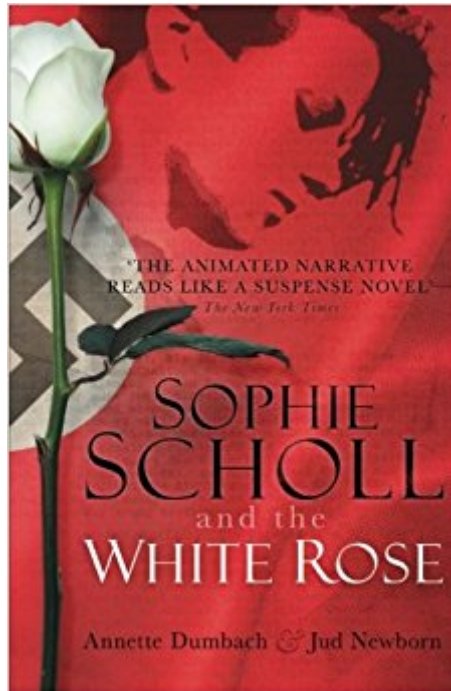




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# **Sophie Scholl And The White Rose**



## Synopsis

In the spring and summer of 1942, five young German students and one professor at the University of Munich crossed the threshold of toleration to enter the realms of resistance, danger and death. Protesting in the name of principles Hitler thought he had killed forever, Sophie Scholl and other members of the White Rose realized that the 'Germanization' Hitler sought to enforce was cruel and inhuman, and that they could not be content to remain silent in its midst. From its inception to its end, the captivating story of Sophie Scholl and the White Rose is an uplifting and enlightening account of German resistance to the Third Reich. With detailed chronicles of Scholl's arrest and trial before Hitler's Hanging Judge, Roland Freisler, as well as appendices containing all of the leaflets the White Rose wrote and circulated exhorting Germans to stand up and fight back, this volume is an invaluable addition to World War II literature and a fascinating window into human resilience in the face of dictatorship.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

"Superbly written... Essential for public and academic history collections" -- Library Journal (starred review)"The animated narrative reads like a suspense novel." -- The New York

Times" "This is a story that commands our attention." -- Newsweek

International" "Heart-wrenching and inspiring." -- San Francisco Chronicle" "Inspiring...and could not be more timely. This is a book worth reading anytime, anywhere." -- Studs Terkel (Pulitzer Prize

Winner)" "Could change your life forever." -- Dayton Daily News" "Unusually powerful and

compelling.... Among the indispensable literature of modern political culture. -- Das Parlament (Official Publication, German Bundestag)"The book, chapter by chapter, builds an incontestable argument for the power and possibilities of action over passive acceptance and apathy." -- UK Jewish Chronicle

Full story of the Oscar nominated (2006) and award-winning German film Sophie Scholl: Die letzten Tage (2005) and the forthcoming major US motion picture, The White Rose (2006) --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

"Brave and God-fearing Resisted evil", aren't those words you would want spoken of you when you pass on from this life to eternity? I found them in a Youtube video I love by Moshe G. That in sum tells what this clandestine German youth group did; their actions set the Nazi leadership on edge, hallelujah. So prophetic these words of Sophie Scholl's older brother spoken on the day of his trial February 22, 1943 which would be realized at Nuremberg a few years later. The honorable President of the Nazi court could not help but squeal and shriek and scream at such testimony coming from the mouths of Hans and his friends of the White Rose group who managed to get 6 of 7 tracts printed and distributed among the population. These tracts' effects were hard to measure but those few Germans who received them recalled how like a lightning bolt's strike, their hands trembled with shock and relief that someone was doing something and were able to speak their minds. Hans and Alex Schmorell whose Russian mother died in his infancy and the other members of the White Rose Group were sent to the Russian front and served as medics behind the lines. Oh my goodness I thought, the worst place in the world to be. Alex being fluent in Russian befriended the peasantry and the White Rose group spent their days singing and dancing in peasant huts before the fighting subsided and their medical ministrations began. So they made the most of a terribly bad situation. Alex witnessed at trial that, "I could not shoot a Russian, having romanticized about his Russian mother and told Russian folk tales by his Russian nannies, this particular testimony enraged the President of the Court. Alex like Dietrich Bonhoeffer had an opportunity to escape and almost made it without detection to Switzerland but returned to Munich when he learned of Hans and Sophie's arrest. He was an integral member of the group. Hans and Sophie Scholl somehow managed to organize and evade detection by the Nazis for many years. Their group of people was composed of students and one professor of the University of Munich; they were students of medicine and philosophy all in their early twenties when they were executed, except for Professor Huber. They used their pooled allowances from family members to purchase a rudimentary printing

press which they hid and once their tracts were printed each member of the group would take a suitcase full of letters and take the train to various locations within Germany and so went the circulation. They all vowed to each other, if one was caught that they would not let go the names of the other members of the group. It was Professor Huber and Willi Graf's 6th and last distributed letter which was released from the cargo holds of the British RAF by the thousands flying over war torn Germany in the last years of the war. "Our people are deeply shaken by the fall of our men at Stalingrad. Three hundred and thirty thousand German men were senselessly and irresponsibly driven to their deaths by the brilliant strategy of our World War I Corporal. Fuhrer, we thank you!" The German commander Von Paulus surrendered to Stalin and left a quarter of a million Germans, the population of an entire small American city today, stranded at Stalingrad in the winter of 1943 left to be imprisoned and executed in a fiercely cold Russian winter. Many Germans were upset with their leadership following this debacle, even as early as 1943, but few were able to speak out so effectively and it became even more difficult as time went on. "There is only one slogan for us: fight against the Party! Get out of all Party organizations, which are used to keep our mouths shut and hold us in political bondage! Get out of the lecture halls run by SS corporals and Party sychophants!...Freedom and honor! For ten long years Hitler and his comrades have squeezed, debased and twisted those beautiful German words...casting the highest values of a nation before swine." It was this letter, strewn from the balconies of the University of Munich by Hans and Sophie Scholl that got them arrested in February 1943. Before the war began, The Scholl's own father had been briefly imprisoned and released for speaking out against the nazis but managed to secretly have radio broadcasts of the BBC played in their house, Like so many other German youth, Hans initially joined the Hitler Youth group long before the war and enjoyed the camaraderie, singing and hiking in the German woodlands, but later became disenchanted and silently, carefully teased himself out of the network. Their father was a local dignitary of some sort and so had some connections. This story is important in many respects in that it chronicles the difficulties ordinary Germans had to face in a true police state. It became dangerous to voice one's views in public and even in private, semi-closed circles; everyone was being monitored under nazi rule. As time went on, and nothing was done to thwart nazi injustice, it became even harder and harder for resistance groups to thrive and exist. These individuals, like the Bonhoeffers and Scholls were quickly silenced by being imprisoned, subjected to sham trials and executed. I have purchased another book by the Scholl's older sister Inge and will read it, but was put off by the introduction which slammed President Reagan's policies toward Russia in the 80's. I see everything right with a peace through strength policy and so set that one aside, bad tasted in my mouth and read this one first. This book

contains all seven published tracts and notes of their trials and a radio broadcast transcript in the appendices. I close with the opening statement of Thomas Mann's radio broadcast of June 27, 1943 with which I opened this review: "The idea that it is impossible to distinguish between the German Volk and Nazism—that to be German and National Socialist are one and the same thing—is heard at times in the Allied countries, and put forward with some passion. But this idea is untenable...too many facts testify to the contrary...Good, splendid young people! You shall not have died in vain; you shall not be forgotten." "Despite everything, your spirit lives on!"—Hans Liepelt, chemistry student and distributor of the White Rose leaflets who, also was executed.

Sophie Scholl, along with her German soldier brother Hans, were part of a small group of young Germans who were non-violently opposing Hitler's militarism at the height of WWII. They were caught passing out anti-war leaflets in Munich at the height of the war. The next day, they were tried, convicted, and executed - all in the same day! Execution was by guillotine. Every time I read the story of their execution, I remember a story told me by a friend, a fellow Vietnam veteran who was standing beside his buddy in their position during an enemy rocket attack. A rocket came toward them. Just before ducking, Kenny looked over at his buddy, who was still standing, but without his head. It had been replaced by twin crimson streams spurting skyward from his severed carotid arteries. I remember that story every time I read about Sophie Scholl and her brother Hans and their friends. We should not know stories like that. / I recommend Annette Dumbach's book enthusiastically.

Sophie Scholl and the White Rose was a very interesting read. It tells the story of who the Anti-Nazi group called the White Rose came to be and how it was destroyed by the Gestapo. We get the backgrounds of its members and learn how their life experiences prepared them for the roles they would play in their passive resistance organization. The only disappointment was when the writers reached the time of the interrogation and trial, there was very little detail given other than the interrogation of Sophie Scholl lasted 17 hours and during the trial the Judge yelled a lot. All six leaflets are presented and some other documents are also in the book. If you read this book you should order the movie "Sophie Scholl the final days" I liked the book over all, but wished for more detail after the arrest.

I teach German and I incorporate the story of the White Rose into my curriculum. I have read Inge Scholl's book, the McDonough book, and seen both films (The White Rose, 1982) and Sophie

Scholl: The Final Days. This is, in my opinion, the best of the books and complements the films by adding a lot of new information that I didn't know before. I especially liked the attention paid to the other members of the group after Hans and Sophie were caught. Everything I have read and seen puts all the emphasis on Hans and Sophie, with Sophie receiving the most attention due to the fact that she was the youngest member and the only woman. The other's contributions and fates tend to be more glossed over. This book is the only source I have found that goes into detail about the others, which I enjoyed and found very helpful and which, quite frankly is owed to them. I highly recommend this book.

Have been wanting to read this for a long time, so glad I finally did. Not an easy subject, though. These were kids, blooming into adulthood when they were forced by their own morality to risk their lives for something they believed in. Of course, the ending is tragic, but their heroism is epic--though perhaps a bit reckless. I hope their spirit finds a place in today's world, in spite of the expense, because the world needs strong moral ethics and people who can stand up. We need the whistle-blowers, the town criers, the insurgents who cannot be "conformed" to an unjust system.

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