

## And the List Goes On

By Sheila Johnson

In 1968, I was humbled to attend the National Conference of Christians and Jews held at the University of Northern Colorado at Greeley. I gained the honor by winning a citywide essay contest in my junior year in high school. I was filled with anxiety due to the fact that I was only seventeen years old, I had never flown in an airplane, it was snowing heavily in Greeley at the time of our departure to Denver, and I would be representing the entire City of El Paso, Texas. That was a lot of pressure for a Black girl who had never been outside the geographical boundaries of Texas and had only interacted with Whites, Blacks and Hispanics. How on Earth was I going to speak to a Jew in a foreign city and state in the midst of a snowstorm?

Much to my surprise and delight, the conference went extremely well and I made new friends far and wide. The storytelling, witness, and sharing of personal journeys from the Jews as well as many of the Christians present impacted my life in a supernatural way. I could not wait to share what I had learned from the conference with my parents, City Council, and various teachers at my school upon my return.

When given the task of writing about my favorite black and white movie, *Schindler's List* quickly came to my mind. In an effort to recount some of the stories told to me and others at the 1968 Conference, I researched the movie through Google and Wikipedia and this is what I found:

Its owner Leopold Page relayed the story of Schindler's List to author Thomas Keneally in a Beverly Hills leather goods shop.

Keneally wasn't the first person that Page told about his experience with Schindler.

There is more than one list; there are seven.

Steven Spielberg, the producer of the movie *Schindler's List*, first became aware of Schindler in the early 1980's.

Spielberg refused to take a salary for making the movie.

Before he decided to make the movie, he tried to convince other directors to make it.

The movie was a gamble for Universal Studios, so they made Spielberg a Dino-sized deal; they convinced him to make *Jurassic Park* first and then *Schindler's List*. Spielberg complied and released both movies in 1993.

Spielberg did not want a movie star with Hollywood clout to portray Schindler. Kevin Costner, Mel Gibson, and Warren Beatty were all considered, but Liam Neeson was chosen for the part.

Spielberg traveled to Poland to do his own research for the movie.

The little girl in the red coat, who appears during the liquidation of the ghetto, was based on a real experience. Spielberg made Oliwia Dabrowska promise him not to watch the movie until she was eighteen, and she actually watched when she was eleven.

The movie was not supposed to be in English; Spielberg wanted to use Polish and German using

subtitles.

The studio did not want the movie to be in black and white.

Spielberg's passion movie earned him seven Oscars.

*Schindler's List* is technically a student project as Steven Spielberg completed it to earn credits for his film course.

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