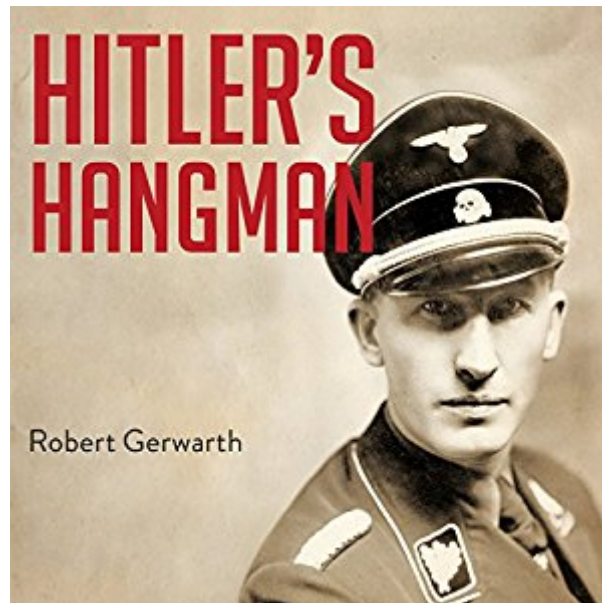




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Hitler's Hangman: The Life Of Heydrich



Synopsis

Reinhard Heydrich is widely recognized as one of the great iconic villains of the 20th century, an appalling figure even within the context of the Nazi leadership. Chief of the Nazi Criminal Police, the SS Security Service, and the Gestapo, ruthless overlord of Nazi-occupied Bohemia and Moravia, and leading planner of the "Final Solution," Heydrich played a central role in Hitler's Germany. He shouldered a major share of responsibility for some of the worst Nazi atrocities, and up to his assassination in Prague in 1942, he was widely seen as one of the most dangerous men in Nazi Germany. Yet Heydrich has received remarkably modest attention in the extensive literature of the Third Reich. Robert Gerwarth weaves together little-known stories of Heydrich's private life with his deeds as head of the Nazi Reich Security Main Office. Fully exploring Heydrich's progression from a privileged middle-class youth to a rapacious mass murderer, Gerwarth sheds new light on the complexity of Heydrich's adult character, his motivations, the incremental steps that led to unimaginable atrocities, and the consequences of his murderous efforts toward recreating the entire ethnic makeup of Europe.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

I recently visited Berlin for a weekend and took a historical walking tour with a fantastic guide. During the course of the walk the guide made a reference to the Wannsee conference and Reinhard Heydrich. This tour made me realise how little I knew about the German motives for the horror of the second world war. So I decide I would read a little about it. So first I read about Himmler and his

brothers, which was a fascinating incite into the radicalisation of the German people and the growth of the the Nazi party. Then I discovered this book. The depth knowledge contained in this book is astounding. It is an intricately researched and incredibly detailed account of the life of Heydrich and more importantly the career of Heydrich in the Nazi party and the SS. The author details the gradual radicalisation of the Nazi racial policies and the motives for the atrocities committed in the name of the Reich and the German people. Without taking any particular slant or passing any judgement the author describes Heydrich's development of the Nazi terror apparatus and his developing puritanical pursuit of racial purity before his eventual assassination. This is a brilliant book and should be compulsory reading for every student of history. It is well written and for a book so heavy with historical detail very easy to read. 10 out of 10. If I have one complaint it would be that the title of Hitlers Hangman does not fully encompass the impact the this one individual had on the lives of some many people across Europe and while it was his nickname, Heydrich, as you will find, out was so much more than that.

The author clearly spent a lot of time researching the book as its quite detailed and seems to contain information about Heydrich's family dynamics that I'd not previously heard nor read. It's also one that keeps you fairly well engaged, though there are more than a few times it was hard to keep pushing through as the subject matter is sickening and the killing goes on and on and on. What can you say about a book that details the life of a guy who committed mass murder on a massive scale? Perhaps that's why, even though I'm a WW2 buff and look forward to reading biographies of all that we're involved from those at the top to those in the trenches, I cant give it 5 stars. I can't say I "loved" a book about Reinhard Heydrich.

I picked up this book after reading the biographies on Hitler, Goering, Himmler & Goebbels and fortunately for their biographers, there is far more information available than there is on Reinhard Heydrich. However, Gerwarth does an excellent job of putting together as much research as possible and turning it into a fascinating read into the life and death of Reinhard Heydrich. If you're familiar with William Shirer's 'Rise & Fall of The Third Reich', you'll find this book a great addition to your library. The book is chilling at times, but that is to be expected when reading anything about Hitler's regime.

Really good bio of " The Man With The Iron Heart", Reinhard Heydrich. If you want to see into the dark mind and soul of an SS Officer, this is the book for you. Heinrich Himmler's right hand man got

exactly what he deserved, but not soon enough to stop the Holocaust!

Currently working my way through the biographies of the leaders of the Nazi party and found the bio on Heydrich to be well-written and replete with additional pieces of information that helped explain, or put a different light on, certain aspects of the terror the Nazis wreaked in Europe and Russia. For instance, the intent to "re-settle" the Jews and other non-Aryan people to the far east of their conquered territories, only to be stifled by the Russian gains (and corresponding German losses), resulting in a frenetic change of plan and accelerating the Holocaust in Eastern Europe as a result of these losses. His capabilities as a near concert-level violinist were also very revealing. Highly recommended.

Having read extensively about the Second World War I thought I was reasonably informed. This book however brought a whole new perspective, namely that of the new social "order" envisaged by the twisted minds of Hitler, Himmler, Heydrich and the extent to which they were actually putting this into practice. Totally chilling. All I can say is thank goodness Hitler decided to invade Russia which was the beginning of the end for him and the Nazis. Were it not for this Europe would have been a vastly different place and this book provides that insight in a compelling and most disturbing way. Confirms one's suspicion that man's propensity to do evil knows no bounds and this book on Heydrich provides convincing evidence in this regard. Read it and be warned. Another book I would equally recommend is "In the Garden of the Beast" which brings a unique insight into life in Berlin in the mid 1930's from the perspective of the American Ambassador and his daughter. Narrative non-fiction I believe the genre is called. Excellent.

I had a hard time putting this book down. The book forced me to face the reality of such a person even existing. His focus on extremism is what I found fascinating, total dedication to Hitler's goals. I was forced to consider how much worse conditions would have been if he had not been assassinated. If history repeats itself I shudder to think what awaits us in the future.

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