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Professor Penny Lunsford

HIS 153-01

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A Tale of Two Cities

While watching "A Tale of Two Cities" quite a few questions arose in my head. The plot was intriguing and sad, yet happy with several small and large plot twists throughout, so who wouldn't be questioning some parts of the film?

The first thing I wondered about was Madame Defarge's knitting. In almost every scene she appears in, she is seen knitting a shroud with different crests that represent families of nobles. I was confused by this because she loathed the nobles and I couldn't understand why she would knit their symbols onto something she spent so much time and effort on. Upon further research[1], I discovered that she was in fact using this shroud as a type of "hit list." In other words, she was knitting the crests of the nobles she wanted dead into the shroud.

The second question I had was about the hairstyles[2] seen on some of the French women during a ball (scene 59:46). During the scene a woman was sitting and there was an actual model of a navy ship in her hair. During Marie Antoinette's rule, avant-garde hairstyles were very popular fashion statements. The women of France would adorn their hair with model ships in celebration of a French naval victory against the British during the American Revolution.

The final question I had during the film was about the Bastille[3]. It was mentioned many times throughout by many different characters, but I was curious about why it was so significant. The Bastille had become a symbol of dictatorship to the people and it held large amounts of

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ammunition. The storming of the Bastille marked the beginning of the French Revolution, even becoming a national holiday that is celebrated to this day.

Works Cited

1: www.britannica.com/topic/Madame-Defarge

2: www.thefashionhistorian.com/2014/12/coiffure-la-fill-in-blank.html

3: www.bl.uk/learning/timeline/item106472.html

* good questions –
* put your end notes on a sep. page – + format them correctly.