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The Plot to Kill Hitler: Dietrich Bonhoeffer: Pastor, Spy, Unlikely Hero

Rachel Wadham

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Book Review

Title: The Plot to Kill Hitler: Dietrich Bonhoeffer: Pastor, Spy, Unlikely Hero

Author: Patricia McCormick

Reviewer: Rachel Wadham

Publisher: Balzer and Bray

Publication Year: 2016

ISBN: 9780062411082

Number of Pages: 192

Interest Level: Intermediate, Young Adult

Rating: Outstanding

Review



Dietrich Bonhoeffer, a pastor and staunch pacifist, faces dark times when his beloved country is thrust into war. A devotee of Gandhi, Bonhoeffer believes that peaceful means can end destruction, but as the atrocities are revealed the only logical path is violence. With their path chosen, Bonhoeffer and his associates conspire to get information about what is happening in Germany out to the world while developing plans to assassinate Hitler. It soon becomes clear that sharing the evidence of hate is having little impact and when several assassination attempts go awry, allowing the enemy to flush them out, Bonhoeffer and his cohorts realize that it is likely they will give their lives for their cause.

McCormick, author of the hard-hitting *Sold and Never Fall Down*, offers an intense biography of a simple man who acted on his beliefs. The idea that being a hero does not mean success but can come in the form of someone who just takes action is a powerful overarching theme of this biography. On the surface it also addresses ethical questions of war and when violence may be necessary that will certainly provide fodder for deeper conversation and contemplation. Organized chronologically with additional information on the timeline and brief historical asides, Bonhoeffer's story is well contextualized in ways that bring the time and place to life. Peppared with only selected photographs, the text itself is so engaging that readers will be able to easily visualize Bonhoeffer's life and the deadly dilemmas he faced.

*Contains violence and sensitivities of war and the Holocaust.