

The Boy in the Striped Pyjamas

So this film was a little harrowing. It was brilliantly acted by all the leads and the supporting cast, and well directed by Mark Herman (who allowed you to imagine the horrors rather than confront you with them). The story is of how an innocent 8-year-old German boy (Bruno, played by ASA Butterfield) befriends a Jewish internee (Schmuel, played by Jack Scanlon) at the height of the Nazi purge of Jews, leading to the tragic finale which is very difficult to watch.

So a good drama — but historically very inaccurate (indeed, the Auschwitz-Birkenau State Museum and others cited it as a book/film that should be avoided entirely). Bruno, as an 8-year-old son of a senior SS officer (the camp commandant, played by David Thewlis) would have been in the Hitler Youth and so fully indoctrinated into the Nazi ideology, as would the wife (Elsa, played by Vera Farmiga) and Bruno's elder sister (Gretel, played by Amber Beattie). But if you put this aside to take (as the film, and book upon which it based, does) a "what-if" approach and allow the film to take you on the journey, it is very interesting and challenging to watch. But you mustn't draw conclusions about the holocaust based on it!