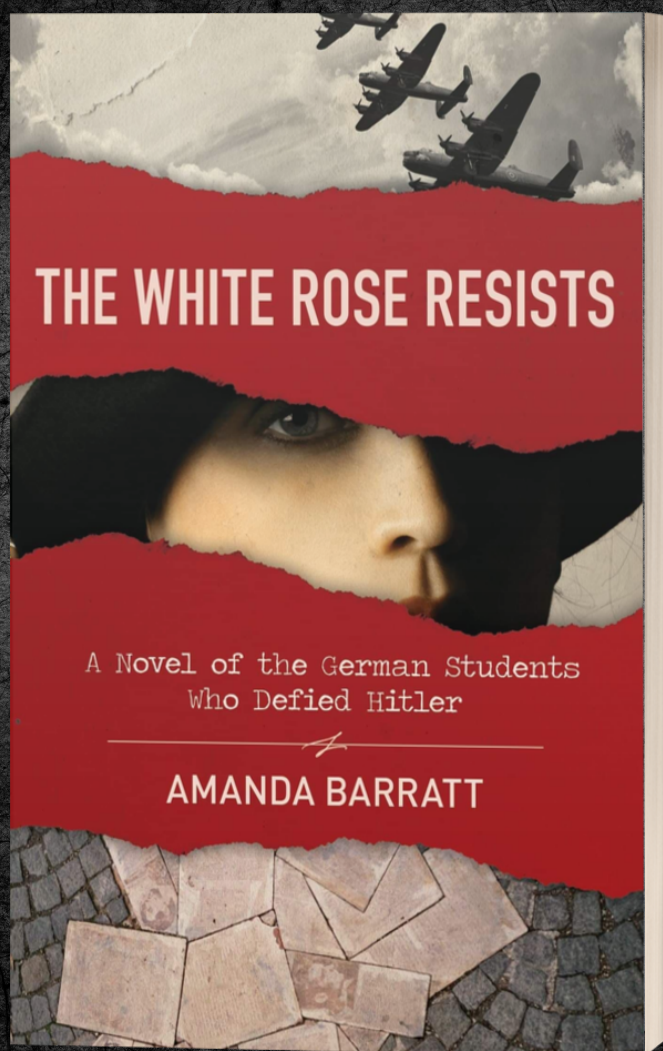


"A rare and powerful story that rips your heart apart at the same time it inspires you to live for something greater. A beautiful masterpiece of a novel."

—Heidi Chiavaroli,  
Carol Award-winning author of *Freedom's Ring* and *The Tea Chest*



# THE WHITE ROSE RESISTS BOOK CLUB KIT

Dear Readers,

I am so thrilled to invite you to share the journey of *The White Rose Resists*! Thank you for choosing this novel to discuss with your book group. *The White Rose Resists: A Novel of the German Students Who Defied Hitler* is based on the extraordinary true story of a group of university students who stepped from the ranks of the silently complicit to form an underground resistance movement.

Ordinary courage is often the most profound, and when I first discovered the story of these men and women, this piece of hidden history refused to let go of my heart. In 1942 and 1943, Hans and Sophie Scholl, Alexander Schmorell, Willi Graf, and others wrote and distributed thousands of leaflets calling on their fellow citizens to rise up against the Nazi government. Their desperate audacity in the face of incredible risk stands as a challenge to us today. For me, digging deep into the heart of this story led to pondering questions about courage, faith, and the life-shaping choices we make for our beliefs.

It's my hope that this book club kit will enrich your discussion time and guide you in going deeper into *The White Rose Resists*. It includes discussion questions, a recipe featured in the book, and a FAQ section for you to learn more about me and the process of writing the novel.

Though I may not be able to travel to your book club in person, I'd love to join you through Skype or Zoom! If you would like to schedule a Q&A with me as part of your bookish get-together, contact me through the form on my website [www.amandabarratt.net](http://www.amandabarratt.net) or via my Facebook page [www.facebook.com/amandabarrattauthor](http://www.facebook.com/amandabarrattauthor).

Happy Reading!

Amanda

# THE WHITE ROSE RESISTS DISCUSSION GUIDE

\*Please note these discussion questions contain spoilers.

1- Were you familiar with the White Rose before reading this novel? If so, did reading the book change the way you view Sophie Scholl and the story of the White Rose? If not, what did you learn that surprised you the most?

2- How did the inclusion of fictional characters Annalise Brandt and Kirk Hoffmann add to the story?

3- When Sophie discovers her brother's plan to produce leaflets, she initially grapples with fear of the consequences if he is discovered. In Chapter 6, she thinks, "How easy it is to trumpet truth, scorn the blinded. But when action presents itself, what do I do? Cringe away. Oh, perhaps not outwardly, but my inward feebleness longs for nothing more than a safe and simple life." Do you think these are true statements? What role did fear play in the choices people made during WWII? How does fear play a role in the choices we make today?

4- Kirk and Annalise both experience a point when they decide to turn against the Nazi regime. Kirk when he witnesses Kristallnacht and Annalise when Herbert tells her about the mass executions in Poland. Do you think the majority of Germans were aware of the crimes committed by the Nazis before and during the war? Why do you think so few undertook resistance?

5- In what ways does Annalise grow and change because of her friendship with Sophie?

6- Sophie tells Annalise, "Every voice matters. If they arise as one, change can happen. But first, one has to rise. There has to be a beginning." How can we use our voices as a force for change today?

7- Quotes from the leaflets written by the White Rose are woven throughout the novel. What did you think of their style and form? Was there a quote that stood out to you?

8- Talk about the relationship between Sophie and Fritz. Why do you think Sophie doubted the depth of her feelings for her fiancé at times? Did you relate to the complexities of their relationship?

9- Why do you think Hans decided to scatter leaflets in the Lichthof during the day? Was his decision bold or simply foolish? What about Sophie's decision to push the stack of leaflets off the balustrade?

10- Why do you think Inspector Mohr offered Sophie a chance to save herself? What did you think about her choice to face the consequences alongside her brother? Would it have been wrong of her to accept Mohr's offer? Contrast Hans and Sophie's determination to accept full responsibility with Christl's plea for clemency at the trial. Does his desire to preserve his life because of his wife and children make him any less of a hero?

11- Do you think the deaths of the leading members of the White Rose expanded the reach of their message more than if they had survived?

12- When Friedrich Voigt is grappling with whether or not to risk his life to attempt to save Kirk, he asks, "Which is worse, I wonder. Indifference or hate?" How would you answer this question?

13- How do the three main characters (Kirk, Annalise, and Sophie) grow in their faith? How did faith influence their decisions and enable them to face difficult circumstances?

14- What do you imagine happened to Kirk and Annalise after the war? How do you think the White Rose affected the rest of their lives?

15- What impact do you think the White Rose had on Germany during the war, considering that those who were part of the group were executed as traitors? What legacy does the White Rose offer us today?

16- Finally, what scene in the novel impacted you the most? Did any make you cry? What was your main takeaway from the book? What will you remember most about *The White Rose Resists*?

# Gesundheitskuchen

## Good Health Cake



***Kirk and Annalise would most certainly approve of preparing this delicious German dessert to accompany your discussion of The White Rose Resists.***

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### **Ingredients**

***1 stick butter or margarine***

***1/2 cup shortening***

***1 3/4 cups sugar***

***4 eggs***

***2 1/2 cups sifted flour combined with 2 teaspoons baking powder***

***1 cup milk***

***1 lemon, grated and juiced***

***Confectioners' sugar***

### **Directions**

***Preheat oven to 350°. Grease and flour a Bundt cake pan. Cream butter, shortening, and sugar. One at a time, add eggs. Cream well.***

***Add lemon zest and juice. Incorporate half of the flour mixture, add milk, then add the remainder of the flour mixture. Mix gently, just enough to incorporate all ingredients. Pour into the cake pan and bake for 55 to 60 minutes. Once cake is cooled, sprinkle the top with confectioners' sugar for an elegant touch.***

## FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

I hope you enjoy this behind-the-scenes peek into *The White Rose Resists*! I recommend reading the answers after you've finished the novel, as there are spoilers.

### **What was the inspiration behind *The White Rose Resists*?**

I still remember the first time I heard the name Sophie Scholl. I was reading a book about youth in Nazi Germany as research for my novel, *My Dearest Dietrich*, and came across the story of the White Rose. I remember sitting there, transfixed—experiencing an almost visceral reaction as I read how Sophie said goodbye to her parents shortly before her execution, how her mother told her to “Remember Jesus,” and how this twenty-one-year-old young woman went to her death with such courage. Sophie's story mesmerized me, and I began to delve deeper into her life. In doing so, I discovered the other members of the White Rose—Alexander Schmorell with his crooked grin and fierce desire to live for truth, Christoph Probst, who cherished his little family while his heart broke at the horror unfolding in his country, Sophie's brother, Hans, sometimes reckless but always committed to resistance. The more I explored the stories of these extraordinary, yet ordinary, individuals, the more deeply rooted my desire became to share their incredible legacy.

### **What was your favorite part of writing *The White Rose Resists*?**

Getting to know the characters. When I wrote *My Dearest Dietrich*, I had to peel back the layers of the legend of Dietrich Bonhoeffer to reach his human essence. With *The White Rose Resists*, I connected with the cast of characters instantly. Reading their letters and diaries, listening to interviews by family and friends, and discovering delightful little snippets from their lives that never made it into the book, but gave me a wonderful portrait of their personalities, was an amazing experience. Coming to know these students as three-dimensional individuals with flaws and complexities made me want to tell their story even more. It also cemented a truth that struck me deeply while writing the novel—anyone can stand up and speak out in the face of injustice. It's less about the reach we have and more about the passion in our hearts. The lives of the members of the White Rose beautifully illustrate this.

### **What was the hardest part of writing *The White Rose Resists*?**

Balancing historical authenticity with a compelling fictional narrative. There remain some ambiguities regarding the White Rose, and historians and biographers have differing opinions, so it was a matter of researching to the best of my ability, then making a choice and trusting it.

After detailed historical research, I had to make peace with the fact that I was writing a novel, not a treatise or biography. Though I strive for authenticity, there will always be fictional gaps and liberties. I hope the novel spurs readers to research the White Rose further, and to that end, I've included a suggested reading list in the Author's Note.

**What scene was your favorite and which was the hardest to write?**

I love so many of the scenes, it's impossible to pick a favorite, but one of my favorites is the scene where Hans, Alex, and Kirk unpack their first duplicating machine. At that moment, the path their resistance will lead them on is still far in the future, yet the tenacity and conviction that will enable them to walk it is fully on display. And I love their camaraderie and friendship, which was always at the heart of the group. The most difficult scene from a research standpoint was actually one that was cut during edits—a scene where Kirk was in Russia assisting a surgeon and the patient died during the operation. I spent hours researching the intricacies of German field hospitals during WWII...and then it all ended up on the cutting room floor! The hardest scenes emotionally were those leading up to Sophie's execution. As I wrote the novel, I became deeply invested in her journey, and as I wrote her intense emotions, I experienced them right along with her. I also felt the weight of responsibility to portray the scenes accurately from a historical perspective, as well as honor her sacrifice, not as a martyr, but as a very human woman.

**What do you hope readers take away from the novel?**

I hope readers walk away with a greater awareness of our deep responsibility to stand for truth in a world often buckling under pressure to compromise. Though we may not live in Nazi Germany, anti-Semitism, racism, evil, and injustice continue to flourish. The students of the White Rose spoke out at a time when to proclaim truth meant to risk imprisonment and execution. As I wrote the novel, the willingness of these men and women to sacrifice everything for their convictions, including their lives, challenged and moved me. I hope the novel will encourage readers to look within themselves and ask uncomfortable questions, then look at the world around them and take action.



ECPA best-selling author Amanda Barratt fell in love with writing in grade school when she wrote her first story—a spin-off of *Jane Eyre*. Now, Amanda writes romantic, historical fiction, penning stories of beauty and brokenness set against the backdrop of bygone eras not so very different from our own. She's the author of over a dozen novels and novellas, including *The White Rose Resists: A Novel of the German Students Who Defied Hitler* and *My Dearest Dietrich: A Novel of Dietrich Bonhoeffer's Lost Love*. Two of her novellas have been finalists in the FHL Reader's Choice Awards.

Amanda lives in the woods of Michigan with her family, where she can be found reading way too many books, plotting her next novel, and jotting down imaginary travel itineraries for her dream vacation to Europe.

Connect with her on Facebook and visit her online at [amandabarratt.net](http://amandabarratt.net).