

Irene Angelico's film " Dark Lullabies " is a very awakening and alarming piece of work. It is the story of the Holocaust, told through the eyes of a second generation Jew. Angelico's mission was to find answers to the many suppressed questions that had bothered her since childhood. She began by searching for fellow childhood survivors of the tragedy who shared her quest for the truth. The film opened with scenes of a confused Germany in the throes of war, with terrified Jewish children running through the streets, and with scenes of their suffering parents sentenced to live, or die in concentration camps run by merciless Nazi's. " Dark Lullabies " continued with Angelico's goal for answers through many interviews with both angered Jews, and ignorant or shameful Germans. The Holocaust was explored, the reasons behind it never answered. What could possibly justify the deaths of millions, be they Jewish or any other race? The closing shots took us through a former concentration camp as it stands today allowing us to imagine what it must have been like then.

In my opinion, Angelico's film did more than just explore unanswered questions that haunted her, far more, it educated and emotionally touched all those privileged enough to see it. In concentrating on the central theme of the plight of second generation Jews, Angelico successfully reassured grown childhood victims of the Holocaust, that they were not alone in their unawareness of what really happened. The film also educated and enlightened its viewers on some of the horrors experienced by Jewish people. Finally, " Dark Lullabies " served as somewhat of

Very
Good
Introduction

a warning for modern day society to remain as individualists, and not conform blindly to dictatorship. /good

This documentary was told from a Jewish person's perspective and was therefore biased, nevertheless, I admire the way that Angelico did not ignore other points of view. She portrayed warm and cold Germans alike and left it for the viewer to draw his/her own conclusions. It is impossible to be completely unbiased when dealing with such a sensitive and personal issue, and I feel that Angelico was as objective as possible when searching for her answers. /good

The effective camera work in "Dark Lullabies" enhanced the poignancy of each and every scene. In interviews, for instance, the shot was always tight on the person's face to catch every fleeting expression or sign of emotion. For example, the close-ups on the Jews at the gathering in Jerusalem showed the hurt and angered faces of the childhood survivors. On the other hand, in Germany, they showed the hard set and flustered countenance of the young neo-Nazi's. The film should also be commended for its outstanding production. Two of the scenes with the most impact took place in Germany. Upon Angelico's arrival in Germany, she decided to focus the camera ~~in~~ on Germans at random. This showed that any German, in her eyes, could have been partially responsible for the Holocaust and revealed ^{to} the audience how many murderers had been allowed to go free. Finally, when Angelico was visiting the concentration camp at Dachau, she brought a camera man ~~along~~ ^{OK.} side her to allow the audience to visit it with her. This, and the flashbacks of /good

how the concentration camp used to be were truly effective in communicating the horrors surrounding the Holocaust. /good

One aspect unique to this expository was that the producer appeared throughout it. I thought this was a new and extremely powerful style. " Dark Lullabies " explored the facts and reasons of history while maintaining a personal touch with Angelico's numerous appearances. This made her search for answers more realistic to the audience, in that it was no longer merely a heroine's quest for the truth, but a real Jewish woman experiencing the hardships of post-Holocaust life. She was real, not removed, and we were a part of evrything she did. /good /good

I was amazed to discover how the Holocaust was all but wiped out of German history. Many German adults who had been involved in the tragedy had not uttered a word of what had happened to their children. One man wrote a book for these unknowing children, and if it weren't for such books, second generation Germans would probably still not know about this shameful event in their past. He explained the political system at the time and described the loss of individualism. Because the German's were acting on the orders of their superiors, they felt no guilt in killing millions of Jews. When children confronted their parents with these shocking revelations, former Nazi's either denied that the Holocaust had ever taken place or completely refused to discuss it. One typical example is of a young girl who discovered that the Grandfather she loved so much was put in jail for the massacre of millions of helpless Jews. As with so many other Germans, for this " loving " Grandfather, killing was just his job. /good

I could not finish this critique without first discussing the meaning of the title, " Dark Lullabies ". Lullabies are songs sung to young children to help them fall asleep. Many second generation Jews were young during the Holocaust or shortly after. For them, the happy lullabies were not sung. The Jewish race was in the midst of rebuilding itself and the only lullabies remembered by these younger Jews were the unsung ones telling the monstrosities of the past.

I feel " Dark Lullabies " was the best documentary shown this semester. It touched me both intellectually and emotionally. What a good alternative to the usual, sensationalized " blood and guts " film clips we normally see on the Holocaust. It offered the story from a new perspective. I found myself thinking about what I had seen long after the film had ended. Angelico's presence in the class was an added bonus. She answered what was not clear in the film and added even more personality to the story, " Dark Lullabies ". I was so moved by Irene Angelico and her courage and determination that I went for a second viewing of the documentary, and given the chance, I would see it yet again.