

***Resistance Women* by Jennifer Chiaverini**
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Who are the women of RESISTANCE WOMEN?

Mildred Fish Harnack (1902-1943): A native of Milwaukee, Wisconsin, Mildred was a warm, intelligent, thoughtful woman who hoped to become an author and professor of American literature. She married a fellow University of Wisconsin scholar, a German economics graduate student named Arvid Harnack, and in 1929, the couple settled in his homeland. While pursuing her doctorate, Mildred worked as a teacher, author, and translator, but her promising future was thwarted by her adopted country's willful embrace of fascism. Mildred, Arvid, and a group of trusted friends and allies forged a resistance network the Gestapo called the Rote Kapelle, or Red Orchestra. Mildred Harnack was the only American woman to be executed at the explicit order of Adolf Hitler.

Greta Lorke Kuckoff (1902-1981): A native of Frankfurt an der Oder, Greta met Mildred and Arvid while studying economics at the University of Wisconsin, an academic achievement that belied her working-class origins. Juggling motherhood and crucial work for the resistance, Greta also assisted Jewish friends struggling beneath oppressive Aryan Laws and helped translate Adolf Hitler's manifesto *Mein Kampf* into English in order to warn the people of Great Britain and the United States of his malicious, deadly ambitions.

Sara Weitz (1912-2006): One of Mildred's brightest students at the University of Berlin, Sara was a young German Jew who found her path to her degree—and her romance with her handsome, pragmatic Aryan boyfriend—increasingly untenable as Hitler relentlessly seized control of the government. Sara is a composite character inspired by Rote Kapelle members Liane Berkowitz, the nineteen-year-old daughter of a Russian Jewish symphony conductor and a famous singing teacher; and the Jewish art students Katja Casella and Lisa Gervai-Egler, who, passing for Aryan, worked as couriers for the resistance and hid fugitive Jews in their studio.

Martha Dodd (1908-1990): The vivacious, impulsive, and flirtatious daughter of the American ambassador, Martha arrived in Berlin full of praise for the “noble, vigorous, youthful” National Socialist movement, but her admiration turned to horror after she witnessed Nazi atrocities firsthand. An aspiring writer and former literary editor of the *Chicago Tribune*, she used her influence within the American embassy—and the Reich hierarchy—to help imperiled Jews flee Germany.

Libertas Schulze-Boysen (1913-1942): Harro's aristocratic wife, Libertas, was the vivacious, stunningly beautiful granddaughter of a Prussian prince. Though she had been educated at the finest Swiss finishing schools and enjoyed wealth and privilege, she worked as a press agent in Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer's Berlin office until it was shut down by the Ministry of Propaganda. Afterward, she found work as a scriptwriter and press agent in the ministry's Deutsche Kulturfilm-Zentrale, where she created a secret archive of film, photos, and accounts of Nazi atrocities—evidence to be used at the war crimes trials she hoped will follow an Allied victory and the end of the war.

And the men of RESISTANCE WOMEN too...

Arvid Harnack (1901-1942): The scion of a prominent German intellectual family, Arvid was a brilliant economist and lawyer who by the mid 1930s had risen to a high-ranking position in the Reich Ministry of Economics. Although he despised Hitler and rejected fascism, he joined the Nazi Party as a cover for his clandestine efforts to warn officials in the United States and Soviet Union about Hitler's secret preparations for war.

Adam Kuckhoff (1887-1943): Greta's husband, the renowned author and dramaturge Adam Kuckhoff, considered his novels and plays to be acts of resistance, sharpening his audience's political awareness and entreating for social justice. With his wife's assistance and in collaboration with other members of the circle, he wrote, published, and distributed subversive pamphlets and newsletters, an offense so threatening to the Reich that it was punishable by death. His ties to the Berlin arts world as well as the communist underground helped him strengthen and extend the reach of the Rote Kapelle.

William Dodd (1869-1940): A man of great integrity and unimpeachable ethics, Dodd, a professor of history at the University of Chicago, accepted the appointment as ambassador to Germany when President Roosevelt declared that he needed "an American liberal in Germany as a standing example." Increasingly dismayed and outraged as he observed the Reich's disregard for the rule of law, blatant violations of human rights, and covert rebuilding of the German military in defiance of international treaties, Dodd warned the White House and State Department of the rising threat to world peace, to little avail.

Natan Weitz (1906-1942): Another fictional character inspired by historical figures, Natan, Sara's elder brother, was forced from his job as a reporter and newspaper editor when the Editors Law of 1933 banned "non-Aryans" from working in journalism. Undaunted, he adopted a pseudonym, found a sympathetic editor, and continued to work as an investigative reporter. He was determined to expose the truth of Nazi injustices despite censorship from the Ministry of Propaganda—and the grim fate that awaited him if he were exposed.

Harro Schulze-Boysen (1909-1942): A Luftwaffe officer serving in the intelligence division of Göring's Air Ministry, Harro shared leadership of the Rote Kapelle with Arvid Harnack, with whom he made most of the group's strategic decisions. Tall, vigorous, and handsome, fluent in five languages, and descended from a celebrated military family, Harro had access to invaluable military intelligence, but his daring and ambition were seen as reckless by some members of the group, who worried that his imprudent actions might expose the entire network.