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The Draw of the Dead

“There’s us and the dead. We survive this by pulling together, not apart.” This is one of the most famous quotes by the character Rick Grimes of AMC’s television series *The Walking Dead*. This show about surviving the zombie apocalypse is exciting, emotional, and addicting. It is one of the reasons for the recent widespread popularity of zombies on the small and big screens. Zombie movies like *World War Z* are just as action-packed and can leave people on the edge of their seats. Although *The Walking Dead* and *World War Z* are both about a zombie apocalypse, *The Walking Dead*’s survival plot leads to a more emotionally engaging story.

When *The Walking Dead*’s apocalypse first started, the walkers (zombies) seemed to move at a pretty fast pace. However, in this show, the longer the person is dead, the slower he or she moves. Even though they are slow, the walkers can be sneaky. If one is not paying attention, getting bitten by a zombie is a high possibility. When individuals are bitten, they have several hours before they “turn.” Rick Grimes, the leader of the core group of characters on *The Walking Dead*, awoke from a coma at the beginning of the apocalypse with no knowledge of what was happening in the world. Alone and with little help or resources, he fought walkers to find his wife and son. After finding his family, his wife passed away while giving birth to a baby they conceived shortly after they were reunited. The only blood relatives Rick has left are his son Carl and daughter Judith. However, he has created a new family with his group of survivors. Rick and the group have gone through a lot: They have battled a farm of walkers; gone to war against the

Governor's people, a city of survivors fighting for everything they have; and demolished Terminus, the city of crazy cannibals who kidnapped Rick's group to eat them. The show started out focusing on killing walkers and evolved into a survival story: "Fight the dead, fear the living" is the motto the characters live by to survive *The Walking Dead's* apocalypse.

Unlike *The Walking Dead*, *World War Z* is an action-packed zombie movie about finding a cure to save mankind. When people are bitten in the world of *World War Z*, they start to have seizures, their fingers lock up, and the virus spreads to the brain, turning them into a zombie usually within twelve seconds and no longer than ten minutes. These zombies move so fast that they outrun most living humans. They bash their own heads into windows of cars to get to people so they can eat them. The main character, Gerry Lane, a former United Nations investigator, is sent out to travel all over the world in hopes of finding a cure. Gerry was with his family when the outbreak took place. He was able to keep them safe with the government while he left on his adventures. His first stop was in Jerusalem to interview a Mossad agent about the outbreak. While he was there, he escaped a battle involving thousands of zombies. He then survived a plane crash from Jerusalem to the World Health Organization. When he reached the World Health Organization, he was ultimately placed in a situation where he had no choice: He had to risk injecting himself with a chemical combining a meningitis strain with components of smallpox and H1N1. This injection was a temporary success, a masking agent making the injected invisible to the zombies. Gerry's final words in the movie lead one to wonder if there will be a sequel to *World War Z*: "This isn't the end. Not even close. We still don't know how it started. If you can fight, fight. Be prepared for anything. Our war has just begun."

The Walking Dead and *World War Z* are both very enjoyable zombie apocalypse stories that promise more entertainment to come. The differences between the two are what make them

so interesting. Like *The Walking Dead*, *World War Z* is action-packed from start to finish.

However, Gerry finding the cure somewhat brings the story to an end. On the other hand, *The Walking Dead* could continue for some time because no cure is known. This gives the writers more to work with, making for a longer and more interesting series. The viewer finds himself or herself more invested emotionally in the long-term possibilities of the television series over the movie.