

James Carroll's
**CONSTANTINE'S
SWORD**

A film by
Oren Jacoby

95 Minutes, Color & B/W, 2007, 35mm & Digital

PRODUCED BY:

:::STORYVILLE FILMS:::~

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For theatrical inquiries please contact First Run Features

630 Ninth Ave. #1213, New York, NY 10036

(212) 243-0600 Fax (212) 989-7649

Website: www.firstrunfeatures.com / Email: info@firstrunfeatures.com

PRESS CONTACT:

Susan Norget or Eric Hynes

Susan Norget Film Promotion

212-431-0090

susan@norget.com or eric@norget.com

www.constantinessword.com

Why are intolerance, violence and war so deeply ingrained in religion?

Why did the Cross become a rallying symbol for persecution?

How does one man who loves the Church confront its history of crusade and conquest?

CONSTANTINE'S SWORD, the latest film by Oscar-nominated documentarian Oren Jacoby, is an astonishing exploration of the dark side of Christianity, following acclaimed author and former priest James Carroll on a journey of remembrance and reckoning.

Carroll, a National Book Award winner and columnist for the Boston Globe, is a practicing Catholic whose search for the truth leads him to confront persecution and violence in the name of God – today and in the Church's past. He discovers a terrible legacy that reverberates across the centuries – from the Emperor Constantine's vision of the cross as a sword and symbol of power, to the rise of genocidal antisemitism, to modern-day wars and conflicts sparked by religious extremism.

At its heart, **CONSTANTINE'S SWORD** is a detective story, as Carroll journeys both into his own past – where he comes to terms with his father's role as a three-star General in the U.S. Air Force preparing for nuclear war – and into the wider world, where he uncovers evidence of church-sanctioned violence against Jews, Muslims, and others. Visiting the U.S. Air Force Academy, he and Jacoby expose how some evangelical Christians are proselytizing inside our country's armed forces and reveal the dangerous consequences of religious influence on American foreign policy.

Warning of what happens when military power and religious fervor are joined, **CONSTANTINE'S SWORD** asks the timely question: Is the fanaticism that threatens the world today fueled by our own deeply held beliefs?

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“Constantine's Sword is endlessly fascinating – both because of its passion and its commitment to reason. There are moments in the film that are simply breath-taking.”

-Errol Morris

“Documentary at its best. The untold story...so important to tell and told so well.”

-Albert Maysles

Director's Statement

We're living in a world at war. And we're living at a time when religion is being used on both sides as an excuse to go to war.



When I met James Carroll and heard his concerns about the coming together of religion and power in our country (set against the backdrop of America's rush to war) and the long history he had begun to trace of religious hatred and violence, I knew I had to work with him to get this story out.

Our movie poses the question: Where did anyone get the idea that it was all right to kill people in the name of God?

When we started to make this film we were shocked to discover how many Americans don't seem concerned about a possible breakdown between the separation of Church and State. In their eyes, America is a Christian nation, and they have somehow revised history to convince themselves that this was a principle of our Founding Fathers. They don't seem at all concerned about the message this sends to the people in the Middle East, where we're entrenched in what's already one of the longest wars ever fought by our country.

Whenever the U.S. is involved in an armed conflict and the lives of American men and women are on the line, it's controversial to question the reasons that we're in that war or in what direction our country is headed.

But for many Americans our film asks an even more troubling and controversial question: is there something in the DNA of Christianity – the majority religion in our country – that demonizes “the other” and is inclined toward violence? This has become an even more controversial point, since that was exactly the suggestion Pope Benedict XVI recently made about Islam. He called it a religion that embraced violence and rejected reason.



Just as he was saying these words, we were listening to Evangelical Christian preachers in Colorado calling young Americans to war and urging them to reject rational arguments and years of serious scientific research in physics, astronomy and biology that might conflict with the Church's views about the origin of the earth, evolution and human sexuality.



At the U. S. Air Force Academy in Colorado Springs we discovered that the mission to proselytize and convert is so widespread in the US military, that it could be hard to convince the world that this is not our intent, that we are not a Crusading Christian nation, seeking converts.

I think many Americans are uncomfortable with the idea of religion and power coming together. This is true of people of faith as well as others. They will be glad for the opportunity offered by our film to get a clearer idea of

where this impulse comes from and will have a better understanding for the terrible price that has been paid for it, especially by Jews.

One of the great pleasures directing *Constantine's Sword* was working with the extraordinary actors Liev Schreiber, Natasha Richardson, Phillip Bosco and Eli Wallach. Each portrays a real character in a voice over performance, and each of them delivers a key emotional turning point in the film.

- Oren Jacoby

Biographies

OREN JACOBY (*Director / Producer / Co-writer*) is an Oscar® nominated filmmaker who has written, directed, and produced award-winning films for more than two decades. He has made documentaries for the BBC, ABC, HBO, PBS, National Geographic, VH-1, and NHK (Japan).



His last film, “Sister Rose’s Passion”, was winner of Best Documentary Short at the 2004 Tribeca Film Festival and was nominated for a 2005 Academy Award®.

Recent credits include: “Downtown Stories” commissioned by Nokia and the Tribeca Film Festival, featuring Rosie Perez and Ed Burns; “The Topdog Diaries” with the 2002 Pulitzer prize-winning playwright, Suzan-Lori Parks, and performances by Don Cheadle and Jeffrey Wright; “The Shakespeare Sessions” starring Kevin Kline, Cynthia Nixon, Liev Schreiber, and Charles S. Dutton; “The Beatles Revolution”, for ABC and VH-1, “Swinging with Duke”, starring Wynton Marsalis and ”Sam Shepard: Stalking Himself”; “Master Thief” on the ‘art heist of the century’; and “Success” for the Emmy award-winning PBS series, The Irish in America.

Jacoby also wrote, produced and directed “The Return Ticket”, adapted from a short story by Anton Chekhov; “Ghosts of the Bayou”; “Idols of the Game”, featuring Michael Jordan; “Benny Goodman: Adventures in the Kingdom of Swing” for American Masters and “The Second Russian Revolution”, a behind the scenes investigation of the collapse of the USSR, called ‘the best BBC series of the decade’ by the London Independent.

He is currently producing “The Italian Secretary”, based on the novel by Caleb Carr and “The Lost Hero” (working title) and just completed “The Last Girl on Earth” a romantic-comedy short commissioned by the Tribeca Film Festival based on a screenplay by Richard Dresser; see it online @ <http://surround.verizon.net/presents/tff/>

In addition to being honored by the Academy and the Tribeca Film Festival, he has won CINE Golden Eagles, the Royal Television Society (UK) journalism award, and the MacArthur Golden Owl award, as well as grants from the American Film Institute and ITVS (The Independent Television Service).

Jacoby has directed plays at Theater for the New City, the Williamstown Theater Festival, Ensemble Studio Theater, and regional theaters, including new works by Richard Dresser, Quincy Long, and Franz Xavier Kroetz. He collaborated with Adrian Hall on an adaptation of Robert Penn Warren’s “All the King’s Men”, with songs by Randy Newman, at the Dallas Theater Center. His stage adaptation of Ralph Ellison’s Invisible Man was performed in a reading at the Tribeca Theater Festival, in a co-

production with the Classical Theater of Harlem. He attended Brown University, RISD and the Directing Program of the Yale School of Drama and is a native New Yorker.

JAMES CARROLL (*Writer / Producer*) was born in Chicago in 1943, and raised in Washington where his father, an Air Force general, served as the Director of the Defense Intelligence Agency. Carroll attended Georgetown University before entering the seminary to train for the Catholic priesthood. He received BA and MA degrees from St. Paul's College, the Paulist Fathers' seminary in Washington, and was ordained to the Catholic priesthood in 1969. Carroll served as Catholic Chaplain at Boston University from 1969 to 1974 and then left the priesthood to become a writer.



In 1974 Carroll was Playwright-in-Residence at the Berkshire Theater Festival in Stockbridge, MA. In 1976 he published his first novel, *Madonna Red*, which was translated into seven languages. Since then he has published nine additional novels, including the New York Times bestsellers *Mortal Friends* (1978), *Family Trade* (1982), and *Prince of Peace* (1984). His novels *The City Below* (1994) and *Secret Father* (2003) were named Notable Books of the Year by the New York Times. Carroll's essays and articles have appeared in *The New Yorker*, *Daedalus*, and other publications. His op-ed page column has run weekly in the *Boston Globe* since 1992.

Carroll's memoir, *An American Requiem: God, My Father, and the War that Came Between Us*, received the 1996 National Book Award in nonfiction and other awards. His book *Constantine's Sword: The Church and the Jews: A History*, published in 2001, was a New York Times bestseller and was honored as one of the Best Books of 2001 by the Los Angeles Times, the Christian Science Monitor, and others. It was named a Notable Book of the Year by the New York Times, and won the Melcher Book Award, the James Parks Morton Interfaith Award, and National Jewish Book Award in History. *Constantine's Sword* is the basis of a 2007 documentary film directed by Oren Jacoby. Responding to the Catholic sex abuse crisis in 2002, Carroll published *Toward A New Catholic Church: The Promise of Reform*. In 2004 he published *Crusade: Chronicles of an Unjust War*, adapted from his *Boston Globe* columns since 9/11. In 2006, he published *House of War: The Pentagon and the Disastrous Rise of American Power*, a history of the Pentagon, which the Chicago Tribune called "the first great non-fiction book of the new millennium." Among its honors is the PEN-Galbraith award for distinguished non-fiction published in 2005 or 2006. An HBO dramatic series based on *House of War* is in preparation.

Carroll is a regular participant in on-going Jewish-Christian-Muslim encounters at the Shalom Hartman Institute in Jerusalem. Carroll is a member of the Council of PEN-New England, which he chaired for four years. He has been a Shorenstein Fellow at the

Kennedy School of Government at Harvard University and a Fellow at the Center for the Study of Values in Public Life at the Harvard Divinity School. He is a trustee of the Boston Public Library, and a member of the Dean's Council at the Harvard Divinity School. Carroll is an elected Fellow of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences, and a Distinguished Scholar-in-Residence at Suffolk University.

James Carroll lives in Boston with his wife, the novelist Alexandra Marshall. They have two grown children.

BOB RICHMAN (*Director of Photography*) started his career working with cinema verite pioneers Albert and David Maysles. He worked closely with them on many projects and eventually acted as director of photography on Maysles Films Inc. documentaries "Christo's Umbrellas" and "The Producers: A Musical Romp With Mel Brooks." His recent credits include, "My Architect: A Son's Journey," "Metallica: Some Kind Of Monster," "An Inconvenient Truth" and Series DP for "Iconoclasts: Season 2."

KATE HIRSON (*Editor*) began her film career with the pioneers of cinema verite, David and Albert Maysles, working on everything from their Beatles film, to their film on the artist Christo ("Running Fence"). She has a particular interest in documentaries about artists – whether they be painters ("14 Americans," "Directions of the 1970's"), dancers ("Dancing!"), classical musicians ("Playing For Real"), or film directors like Arthur Freed ("Musicals Great Musicals"), Busby Berkeley ("Going Through The Roof"), and Clint Eastwood ("Clint Eastwood: Out of the Shadows"). She recently received an Emmy Award for her work on "Judy Garland – All By Myself", and was an editor on the landmark PBS series "African American Lives."

JOEL GOODMAN (*Composer*) Acclaimed by The Hollywood Reporter as an "Indie Composer to Watch," Joel Goodman is a multi-talented, award-winning composer. His original composition credits include work on Oscar and Emmy Award winning films, including "To Be Alive!" (Academy Award Winner); "Sister Rose's Passion" (2005 Academy Award Nomination); "The Collector of Bedford Street" (2004 Academy Award Nomination) and "Children Underground" (2002 Academy Award Nomination) for such producers as HBO, Disney, GreenStreet Films, Good Machine, Anonymous Content, TriggerStreet Films, Double A Films, Maysles Films, PBS, Hybrid Films, Working Pictures and Cypress Films. He has also worked with an impressive array of distinguished directors and producers, including Wong Kar-wei, Kevin Spacey, Albert Maysles, Andrew Jarecki, John Penotti, Barbara Kopple, Susan Froemke, Stephen Ives and Fisher Stevens. Joel's original music for television has included "The Staircase" (ABC); "Brooklyn North Homicide" (Court TV); "Seabiscuit" (American Experience/PBS); and "Robert Capa: In Love and War (American Masters/PBS); as well as Emmy Award winning shows "Born Rich" (HBO) and "Reporting America At War (PBS).

MICHAEL SOLOMON (*Producer*) photographed and produced "How to Eat Your Watermelon in White Company (and Enjoy It)," an award-winning feature documentary about Melvin Van Peebles. He has produced shorts, commercials, music videos and industrial films, with directors Albert Watson and Spike Lee, among others. He has also produced music and film shows for Italian television (RAI, Canale 5, Studio Universal and Telepiu'). He is currently in pre-production on a narrative feature about climate change. Solomon was born in Brooklyn, NY, and graduated from the University of California, Santa Barbara.

BETSY WEST (*Producer*) is an award-winning producer and executive with more than twenty-five years experience in the network television and documentary film worlds. In addition to serving as producer for Constantine's Sword and other Storyville projects, she is Visiting Associate Professor at the Columbia University School of Journalism. She is also Executive Producer of Women 2.0, a documentary, book and internet project about the women's movement that is currently in development.

West began her career at ABC News, where she traveled the world as one of the original producers of Nightline and was part of the senior team that launched the magazine program PrimeTime Live in 1989. She was Executive Producer of the ABC documentary program Turning Point from 1994-1998. Her work at ABC earned her 18 Emmy Awards. Turning Point won two Alfred I. duPont-Columbia University Journalism Gold Baton Awards, an Overseas Press Club Award, and a Robert F. Kennedy Journalism Award. As Senior Vice President at CBS NEWS from 1998-2005, she oversaw 60 Minutes and 48 Hours, and was the executive in charge of 9/11, the 2-hour documentary that won a Peabody Award and the PrimeTime Emmy Award for Best Documentary in 2002.

West graduated Phi Beta Kappa from Brown University, where she is a Trustee Emerita and runs a Media Advisory Council. She earned a Master's degree from the Newhouse School of Communications at Syracuse University. She currently serves on the boards of the Worcester Foundation for Biomedical Research and The New Victory Theater in New York City and is a member of the Overseas Press Club.

ELGIN SMITH (*Supervising Producer*) is a Montana native who moved to New York City to pursue a filmmaking career. He joined Storyville Films in 2001, and has since filled a variety of positions in both Production and Post-Production. Most recently, he served as Supervising Producer and Additional Editor on the upcoming feature film release, "Constantine's Sword."

His prior Storyville credits include: Editor and Associate Producer on the Oscar-nominated short documentary, "Sister Rose's Passion"; Editor and Associate Producer on "Maestro"; and Associate Producer of "The Topdog Diaries" and "The Shakespeare Sessions," both shown nationally on PBS.

Prior to joining Storyville, he worked at the Emmy Award-winning series American Masters as Production Coordinator on "Novel Reflections on the American Dream," a pilot for the American Novel series, Production Associate on "Clint Eastwood: Out of the Shadows," and as Assistant Editor on "Joni Mitchell: Woman of Heart and Mind."

Elgin's film career began at the University of Montana, where he served as Producer, Editor, and Photographer on several pieces for Montana PBS, including "Anaconda: The Legacy," an award-winning documentary produced by the Student Documentary Unit at U of M.

CONSTANTINE'S SWORD CREDITS

Metropole Film Board
in association with Prologue Productions present:
a :: STORYVILLE FILMS:: production

Directed by
Oren Jacoby

Based on the book
Constantine's Sword
by James Carroll

Written by
James Carroll
and
Oren Jacoby

Edited by
Kate Hirson

Director of Photography
Bob Richman

Produced by
Oren Jacoby

Producers
James Carroll
Michael Solomon
Betsy West

Supervising Producer
Elgin Smith

Music by
Joel Goodman

Graphic Design by
Brian Oakes

Cast

Constantine.....Liev Schreiber
Gian Pietro Caraffa.....Phillip Bosco
Edith Stein.....Natasha Richardson
Piero Terracina.....Eli Wallach

Associate Producers
Charlotte Gladstone
Leslie Friedman

Field Producers
Rafaella Di Giulio – Rome
Julie Gautier-Holt – Colorado
Ivette Löcker – Germany
Alexandra Salomon – Rome

Archival Supervisor
Amy Schewel

Researcher
Katherine Hindley

Archival Licensing
Natalie Picoe

Sound Recordist
Edward L. O'Connor

Additional Sound
Peter J. Miller
Roger Phenix
Juan Rodriguez

Additional Editing
Elgin Smith

Additional Photography
Wolfgang Held
Oren Jacoby
Enrico Pergolini
Claudia Raschke-Robinson
Elgin Smith
Michael Solomon

Legal Counsel
Robert I. Freedman

Co-Producer for Prologue Prods.
Donald Cutler

A production of
:: STORYVILLE FILMS::
for
Prologue Productions and
Metropole Film Board

Executive Producers
James Carroll
and
Oren Jacoby

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and
Prologue Productions

FROM THE LOS ANGELES TIMES

Devout Catholic answers a call to challenge church

June 22, 2007

James Carroll, a former priest, uses his personal spiritual journey to drive 'Constantine's Sword.'

By Gina Piccalo, Times Staff Writer

Author James Carroll is an idiosyncratic Catholic, a former priest who still celebrates his faith yet rejects the very roots of its doctrine, viewing Christianity's promise of eternal life as "destructive" and the cross as a symbol of Roman Emperor Constantine's lust for power.

This unorthodox perspective drives "Constantine's Sword," a documentary premiering Sunday at the Los Angeles Film Festival about Carroll's personal discovery of anti-Semitism in the Catholic church and its influence in today's evangelical Christian movement.

The film, based on Carroll's 2001 book, uses his spiritual journey as a guide and his naivete as a cautionary tale, detailing the violence committed by the church over the centuries in Christ's name. In the end, Carroll warns ominously that the same brand of us-versus-them Christian dogma that dominates America today also led to the Crusades, the Spanish Inquisition and the Holocaust.

"If you think of religion as a great lake," Carroll says in the film, "it's a lake of gasoline and all it's going to take is someone to drop a match into it for a terrible conflagration . that's what the world of weapons of mass destruction means. And when you put religion into that context, as a source of hatred and violence, the worst catastrophe of all is possible. Every religious person has to be responsible for every way their religion encourages intolerance, suspicion, hate and envy of each other. We have some very clear reckoning to do."

Carroll's interest in turning his book into a documentary came shortly after the 2004 release of Mel Gibson's film "The Passion of the Christ," which was criticized for what some saw as its depiction of Jews as Christ killers. The film set box office records and demonstrated the enormous cultural influence of conservative Christians, convincing Carroll that he urgently needed to reach a broader audience with his research.

He sought out director Oren Jacoby just as Jacoby began filming "Sister Rose's Passion," a short documentary nominated last year for an Oscar, about a nun who helps remove anti-Semitism from Catholic teaching materials.

Jacoby said he was moved by Carroll's "special kind of intelligence and sensitivity."

"He was passionate," Jacoby said. " 'Tortured' is too strong a word, but it's close. He was someone who was in a real crisis because of his concerns about this religion he cares so deeply about. But more importantly, he was concerned about America and the line that was being crossed between church and state."

"Constantine's Sword" tries to link the errors of the past with the religious movements of today, moving fluidly from stories of the Crusades and clips of Hitler Youth rallies to scenes of Catholic youth cheering Pope Benedict XVI and ecstatic kids at evangelical Christian revivals. President Bush is heard in news footage describing the war on terrorism as a "crusade," a conflict of "good and evil," and saying, "we have received our rights from God. And we know God is not neutral."

In the film, Carroll demystifies the church without condescending to it, dispassionately recounting the terrible fate Jews have faced at the hands of Christians.

In person, however, Carroll is far more charged with activist spirit.

At a lecture last week at All Saints Episcopal Church in Pasadena, Carroll gripped the podium, blaming the "sadism of Christian piety" for glorifying violence and the doctrine of eternal life for keeping the poor and enslaved from resisting their situations.

"Even in its foundation," he told a rapt crowd, "the church was getting it wrong. That's why Christians go to church as much to be forgiven as to be fed."

In "Constantine's Sword," Carroll visits the U.S. Air Force Academy in Colorado Springs, Colo. There, he finds "The Passion of the Christ" movie posters in the cafeteria and students tell him that movie fliers featuring the blood-streaked face of Jesus lined the cafeteria trays of 4,000 cadets for several days.

A 2004 Yale University Divinity School study cited in the film found that academy chaplains urged nonevangelical Christians to convert or "burn in the fires of hell."

Jewish Air Force cadet Casey Weinstein tells Carroll that he's treated as an outsider, relentlessly hounded by peers to convert. In 2005, his father and academy alum, Mikey Weinstein, sued the Air Force for encouraging evangelical Christians to proselytize to cadets at the school. (The case never made it to trial.)

From there, Carroll revisits the origins of Christian anti-Semitism, traveling to Trier, Germany, Constantine's birthplace, where in the 11th century, Crusader mobs wiped out Jewish communities. Back then, the film states, when Jews begged the pope to protect them, he refused to help those who didn't convert.

In the 20th century, Carroll finds, Trier hosted a celebration of the agreement the pope signed with Adolf Hitler. In it, the pope promised to defend Jews who converted but to do nothing for those who didn't.

In Rome, Carroll meets the Limentanis, descendants of the hundreds of Jews who - by order of a 16th century pope - were rounded up, forced to relinquish their property and their rights and ordered to live in a four-square-mile ghetto that was locked each night and maintained as such for 300 years.

There, Carroll learned that during World War II, Roman Jews were again stripped of their rights, rounded up and killed. The pope remained silent.

The Limentanis survived because a priest claimed their young son as his student.

"I was totally blown away by these revelations in the last few years," said Carroll a day after his Pasadena lecture. "I never saw it. I never heard about it."

Carroll, 64, was born into a devout Irish Catholic family. His father was an FBI agent who helped establish the U.S. Air Force after World War II and as a three-star general in 1962 warned the Kennedy administration of Cuba's missiles.

Carroll and his family were often treated as dignitaries during their travels and once were granted a private audience with the pope. That meeting helped lead Carroll to the priesthood.

"The seminary gave me the ability to challenge some of the things I'd never questioned about my church and about America," Carroll said in the film.

As a priest from 1969 to 1974, Carroll protested the Vietnam War at the same time his father was defending it. He left the priesthood to write and over the years has published nearly two dozen books, novels and nonfiction. He's become a well-regarded op-ed columnist for the Boston Globe and his 1996 book about the rift with his father, "An American Requiem: God, My Father and the War That Came Between Us," won the National Book Award.

Last week, Carroll stopped in L.A. as part of a tour for the paperback edition of his 2006 book "House of War: The Pentagon and the Disastrous Rise of American Power," which traces the history of the Pentagon and his own experience with it.

"I love my country," he said. "But I'm fully attuned to the ways in which America is a danger to the world today. I'm a firm critic of a whole aspect of American life. [But] I think someone's love for an institution is directly proportioned to their readiness to criticism of it."

Carroll hopes that by sharing his troubling discoveries, he'll motivate Americans and Christians to think more critically of the institutions that dominate their lives and help generate reform. In "Constantine's Sword," as in much of his writing, Carroll struggles to understand the root of the world's violence in the hope that he might find the answer to peace.

"Human beings can never kill each other," he wrote in his June 18 column for the Boston Globe, "without killing God."