

HIST 349: Reading Guide – *The Corruption of Angels*

1. What is Pegg's argument? What did you think of the way that Pegg structures his book? Does it help with his argument or does it detract?
2. The word "inquisition" has some very negative connotations for the modern audience. How does Pegg deal with this issue? How successful is he? Do you now view the inquisition differently?
3. What kinds of problems did the inquisitors face in trying to root out heresy? How did they overcome these problems?
4. Several times Pegg talks about the "detective model" (p. 127, for example) used by the inquisitors? To what does this refer and how does Pegg use it?
5. Pegg notes that the inquisition in Saint-Sernin "functioned as a form of spiritual inoculation, if somewhat time delayed in a few cases, against the disease of heresy." (p. 129) What does he mean here? Do you think he is right?
6. Pegg notes that "simply through their questions, [the inquisitors] managed to transform, or to finally confirm, how thousands of men and women saw, felt, heard and understood landscape and light in their lives." p. 124. We might substitute "landscape and light" with numerous other things. Do you agree with this? Was the inquisition that powerful? Or is he reading too much in how inquisitors viewed gestures, nods, and words in passing?