the ideas at the beginning and then we are going to go through "Judgement at Nuremberg," "Ship of Fools," "The Pawnbroker," "The Holocaust" TV mini-series and Claude Lanzmann "Shoah."

To open with a couple of these ideas is, this is the phrase which I love from Primo. "The gap between things as they were down there and things as they are represented by the current imagination." This for me, sums up the conceptual through line that we are trying to look at today. Things down there at the time of the forties, in the camps, which is what he means there, and things is represented by the current and I love it. And he's so smart, he's so sharp, Primo that, represented by the current imagination because it can only be through a contemporary, whether it's the seventies, eighties, or today, imagination reflecting back on memory and how to bear witness and how to represent the events of that time. It must happen as all stories do through memory, through imagination.

Then secondly is what Dennis and I would call the Claude Lanzmann and Spielberg debate, where in essence Lanzmann, as I'm sure many know, argue that you cannot be fictional about it. You can only tell the oral stories. You can only do testimony and witness by not having any of the artifice of film and art and fiction. You can only interview survivors and listen to their stories.

And the whole, as everyone knows, the nine and a half hour film of Shoah is basically following mostly survivors with some perpetrators interviewed by Lanzmann and all put together. Spielberg, as we all know, was Schindler. It's an artifice taken from a book, from a story based on some fact, but is an artistic experience that he's trying to create. And the debate represents the polarities of the two, which we're trying to tease out today and next week.

This is just a quote from Ellie Viso here, I'm the survivor, like Kafka's vessel, loved Kafka, unfortunate messenger. He realises his message has now been received nor transmitted or worse it has been, but nothing's changed. It's a fascinating insight of Ellie Viso and I don't think it's not the only dominating thought that we're going to look at today, but it's a way of, I love the way he comes in, always with a side thought Adorno. So this changes very much from what Adorno was said before. One poetry or it was by barrack to write poetry after Auschwitz, much later in his life he said this perennial suffering has as much right to expression as a tortured man has to scream. Hence, I may have been wrong to say that after Auschwitz you could no longer write poetry and then Eli Viso it's a big change. And that change of Adorno knows, is accepting.

I dunno if you can take the artistic out of any storytelling. In theatre, we have something called verbatim theatre, which is contemporary movement over the last few decades, which is literally meant to be interview the witness and you literally take down word for word and that's what you portray on the stage. You don't change anything. But there are always choices, director choices, acting choices, staging, set, design, costume, all that. I don't think even verbatim theatre can claim to be a sort of naive purist documentary only because it does have art and artifice in it. And then finally, an interesting thought from Wiesel Auschwitz is a universe outside the universe a creation that exists as parallel to creation.

What I like about his statement is that he's trying to say, look, this is let's the equivalent, let's see it as that. And then try to think how on earth do we show this in memory and in storytelling in something like film or other forms of artistic expression. But I would always go back to the first phrase of Primo Levi. We have to always acknowledge we're looking through a current imagination, how things are represented. Even when we look back at some of the films we'll show today and others, we look back with today's zeitgeist and way of seeing the world on then in the way that 50 years time there's artificial intelligence, there'll be internet, there'll be satellites, whatever, be looking et cetera in a totally different way.

Okay, so we begin with judgement at Nuremberg. Dennis, over to you if you'd like to introduce it and then we'll show.

- Thank you. Thank you very much, David. Perhaps before I start just two things. One is of course can't help but feeling if there are people on this call from Israel that my thoughts are with you at this awful time, we can only pray for shalom for peace. The other introductory remark I'd like to make is many people asked me some weeks ago, and it's perhaps appropriate in the light of our session tonight today about the issue of the lecturer at UCT who essentially suggested that Hitler had not committed a crime. People asked me what had happened, I was told this

week finally that there's a university committee, University of Cape Town set up to now deal with this matter and we'll be moving ahead apparently shortly. I will keep you apprised of developments.

So let's talk about judgement at Nuremberg. It fits in very briefly, briefly. I'm briefly speaking fits in with what David has already said. Why, because here we are talking about a fictional account, but a fictional account, which in sense almost straddles if you wish that that point between fiction and reality. A "Judgement in Nuremberg" a 1961 film directed by Stanley Kramer, the screenplay by Abby Mann, who oddly enough, the same team, oddly enough, probably unsurprisingly enough, the same team that we will see when we get a "Ship of Fools" presently basically made this film and the screenplay about, in the sense it's fictional account of the trial of judges at Nuremberg. There was a trial of judges, Nazi judges in Nuremberg. This is not a direct account thereof, it's a fictionalised account, but it has a couple of remarkable features in it. I have lectured fully on this film some while back. It seems a long time ago. And Lockdown University, many of you may not have attended that lecture because we've expanded our audiences and I have attended so much. But David and I probably will come back to the film as a comprehensive analysis 'cause it deserves it. When we deal with the Nuremberg trials. Suffice to say it's a fictionalised account of the judges being tried at Nuremberg, the Nazi judges for implementing Nazi laws. It has an extraordinary amount to say for itself about the role of law, about the role of the judiciary in implementing evil laws in a particularly egregiously evil system.

And we can debate this for hours, but there are a couple of points that I would like to point out which are particularly unique about this form. Insofar as tonight is concerned, it was the first major film which portrayed the concentration camps because during the course of the film, the prosecutor played by Richard Widmark actually plays clips from the concentration camps, which therefore become part of the film. And bearing in mind that this was a film watched by millions of people, it was for many the first time that audiences encountered the horrors of the camps.

The second aspect is the film actually had an extraordinary set of important implications for the United States four years after the film was made in 1965, during really difficult times in United States, the film was shown on ABC. And so that on a Sunday night and the film was interrupted by coverage of the Selma riots, the Selma riots by the police against protestors, you may recall, down in Alabama, civil rights protestors. And it was extraordinary people who spoke about this, that the film was interrupted. There was then a report about police brutality at the Selma protests and then they went back to the film and the connections between the two were not exactly lost on the audience at the time, which again reinforces David's point about the broadening of the lens in regard to the portrayal of all of this.

The third aspect I'd like to highlight is what effectively the film concentrates on amongst all other things is a central argument about were these judges culpable in regard to the implementation of Nazi laws. We're going to play a clip for you just to give you a feel of it. And as I say, we'll deal with this form far more comprehensively in a later session. A clip, some of you have may have seen it when I did talk about the film some while back by Maximilian Schell, who plays the

role of Hunts Rolfe, who is the defender, the defence counsel for the four fictionalised judges on trial during this film. And why this is particularly interesting because the thrust of Maximilian Schell's for Trail of Rolf is to suggest, well, Nazi Germany was not the only country which had egregious laws in this particular clip it's about sterilisation. And of course what he does is to suggest quite properly that there was sterilisation in the United States of America. At that point in time, I was particularly interested in now reading a new wonderful book by Anne Harrington on the history of psychiatry in which he actually talks about the sterilisation at that time and in fact contextualises within this context. But I just wanted to, or we wanted to just give you a clip to give you a sense of the nature of the trial and therefore the nature of the way in which, if you wish the Holocaust was portrayed in terms of this visual attempt to conceptualise the trial of Nazi judges. This is Maximilian and Charlton, by the way, won the Oscar for best actor that year. David, if we can show that now.

Video begins

- Are you aware that sexual sterilisation was not invented by national socialism, but had been advanced for years before as a weapon in dealing with a mentally incompetent and the criminal?

- Yes, I'm aware of that.

- Are you aware that it has advocates among leading citizens in many other countries?

- I am not an expert on such laws.

- Permit me to read one to you. This is a high court opinion upholding such laws in existence in another country. And I quote, we have seen more than once that a public welfare may call upon the best citizens for their lives. It would be strange indeed, if we could not call upon those who already sat the strength of the state for these lesser sacrifices in order to prevent our being swamped by incompetence. It is better for all the world if instead of waiting to execute degenerate offsprings for crime, or to let them suffer for their in adversity, society can prevent their propagation by medical means in the first place. Regenerations of imbeciles.

- You recognise it now, Dr. Beak?

- No sir, I don't.

- Actually, there is no particular reason you should since the opinion of hold sterilisation law in the state of Virginia of the United States and was written and delivered by that great American Supreme Court Justice Oliver Wendell Holmes. Now Dr. Wick, in view of what you have just learned, can you still say that sexual sterilisation was a novel national socialist measure?

- Yes I can say it because it was never before used as a weapon against political opponents.

- Do you personally know of a case where someone was sterilised for political reasons?
- I know that such things were done.
- That's not the question. Please answer the question. Do you know of a case?
- I don't know of any specific case or specific date.
- I am asking you if you have any firsthand personal knowledge of such a case.
- No, I have no such personal knowledge.
- Thank you. You are aware of the charges and the indictment against Van Channing?
- Yes, aye.
- Can You honestly say he's responsible for them?
- Yes, I can.
- Will you consider yourself free of responsibility?
- Yes, I do.
- Dr. Wick, did you ever swear to the civil servant loyalty oath of 1934?
- Your Honour. I object. The witness doesn't have to answer that question. He's not on trial.
- All Germany is on trial, your Honour. This tribunal placed it on trial when he placed standing on trial. If responsibility is to be found, the widest latitude is to be permit.
- Objection overruled.
- Did you ever swear to the Civil Servant Loyalty oath of 1934.
- Everyone did.
- We are not interested in what everyone did. We are interested in what you did. Would you read the oath from the (speaks German) March, 1933?
- I swear that I shall be obedient to the leader of the German right people, Adolf Hitler, that I shall be loyal to him, that I will observe the laws and that I will conscientiously fulfil my duties. So

help me God. Everyone swore to it. It was mandatory.

- Yes, but you are such a perceptive man, Dr. Wick, you could see what was coming. You could see that national socialism was leading Germany to disaster. It was clear to anyone who had eyes and ears. Didn't you realise what it would have meant if you had men like you would've refused to swear to the oath? It would have meant that Hitler could never have come to absolute power. Why didn't you Dr. Wick. Why didn't you. Can you give us an explanation? Has it something to do with your pension?

End of Video

- Think that's the end of the quote tip David. And I'll just make one final comment. I'm sorry that there's a discontinuity between the visuals and the sound, but I hope you got the idea. And it's all very well saying, well, this is a fictionalised account, we didn't really have, quite frankly, the benefit of being able to watch the entire aisle in this particular regard. And I have to say, I think this film in its own way, raises the most profound questions with regard to evil legal systems, what happened in Nazi Germany at the time, through the prism of the judges. And therefore, as a very early, it was probably one of the very, there was indeed, of course, the Anna Frank film in 1959 and Frank Film. But really this was the first film that began to come to grips in a wide audience with the implications of what had occurred in Germany, as I said, the actual concentration council shown so that it left you in no doubt at the end of the day about the debate with regard to the moral responsibility of Germans. And to that extent, the character of Hans was right. This form does focus on the culpability of Germans in general and many other issues which we can talk about later. We don't have the time for. So over to you David, in the Ship of Fools.

- Thank you, Dennis. And if I could just echo--

- [Dennis] Of course.

- The what you said earlier, just thoughts to people in Israel. I spoke to my sister this morning and I'm sure many people have just all thoughts there. This is what's incredible here.

You can see the filming of Stanley Kramer, the writing of Abby Mann and the acting of Maximilian Schell is quite incredible. And it segues very, very clearly into the next one, Ship of Fools, where it's also written by Abby Mann, Jewish, Danny Kramer, Jewish. As we all know, I think there are such a good combination of writers, of writer and director, not only as a social message kind of film or screenplay, but how to put the human character and human characteristics inside a together with a social message, if you like, or a social theme. And therefore a broader historical theme. And what I said earlier, the way of seeing the world at the time and Judgement in Nuremberg is a reflection on this and Ship of Fools as well. And what I love about their collaboration, it allows later eyes, a later zeitgeist time of way of seeing to look back with obviously the benefit of hindsight and time to look back on what they see as the key

elements of that moment in history and how to try most effectively to represent it in writing it screenplay and in filming it, and the acting and the shooting of the visual film.

So *Ship of Fools* is 1965 by the two of them. And it's basically just to remind perhaps very quickly the story. It's basically a number of people on a ship going back from Mexico back to Germany in, and it's set in 1933 and Hitler has just taken power, et cetera. It's based on Catherine Porter's novel, which was written in 1962 and then made the movie in '65.

For me, there's a double theme in the whole film. The one is love, love of the self, love for others, lust, passion, the frailties of passion, the hunger of passion, the loss of passion, and loved that longing and the aching for it extraordinarily acted and filmed. And at the same time, the historical picture overall, which is creeping into the daily life and conversation and these characters themselves, which is the looming shadow the gathering storm of the Nazi era of beginning of 1933, which is overshadowing and omnipresent everywhere, but nobody really knows what's rarely to come. So we see illusions, we see dreams and myths and misunderstandings and miscommunication, and yet it's driven by the love stories or the failed love stories or the terrifying loss of love in different ways and passion in life.

And driven by this overall semi minimal glimpses of what might really come to happen in 1933. It's an incredible combination of a way of showing the beginning of a gathering storm of history together with profound sense of what is love and passion and lust and desire inside just ordinary human beings. *A Ship of Fools*, obviously the title of the ship is taken from the Plato, the idea of Platos and the ship. And to put it minimally to put it mildly, he's questioning of democracy and he's the captain of the ship and isn't, et cetera, don't want to go into that. But it's a "*Ship of Fools*". It's an amazing, I love the phrase, I've always loved it in poetry and literature just reminds us of who we really are on this planet. And the fact that it's a ship is always a journey, which is a metaphor for these characters in their lives.

At times they have dinner with the captain, lot of shots and scenes with that where they selected the cynical captain. But then you get this wannabe Nazi, there's the Jewish guy who's been told to go and sit on another table, has to sit there with a dwarf who's the rarely intelligent over as intelligent insight on everything happening to these fools on the ship, knows what's coming, has no illusions. Because of course he's been socially excluded as a dwarf. So that the Jewish guy and his naivety and then the Nazi character who is full of these illusions of Arian grandeur and showing to be ridiculous, the sense of social exclusion and individual exclusion, but trying to reach each other through love and passion and desire. Trying for some hope together. For me profound human heart in a context of a looming catastrophe of world history.

The New York Times had an interesting comment at the time in '65 in the crit called it a subtle orchestration of love and hate with a terrifying background of a history to come. Interestingly, it was banned by Franco in Spain because as he said, it had an anti-fascist stance. I want to show just a couple of phrases here before showing you the clip of the film.

Now this is where, this is the Jewish character sitting and talking to the dwarf narrator character. We are Germans first and Jews second. There are half a million Jews in Germany. What are they going to do? Kill all of us. I apologise, I'm a bad actor, but he's tried to say it with that tone of naive incredulity. This is ridiculous. And he's right, Abby Mann is writing this of course, a decade and a half after. But the way of putting it is so precise and concise of trying to capture a certain attitude of the time. What I was saying at the beginning, how to reflect back 20 years later on the time being. Then how to tell the story.

And then this phrase for me of with the Vivian Leigh character, tell me, wouldn't it unnerve you to have an affair with me? For me, it's one of the great lines of all time on a human level of human stories of passion, desire, lust and love. It's so witty, it's ironic, it's playful, sad and profound.

Then this conversation between Rieber, eh Rieber, the one character and Lowenthal the Jewish character. Okay, Lowenthal you know it's an historical fact. Sorry, that shouldn't be Reiber up there. I'm sorry. That should be Lowenthal saying we are Germans first. So down here Lowenthal it's an historical fact. An historical fact that the Jews are the basis of our misfortunes. Of course you agree. Of course, the Jews and the bicycle riders, bicycle riders. Why the bicycle riders? Why the Jews? This seems so simple and maybe even banal, but to write this ain't easy and takes a hell of a lot of effort and sweat. And in six lines he captures so many other conceptual meanings and ideas, which I don't want to go into, okay?

But this is taught in so many universities as an example of brilliant screenwriting of how to capture something profound through character. What I'm trying to say, okay, the clip I want to show it's actually from Vivian Leigh. And it's not to do with the big historical theme, but it's to show the loss of hopeless passion. The loss of her own sense of beauty, of her own sense of self is an incredible pathos and sense of loss. She's 46 looking in the mirror. It's incredible moment of theatre and film making and acting, but for me, the human story in it reflects a loss of innocence of the world. And I don't think I'm pushing the metaphor too much. It's a loss of innocence and naivety about the world that Kramer and Abby Mann are trying to get at through Vivian Leigh's moment.

Video begins

- You are not young, Mrs. Treadwell You have not been young for years. Behind those old eyes, you hide a 16 year old heart. Is that what men really find attractive. Baby. You just have managed to grow up, Mrs. Treadwell or Murray Hill, Virginia.

- You can paint your toenails green.

- Know how it ends.

- Sitting in a cafe. Paid escort.

Video ends

- Okay, I am going to stop it here 'cause the next scene carries on with the Sam Neal basketball coach character, absolute loss of innocence, which every human being has been through woman man, and it's set in her mid forties. And for me that's mirroring the bigger historical picture.

The next one that we want to go onto is "The Pawnbroker" which is for me, one of the most remarkable films, and I want to get this out here. Okay, so we just have this first, so for those of us here, it'll come. The Pawnbroker. Just to recap very quickly, the pawnbroker tells a story of a man who was a professor in Germany, obviously kicked out of his job in the thirties and is taken to the camps and sees his wife raped and murdered in front of his eyes by the Germans and his children as well in the camps. The movie begins 25 years later set in East Harlem where he has a pawn shop where he's selling obviously P-A-W-N by the way, he's selling things obviously people bring in and et cetera, but he sets it in a place in East, it's so far away from anywhere and it's almost like he's buried the shop somewhere in the middle of East Harlem. He's buried his life, he's buried his emotions because of what he's gone through.

And the Rod Steiger character, an extraordinary actor, incredible acting in this film for me, it's about he is so numbed by his experiences of the camps. And what's interesting how they show it cinematically is that every now and then we have flashbacks through the Rod Steiger character's mind, flashbacks to memory, memory represented through character and his flashbacks of moments of his life, of what happened to his wife, the children, the trains, the camps, et cetera. And through that historical event and moment is brought into the film.

So the Rod Steiger character runs the pawn shop, but he can't show emotions. They are buried so deep inside him. He has no pain left, no crying tears even left. As he says in one of his speeches, I'm beyond bitter. He's beyond feeling, he's beyond bitterness, beyond anger, rage even. He has edited out emotion from his life, his past experience in the camp have killed it. So try and show a character who years later, educated professor, this is how he is living in Manhattan. And he's uninterested and cynical about all the desperate customers who come desperate for a couple of extra bucks for what they're pawing in the shop.

And we see the slow change of his relationship with the young Puerto Rican guy, his name is Jesus Ortiz, and he's a young, ambitious Puerto Rican guy who works for him and he calls him his teacher, and he asked to teach, he'd be taught about the value of money and the value of gold, but nevermind going to the rest of the story, but that relationship, then slowly we see the young guy slowly trying to bring out a little bit of emotion and belief in humanity in the Roder Steiger character.

What's brilliant is that there are no easy solutions. It's not a happy ending or anything like that, but we see the attempt of one to try and bring a little bit of humanity and feeling back. Does it

succeed or not? We are not sure. It's left highly ambiguous. It was formed by, made by Sydney Lumet. Everybody knows music by Quincy Jones. Interestingly, New York Times called the Steiger character, a survivor of the camps who had become detached and remote in the modern world. Now that's interesting in the world after the war, and this is the New York Times critic said that he becomes a figure, a shadow of the Wandering Jew. Well, I'm not sure if that's accurate, but I'll throw that out. It's an interesting, provocative statement just before showing the clip.

Stanley Kubrick, as we all know, the Jewish brilliant Jewish film director, he turned it down. He said that Steiger wasn't such an exciting actor. He got it completely wrong.

Karel Reisz brilliant director, his own parents were murdered in the Holocaust. And he said, for personal reasons he could not make this film. This is capturing what the whole debate we're trying to look at today.

Then they offered it to Franco Zeffirelli. Zeffirelli, interestingly, very different. He said, it's not the kind of subject for his first Anglo-American debut as an American based director in Hollywood. We have the commercials, we have the personal from rights and from Kubrick we have the artistic. Those three directors for me capture the approach as to how to tell memory and how to show the Holocaust today. This is a clip from the "Pawnbroker".

Video begins

- Teaching time Mr. Nazerman, time to teach. Now, last time you taught me gold, right? What are you going to teach me tonight?

- Tonight I teach you to save your penny.

- I'm going to do that Mr. Nazerman? Yes, sir. And the meantime, I'm learning business from my master, right? So I got to know one thing, something I've been thinking about say, how come you people come to business so natural?

- You people. Oh, I see, yeah, I see, I see you want to learn the secret of our success. Is that right? All right, I teach you. First of all, you start off with a period of several thousand years during which you have nothing to sustain you, but a great bearded legend, oh my friend, you have no land to call your own to grow food on or to hunt. You have nothing. You're never in one place long enough to have a geography or an army or a land myth. All you have is a little brain, a little brain, and a great bearded legend to sustain you and convince you that you are special even in poverty. But this little brain that's the real key, you see. With this little brain, you go out and you buy a piece of cloth and you cut that cloth in two and you go out and sell it for penny more than you paid for it. Then you run right out and buy another piece of cloth, cut it into three pieces and sell it for three pennies profit. But my friend, during that time, you must never succumb to buying an extra piece of bread for the table or a toy for a child. No. You must immediately run out and get yourself a still larger piece of cloth. And so you repeat this process

over and over and suddenly you discover something. You have no longer any desire, any temptation to dig into the earth, to grow food or to gaze at a limitless land and call it your own. No, no. You just go on and on and on, repeating this process over the centuries, over and over. And suddenly you make a grand discovery. You have a mercantile heritage, you are a merchant, you are known as a user, a man with secret resources, a witch, a pawnbroker, a .

- You really is some teacher, Mr. Nazerman. You really, really is the great.

- Good afternoon, Mr. Nazerman. Mr. Nazerman for some days now I've been trying to give an idea some sort of shape, a pattern.

Video ends

- I think we can hold it there 'cause we short of time. So it's that speech that is so brilliant capturing so much of this character who suffered so much and in his own words, in the movie is beyond bitterness, beyond feeling. Okay, Dennis, over to you.

- Oh, just a couple of comments about the state. 'Cause it is rightly says such an extraordinary form in such a really surprisingly brilliant piece of acting by Rod Steiger, who often hamed it up, but not in this form. Of course, Sydney Lumet, who is the director always interested me because he made a lot of films that in legal kind of courses I've taught. "12 Angry Men". "The Verdict", "The Network" are also his, and it's really interesting and one of the things about this film, which is so remarkable, is it starts off with an idyllic scene in Germany in which the young character of Rod Steiger is there with his family. And it is incredible counter position to the rest of the film. It sets the tone that because the idea of memory and stifled memory is so central to it. I just always thought that was a remarkable piece of filmmaking.

What is not a remarkable piece of filmmaking, but was particularly important at the time was the 1978 rather big budget American TV series over four nights called Holocaust, which starred Meryl Streep, a young Meryl Streep and a young James Woods. It was a fictionalised account. And again, I'll come back to that in a moment, telling a story of a fictionalised Jewish family, Joseph Weiss successful Berlin doctor, his wife and children. And it basically charts the early tragic journey from bourgeois affluence to the gas chambers. Meryl Streep plays the Christian daughter of one of the vice sons. In this particular film, there is a parallel story on a character who's referred to as Eric Doff. He's an unemployed lawyer, initially apolitical, but he obtains a job with Hitler's SS and then becomes a very enthusiastic member of the Nazi killing machine.

And so what you had over four nights in 1978 on American television was this portrayal of the fictionalised family going as it were to the gas chambers and the journey there to paralleling it to the Nazi participation to this apolitical character who becomes political. And the film, the interesting thing about this is that here you have to ask yourself, well, there hadn't really been the kind of serious documentary which we are going to talk about, or David particularly will talk about Shoah (indistinct) in a few minutes.

But it was therefore a fictionalised account different to the lens, if you wish, which we've explored in Nuremberg looking at the question of the culpability of Nazi jurists or the "Ship of Fools", almost an allegorical depiction of what was going to happen or focusing almost exclusively on the effects of the Holocaust on one person. Rod Steiger character here was a portrayal of the broader implications of the Holocaust done in his fictionalised fashion. And it was not an uncontroversial portrayal for all sorts of reasons, and I'm going to come to those. But there was a significance, a series of significance which I would be remiss not to tell you about the film, the, sorry, the mini-series over four nights were shown in the US and basically got an audience around about 120 million people, much more significant perhaps for our purposes.

It was shown in 1979 in the West Germany as it then was watched by more than 20 million people. In fact, two years ago there was a reprise of the entire series yet again. And the significance of that was that in fact it had a massive effect on the debate about the Holocaust within Germany in two ways. It was attacked by a whole range of German media. On the one hand we suggested all sorts of terrible things about it, but on the other hand, it really did spark a debate and it was not entirely inconsequential that a few months after the series being broadcast in Germany, Germany scrapped the statute of limitations for murder enabling Nazis to be tried for their participation. And I can't tell you that it was directly because of that miniseries, but there's no doubt about it that shortly thereafter there was a very significant uptick in the presentation of the historical record of the Nazis in German schools. And Germany historians were basically focusing to a greater extent on the Holocaust and otherwise have been the case.

And so why this becomes particularly interesting to me is because on the one hand it was criticised as being kitsch, it was criticised as not basically being a serious depiction of this almost unpredictable set of events. And yes, on the other hand this has a series of political consequences. So what I want to do firstly is just give you the tip of the trailer to give you a feel. Those of you, many of you might have seen it, but just to refresh memories. And then I want to just refer you to what Elie Wiesel had to say about this in a famous 1978 New York Times editorial piece. So let's just have a look at the not particularly great quality, but let's have a look at the trailer.

- Sure. And Dennis, if I can just add in very quickly to add into what you were saying in a recent study showed that less than half of current American school children have any clue of the fact that it was 6 million Jews murdered. And the same figures came out for the contemporary Germany a couple of years ago in a survey, less than half of German, less than half of German school kids knew anything more than the Holocaust in a vague way. Nothing about the specifics of murder and nowhere near millions, et cetera. The other just quick question is that we have to ask obviously NBC there, the film, the TV company made a fortune, the ratings and so on.

- It did.

- But we have to also say, how does one learn history today? And we have to ask what is the

role of popular media and also how popular media itself changes the perception of history. And this is part of the contemporary director maker, which feeds into this debate about the series. Okay, let's watch it.

Video begins

- [Narrator] Pictures ever made. Now only one other film of this plane, Holocaust.
- [Speaker 1] We'll solve a multitude of problems simply by attacking Jews.
- [Narrator] It's an extraordinary story of.
- [David] Sorry, it's cutting.
- Yeah, if we can't do it, we can't do.
- [Wendy] I think that maybe just.
- [Narrator] Heroism against the eyes has seen through the lives of two unforgettable families.
- We're all friends here, all good billionaires.
- [Narrator] Torn apart by the devastation of war.
- Things won't get easier for you.
- How much worse can they get? We're no longer citizens. We have no legal rights. Property can be confiscated than the name of humanity. What else can you do to us?
- [Narrator] One struggles against oppression.
- What has he done? Why are you taking him?
- Routine Questioning?
- No, no, no. What is his crime? What has he done.
- [Narrator] The other allies with Hitler.
- I respect the party and the work the fuhrer is doing.
- [Narrator] Winner of eight prestigious Emmy awards.

- Try again what crime did you commit?
- I have done nothing.
- [Narrator] And the critics agree Holocaust is one of the most powerful films ever made.
- This is my country as much as theirs. I do not fear those barbarians.
- [Narrator] Riveting, fascinating, and uncommonly valuable achievement says Time Magazine.
- I am still not convinced they intend to kill us all.
- Please have your wife. If you don't, I will kill him.
- [Narrator] And the New York Post says, every American family should see Holocaust.
- The trains aren't going to Russia. Where are we going? Trablanker another police work here.
- It's a death camp.
- [Narrator] Featuring a brilliant all-star cast.
- Please go back, I'll be all right.
- [Narrator] including two-time Oscar winner Meryl Streep.
- The Rabbi say that every life is a sanctification.
- [Narrator] James Woods of "The Getaway" and Oscar nominee for "Salvador". Michael Moriarty of "Pale Rider" and "Law and Order". Joseph Bottoms of "Inner Sanctum" and "Blind Date" David Warner of "Star Trek five" and six and Sam Wannamaker of "City of Joy" and "Baby Boom".
- Everybody take hands.
- [Narrator] With Holocaust exclusively from World Vision Home Video.
- Oh, I'm very relieved that we were able to see that 'cause it gives you a feel of what I want to discuss with you because on the one hand you've got this all-star cast. In fact, one of the films that we actually exclude out of our discussion, which be particularly interesting was William Styron and "Sophie's Choice" and the extraordinary portrayal by Meryl Streep, but be that as it may.

But here is what I wanted to talk about a little bit, but what Wiesel had to say about this. Now just one comment. There's a quote here from Levi, Primo Levi. So this first book of mine fell into oblivion for many years, perhaps also because in all of Germany these were difficult times of mourning and reconstruction and the public did not want to return in memory to the painful years of the war that had just ended.

Why I put that quote up was because for a very long time, and we'll see this in our second of our series next week, that in fact, of course more and more portrayals of the holocaust took place. But it was difficult in those times. And the significance of the portrayal by the miniseries Holocaust was this one of the sort of, if you could call it more macro analyses, even though it was done through two families, then had hitherto been the case for all the reasons I've advanced.

But Eli Wiesel in 1978 spoke about this and he wrote this piece of which the extractor, "I know people will tell me that filmmaking has its own own laws and its demands after all similar techniques are being used for war movies and historical recreations. But the Holocaust is unique, not just another event." This series he's talking about the series treats Holocaust after it was just another event. "I object to it, not because it's not artistic enough, but because it's not authentic enough, it removes us from the event instead of bringing us closer to it, the tone is wrong. Most scenes do not ring too much drama. Not enough documentary. Many ads. In all fairness, I must add that many Jewish and non-Jewish organisations supported the project and promoted it amongst their members. But they did say even before they could view the programmes, this does not mean that people will not be muted. Some who saw previews have been profoundly affected. And I know don't tell me the film was not meant for viewers like me, but for those who were not there, not even born yet, those who are only beginning to discover the reality of death factories in the heart of civilised Europe."

And if I can pause there that he's now reflecting exactly the dilemma that somebody like myself has reading Wiesel, thinking about the inadequacies of the mini-series and yet thinking, well, twenties of million Germans watched it and that had a significant effect on him. So you have to judge, as it were for yourself as to whether in fact how you evaluate it. But then he does go onto make some profound points, which circles back to David's introductory remarks.

"Art and Theresienstadt were perhaps compatible into Theresienstadt, but not here, not in the television studio. The same is true of prayer and Buchenwald faith and Treblinka. A film about Sobibor war is either not a picture or not about Sobibor. The Holocaust? The ultimate event, the ultimate mystery never to be comprehended or transmitted. Only those who were there know what it was. The others will never know. It was easier for Auschwitz inmates to imagine themselves free and for free persons to imagine themselves in Auschwitz. What then is the answer he asks? How is one to tell a tale that cannot be but must be told? How is one to protect the memory of the victims? How are we to oppose the killer's hopes and their accomplices endeavours to kill the dead for the second time? What'll happen when the last survivor's gone? I don't know. All I know is that the witness does not recognise him in this film. The Holocaust must

be remembered, but not as a show.”

And that's a really interesting and profound, as you would expect from Wiesel critique. And so because time is going, I'm not going to say more than this, that we now going to move, David will take us through the nine and a half hour documentary by Lanzmann, which in some ways is an attempt to answer precisely the critique that if Wiesel launched against Holocaust, albeit that it was seen by so many millions of people. So over to you, David, and the discussion of Shoah.

- Thank you Dennis. I just wonder if we shouldn't bring it to a close now, begin next week with.

- We can, because we've gone on so long. Yeah, we got on. We want to spend some time on Shoah, don't we?

- Yes. So just to say, just to bring it around to a circle, as Dennis has mentioned, what is so profound and so important about studying the mini-series is obviously the millions watching it in America and in Germany and elsewhere in the world. Obviously it's a commercial interest. It goes back to the three directors. Kubrick writes, (indistinct) and is a commercial interest, there's a human, et cetera. The debate of the artistic versus the documentary, the sense of how to represent memory and testimony. I think one of the biggest questions that this miniseries leaves with me is whose perspective ultimately represents the memory? Is that the survivor? Is it the perpetrator? Is it the outsiders, the allies who do nothing? Is it a mixture of all of them? Is it the interests of a TV series or of popular culture to educate as many millions as possible, in whose interest and whose perspective do we see really represented?

And we have to accept a series of contradictions, which Holocaust as many series does throw up. And the main thing for me, which links to the Eli Wiesel quote at the end that Dennis has brought in here, is to ensure that the survivor is never silenced by the dominance of popular culture. And if there is a critique of this miniseries for me, it is possibly that it is the representation of the survivor in the context of the zeitgeist, contemporary eyes, money ratings, the position of the survivor and the victim and the dead, and have they been silenced or partly silenced by the dominant needs of a dominant culture.

And this will pick up next week with the Lanceman remarkable nine and a half hour piece Dennis mentioned Shoah, which is only interviews and doesn't try to fictionalise anything. The debate continues. Okay, thank you very much.

- Should we, yeah,

- [Wendy] Do you want to have a look at any of the questions?

- I'm happy to ask--

Comments and Q&A

- [Wendy] Some comments.
- I'm in your hands. Should we do a couple of the questions?
- Thank you should Dennis. Okay. if you guys have got the time.
- No, no, no, no, no, no, no, I'm absolutely, let me get onto that right at this moment.
- Okay.
- I'm just trying to get back to thanks. Oh, sorry. There were lots of things on the vaccine.
- Yeah. I can begin here for you Dennis,
- Why don't you begin, David, I'm back.
- Okay. Yeah, sure. Yolandi, the talk is timely. I watched "Seven Beauties" last night, was very upset with a mixture of comedy and tragedy and yeah, same thing with "Life is Beautiful". So exactly Yolandi, and we're going to try and come into that debate next week with "Life is Beautiful" and "Seven Beauties". And then there's also of course "The Night Porter", which really wanted to bring in today, but they represent a different aspect of the debate. And it is, there is an irony there and it is dealing with comedy and tragedy and it is walking that very fine line of those two elements of dramaturgy. So let's rather deal with it next week, which we'll definitely come into because one cannot deny the alluring, disturbing and attractive qualities of films like "Seven Beauties" and "Night Porter", et cetera. Next dra, do that in Canada we have to wait one and half the Pfizer?
- David, I think we should move--
- Yeah let's move. Okay, that's all there. Sorry, Sam reading the book. Da da da. Okay.
- I'll tell you when there's a good.
- [David] Okay, go for it. Dennis.
- No, David's a question which I think perhaps we should address.

Q: "Kirk says, your talk begs the question, why create a narrative fiction using creative film when there are documentary films that give representations of what happened? How can a film like "Seven Beauties" be morally justified?"

A: Well, I would, Kirk yeah, that is a very important question. And that in a way it goes to the key of what we're saying. What I would mention here, and I'm going to say this 'cause I do believe in this, is that yes, there is a difference between kitsch, the TV miniseries for example, only being

made for massive profit. Let's be honest, massive ratings. The artistic film of "Seven Beauties" or "The Night Porter", can they be morally justified? I don't, it's a debate, but there is artifice in everything. I don't think there is purity. I think that purity cannot be done in storytelling. There is always choice, there's always character even if it's in a film or on stage, wherever. Even in writing in literature, there are choices. This character protagonist, antagonist, it's de facto set up in the very structure of storytelling. And all of this ultimately goes back to how to tell a story, but a story of this particular memory. And I don't think one can get away from what you say in the creative film, the elements of artifice and artistry that can be used in that double meaning of money versus educating a hundred million people with Holocaust mini-series. It can be used in the debate between the so-called artistry of "Seven Beauties", "Night Porter" versus documentary evidence. But I would say even in documentary and the way documentaries are made these days, they show actors acting out scenes and then they come back, to an historian or somebody else. They cannot be a purist documentary, I don't think in today's world.

- I agree.

Q: Teddy asks the question, "don't the questions the Nuremberg trial judges also applied to South African judges in the Apartheid trials?"

A: Teddy, absolutely. I tried to address that when I did actually do a full lecture on Nuremberg and we may want to come back to that. If we have a look at Judgement at Nuremberg more comprehensively in the light of the Nuremberg trials and its implications for everybody else.

Myra says, implore you all to read "Caste" by Isabel Wilkinson to see how Hitler even came to the US in his early days. You mean obviously metaphorically as such meaning that the way in which the caste system, because the book is a really important book published last year. It deals with a caste system in the United States of America. It parallels that to some extent to cast systems all over the world, including Nazi Germany. And if I recall correctly, it develops an argument around about seven or eight pillars of caste, if I recall from my memory of reading it. All of which basically try to analyse the question of the way in which people become (indistinct). Really important book. I agree with you entirely.

- Can I just come in with Frida's question?

Q: "Why are we not showing films, Polish films about the war?"

- I was about to get you that, yeah.

A: Okay. I mean very important. Wajda and others have brilliant films, but from the point of view, I'm trying to show a sense the dominant debates and dominant films in the English speaking world I guess at the moment.

- Yes this incredible.

- For a six month programme.

- Well the interesting was, yes, if we could do the whole thing, I'd do that because I did look interesting enough 'cause there's a very famous 1948, if I call, call 48 or 50, somewhere around there by Van der Jacob Wolfski. I hope I've pronounced that, who she's referring to called the Return to Auschwitz. But I couldn't find anything on YouTube that I could use as a clip. So it becomes a lot more difficult to, or the subtitles. So I'm afraid you did write that, it's a limit to what you can do.

Marcia, what about Ship of Fools by Hieronymus Bosch, of course the famous painting roundabout I think 1500. I'm not quite sure what asked to say about that. David. There's one. He had to show video so that they aren't choppy. Did you check? Oh, sorry. No, that's a different thing. I'm sorry you don't, that's a technical question, which you don't have to worry about. And we've done that. Yeah, sorry.

- Frida talks about the Holocaust TV series was really kitsch.

- [Dennis] Yes, yes. On the other hand, the majority of people love kitsch, so maybe use kitsch to educate and show it to people. Yeah unfortunately these kitsch stories, huge amount of money is invested. So a huge amount of money is made, but it does get to 120 million Americans, and it got to 20 million West Germans and possibly had an influence, as Dennis was saying on changing a law. So it's a complex, profound, contradictory debate. And I don't think one can be evangelical either way or purist.

- I'm absolutely, I'm absolutely with you. I mean, that's my dilemma. I read and it's important question. I read Wiesel and I say right on, but then if 20 million people in West Germany watched the thing and it influenced them, I'm betwixt in between, honest, but I take your point entirely, David, there are a lot of questions about Lanzmann, but we will deal with that next time. I'm pleased to see that it's, a okay. Then there's Susan... Paperclips, an interesting documentary that highlights the ignorance of American people Shoah. You may know about that David, I don't.

- Sorry, say that again please.

- Paperclips is an interesting documentary that highlights the ignorance of the American people of the Shoah.

- Yes, yes.

- [Wendy] It's a fabulous documentary.

- Okay. The name of the film, Vivian Leigh's, "Ship of Fools".

- Yeah, sorry. That's right. Yeah.

- With an incredible cast of others.

- What a cast. Yeah, I think that's basically about it. So we look forward to seeing you next week and she'll start with Shoah and then we'll have to engage with Schindler's List and some of the other very vital films in this particular regard. Again, let me say, David can conclude, but I just want to say you've got to make a choice here. We'll be ready at 7:40. We've done gone for 70 minutes and if we were going to do all the films we once that you'd haven't, we'd be as long as the Shoah and we take nine and a half hours. So we've got to be limited in our choice. You may disagree with that, but that's wonderful 'cause that's part of the debate.

- Thanks so much everybody. Take care and peace today and all thoughts to friends and family. Everybody in Israel.

- Please God peace there.

- Thank you very much guys. Thank you very much. And I echo your feelings about Israel and deepest yeah, thoughts are with everybody there to all of you. Thank you. Thank you very much indeed. Thank you everybody, sitting outside.

- [Dennis] Take care.

- Bye-Bye.