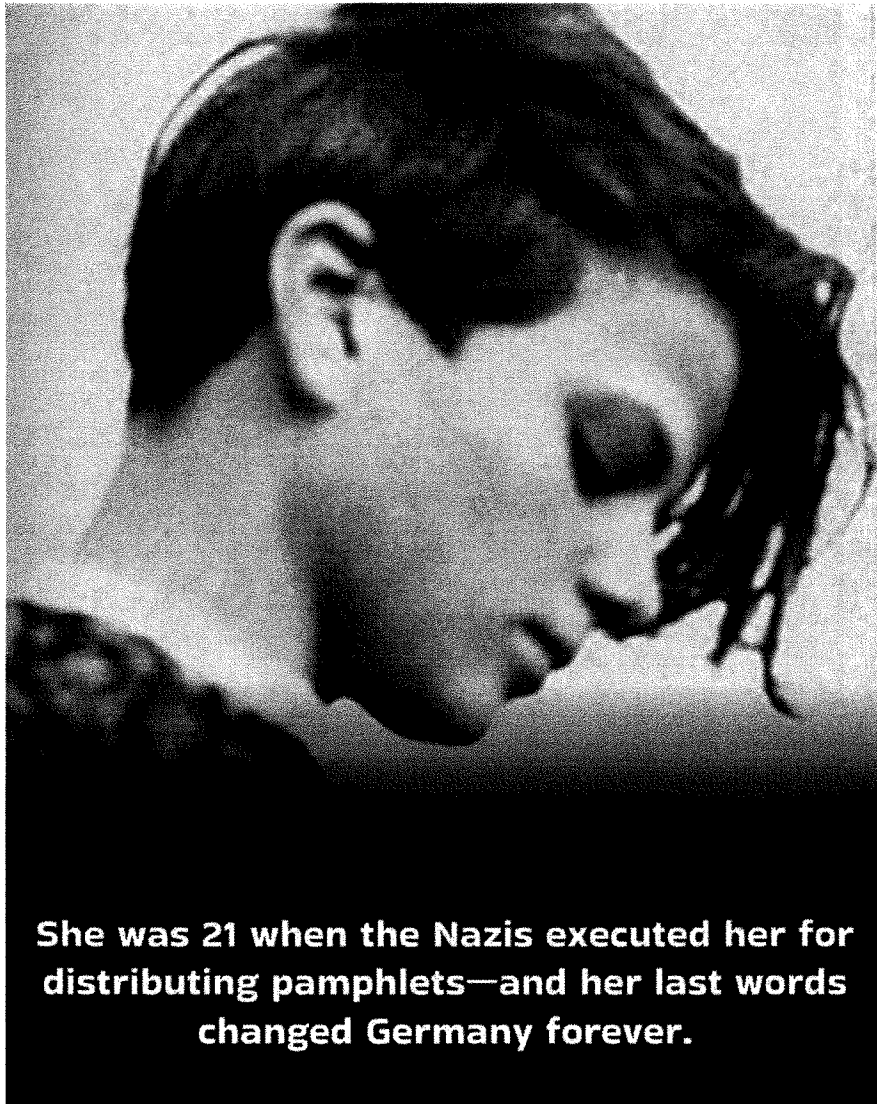


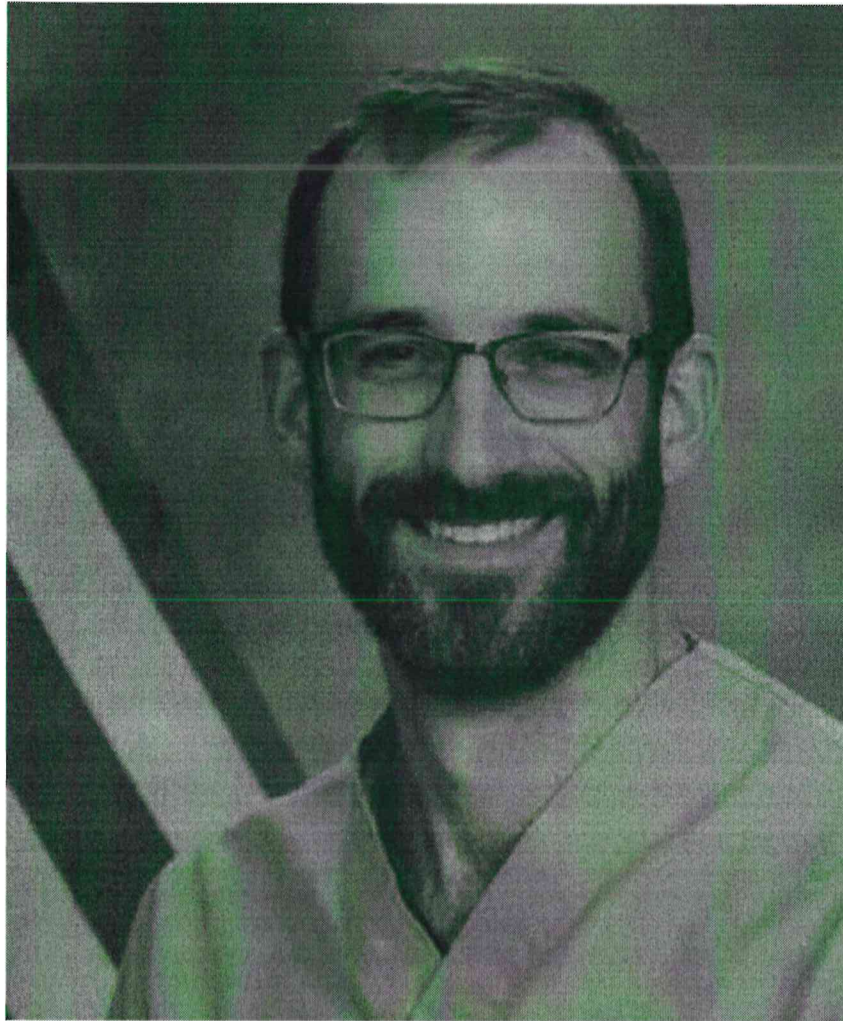
D6 - Lisa Casillas-Siemsen - PC



**She was 21 when the Nazis executed her for
distributing pamphlets—and her last words
changed Germany forever.**

In honor of Sophie Scholl (1921-1943)

who refused to be silent,
who believed conscience mattered more than survival, and
whose last words still echo as a call to courage for everyone who faces the
choice between safety and righteousness.



Alex Pretti, VA Nurse
Disarmed, then shot in the back by ICE
while lying facedown in the street when
exercising his 1st Amendment rights.

She was 21 when the Nazis executed her for distributing pamphlets—and her last words changed Germany forever.

Her name was Sophie Scholl. And on February 22, 1943, she walked calmly to a guillotine rather than betray what she believed was right.

Sophie's story didn't start with heroism. It started with a mistake.

Born in 1921 in Germany, Sophie was twelve years old when she joined the League of German Girls—the female branch of Hitler Youth. So did most of her classmates. Her older brother Hans joined the boys' division.

Their father was horrified. He was an anti-Nazi politician who could see what his children couldn't yet understand. He told them: "All I want is for you to walk straight and free through life, even when it's hard."

Sophie and Hans argued with him. They believed the propaganda. They trusted their teachers, their youth group leaders, the posters plastered across every German city.

Then, slowly, the cracks began to show.

In 1937, Hans and several of his friends were arrested for being part of a banned youth scouting group. Sophie watched her brother—a loyal Hitler Youth member—get dragged away by the Gestapo for something as innocent as going camping.

She started questioning everything.

She read a sermon by Bishop Clemens August Graf von Galen, who openly condemned Nazi euthanasia programs. His words about conscience, about the individual's responsibility to resist evil, struck something deep inside her.

By the time Sophie enrolled at the University of Munich in 1942 to study biology and philosophy, she wasn't just disillusioned. She was determined.

Hans was already there, studying medicine. He'd gathered a small group of friends who met secretly to discuss resistance, philosophy, and what it meant to live under dictatorship.

Then their friend Fritz returned from the Eastern Front.

The stories he told them were horrifying. Mass executions of Jews. Soviet prisoners shot and dumped into mass graves. The industrial scale of Nazi atrocities happening while ordinary Germans went about their lives, pretending not to know.

The group decided they couldn't stay silent anymore.

They called themselves the White Rose—a symbol of purity standing against evil. They began writing and distributing pamphlets across Munich and other German cities.

"We will not be silent," they wrote. "We are your bad conscience. The White Rose will not leave you in peace!"

Their pamphlets were sophisticated, intellectual arguments against the Nazi regime. They quoted philosophers and theologians. They appealed to Germans' better nature, their conscience, their humanity.

Sophie was crucial to the operation. She purchased an illegal typewriter. She helped write the pamphlets. And because she was a woman, she could distribute them more safely—the SS were less likely to randomly stop and search a young female university student.

They distributed five pamphlets successfully.

Then came the sixth.

On February 18, 1943, Sophie and Hans brought a suitcase full of pamphlets to the University of Munich. They placed them carefully around the building—on windowsills, in hallways, anywhere students would find them.

They'd almost finished when Sophie made a split-second decision. There were leftover pamphlets in the suitcase. She climbed to the top floor atrium and flung them over the railing, watching them flutter down like snow across the courtyard below.

A janitor saw her do it.

He called the Gestapo immediately.

Within minutes, Sophie and Hans were arrested. The Gestapo interrogator, Robert Mohr, initially believed Sophie was innocent—just a girl caught up in her brother's activities.

Then Hans confessed. And Sophie immediately took full responsibility too, trying to protect the other members of their group.

"I would do it all again," she told Mohr. "Because I'm not wrong. You are."

Four days later, on February 22, 1943, Sophie, Hans, and their friend Christoph Probst stood before Judge Roland Freisler in the People's Court—a kangaroo court designed to rubber-stamp death sentences.

They weren't allowed to defend themselves. They weren't given lawyers. The trial was a formality. Sophie managed one statement: "Somebody, after all, had to make a start. What we wrote and said is also believed by many others. They just don't dare express themselves as we did."

All three were found guilty of treason and sentenced to death by guillotine.

The execution was scheduled for 5 PM that same day.

Sophie had hours to live. She was 21 years old.

Prison officials later said they were stunned by her composure. She didn't break down. She didn't beg. She walked to the guillotine calmly, head held high.

Her last words were these:

"How can we expect righteousness to prevail when there is hardly anyone willing to give himself up individually to a righteous cause? Such a fine, sunny day, and I have to go, but what does my death matter, if through us, thousands of people are awakened and stirred to action?"

At 5 PM on February 22, 1943, Sophie Scholl was executed. Hans followed. Then Christoph. They killed a 21-year-old girl for distributing pamphlets.

But here's what the Nazis didn't count on.

A copy of that sixth pamphlet—the one Sophie threw over the railing—was smuggled out of Germany and reached the Allied forces. They retitled it "The Manifesto of the Students of Munich." And then they dropped millions of copies across Germany.

The words Sophie died for rained down on German cities like the pamphlets she'd scattered in that university courtyard. Her voice, which the Nazis had tried to silence, was amplified a million times over.

After the war, Germany recognized the White Rose members as heroes. Schools were named after them. Their story was taught to every German student.

In 2003, a German television station held a poll: Who were the greatest Germans of all time? Sophie and Hans Scholl ranked fourth overall.

But among Germans under forty, they ranked first.

Higher than Einstein. Higher than Goethe. Higher than Beethoven.

The girl the Nazis executed at 21 became the person young Germans most admired.

Think about Sophie's courage. She wasn't a soldier. She didn't have weapons or training. She was a university student with a typewriter and a conscience.

She knew what would happen if she got caught. The Nazis had already executed other resisters.

The risks were absolutely clear.

She did it anyway.

Because she understood something fundamental: silence is complicity. When evil is happening and you say nothing, you become part of it.

Sophie chose to speak. She chose to act. She chose to risk everything rather than live safely while atrocities happened around her.

She was 21 years old. The age when most people are just figuring out their lives, she was giving hers up for her principles.

Her last words haunt me: "What does my death matter, if through us, thousands of people are awakened and stirred to action?"

She knew she was going to die. And her concern wasn't for herself—it was whether her death would mean something. Whether it would wake people up.

It did.

Sophie Scholl's death did exactly what she hoped it would. Her words spread across Germany. Her courage inspired others to resist. Her name became synonymous with moral courage in the face of evil.

Today, when Germans think about resistance to the Nazis, they don't just think about Allied soldiers or famous generals. They think about a 21-year-old girl with a typewriter who refused to be silent. She proved that you don't need power to resist tyranny. You don't need an army or weapons or special training.

You just need courage. And a refusal to let evil happen without speaking against it.

Sophie Scholl walked to a guillotine on a sunny day in February, head held high, because she knew her conscience mattered more than her life.

She was 21 years old. She had her whole life ahead of her.

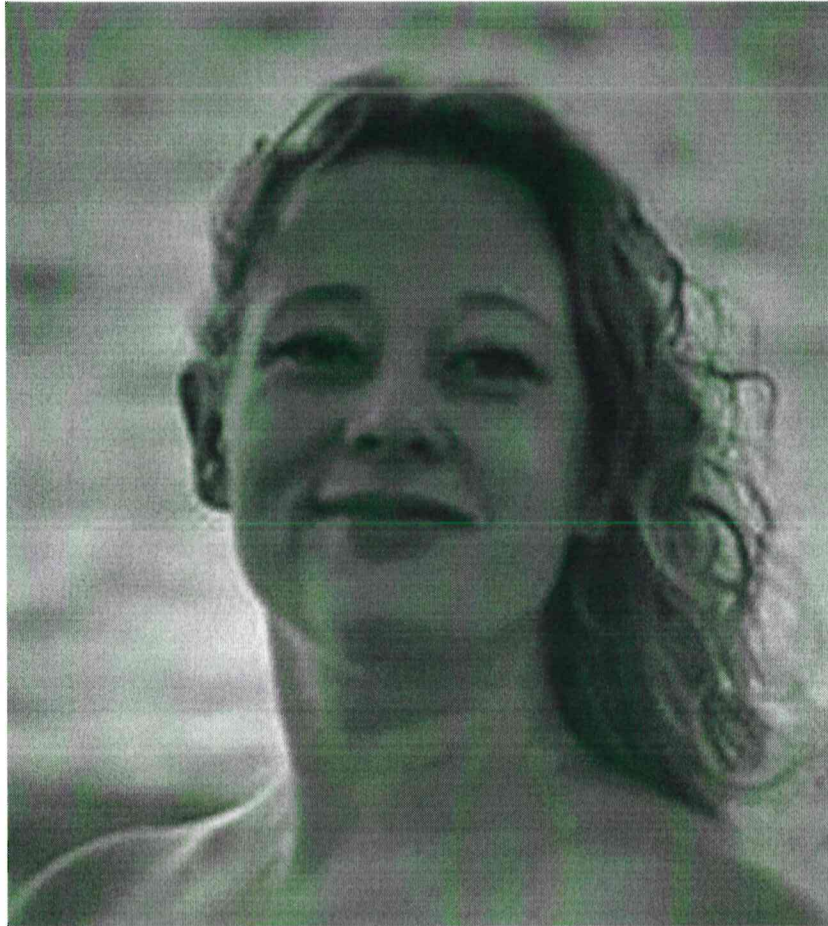
And she gave it up rather than stay silent while people were murdered.

That's not just heroism. That's a level of moral courage most of us will never be tested on.

But her story asks us a question: If we were tested the way Sophie was, would we have her courage?

Would we risk everything for what's right?

Or would we stay silent and safe?



Renee Good

**Shot in the head through her open car
window by ICE while exercising her 1st
Amendment rights.**