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"Nazi Hunters" put the bad guys where they belong (DVD)

[Bob Etier](#), Documentary Examiner

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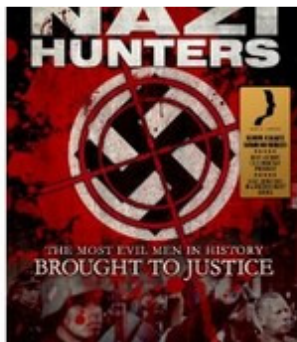
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Explore the hunt and capture of Germany's worst war criminals

Credits: National Geographic/History



The death penalty is one of those hot topics—when introduced into conversation it brings forth the passions of both those for and against it. Those against it argue that it is barbaric, that it is eye-for-an-eye justice, it is not a deterrent, and that sometimes innocent people are murdered by the state for crimes they did not commit. But what if the person sentenced to death *is* guilty—not beyond a reasonable doubt, but beyond all doubt—and his crimes were extreme examples of barbarism?

Perhaps there's a little savagery in all of us. After years of documentaries about Nazi war crimes, there is some satisfaction and, yes, even enjoyment, in watching documentaries about the successful hunt and capture of the perpetrators. Released on DVD October 25, 2011, *Nazi Hunters* details eight missions to capture high-ranking, especially brutal Nazis who managed to escape their past deeds and go on to live somewhat normal (and sometimes very successful) lives. Unpunished for their participation in the

Video: [Nazi Hunters \(DVD\)](#)

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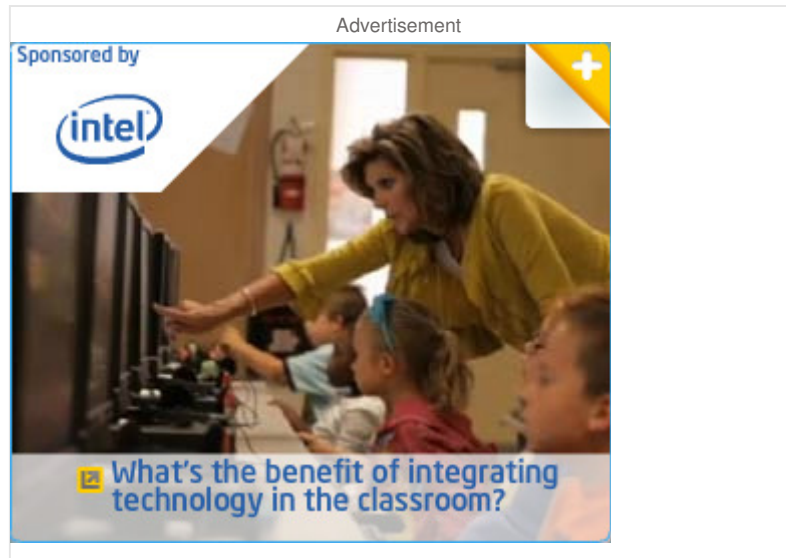
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slaughter of millions of people, and the commission of tens of millions of crimes, they were rewarded with new identities and governments that protected them.



Nazi Hunters is a [National Geographic/History](#) documentary series that features archival films and photographs, and interviews with the people who made history—former Mossad members, Beate and Serge Klarsfeld—as well as holocaust survivors, the children of survivors, historians, investigators, and journalists. It includes reenactments of hunt activities and events, and an overview of atrocities committed by the hunted.

Who were the hunted? Adolph Eichmann, Klaus Barbie, Joseph Mengele, Herbert Cukurs, Erich Priebke, Reinhard Kopps, Kurt Lischka, Paul Touvier, Gustave Wagner, and Franz Strangl. It's difficult to imagine people protesting outside a courthouse or prison, advocating that these monsters' lives should be spared (except in the case of Mengele who died from a stroke/drowning so did not end up in court).

Several episodes bring up sad reminders of the role of the Roman Catholic Church in helping Nazis escape Europe, and the arrogance of Nazis who didn't believe they did anything wrong or used the "just following orders" excuse. In the episode about Erich Priebke, the Nazi hunters are an ABC news team who were looking for Reinhard Kopps and ended

up with a much bigger fish. It's more about the hunt for a really juicy story (which just happened to be about Nazis living the good life in South America), but the participants convey as much excitement as former Mossad agents who spent years and risked their lives bringing their targets to justice.

No punishment inflicted could equal the crimes of these men; does that mean that they should not have been punished? Does the fact that some were captured as many as fifty years after their crimes somehow negate the necessity of retribution? Watch *Nazi Hunters* and answer these questions yourself; you may discover the savage within.

Read more: <http://technorati.com/entertainment/article/nazi-hunters-vs-the-death-penalty/#ixzz1bv21BKf>

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By **Bob Etier**

Documentary Examiner

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