

Gerard Koskovich
P.O. Box 14301
San Francisco, CA 94114-0301
USA

E-mail: DAlembert@aol.com

FROM ELDORADO TO THE THIRD REICH

The Life and Death of a Homosexual Culture

by

Gerard Koskovich

Revised July 2006 for publication in an Italian-language translation by Beatrix Rossi.

Published as "Dall'Eldorado al Terzo Reich: Vita e Morte di una Cultura Omosessuali," in Gerard Koskovich, Roberto Malini and Steed Gamero, Un Diverso Olocausto (Florence and Milan: Arcigay Firenze/Visions, 2007), pp. 9–54.

Copyright © 2006 Ray Gerard Koskovich; all rights reserved.

In the month of April 1945, Allied units advancing across Germany finally brought an end to the Nazi fantasy of a Thousand Year Reich. During those eventful weeks, the liberation of the concentration camps stirred the deepest feelings of revulsion even in hardened veterans of combat. For most of the Allied forces—soldiers from the United States, the United Kingdom, the Soviet Union and other nations—the camps provided the first full evidence of the massive apparatus of state terror at the heart of the Nazi regime which they had joined forces to fight.

A 21-year-old American soldier named Robert Fleischer was among the liberators of Dachau—the camp near Munich that had been established 12 years earlier as a prototype for the National Socialist system of political and social repression. Fleischer later recalled the experience in these words:

The roads were clogged with walking skeletons in those striped uniforms. They could hardly drag themselves along. I tried to talk to them, and they didn't know any English. All of a sudden, it dawned on me to ask, "*Du bist Juden?*"—"Are you Jewish?" A man nodded "*Ja,*" and I said, "Me too." [Another prisoner] came up to me... and he started kissing my hand. I was so upset, I said to myself, "How dare the world do this to two human beings? Who am I that he should kiss my hand because he's free?"¹

Fleischer had immediately sought out fellow Jews among the liberated, since the Nazi ideology of anti-Semitism had already been acknowledged and widely condemned outside Germany. But the young soldier had no way of knowing that he might look for another class of prisoners with whom he shared an affinity, a class that had been among the first singled out for internment at Dachau: prisoners who, like Fleischer himself, were homosexual.

Fleischer's testimony calls to mind the invisibility of the homosexual victims of the Nazi regime—a situation that was compounded by the exclusion of these victims from legal recognition and from historical memory in the decades following World War II. At the same time, his words remind us that the Jewish people were Hitler's primary target. If we wish to comprehend the ideology and the mechanisms of social repression deployed against homosexuals by the Nazi state, we must therefore look not only at the background and the specifics of that repression but also at its relationship to the regime's pursuit of anti-Semitic genocide.

Emergence of a Homosexual Minority in Germany (1830s-1920s)

The Nazis' campaign of antihomosexual persecution was not directed simply at isolated acts or individuals; rather, it targeted broad social and cultural phenomena for eradication. In the century before the Nazi period, homosexual men and women in Germany had come to be perceived as a contested cultural minority—a somewhat indistinct class grouped by affectional, sexual and social affinities; inhabiting specific urban territories; forming social networks; and pursuing collective cultural and political aims.²

Industrialization from the 1830s through the 1870s in Germany had produced an enormous expansion in urban centers linked into a national network by new intercity rail lines. The burgeoning populace of these cities possessed a mobility and heterogeneity that encouraged the emer-

gence of new social groupings. For instance, police records from the mid-19th century show urban points of transit and anonymous interaction—train stations, public parks, and so on—quickly developing as territories for men seeking sexual encounters with other men.

In the last decades of the 19th century, the clandestine, risky, and somewhat random interactions of this sort developed into an increasingly distinct homosexual subculture as the middle- and working-classes acquired a modicum of leisure time and developed commercial territories for extensive social interaction outside the home. For example, by the 1880s in the larger German cities, scattered cafés catering to a clientele of homosexual men were facilitating sexual contact and making enduring social networks possible.

The institutions of power in German society did not view this rearrangement of the terrain of sex and gender as benign. The legal system, for instance, sought to extend its regulation of male gender roles and sexual behavior by codifying homosexual activity and its attendant social expressions as criminal offenses. After the independent German states were unified in 1871, harsh Prussian laws against male homosexual behavior were imposed nationwide.³

By contrast, the law made no mention of sexual encounters between women—a measure not of greater freedom for lesbians, but of the extent to which women in general were controlled by exclusion from most sectors of the labor market and from the public territories of political and cultural power dominated by men. Women’s economic dependence on fathers or husbands and culturally enforced responsibilities for housekeeping, child-bearing and child-rearing served to limit lesbian sexual expression and to deflect the anxious gaze of lawmakers.

The medical establishment in Germany quickly moved to surpass the law in this area. By the 1870s, physicians were classifying both women and men who experienced homosexual desire as genetic degenerates or pathological personality types. Such assessments usually made distinctions between cases of supposedly in-born inversion and those where individuals were said to have acquired homosexual proclivities through libertine self-indulgence or as a consequence homosexual seduction.

Specialists in psychiatry—an emerging field led by German and Austrian physicians—published studies to elaborate these theories and to advance therapeutic intervention as a means of social control superior to criminal sanctions. The studies usually emphasized the social threat of cross-gender behavior and the putative danger of homosexual contagion to justify therapeutic intervention and social-hygiene countermeasures.⁴ These imperatives would be carried to their most repressive extreme under the Nazis.

From the 1880s into the Nazi era, German religious organizations similarly waged concerted “moral purity” campaigns against phenomena they regarded as evidence of urban vice and decadence. These campaigns targeted abortion, prostitution, sexually oriented publications and amusements, women working outside the home, homosexual relations—in short, the signs of changing gender and social structures characteristic of modern life. The most prominent moral purity efforts were associated with the Inner Mission, the national Protestant social welfare organization, which distributed tracts, set up youth groups, lobbied against legal reform, and advocated castration of sex offenders.⁵

Despite such attempts at regulation, the subcultures of homosexual men and women continued developing—albeit in a fairly precarious form—in the years before World War I. This development was grounded in two broader social shifts: the emergence of eroticism in general into the public sphere and more specifically the commercial sphere; and the movement of women into factory work and into the rapidly expanding secretarial field—a movement that for the first time offered economic independence to significant numbers of working- and middle-class women.

After the turn of the century, sexual, social, and intellectual territories for homosexual men and women in Germany were expanding to include cafés and pastry shops, beer cellars, nightclubs, bath houses, bookstores, sports and hobby clubs, small hotels, apartment buildings and sections of neighborhoods. In some cases, these were mixed settings where the greeting ranged from toleration to genuine welcome; in others, they were specifically homosexual enterprises, often run by entrepreneurs who were themselves homosexual. By 1914, Berlin alone had an estimated 40 homosexual bars—including a number catering particularly to lesbians—several homosexual periodicals, and one- to two-thousand male prostitutes. By the early 1920s, similar developments on a smaller scale had appeared in other German cities.⁶

For homosexuals whose primary experience had been isolation and confusion, the discovery of urban homosexual life could be a revelation. To quote one contemporary observer, Dr. Magnus Hirschfeld (about whom we shall hear more shortly), “Uranians have been seen arriving from the depths of the provinces weeping tears of joy at the sight of this spectacle.”⁷ The sense of discovery homosexuals shared about Berlin was reflected in the name of the city’s most famous homosexual nightclub and female-impersonation revue of the late 1920s and early 1930s: The art déco neon signs on the façade spelled out *Eldorado*, recalling the mythic land of gold that the Conquistadors had sought in vain.⁸ In the richly developed homosexual territories of Berlin, many homosexual men and women of the era no doubt felt they had in fact found their own Eldorado.

Men, Women and the Politics of Homosexuality (1860s-1920s)

Efforts to organize German homosexuals politically emerged in tandem with the profound social changes that were taking place in the second half of the 19th century. For homosexual men, this struggle developed primarily as a specific movement to reverse the medical discourse of the pathological homosexual personality type by transforming it into a depathologized “homosexual identity” worthy of social equality. In contrast, organizing by lesbians emerged primarily in the context of the broader feminist movement.

Beginning in the 1860s, lawyer and journalist Karl Heinrich Ulrichs published a series of pioneering tracts demanding an end to persecution and identifying male homosexuals as a class with specific cultural, social and political needs. In 1865, Ulrichs declared:

I am an insurgent. I decline to accept what exists if I believe it is unjust. I am fighting for a life free from prosecution and scorn. I urge the general public and the state to recognize Uranian love as equal to congenital Dionian love.⁹

That same year, he privately drafted a proposal for a “Uranian union”—a mutual-aid society for homosexual men. Two years later, in an unprecedented address before the 500 members of the

Society of German Jurists, he called publicly for the repeal of antihomosexual laws; he was shouted down before finishing his statement.¹⁰

Following up on these early efforts, a group in Berlin headed by Dr. Magnus Hirschfeld founded the Scientific-Humanitarian Committee (*Wissenschaftlich-humanitären Komitee*) on May 15, 1897. Hirschfeld and his followers argued that homosexuality resulted from a harmless inborn gender disturbance which merited neither legal nor medical intervention.¹¹ The earliest known homosexual rights organization, the Committee took as its primary political goal the repeal of §175 of the Reich Penal Code, the German law prohibiting homosexual acts between men. The Committee also worked to educate the public about supportive scientific research and to encourage self-respect among members of the “third sex.”¹²

This scientific and political approach was not the sole strategy employed by the movement. A second Berlin-based group, the Community of Self-Owners (*Gemeinschaft der Eigenen*) founded in 1903 by Adolf Brand, a bisexual writer and publisher, emphasized cultural reform—and saw male homosexual behavior itself as a cultural rather than a biological phenomenon. Brand based his analysis on classical and German Enlightenment traditions, advancing passionate friendship as the foundation of masculine virtue, aesthetic refinement, intellectual development and good citizenship. The Community’s periodicals, salons and public readings were unabashedly anti-modernist, conservative, nationalistic and misogynistic—and occasionally critical of Hirschfeld and the Committee.¹³

The model of homosexuals organizing themselves to work for change and to provide for their own communal needs gradually spread after the turn of the century in Germany: By the early 1920s, some 25 political, cultural and social organizations—largely in the middle ground between Hirschfeld and Brand—were operating in cities throughout the country. Undoubtedly the most successful of these was the League for Human Rights (*Bund für Menschenrechte*), a national co-gender group active from 1923 to 1933; at its peak, the League boasted approximately 48,000 members.¹⁴

Women worked to some extent in the setting of these specifically homosexual groups, but politically active lesbians in the late-19th and early-20th centuries more often focused on a broader feminist agenda—including educational reform, access to the labor market, and women’s suffrage—working in organizations that welcomed their energies while essentially ignoring their sexuality.¹⁵ In a speech given in 1904, feminist organizer Anna Rüling described the situation in these words:

From the beginning of the women’s movement until the present day, a significant number of homosexual women assumed leadership in the numerous struggles.... Considering the contributions made to the women’s movement by homosexual women for decades, it is amazing that the large and influential organizations of the movement have never lifted a finger to improve the civil rights and social standing of their numerous Uranian members.¹⁶

This situation began to change around 1910-1911, when several of the broad-based women’s organizations added lesbian issues to their agenda, joining the Scientific-Humanitarian Committee and other groups to defeat legislative efforts to criminalize female homosexual acts.¹⁷

Both the homosexual organizations and the women's groups of this period emerged in the context of a much wider wave of social reform in Germany in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Known as the *lebensreformbewegung*—the “life reform movement”—this phenomenon involved widespread efforts by the middle class to respond directly through self-help and mutual aid to changes in the structures of gender and family and to such challenges of urban life as housing shortages, poor sanitation, unemployment and personal isolation.¹⁸

Hirschfeld himself combined this spirit of reform with strategic efforts to redeploy the influence of science and medicine on behalf of homosexuals. In 1919, he founded the Institute for Sexual Science (*Institut für Sexualwissenschaft*) in Berlin as a full-service sexual study and therapy center, including a library, archives, museum, and clinic, as well as widely advertised publishing and lecture programs. Using the Institute as a base, Hirschfeld became an internationally recognized sexologist and the most visible German advocate of sexual reform and of social tolerance for sexual minorities.¹⁹

Right-Wing Reaction and the Nazi Rise to Power (1920-1933)

The period of social change in Germany that gave rise to the homosexual subculture, the homosexual rights movement, the women's movement, and progressive social movements in general also provoked strong conservative reactions in Germany—with attendant calls for strict regulation of sexual, political, ethnic and religious minorities. World War I, which resulted in the deaths of nearly 2 million German soldiers and ended an economically ruinous defeat, exacerbated these tensions and polarities.

The establishment of the democratic Weimar Republic—which replaced the Imperial regime in 1918—initially appeared to promise progressive change, but hopes for continuing reform disappeared as economic conditions in Germany deteriorated. A hyper-inflation in 1922-1923—followed by the worldwide economic crash in 1929—added massive unemployment to the disruptions produced by the war. In these circumstances of deepening economic crisis and social conflict, reactionary political discourses of anti-socialism, anti-Semitism, xenophobia, and homophobia rapidly gained ground.²⁰

Among the organizations promoting right-wing ideology of this sort were the National Socialists. Established in 1920 with the merging of several smaller right-wing extremist groups, the Nazi Party played an increasingly visible and aggressive role as the decade progressed, attracting adherents from the masses of Germans seeking drastic solutions to the upheavals of the era. The *Sturmabteilung* or “Storm Section” of the party—known by its German acronym as the SA—directly recruited unemployed young men, providing them with uniforms, meals, and a sense of belonging, while deploying them in paramilitary gangs to enforce terror against political opponents and minority groups.

In the years before they came to power, some leading Nazis tolerated the private behavior of certain party organizers who were homosexual; such toleration was not advanced as a matter of policy but was practiced purely for pragmatic reasons on a case-by-case basis. At the same time, most members and sympathizers of the party unequivocally and explicitly ranked homosexuals

among the groups supposedly at fault for the instability of German society and the weakness of the German state.

As a Jew, a leftist, a social reformer and a homosexual activist, Magnus Hirschfeld was an early target. In 1921, he stood up to hecklers while giving a lecture in Munich, the city that was ground zero of the right-wing extremist movement. As soon as he left the hall, a band of young thugs attacked the portly 52-year old doctor from behind with a hail of stones. A blow to the head knocked him unconscious and he fell to the sidewalk, bleeding profusely, his skull fractured. While many Germans responded with horror, a Dresden newspaper offered this chilling commentary:

Weeds never die. The well-known Dr. Magnus Hirschfeld had been hurt enough to be put on the death list. We hear now that he is in fact recovering from his wounds. We have no hesitation in saying that we regret that this shameless and horrible poisoner of our people has not found his well-deserved end.²¹

Despite warnings from his supporters, Hirschfeld bravely carried on with his public appearances. In 1923, he was fired on when a group of Nazis invaded a lecture he was giving in Vienna. Hirschfeld escaped without injury, but members of the audience were beaten during the melee.²² Throughout the decade, Hirschfeld, the Institute for Sexual Science, the homosexual movement, and homosexuals in general came under frequent and vitriolic attack in the popular tabloids and the Nazi press.²³

Borrowing analyses from medical science and at times from the homosexual movement itself, Nazi ideologues described homosexuals as members of a deviant psychological or biological class, as participants in a secretive subculture, as constituents of a pseudo-ethnic community or as conspirators in a criminal or political cabal—each posing the threat of impermissible dissidence. While endorsing the notion that homosexuality in some individuals resulted from a congenital defect, Nazi jurists and physicians also characterized homosexual desire as a contagion that might infect and corrupt even those who were not homosexual by nature.²⁴

Above all, the Nazis believed that homosexuality disrupted the hierarchy of gender with its strict schema of male aggressiveness, female submission and reproductive duty that the party advanced as its chief strategy for reestablishing social stability. In addition, given the Nazis' insistence on personal bonds within all-male political, military and social organizations as the basis of state power, the regime was anxious to prevent its own institutions from inadvertently facilitating homosexual affections that could produce an internal force of opposition.²⁵

Responding to the Scientific-Humanitarian Committee's ongoing campaign to repeal §175, a 1928 statement provides a characteristic example of the Nazi Party's antihomosexual discourse:

It is not necessary that you and I live, but it is necessary that the German people live. And it can only live if it can fight, for life means fighting. And it can only fight if it maintains its masculinity. It can only maintain its masculinity if it exercises discipline, especially in matters of love. Free love and deviance are undisciplined... We therefore reject any form of lewdness, especially homosexuality, because it robs us of our last chance to free our people from the bondage which now enslaves it.²⁶

Destruction of the Homosexual Culture and the Homosexual Movement (1933-1936)

Upon coming to power at the beginning of 1933, the Nazis moved quickly to enact this ideology as national policy and to elaborate strategies for regulating homosexuals as an inferior class and homosexual desire as a socially disruptive force. These goals are evident in a series of actions taken between 1933 and 1936 that resulted in the destruction of the homosexual rights movement and of the vibrant homosexual culture that had developed in the previous century in Germany.

In the first such move, less than one month after Adolf Hitler was named Chancellor, the government banned sexually oriented publications—including all homosexual periodicals, however prim their content—and outlawed homosexual rights organizations. Four weeks later, SS officers ransacked the apartment of the director of the Scientific-Humanitarian Committee, Kurt Hiller, who like Hirschfeld was homosexual, Jewish, and a socialist; a week later Hiller was transported to the Oranienburg concentration camp, where he faced repeated torture over the next nine months before being inadvertently released.²⁷

The campaign to destroy the homosexual movement and to eliminate homosexual images proceeded on May 6, 1933, when over 100 Nazi students invaded Hirschfeld's Institute for Sexual Science. The gang carted off the Institute's library and archives to fuel a massive bonfire of "un-German" books on the square in front of the Berlin opera on the night of May 10. A life-sized bust of Hirschfeld also was consigned to the fire.²⁸

Hirschfeld himself was spared arrest only because he was abroad on a lecture tour. Witnessing the conflagration on a newsreel in Paris a few days later, he likened seeing the flames consume his research collection to watching his own funeral.²⁹ Hirschfeld remained in exile until his death in 1935; his remains were laid to rest in the French Riviera city of Nice.

Adolf Brand's publishing house also was raided. Between May and November, police descended five times, ultimately seizing the entire inventory of books and magazines built up over the course of nearly 40 years. "My whole life's work has been destroyed," Brand stated in a letter.³⁰ Brand himself, however, was not arrested—probably because he was married, and was neither Jewish nor a leftist, and possibly because of the intervention of a protector within the Nazi party. He remained in Berlin and was killed along with his wife during an Allied bombing raid in 1945.³¹

The first months of 1933 also saw the Nazi regime carry its antihomosexual offensive to social territories, with the SA attacking homosexual bars and nightclubs. Among the first establishments padlocked as a threat to public order was the famed Eldorado club in Berlin, which had remained a joyful destination for a cosmopolitan mix of lesbian women, homosexual men, transvestites of both sexes and slumming tourists.³²

The large and handsome space occupied by the Eldorado on Motzstraße reopened immediately—as a propaganda office for the Nazi campaign in the March 1933 parliamentary elections which Hitler called to consolidate his power shortly after being named Chancellor. Huge swastikas were draped over the façade, and an enormous Fraktur-lettered banner commanding "Vote for the Hitler ticket" obscured a now sadly obsolete sign that had proclaimed "Here it's

okay!”³³ Although a small scattering of bars struggled on as clandestine, ephemeral and highly risky meeting places, the elaborate landscape of Weimar homosexual nightlife soon vanished, like the mythic land of Eldorado, back into the realm of dreams.³⁴

For the Nazi regime, charges of homosexuality proved to have multiple strategic uses. In June and July of 1934, for example, assertions that homosexual activity was rife in the SA provided the excuse for a violent purge of the organization, which had been interfering with Nazi plans to gain fealty from the traditional German military and from the business and industrial establishment. In a three-week period, SS officers killed SA leader Ernst Röhm and his aide Edmund Heines, who were in fact homosexual, and approximately 300 other individuals, the overwhelming majority of whom were not. Many of those killed had done nothing more than raise the petty ire of an SS functionary—and some were outright victims of mistaken identity.³⁵

The purge of the SA, often referred to as “The Night of the Long Knives,” is significant for a number of reasons:

- It marked the opening of a full-press campaign of anti-homosexual vilification under propaganda minister Joseph Goebbels—a campaign that not only spread terror among homosexuals but also helped the Nazis elaborate tactics for manipulating public opinion that would prove useful to their broader aims of so-called social purification.³⁶
- It demonstrated how antihomosexual measures and accusations of homosexuality could be used to terrify and control nonhomosexuals: Like the random victims of the Röhm purge, anyone the party disliked faced the threat of fatal “homosexualization.”
- It marked the Nazis’ first deployment of a new policy instrument: state-sponsored mass murder. By drawing on existing social prejudices, the antihomosexual ideology advanced to excuse the purge undoubtedly played a key role in facilitating public acceptance of the tactic. And public acceptance of this first massacre emboldened the Nazis to consider the door open to future uses of mass murder.

In 1935, on the first anniversary of Röhm’s killing—and shortly before the promulgation of the anti-Jewish Nuremberg Laws—the Nazi government adopted new regulations against male homosexual behavior. Going beyond the “coitus-like acts” proscribed under §175 of the Imperial code, the revised law permitted felony prosecution of kissing, embraces, and lustful gazes. Given the vagueness of the statute and the capriciousness of Nazi jurisprudence, the revisions made prosecution a simple matter, as national statistics on convictions indicate: In 1934, 948 men were found guilty; by 1938, the number had soared to 8,562.³⁷

Although §175 was not extended to lesbians, scattered cases have been documented in which judges nonetheless handed down convictions for lesbian acts; women also were occasionally prosecuted under §176, which prohibited individuals in a position of authority from engaging in sexual relations with their charges.³⁸ (Lesbians in Austria faced a more specific legal threat: The section of Austrian law forbidding sexual contacts between women continued to be enforced locally by Nazi judges after the country was annexed to the Reich in 1938.³⁹)

The general distinction between homosexual men and lesbian women in Nazi law was grounded in conceptions of gender roles and reproductive drives, as well as beliefs about the prevalence

and consequences of homosexual activity in men versus women. The Nazi Criminal Code Commission of the Ministry of Justice outlined this thinking in a 1935 statement arguing against proposals to criminalize sexual relations between women:

With respect to [homosexual] men, fertility is wasted; they usually do not procreate at all. This is not true regarding women, or at least not to the same extent. The vice is more widespread among men than among women (except for the prostitution milieu). With respect to women, it is also less obvious, less conspicuous. The danger of corruption by example is thus smaller.... An important reason for punishing same-sex intercourse is the falsification of public life if decisive steps are not taken against this epidemic.... If such a predisposition cannot be combated, then at least its activities can be.... What was earlier referred to as the falsification of public life would hardly pertain to women, as women play a relatively small role in public life.⁴⁰

Characteristic of its mania for bureaucratic centralization and systematization, the Nazi government established a special department at Gestapo headquarters in the wake of the Röhm purge to collect dossiers on homosexual men from local police throughout the Reich, with a particular interest in political personalities. At the end of 1936, this unit was taken over by the Reich Central Office for the Combating of Homosexuality and Abortion.⁴¹ The twin objects of this new agency again suggest the extent to which the regime's antihomosexual policies were motivated by its insistence that all healthy adult Aryans increase the size of the "national community" (*Volksgemeinschaft*) through reproduction. The decree establishing the office made this clear:

The considerable dangers which the relatively high number of abortions still being performed present for population policy and the health of the nation, and which constitute a grave infringement of the ideological fundamentals of National Socialism—as well as the homosexual activities of a not inconsiderable portion of the population, which constitute a serious threat to young people—demand more effective measures against these national diseases than has hitherto been the case.⁴²

Homosexual Men and Women in the Concentration Camps (1933–1945)

Along with political opponents of the Nazi regime, homosexual men were one of the first classes singled out for internment in the concentration camps—some five years before the order to intern Jews solely for reasons of race.⁴³ The sociologist Rüdiger Lautmann, who has published systematic research on this subject, found homosexuals and pimps already labeled as a distinct classification at the Fuhlsbüttel camp by the fall of 1933. Dachau received homosexual prisoners identified as such no later than 1934. Hundreds more arrived at both camps during roundups preceding the 1936 Olympic Games in Berlin. Homosexual men ultimately were interned in dozens of camps throughout the Reich; they remained one of the distinctly identified prisoner categories until the Liberation.⁴⁴

Although internment was a constant threat for homosexual men under the Nazi regime, it was not uniform and systematic: The majority of men convicted of homosexual offenses during the Nazi period, for example, appear to have avoided transport to the camps. Approximately 50,000 criminal convictions were handed down for violations of the legal proscriptions against homo-

sexual acts between 1935 and 1945.⁴⁵ By contrast, Lautmann extrapolates from a review of surviving concentration camp records that approximately 10,000 men—but possibly as few as 5,000 or as many as 15,000—were interned as homosexuals. These estimates include men who were transported directly without criminal conviction under so-called “preventive detention” orders.⁴⁶

On the basis of these figures, as few as one out of five men convicted of homosexual offenses ultimately was transferred to the camps; the remainder apparently served only civil prison terms. The explanation for this disparity undoubtedly lies in the distinction Nazi policy-makers and jurists drew between “environmentally-caused incidents” and “habitual homosexuality”—categories that largely duplicated the distinction between “acquired” and “inborn” cases that had been established by the German medical profession since the mid-19th century.

Given this thinking, many individuals found guilty of violating §175 were thought to have merely strayed into homosexual activity. For them, the Nazis believed that severe prison discipline, hard labor, psychotherapy, castration (or a combination of these practices) offered the possibility of recuperation in some useful form for the national community—at worst as economic or military contributors, at best as Aryans capable of fulfilling their reproductive duty. Such was the case, for example, with Pierre Seel, a 17-year-old from the annexed French province of Alsace, who was interned as a homosexual in 1941. He spent six terrifying months in the Schirmeck-Vorbrück concentration camp before being forced into service with the German army.⁴⁷

By contrast, repeat offenders and those whose behavior violated gender norms were seen as demonstrating an intrinsic and unchangeable homosexual nature; they were more likely to face transport and less likely to earn release after internment. In addition, those accused of “corruption of minors” were particularly susceptible to internment, as their activities were believed to result in the propagation of homosexuality among impressionable youths.⁴⁸

A similar analysis of the experience of lesbians in the concentration camps is not possible for two reasons: Because the Nazis did not outlaw lesbian sex acts throughout the Reich, court records do not provide a statistical measure of state intervention. In addition, lesbian women who found themselves in the camps almost invariably appear to have been transported for reasons other than homosexual behavior; except in a few cases, camp records do not identify lesbians—and in cases where the records do note that an internee was lesbian, the indication is generally a subclassification following the internee’s main category of identification.⁴⁹

The available evidence does, however, demonstrate that lesbian women were present in at least some camps at some times in visible numbers. Among the women specifically singled out as distinct classes for internment were sex workers and repeat criminal offenders with prison experience; both of these groups included marginalized working-class and poverty-class women with a strongly developed butch-femme sexual subculture.⁵⁰ A French resistance worker, for example, recalled seeing such women at the Ravensbrück camp in 1943:

There was a certain amount of lesbianism [among the criminals, asocials and prostitutes]. The “males” were called “Jules,” and they would carve a cross into the foreheads of their “steadies”—we called it the *croix des vaches*.⁵¹

For women whose behavior did not exhibit cross-gender signifiers, cultivating a stony silence and utterly withdrawing from any association with homosexual activity offered a strategy for

survival in the camps—as it did for many homosexuals of both sexes in German society at large. Another Ravensbrück survivor—a lesbian apparently interned as a socialist political prisoner—recalled her camp experiences of 1941-42 in these words:

I had a female block warden; she would call out to me, “Do you want a cigarette?”—so I assume she had a tendency. But I had absolutely no contact. I always told myself, “Wait until the war is over.” I was well behaved.⁵²

Men interned as homosexuals did not have access to this strategically deployed invisibility. From the founding of the camps, male homosexual internees were identified by distinctive uniform markings—among them yellow armbands inscribed with a capital letter “A” (probably standing for *arschficker*—the German for “ass-fucker”); large black dots; or the number 175 (a reference to §175 of the penal code).⁵³ Over time, a triangle of pink cloth emerged as the marking for homosexual men. The emblem no doubt appeared systemwide when the administration of the camps was reformed in 1936, at which time the central bureaucracy imposed a standard taxonomy of internee markings.⁵⁴

Conditions for all prisoners in the camps were extremely harsh, but homosexual men appear in most camps at most times to have faced particularly severe circumstances. Unlike the Jews and the Sinti and Roma, homosexual internees as a class never were targeted for systematic extermination in camps designed to serve as death mills. Nonetheless, they apparently had the lowest survival rate of any prisoner grouping outside of those racial categories. Lautmann estimates that 60 percent of the homosexual internees died in the camps, three-quarters of them within their first year of internment, compared to 41 percent of the political prisoners and 35 percent of the Jehovah’s Witnesses.⁵⁵

These figures undoubtedly are a consequence of several factors, each of which provides insight into the experience of homosexual men in the concentration camps:

- Guards frequently singled out homosexual male internees for physical abuse and torture. As one inmate of Dachau later recalled, “[Pink triangle prisoners] were particularly picked on by the SS, humiliated in the most degrading fashion, and corporally punished at every opportunity.”⁵⁶
- Homosexual male prisoners often represented no more than one percent of the total population in a given camp, so establishing mutual support, trading in the camp black markets, and bartering for better positions in the camp hierarchy were largely impossible. This situation was exacerbated by the fact that pink triangle prisoners were forced to limit their contacts with each other and with prisoners outside their own group, as the slightest signs of friendship might be taken as evidence that they were failing to reform. By contrast, common criminals and political prisoners—more numerous, more experienced with prison life and ideological systems of solidarity, and more able to associate with one another without arousing suspicion—fared comparatively better in camps.
- Homosexual men were in at least some cases disproportionately represented among prisoners chosen for medical experiments. For example, Eugen Kogon, a political prisoner who was a medical ward clerk at Buchenwald from 1942 to 1945, noted that experimental subjects in that camp “were generally convicts and homosexuals, with a sprinkling of political prisoners

of all nationalities.” He recalled that one group of homosexual men were deliberately infected with typhus, while others were subjected to synthetic hormone implants in an experimental attempt to suppress their homosexual desires.⁵⁷

- Homosexual prisoners were assigned in markedly higher percentages to the most grueling and dangerous work commandos, including the gravel pit and street roller at Dachau, the clay pit at Sachsenhausen, the tunnel blastings at the Dora work site, the stone quarry at Buchenwald, and the details that picked up unexploded bombs after air raids in Hamburg. Men assigned to these commandos had an even lower survival rate than other camp inmates.⁵⁸

The Fate of Homosexual Victims in the Post-War Period (1945–2006)

Like all internees in the Nazi concentration camps, many homosexuals who survived until the Liberation died shortly thereafter from the effects of their ordeal. But unlike the racial, ethnic, religious and political internees, homosexual men were not necessarily set free upon the arrival of Allied soldiers at the camps. Evidence indicates that in at least some cases, Allied occupation officials remanded homosexual camp inmates to the criminal prison system, regarding them as sexual offenders who had merited punishment under the Nazis and who continued to merit punishment after the fall of the regime.⁵⁹

The defeat of the Third Reich did not bring legal freedom for homosexuals. Following the war, the highest federal court in West Germany refused to overturn the 1935 Nazi revision of §175, holding in a sinister ruling that the proscriptions against same-sex kissing, touching, and gazes were legally permissible because they did not represent a “typically National Socialist way of thinking.”⁶⁰ The law remained in effect in West Germany until 1969—resulting in more than 47,000 convictions in the post-Nazi period. In East Germany, the Nazi law was maintained until 1950; thereafter, the pre-Nazi text of §175 was enforced until 1967. Arrest statistics for East Germany are unavailable, but the number is believed to be lower than in West Germany.⁶¹

Writing under the pseudonym “Bert Micha” in a privately circulated newsletter in Germany in 1958, a homosexual survivor of the concentration camps criticized this ongoing injustice—and made quite clear the personal silence and historical invisibility it imposed:

Yet there is one group among all the victims that has never received the light of publicity, hasn’t complained about the damage it sustained, and hasn’t encountered any understanding from the newspapers, from government agencies, or from organizations that defend the interests of former internees: that group is the homophiles. Because Paragraph 175 of the German Penal Code—the very Paragraph 175 that has been a subject of debate for decades—makes homophiles into criminals, they encounter no pity from the public, and of course can make no claim for damages. To this day, no one has sought to learn how many homophiles were hunted down by the Nazis, nor to learn what the survivors retrieved of their lives and their belongings.⁶²

In a final and ongoing injustice—and in contrast to most other groups singled out for persecution—homosexual survivors have been systematically excluded from government programs established to provide support and reparations for victims of the Nazi regime. Only 22 homosexual

survivors are known to have received compensation in any form from the German government, and in Austria, only two homosexual men have received compensation from the national fund finally established in 1995.⁶³

Even with regard to purely symbolic recognition, homosexual victims were required to wait more than half a century after the end of the Nazi regime before receiving a formal apology from the German parliament in December 2000. After an additional year and a half of debate, the lawmakers at last voted in May 2002 to pardon those convicted under §175 during the Nazi era—but still left unaddressed the issue of providing individual reparations to give substance to their formal recognition of the profound injustices committed by the Nazi regime.⁶⁴

More recently, the German parliament has taken modest steps to make cultural reparations by providing funds and a site for a planned public monument in Berlin to commemorate the homosexual victims of the Nazis and by discussing the prospect of financial support for a project to establish a successor to Hirschfeld's Institute for Sexual Science.⁶⁵ Although such measures will no doubt serve to educate the public about the history of antihomosexual persecution under the Nazi regime and to honor the memory of those who perished, they largely come too late for the victims themselves: Only a rapidly dwindling handful of homosexual survivors remain to witness this belated rehabilitation.⁶⁶

Closing Reflections: The Persecution of Homosexuals and the Holocaust

As the foregoing overview should indicate, the Nazi persecution of homosexual was severe, but it was an enterprise different both in kind and in scope from the genocide carried out against the Jews. Unlike the Jewish people, homosexuals did not face systematic and pitiless identification and removal from the population of Germany and the German-occupied countries. Unlike the Jewish people, homosexuals as a class were not consigned by the state to mass extermination in death camps. And unlike the Jewish people, the majority of homosexual men and women under Nazi rule, although forced into silence, secrecy and fear, were able to find the means to survive.

We can, however, view the Nazis' execution of their antihomosexual policies as an integral step in putting into practice the ideology of social purification that ultimately led to the annihilation of 6 million Jews. The measures taken against the homosexual subculture and the homosexual movement in the first four years of the Hitler regime aided the Nazis in establishing a technology and bureaucracy of mass stigmatization, isolation, and persecution against a social group that was already the object of popular prejudice. Unlike the regime's early efforts to target Jews, such persecution of homosexuals attracted no concern whatsoever from foreign powers or traditionalist factions within the German government.⁶⁷

Each of the methods initially deployed against homosexuals between 1933 and 1936—including the destruction of cultural and social territories and networks, the silencing of means of communication, the consignment of members of a despised group to concentration camps, and the application of state-sponsored mass murder—would be carried to systematic elaboration in the Holocaust against European Jewry. The ends of the Nazi persecution of homosexuals and the genocide of the Jews thus differed considerably, but the historical development of the means was intrinsically connected.

The fate of homosexuals under the Nazi regime merits a place in the realm of public memory. At the same time, we must recall that homosexuals were but one target of the Nazis. Ultimately, we must mourn the loss of all those peoples and cultures that disappeared into the dark night of destruction in the middle of the 20th century. Whether we are Jews or queers, people with psychological or physical disabilities, sex workers or homeless people, whether we are members of marginalized racial, ethnic, political, or religious groups, we are bound together in our sorrowful interrogation of the past—and we join all who strive for individual dignity and human rights in our vigilance for the future. ■

REFERENCES

¹ Alan Bérubé, *Coming Out Under Fire: The History of Gay Men and Women in World War Two* (New York City: Free Press, 1990), p. 200.

² On the social history of homosexuality in Germany in the 19th and early-20th centuries, see James Steakley, *The Homosexual Emancipation Movement in Germany* (New York City: Arno Press, 1975), pp. 13-16 and *passim*, and Wolfgang Theis and Andreas Sternweiler, “Alltag in Kaiserreich und in der Weimarer Republik,” in Berlin Museum, *Eldorado: Homosexuellen Frauen und Männer in Berlin 1850-1950—Geschichte, Alltag, und Kultur* (Berlin: Frölich und Kaufmann, 1984), pp. 49-61.

³ See Steakley, *The Homosexual Emancipation Movement*, pp. 5, 10, 21.

⁴ See Richard Plant, *The Pink Triangle: The Nazi War Against Homosexuals* (New York City: Henry Holt and Company, 1986), p. 31f., and Steakley, *The Homosexual Emancipation Movement*, p. 9f.

⁵ See John C. Fout, “Sexual Politics in Wilhelmine Germany: The Male Gender Crisis, Moral Purity, and Homophobia,” *Journal of the History of Sexuality*, vol. 2, no. 3 (January 1992): pp. 388-421, citation pp. 403-417; on the castration policy, see Geoffrey J. Giles, “‘The Most Unkindest Cut of All’: Castration, Homosexuality and Nazi Justice,” *Journal of Contemporary History*, vol. 27 (1992): pp. 41-61, citation p. 44.

⁶ See Magnus Hirschfeld, *Berlins drittes Geschlecht* (Berlin and Leipzig: H. Seeman, 1904), *passim*; Steakley, *The Homosexual Emancipation Movement*, pp. 23f, 27, 78f, and *passim*; Theis and Sternweiler in Berlin Museum, pp. 56-73; and Claudia Schoppman, *Days of Masquerade: Life Stories of Lesbians During the Third Reich* (New York City: Columbia University Press, 1996), pp. 2-4.

⁷ Hirschfeld, *Berlins drittes Geschlecht*; translated from the French edition published as *Le Troisième sexe: Les homosexuels de Berlin* (Paris: Librairie Médicale et Scientifique Jules Rousset, 1908), p. 56. “Uranians” is a 19th-century term for homosexuals; see note 9 for further details.

⁸ See Ruth Margarete Roellig, *Berlins lesbische Frauen* (Naunhof-bei-Leipzig: Bruno Gebauer Verlag für Kulturprobleme, 1928); the bilingual German-French edition I have consulted is *Les lesbiennes de Berlin* (Lille: Cahiers Gai-Kitsch-Camp, 1992), pp. 94ff. Also see Monika Hingst, Manfred Herzer, Karl-Heinz Steinle, Andreas Sternweiler and Wolfgang Theis (eds.), *Goodbye to Berlin? 100 Jahre Schwulenbewegung* (Berlin: Verlag rosa Winkel, 1997), pp. 127f; this publication includes a 1932 photograph of the exterior.

⁹ Karl Heinrich Ulrichs, *Vindicta* (1865), reprinted in Karl Heinrich Ulrichs, *The Riddle of Man-Manly Love: The Pioneering Work on Male Homosexuality*, vol. 1 (Buffalo, N.Y.: Prometheus Books, 1994), p. 109; translated from the German by Michael A. Lombardi-Nash. Ulrichs developed a variety of neologisms to describe his new sexual taxonomy. “Uranian” is the term he applied to feminine men sexually attracted to masculine men; “dionian” is his term for the attraction of men to women.

¹⁰ On Ulrichs in general, see Hubert Kennedy, *Karl Heinrich Ulrichs: Pioneer of the Modern Gay Movement* (Concord, Calif.: Peremptory Publications, 2005); for Ulrichs’s writing and legal activism on behalf of “urmings” in the 1860s, see ch. 4–ch. 9 *passim*. Ulrichs lived the last years of his life in Sicily, where he died in 1895; his grave is in the cemetery of Aquila.

¹¹ On Hirschfeld's theories about homosexuality, see James D. Steakley, "Per Scientiam ad Justitiam: Magnus Hirschfeld and the Sexual Politics of Innate Sexuality," in Vernon A. Rosario (ed.), *Science and Homosexualities* (New York City: Routledge, 1997), pp. 133-154.

¹² On the Scientific-Humanitarian Committee, see Manfred Herzer, "Das Wissenschaftlich humanitäre Komitee," in Hingst, et al., pp. 37-47.

¹³ On Brand and the Community of Self-Owners, see Harry Oosterhuis (ed.), *Homosexuality and Male Bonding in Pre-Nazi Germany* (Binghamton, N.Y.: Haworth Press, 1991), pp. 2-8, 245-247, and *passim*.

¹⁴ See Steakley, *The Homosexual Emancipation Movement*, p. 82; also see Plant, p. 41, and Schoppman, *Days of Masquerade*, p. 4.

¹⁵ See Lillian Faderman and Brigitte Erickson (eds.), *Lesbians in Germany, 1890s–1920s* (Tallahassee, Fla.: Naiad Press, 1990), pp. xii-xiii, and Steakley, *The Homosexual Emancipation Movement*, pp. 40-42.

¹⁶ Quoted in Faderman and Erickson, p. xiii.

¹⁷ See Faderman and Erickson, pp. xiv-xvi, and Steakley, *The Homosexual Emancipation Movement*, pp. 40-42.

¹⁸ See Steakley, *The Homosexual Emancipation Movement*, pp. 24-30.

¹⁹ On Hirschfeld and the Institute for Sexual Science, see "Institute for Sexual Science (1919–1933)," a virtual exhibition curated in 2002 by the Magnus-Hirschfeld-Gesellschaft, Berlin. The exhibit is available for purchase on CD-ROM with texts in German, Spanish and English; for more information, visit www.magnus-hirschfeld.de/institute. Also see Charlotte Wolff, *Magnus Hirschfeld: Portrait of a Pioneer in Sexology* (London: Quartet Books, 1986), ch. 9; and Manfred Baumgart, "Das Institut für Sexualwissenschaft und die Homosexuellenbewegung in der Weimarer Republik," in Berlin Museum, pp. 31-33.

²⁰ For an overview of the post-World War I situation in Germany and the position of homosexuals in the period, see Plant, ch. 1.

²¹ Quoted in Wolff, p. 198; she does not name the newspaper.

²² For accounts of the 1921 and 1923 attacks, see Wolff, pp. 196-198 and 218, and Steakley, *The Homosexual Emancipation Movement*, p. 88.

²³ See Plant, p. 44.

²⁴ See Harry Oosterhuis, "Medicine, Male Bonding and Homosexuality in Nazi Germany," *Journal of Contemporary History*, vol. 32, no. 2 (April 1997): pp. 187–205.

²⁵ See Oosterhuis, "Medicine, Male Bonding and Homosexuality in Nazi Germany," pp. 194ff.

²⁶ Quoted in Steakley, *The Homosexual Emancipation Movement*, p. 84.

²⁷ For an overview of the Nazis' anti-homosexual activities in 1933, see Plant, pp. 50f, 209-211.

²⁸ On the destruction of the Institute, see Magnus-Hirschfeld-Gesellschaft, "Institute for Sexual Science (1919–1933)"; also see James Steakley, "Anniversary of a Book Burning," *The Advocate* (June 9, 1983): 18-19, 57.

²⁹ *Anthropos*, no. 1–2 (1934); quoted in Steakley, *The Homosexual Emancipation Movement*, p. 105.

³⁰ Quoted in Günter Grau (ed.), *Hidden Holocaust? Gay and Lesbian Persecution in Germany, 1933-45* (London: Cassell, 1995), p. 34.

³¹ See Oosterhuis, *Homosexuality and Male Bonding in Pre-Nazi Germany*, p. 7.

³² For the makeup of the clientele at the Eldorado, see the sources in note 8.

³³ See the photo collage of closed bars published in the Viennese periodical *Der Notschrei* (May 1933): p. 6. The entire page is reproduced in Hingst, et al., p. 154; also see the caption on p. 155.

³⁴ On bars as homosexual gathering-places in Berlin in the Nazi era, see Carola Gerlach, "Außerdem habe ich dort mit meiner Freund getanzt," in Andreas Pretzel and Gabriele Roßbach (eds.), *Wegen der zu erwartenden hohen Strafe: Homosexuellenverfolgung in Berlin 1933–1945* (Berlin: Verlag rosa Winkel, 2000), pp. 305-332.

³⁵ On Röhm and the purge of the SA, see Plant, ch. 53. Also see Max Gallo, *The Night of Long Knives* (New York City: Harper and Row, 1972), *passim*.

³⁶ On the propaganda campaign, see Hans-Georg Stümke, "From the 'People's Consciousness of Right and Wrong' to 'The Healthy Instincts of the Nation': The Persecution of Homosexuals in Nazi Germany," in Michael Burleigh (ed.) *Confronting the Nazi Past: New Debates on Modern German History* (London: Collins and Brown, 1996), pp. 154-166; citation pp. 157f.

³⁷ On the revisions to §175, see Plant, pp. 69, 110. For the statistics on convictions, see Stümke, p. 160.

³⁸ See Schoppmann, *Days of Masquerade*, pp. 20f.

³⁹ See Claudia Schoppman, *Verbotene Verhältnisse: Frauenliebe 1938-1945* (Berlin: Querverlag, 1999), *passim*.

⁴⁰ Quoted in Schoppman, *Days of Masquerade*, p. 16.

⁴¹ On the Gestapo department and the Reich Central Office, see Stümke, pp. 158f.

⁴² Quoted in Stümke, p. 159.

⁴³ See Falk Pingel, "Concentration Camps," in Israel Gutman (ed.), *Encyclopedia of the Holocaust*, vol. 1 (New York City: Macmillan, 1990), p. 311.

⁴⁴ On homosexual men in the camps, see Rüdiger Lautmann, "The Pink Triangle: The Persecution of Homosexual Males in Concentration Camps in Nazi Germany," in Salvatore J. Licata and Robert P. Peterson (eds.), *Historical Perspectives on Homosexuality* (New York City: Haworth Press/Stein and Day, 1981), pp. 141-160; Rüdiger Lautmann, "Gay Prisoners in Concentration Camps as Compared with Jehovah's Witnesses and Political Prisoners," in Michael Berenbaum (ed.), *A Mosaic of Victims: Non-Jews Persecuted and Murdered by the Nazis* (New York City: New York University Press, 1990), pp. 200-206; and Grau, part 4.

A number of memoirs and oral histories of homosexual male survivors have been published, especially in the past 20 years. For book-length accounts, see Heinz Heger (pseudonym of Hans Neumann), *The Men with the Pink Triangle* (Boston: Alyson Publications, 1994), which recounts the memoirs of an Austrian homosexual, Josef Kohout, who survived six years in Sachsenhausen and Flossenbürg; and Pierre Seel, *Moi, Pierre Seel, deporté homosexuel* (Paris: Calmann-Levy, 1994), the memoirs of an Alsatian interned in the Schirmeck-Vorbrück camp.

For shorter texts, see the testimonies of J.A.W., Karl and Erich in Jürgen Lemke, *Gay Voices from East Germany* (Bloomington, Ind.: Indiana University Press, 1991). Also see the testimonies of Karl B., David F., Jacob K., Karl Lange and Friedrich-Paul von Groszheim, all collected in Lutz van Dijk, *Ein erfülltes Leben, trotzdem—: Erinnerungen Homosexueller, 1933–1945; elf biographische Texte* (Reinbek bei Hamburg: Rowohlt, 1992).

In addition, three widely distributed documentary films have presented survivor testimonies: Stuart Marshall (director), *Desire: Sexuality in Germany, 1910-1945* (Maya Vision, 1989); Elke Jeanrond and Josef Weishaupt (directors), *Wir hatten ein großes "A" am Bein* (Norddeutscher Rundfunk, 1990); and Rob Epstein and Jeffrey Friedman (directors), *Paragraph 175* (Telling Pictures, 2000).

⁴⁵ The estimated total is extrapolated from conviction statistics given by Grau, p. 154, and Hans-Georg Stümke and Rudi Finkler, *Rosa Winkel, Rosa Listen: Homosexuelle und "gesundes Volkempfinden" von Auschwitz bis Heute* (Hamburg: Rowohlt, 1981), p. 262. Note that the number of individuals convicted was certainly somewhat lower than the total number of convictions, as at least some men undoubtedly were convicted more than once.

⁴⁶ See Lautmann, "The Pink Triangle," p. 146. Some critics suggest that Lautmann's figures may be too conservative; for a discussion, see Johansson and Percy, pp. 548-550.

⁴⁷ See Seel, pp. 37ff.

⁴⁸ See Grau, p. 6f.

⁴⁹ For the rare cases of lesbians interned as such and for camp records mentioning lesbianism, see Schoppman, *Days of Masquerade*, pp. 20-23.

⁵⁰ On lesbians in the camps, see Schoppmann, *Days of Masquerade*, pp. 20–23. Also see Plant, pp. 114–116; and Fania Fénelon (with Marcelle Routier), *Playing for Time* (New York City: Atheneum, 1977), pp. 142–151, 198–201, 212–222.

⁵¹ Quoted in Anton Gill, *The Journey Back from Hell: Conversations with Concentration Camp Survivors—An Oral History* (New York City: Avon Books, 1988), p. 327. The expression *croix des vaches* (“bitch’s cross,” or literally “cow’s cross”) is a mean-spirited reference to the *croix de guerre*, a prestigious French combat medal.

⁵² Quoted in Terrie Couch, “The Legacy of the Black Triangles: An American and a German Lesbian Survivor of the Concentration Camps,” *Windy City Times*, vol. 6, no. 34 (May 9, 1991), p. 19.

⁵³ See Lautmann, “The Pink Triangle,” p. 148.

⁵⁴ See Wolfgang Sofsky, *The Order of Terror: The Concentration Camp* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1997), p. 118. Note that there was no distinctive insignia for lesbians in the camps. The notion that a black triangle served this purpose has emerged in the lesbian and gay community in several countries since the 1980s, but this clearly reflects modern folklore rather than historical evidence. The Nazis in fact used a black triangle as a marker for “asocials,” a category of internees that included sex workers, the homeless and the unemployed of both sexes, but that did not specifically include lesbians as such. See Lucinda Zoe, “The Black Triangle,” *Lesbian Her-story Archives Newsletter*, no. 12 (June 1991): p. 7. On internees classed as asocials, see Robert Gellately and Nathan Stoltzfus (eds.), *Social Outsiders in Nazi Germany* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 2001), pp. 11–13, as well as comments in several of the essays in the book.

⁵⁵ See Lautmann, “The Pink Triangle,” p. 147, and “Gay Prisoners,” p. 204.

⁵⁶ Quoted in Lautmann, “The Pink Triangle,” p. 147.

⁵⁷ Eugen Kogon, *The Theory and Practice of Hell: The German Concentration Camps and the System Behind Them* (New York City: Octagon Books, 1979), p. 144. Kogon also described the experiments as the lead author of the 1945 report which the Psychological Warfare Division of the Supreme Headquarters Allied Expeditionary Forces prepared in the month after liberating Buchenwald; this report remained unpublished until 1995. See David A. Hackett (ed. and translator), *The Buchenwald Report* (Boulder, Colo.: Westview Press, 1995), pp. 71f, 79. On medical experiments involving homosexuals, also see Plant, pp. 175–179.

⁵⁸ With the exception of the information from Kogon, the analysis in this section generally follows Lautmann, “The Pink Triangle,” pp. 147–159. Also see Plant, pp. 179–180.

⁵⁹ See Plant, p. 181.

⁶⁰ See Stümke, p. 165; he does not cite the date or caption of the opinion.

⁶¹ See Pink Triangle Coalition, “Proposal for a *Cy Pres* Allocation for Homosexual Victims of the Nazis,” Holocaust Victim Assets Litigation (Swiss Banks), submitted to the United States Federal Court for the New York District, Nov. 7, 2001, p. 25f. This document is available at <http://me.in-berlin.de/~hirschfeld/entschaedigen/cy-pres.html>.

⁶² Published in the autumn 1958 issue of *Die Runde*, newsletter of the Kameradschaft die Runde, a private homosexual social group in Reutlingen, near Stuttgart. A French translation appeared as B. M., “Les homophiles dans les camps de concentration de Hitler,” *Arcadie*, no. 82 (October 1960). The French version, as well as a recent English translation, are available in the “Textes” section of the Triangles Roses website at www.triangles-roses.org.

⁶³ See the discussion in Pink Triangle Coalition, p. 26f. Approximately 30 homosexual victims are known to have made unsuccessful demands for reparations in the past 25 years. For examples, see Klaus Müller, “Introduction,” in Heger, p. 14; also see Stefan K. (pseudonym of Teofil Kosinski), “I Am Stefan K.,” in Lutz Van Dijk, *Damned Strong Love* (New York City: Henry Holt, 1995), pp. 131–134.

⁶⁴ On the apology, see Rex Wockner, “Bundestag Apologizes to Gays,” *San Francisco Bay Times* (Dec. 21, 2000), p. 15. The action was taken on Dec. 7, 2000, by the lower house of the German parliament. On the pardon, which was passed by the parliament on May 17, 2002, see “Nazi-Era Gays Pardoned,” *The Advocate* (May 21, 2002).

⁶⁵ On the monument, see the “Gedenkort für die im Nationalsozialismus verfolgten Homosexuellen” website at www.gedenkort.de, where updates about the project are available in German, French and English. On the institute

proposal, see the website of Initiative Queer Nations, the German association spearheading the project: www.queer-nations.de (texts in German and English).

⁶⁶ Fewer than 10 men who were sent as homosexuals to Nazi concentration camps and prisons are now believed to be alive. The most outspoken homosexual survivor, Pierre Seel, died in Toulouse, France, on Nov. 25, 2005; see Gerard Koskovich, "Obituary: Gay Concentration Camp Survivor Pierre Seel Dies," *Bay Area Reporter* (Dec. 15, 2005): 21 (available on the Web at www.ebar.com/obituaries/index.php?id=73).

⁶⁷ These opposition forces initially slowed implementation of the Nazis' anti-Semitic program; see Yehuda Bauer, *A History of the Holocaust* (New York City: Franklin Watts, 1982), pp. 98ff.

GERARD KOSKOVICH is an independent scholar, editor and rare book dealer based in San Francisco, California. He is a founding member and a member of the board of directors of the Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual, Transgender Historical Society, San Francisco (www.glbthistory.org). He also serves on the board of directors of the Mémorial de la Déportation Homosexuelle, the French national group working to commemorate the homosexual victims of the Nazis. His articles on queer history and culture have appeared in numerous publications in the United States and Europe since the 1980s, and he is a regular contributor to the French website *Triangles Roses* (www.triangles-roses.org).