

Langston Payne
10/12/23
E Band
College English

Connection 1#:

Goal: What I was looking to get at in this paragraph is how the Nazis used the Star Of David to brand/mark Jewish people and how the clothing of the handmaids were connected to their identity in society.

Throughout the book, there were several options for what I was able to do with all the different examples I could've chosen. Ultimately I choose to compare the book to the Holocaust. One example of how they are similar is how during WW2 Nazi Germany would brand and mark Jews using the Star of David. Similar to that in The Handmaid's Tale the Handmaid's are forced to wear outfits which are symbolic of their role within society, and hence, the rights (or lack thereof) to which they are entitled. The Handmaids are dressed in red, "the color of blood, which defines [them]". This connection between the color red and blood causes the reader to associate the Handmaids' clothing with menstruation, a process that ultimately represents the ability to bear children.

Additionally Marthas are assigned the color of "dull green, like a surgeon's gown of the time before". The comparison to a surgeon's gown represents the role of a Martha within the household; they are required to take care of the house and everyone inside, fixing anything that becomes broken. Green can often be a symbol of jealousy, which correlates to the envy that some Martha feel towards the Handmaids, as evident when Cora states, "if I hadn't got my tubes tied, it could've been me".

Connection #2:

Goal: Extreme/very strict laws put into place in society.

For example in *The Handmaid's Tale* Extreme laws were put in place quickly and women's rights were eroded before their very eyes after a terrorist attack shook the nation. In one of her many flashbacks, Offred explains to the reader that everything began "when they shot the President and machine-gunned the Congress". The attack threw the country into a state of emergency in which the government suspended the Constitution. Atwood repeatedly chooses to use vague words in phrases such as, "they blamed it on the Islamic fanatics", "it was for security reasons they said", and "the thing to do, they said, was to continue on as usual", to describe the people and organizations in control. Refusing to attach names or faces to these figures manipulates the reader into thinking it wasn't so much a specific leader making all of the bad stuff happen, but rather the society as a whole.

Connection #3:

Goal:

In chapter 15 it opens up with this. (pg. 86) "The commander knocks at the door. The knock is prescribed.: the sitting room is supposed to be Serena Joy's territory, he's supposed to ask permission to enter it. She likes to keep him waiting. It's a little things that means alot. He steps forward into the room anyway. We could compare this to the holocaust how Jew's would hide in homes and anywhere they could to be safe. Anne Frank hid people in attics and in houses and anywhere and Nazis would still knock on doors searching for Jews. Additionally this quote "Moirra had power now, she'd been set loose, she'd set herself loose. She was now a loose woman." Chapter 22, pg. 133. Similar to this Hilter became very power-hungry and didn't want to just conquer all of Europe but the entire world. Her fault, her fault, her fault, we chant in unison." Chapter 13, pg. 72. This is similar to the ideology aspect of the Nazis believing that they are the "Arian race" or the "perfect race", with blue eyes blonde or brown hair, and being Christian. While the Holocaust was a specific historical event during World War II where millions of Jews and other minority groups were systematically persecuted and killed by the Nazis, "*The Handmaid's Tale*" touches on broader themes of totalitarianism, discrimination, and the suppression of individual freedoms. The novel explores how authoritarian regimes strip individuals of their basic human rights and dignity, drawing parallels with historical events like the Holocaust. Another similarity arises with the loss of identity. In concentration camps during the Holocaust, Jews were stripped of their right to a name and were instead labelled with numbers tattooed on their arms. In the Gileadean society, Handmaids have their real names taken away from them, replaced with the name of their Commanders with the prefix 'Of-' added. The purpose of this is to show that the Handmaids belong to their respective Commanders; they are their property. Handmaid's

are indoctrinated to accept this as a lifestyle by other women given the title of "Aunts". These women are some of the highest-ranking females within society and hold a great deal of power over the Handmaids, shown through the imagery of the "electric cattle prods slung on thongs from their leather belts," as they patrolled the training centre at night. This is similar to the way in which the Jews were kept in line by guards during the Holocaust.