Bringing Death to Life: The Personifications of Death in Zusak’s The Book Thief, Moore’s A Dirty Job and Pendle’s Death: A Life

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Abstract
This essay examines the personifications of Death in Markus Zusak’s The Book Thief (2005), Christopher Moore’s A Dirty Job (2006) and George Pendle’s Death: A Life (2008). The personifications are analysed in terms of gender, anthropomorphism, (im)mortality, agency in conceptual death and attitude towards their occupation as Death. The personifications are also compared to previous portrayals in relation to fear, denial and acceptance of death. The essay is based on a close reading of the three literary works, and it is argued that the authors give Death human characteristics, force Death to reflect on mortality, and disconnect personified Death from the responsibility of conceptual death in order to portray Death as a humane, likeable and... (More)
Death and chocolate. First the colors. Then the humans. The book thief and her brother were traveling down toward Munich, where they would soon be given over to foster parents. We now know, of course, that the boy didn't make it. HOW IT HAPPENED. 

The book thief was dreaming about the Führer, Adolf Hitler. In the dream, she was attending a rally at which he spoke, looking at the skull-colored part in his hair and the perfect square of his mustache. She was listening contentedly to the torrent of words spilling from his mouth. His sentences glowed in the light. Death ends the story by telling us about Liesel Meminger’s death, how she lived a long life in Sydney with her husband, three children, and many grandchildren. When Death goes to collect her, he sets her down so they can walk together for a while. He shows her The Book Thief and wants to ask her so many questions about humans. He cannot understand them, how they can contain so much lightness and darkness. He doesn't ask these things, though. Death: Here is a little information you should know: this books is filled with many interesting facts. Very releva

THE BOOK THIEF: A Summary.

Liesel: Hi, I'm Liesel. I have no personality, but I'm a cute little girl.

Death: Her name is not Liesel. Her name is THE BOOK THIEF and I shall name her that for the rest of the book. Liesel: Even though I stole, like, 3 books in total or something.

Death: Shut up, Book Thief. They're not quite inseparable, but they definitely support each other. With The Book Thief, Markus Zusak has shown he's a writer of genius, an artist of words, a poet, a literary marvel. His writing is lyrical, haunting, poetic, profound. Death is rendered vividly, a lonely, haunted being who is drawn to children, who has had a lot of time to contemplate human nature and wonder at it. Much of what Death says is very philosophical, and even beautiful. The Book Thief is set in Nazi Germany, at the start of World War Two. On the journey to her new home, Liesel's younger brother dies and she steals her first book: The Gravedigger's Handbook. When she arrives at her new home, she suddenly has a new mama and papa. In reflection, The Book Thief leaves behind a sense of guilt, in some ways. Because it is the British bombs that are falling in Germany, the British who kill so many in the story and leave the reader’s cheeks soaked in tears. Overall I would rate it 8/10, and recommend it to anyone aged 13 and upwards, as it is a serious story, and may not be fully understood by those younger. Want to tell the world about a book you've read? Join the site and send us your review!