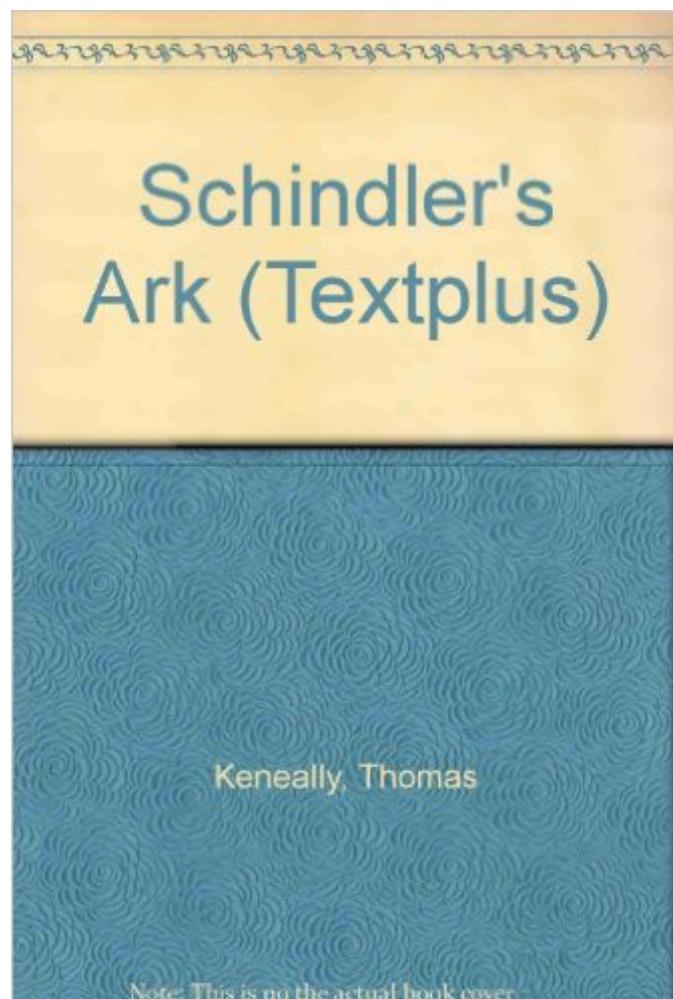


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Schindler's Ark (Textplus)



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Customer Reviews

Thomas Keneally's Booker Prize-winning, fictionalized biography of Oskar Schindler memorializes a member of the Nazi party who endangered his own life for four years, working privately to save Jews from the death camps. A playboy who loved fine wines and foods, he was also a smooth-talking manipulator (and briber) of Nazi officials, as well as a clever entrepreneur, already on his way to stunning financial success by the early days of World War II. Nowhere in Schindler's background are there any hints that he would one day become the savior of eleven hundred Jewish men and women. While the excellent film of this novel concentrates on the dangers Schindler and "his Jews" faced daily throughout the war, Keneally, well known for his depictions of characters acting under stress, concentrates on the character of Oskar Schindler himself, beginning with his childhood and teen years. As he explores Schindler's transformation from war profiteer and

"passive" Nazi to a man willing to use his fortune to ensure the salvation of his factory workers, Keneally reveals a man of enormous courage and derring-do, a man who thrives by living on the edge. Presenting episodes from the lives of some of the "Schindlerjuden," Keneally highlights their humanity, creating moments of high drama. Characters such as Leopold Pfefferberg and factory manager Itzhak Stern move in and out of the narrative, illustrating graphically the extent to which their lives depend upon Oskar Schindler, while the constant intrusion of sadistic SS commandant Amon Goeth in Schindler's life shows the fragility of their security. Other stories, of people who just missed being saved by Schindler, highlight the arbitrariness of fate--chance--in their (and our) lives.

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