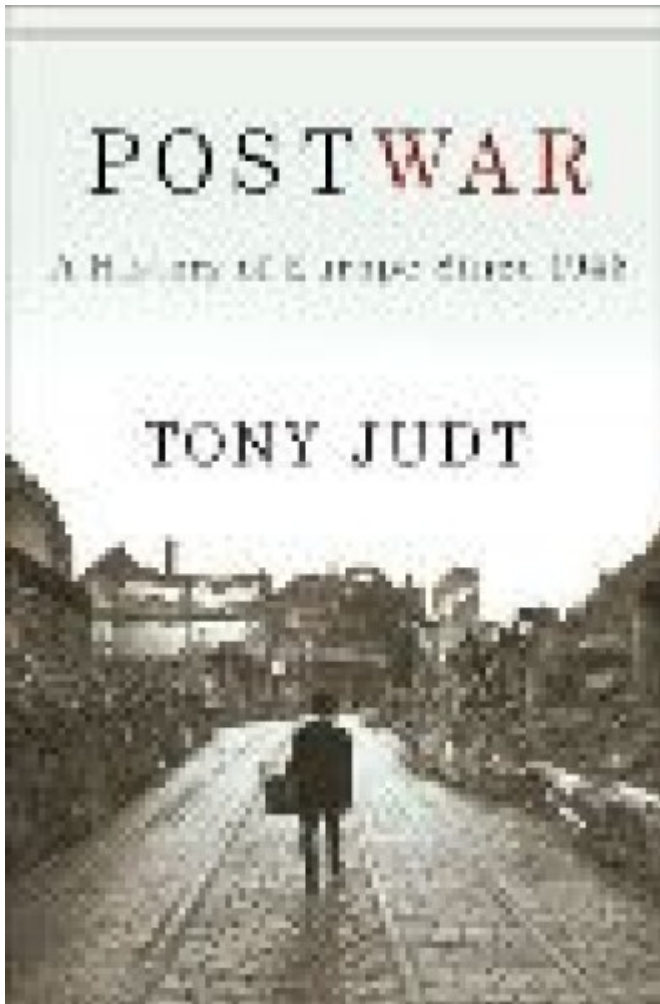


BookMarks

Books in the [March 7, 2006](#) issue

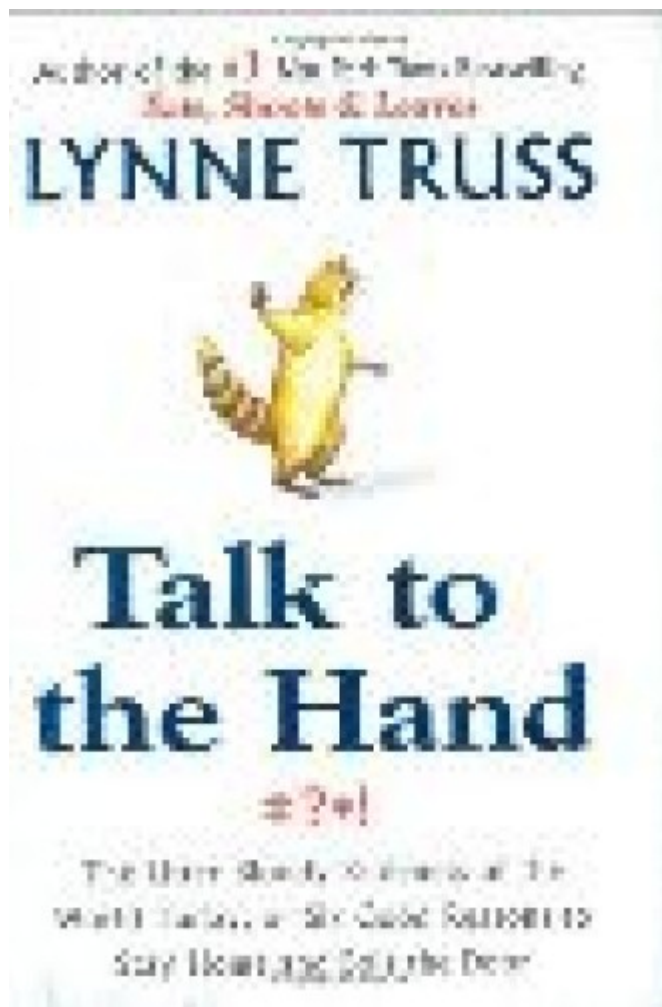
In Review



Postwar: A History of Europe Since 1945

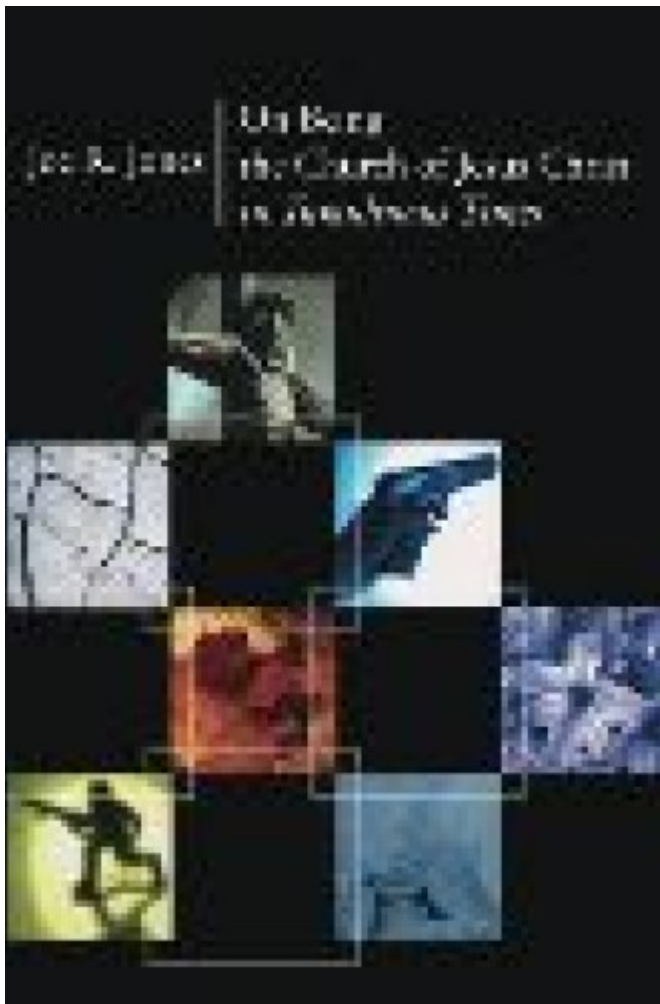
Tony Judt

Penguin



Talk to the Hand: The Utter Bloody Rudeness of the World Today, or Six Good Reasons to Stay Home and Bolt the Door

Lynne Truss
Gotham



On Being the Church of Jesus Christ in Tumultuous Times

Joe R. Jones
Cascade

At one time the postwar era (1945-1989) was considered the dawning of a new epoch. Now with the Berlin Wall down and the Soviet Union part of history, Judt treats the era as an interim period during which the unfinished business of World War II was dealt with. In telling the story of the postwar era and beyond, Judt covers Eastern and Western Europe, the histories of individual countries and Europe's love-hate relationship with the United States.

Truss is often dismissed as a harrumphing traditionalist—in reactions to her previous book about the rules of grammar and to this one about the rules of civil politeness. But there is something more profound at work here. Truss is making a nuanced critique (laced with terrific humor) of the effects of the technologies to which we are

addicted. Just as e-mail and text messaging undo good grammar and love for language, so cell phones and mass media undo respect and empathy for strangers in our immediate surroundings. Truss traces this growing rudeness to our tendency to prize privacy to the exclusion of societal good. Yet she ultimately sees hope in the fact that so many agree that the world is becoming increasingly rude.

According to Stanley Hauerwas, Jones, who recently retired from a career as dean and theology professor at Christian Theological Seminary in Indianapolis, is “the best unknown theologian in America.” This volume of essays, sermons and prayers should help to change that. It includes methodological reflections that draw heavily upon Kierkegaard and writings that convey Jones’s worry over the failure of his ecumenical efforts, as well as his hope that the church will confess Jesus as Lord even (or especially) in a time of war.