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Commentary: Masculinity and the Racial State

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In their 1991 monograph on Nazi Germany, *The Racial State*, Michael Burleigh and Wolfgang Wippermann asked why it was "acceptable to use anthropological categories in the case of youth or women, and apparently unacceptable to employ them in the case of men?" The expansive historiography of Nazism, they complained, offered nothing "beyond an isolated venture into the realm of male fantasies, or a few studies of homosexuals."[1] The answer, in fact, had a lot more to do with scholarly motivation than acceptability. Put starkly, there was no intellectual *frisson* in recovering the history of "men" as a social category in Nazi Germany.[2] Influential as *The Racial State* proved to be in driving the research agenda for historians of National Socialism, the authors' ensuing chapter, "Men in the Third Reich," merely confirmed as much. It presented a dry, empirical overview of Nazi racial and economic policies, excised of those specifically directed at women and children. The terms *gender*, *masculine*, or *masculinity* do not appear once in thirty-six dense pages of text.[3] To be sure, this reflected the wider state of knowledge in the academy. Now, almost three decades later, historians can draw on a sociology of gender relations that was still in its infancy when Burleigh and Wippermann were writing.[4] They study "men" to decode historical configurations of power. They no longer conceive of women, children, and men as discrete actor groups, but as protagonists in systems of gender relations. A sophisticated interdisciplinary literature has rendered men legible as gendered subjects, rather than as an unmarked norm.[5] This scholarship stresses the plurality of masculine identities. It advises that a racial state, like all known states, will be a patriarchal institution, and that the gendering of oppressed ethnic minorities plays a key role in the construction of majority femininities and masculinities.[6] By pondering the relationship between racial and social identities in Nazi Germany, Burleigh and Wippermann nevertheless raised questions with which historians continue to grapple. Each of the contributors to this special issue of *Central European History* focuses productively on the intersection of gender, ethnicity, and power in the "racial state."

[1]Michael Burleigh and Wolfgang Wippermann, *The Racial State: Germany 1933–1945* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991), 267. On "male fantasies," which Thomas Kühne discusses at length in his Introduction to this special issue, see Klaus Theweleit, *Male Fantasies*, vol. I: *Women, Floods, Bodies, History*; vol. II: *Male Bodies: Psychoanalyzing the White Terror,* trans. Stephen Conway (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1989).

[2]On the historicization of masculinity, see esp. John Tosh, "The History of Masculinity: An Outdated Concept?," in *What is Masculinity? Historical Dynamics from Antiquity to the Contemporary World*, ed. John H. Arnold and Sean Brady (Houndmills: Palgrave Macmillan, 2011), 21-22.

[3]Burleigh and Wippermann, *Racial State*, 267-303.

[4]Gathered in R. W. Connell, *Masculinities*, 2nd ed. (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2005).

[5]For an exceptionally lucid overview, see Stefan Horlacher, Bettina Jansen, and Wieland Schwanebeck, eds., *Männlichkeit: Ein Interdisziplinäres Handbuch* (Stuttgart: Metzler, 2016).

[6]Connell, *Masculinities*, 73-80.

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Edward Westermann and Thomas Kühne offer complementary readings of gendering rituals in Nazi paramilitary and military cultures. Zooming out from his research on *Schutzstaffel* (SS) and police units, Westermann presents a valuable synthesis of the scattered scholarship on the contribution of alcohol consumption to masculinist paramilitarism. The drinking rituals of the latter stood in a rich German tradition of raucous male sociability that was congruent with wider European gender norms. Alcohol and tobacco were resources for masculine display, their public consumption a privilege of adult manhood—hence, in part, cultural abhorrence of the "new woman" emboldened to drink and smoke in public. The German male's alcohol consumption evoked concerns well beyond a notably vocal temperance movement: Friedrich Nietzsche had famously complained that "nowhere have the two great European narcotics, alcohol and Christianity, been abused more dissolutely."[7] Per capita alcohol consumption was a reliable index of German prosperity, and it recovered rapidly in the early years of Adolf Hitler's dictatorship.[8] The Nazi paramilitary formations certainly played their part: there were, after all, some four-and-a-half million men in the *Sturmabteilung* (SA) by early 1934.[9] Westermann's article uncovers the social functions of alcohol consumption in that subculture. It was a metric of individual manliness and a means for accumulating social capital in the paramilitary unit. At the same time, alcohol lubricated a comradeship that located agency in the male group rather than in the individual perpetrator of violence. Westermann is rightly careful to stress that the beery sense of fun common to the Nazi paramilitary and police units has only limited scope in accounting for their wartime criminality. But drinking rituals helped to translate a singular ideology into social practice. They acculturated newcomers to the group and identified the entrepreneurs and patterns of social authority that shaped the implementation of racial policy at a microhistorical level.[10]

Westermann's material on singing rituals is equally intriguing, though he might have pressed their gendered character further still. The adult human voice is a key marker and performer of the sexed body. It both constructs and reiterates gender.[11] Group singing is a pooled demonstration of gendered competencies. Hoary nationalist songs located these paramilitary groups in an imagined tradition of German martial togetherness. But the political Right had, of course, no monopoly on singing as a gendered performance. The mighty German labor movement celebrated the solidarity of working men in ebullient songs of protest, and its male choirs were of international renown. The Nazi regime moved with

[7]Oscar Levy, ed., *The Complete Works of Friedrich Nietzsche*, vol. 16 (Edinburgh: T. N. Foulis, 1911), 51.

[8]Jonathan Lewy, "Vice in the Third Reich? Alcohol, Tobacco and Drugs," in *Life and Times in Nazi Germany*, ed. Lisa Pine (London: Bloomsbury, 2016), 50.

[9]This total includes the forcibly incorporated nationalist *Stahlhelm*. See Peter Longerich, *Geschichte der SA* (Munich: C. H. Beck, 1984), 184.

[10]The notion of "entrepreneurs" of violence is developed in S. A. Haslam and Stephen Reicher, "Identity Entrepreneurship and the Consequences of Identity Failure: The Dynamics of Leadership in the BBC Prison Study," *Social Psychology Quarterly* 70, no. 2 (2007):125-47. Westermann also addresses alcohol abuse on this localized level; see Edward B. Westermann, "Stone Cold Killers or Drunk with Murder? Alcohol and Atrocity in the Holocaust," *Holocaust and Genocide Studies* 30, no. 1 (2016): 1-19.

[11]For a fascinating study, see Christine Ehrick, *Radio and the Gendered Soundscape: Women and Broadcasting in Argentina and Uruguay, 1930–1950* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2015), 7. On Germany, see Kate Lacey, *Feminine Frequencies: Gender, German Radio, and the Public Sphere 1923–1945* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1997).

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alacrity to ban the German Union of Workers' Choirs in 1933.[12] Yet, singing remained an important ritual of self-assertion, with choirs meeting covertly to keep traditions alive. In the early concentration camps, inmate singing constructed male comradeship in adversity, and it sometimes even won the appreciation of the SS guards.[13] The guards sang, too, on "comradeship evenings" and on group visits to local taverns, where their wistful songs of forbidding forests and wholesome maidens made a deep impression on local citizens.[14] Singing was a widely admired gendered competency. In honoring group singing, inmates and guards provided functional affirmation of each other's masculine ideals. The guards' drinking rituals were likewise consonant with broader ideals of male sociability. For many prisoners, it was, instead, the purported accompanying excesses that exposed their dishonorable manhood. Westermann relates reports of the Buchenwald SS indulging in "eating and drinking sprees that almost invariably ended in wild orgies." Whether this constitutes, as he suggests, evidence of "sexualized extravagance" is extremely doubtful. Depicting their fascist guards as sexually depraved brutes was commonplace among prisoners. It was a rhetoric of cultural disarmament developed to dramatize the Nazis' perversion of martial male traditions: inmate testimony, too, must be read as a form of gendered display.

Like Westermann, most of the contributors to this volume engage closely with Thomas Kühne's justly acclaimed monograph on German martial comradeship.[15] In his own article in this issue, Kühne presses the gendered properties of *Wehrmacht* comradeship in conceptually ambitious directions. Working from the premise of a hegemonic "hard" soldierly masculinity, he shows that males from diverse sociocultural constituencies were able to claim fidelity to this ideal. Hegemonic masculinity has little to do with individual character traits, a misconception common even in academic literature.[16] Rather, as (re)formulated by Raewyn Connell and James Messerschmidt, it is a bundle of "widespread ideals, fantasies, and desires" instrumentalized by dominant male groups that claim to embody them.[17] When this masculine code intersects with the gender values honored by subordinate groups, the dominant group secures enhanced cultural legitimacy. Their complicity, in turn, affirms and reproduces a patriarchal gender order that also grants them a social and political "dividend." One of the analytical merits of *hegemonic masculinity* as a concept is its attention to the historicity of gender. Kühne's great achievement has been to reconcile the *longue durée* elements of German military culture with the more immediate racial preoccupations of the Nazi *Volksgemeinschaft* (people's community). His striking opening topos of SS

[12]Helmke Jan Keden, "'Kommst du auch zum Kaffeeklatsch?' Ein Beitrag zur ‚Arbeitersängerbewegung' im Nationalsozialismus," *International Journal of Musicology* 8 (1999): 301-20. On labor movement traditions, see Inge Lammel, *Arbeitermusikkultur in Deutschland 1844–1945* (Leipzig: Deutscher Verlag für Musik, 1984).

[13]Guido Fackler, "Cultural Behaviour and the Invention of Traditions: Music and Musical Practices in the Early Concentration Camps, 1933-1936/7," *Journal of Contemporary History* 45, no. 3 (2010): 601-27.

[14]Rosel Kirchhoff, *Am Lagertor: Gesellschaftskritischer Roman aus dem zwanzigsten Jahrhundert in dreiunddreizig Bildern* (Munich: Bayerland Verlag, 1972), 26.

[15]Thomas Kühne, *The Rise and Fall of Comradeship: Hitler's Soldiers, Male Bonding and Mass Violence in the Twentieth Century* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2017).

[16]See the cogent stocktaking in R. W. Connell and James Messerschmidt, "Hegemonic Masculinity: Rethinking the Concept," *Gender & Society* 19, no. 2 (2005): 829–59. For some mixed applications, see James W. Messerschmidt, "Engendering Gendered Knowledge: Assessing the Academic Appropriation of Hegemonic Masculinity," *Men and Masculinities* 15, no. 1 (2012): 56-76.

[17]Connell and Messerschmidt, "Hegemonic Masculinity," 838.

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Obersturmführer Walter Hauck pushing a baby carriage registers a male whose masculine capital as a senior officer *and* father in the ardently pronatalist, racially select SS permits him to explore a particularly extensive range of social behaviors. The SA's regulations against this behavior—issued in the year following the so-called Röhm purge of June 1934—reflected its much more ambiguous public gendering.[18] But SA men, SS men, and *Wehrmacht* soldiers alike rallied under the cultural banner of a protean "hard" masculinity, which legitimized the patriarchal Nazi *Männerstaat*.

Far less persuasive, in my view, is Kühne's argument that (some) comradely behaviors were coded feminine within the military group. The point that masculinity is not simply a repudiation of femininity is well taken and an important rejoinder to Klaus Theweleit's *Male Fantasies*. But it is difficult to see how soldierly behaviors potentially incongruent with the ideal of "hard" masculinity would have been construed as feminine. In a patriarchal environment, only socially devalued characteristics are likely to be coded female. Research on hegemonic masculinity consistently finds that all masculinities, privileged or subordinate, are construed *relative* to femininity in the superordinate patriarchal order.[19] A number of Kühne's examples also fail to convince empirically. Hauck's pram-pushing was evidently not regarded as a feminine ritual in the SS. *Wehrmacht* officers' "empathy" toward their men looks a great deal more like functional military paternalism than anything likely to be "coded femininely." It is certainly worth asking why positive emotional ties between soldiers would be any more interpreted as feminine than those between male friends or relatives. And the proposition, via Uta Frevert, that a military unit's second-in-command necessarily adopted a "clearly restrained demeanor" invokes a simple, deterministic account of social action at variance with Kühne's otherwise nuanced and sophisticated conception of masculinity. The barracks and dugouts of the *Wehrmacht* were certainly suffused with the vocabulary of femininity, but as a rhetorical tool of *Manneszucht* (male discipline) rather than the construction of male comradeship. Redolent of Westermann's discussion of alcohol and paramilitarism, it was the *opponents* of the cult of male comradeship—in this case, the writers Sebastian Haffner and Henrich Böll—who depicted its sentimental elements as unmasculine or effeminate. Kühne's notion of protean masculinity remains a promising analytical device for uncovering the hierarchy of masculinities in the *Wehrmacht*, but the hypothesis that it also "allowed men to switch back and forth between manliness and effeminacy" requires considerably more evidence.

Jason Crouthamel's article builds on his important research on masculinity and sexuality in the imperial army during World War I. He draws on little used and revealing records in the Berlin *Landesarchiv* of the interrogations of war veterans arrested by the Gestapo and criminal police during the post-Röhm crackdown on public displays of male homosexuality. Ernst Röhm's disgrace, which followed years of homophobic propaganda against the SA from the political Left, freed the regime of any need to equivocate on the axiomatic relationship between heterosexuality and soldierly masculinity. To be sure, wartime service was already an unreliable marker of exalted masculine status, as the experiences of German-Jewish veterans (addressed in Michael Geheran's contribution to this special issue), even during the Weimar

[18]For an excellent study, see Andrew Wackerfuss, *Stormtrooper Families: Homosexuality and Community in the Early Nazi Movement* (New York: Harrington Park Press, 2015).

[19]This is stressed throughout Messerschmidt, "Engendering Gendered Knowledge."

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Republic, remind us.[20] But the pace of change in 1934 was bewildering for Crouthamel's subjects, who were making judicial calculations in encounters with increasingly arbitrary and activist state institutions. Their interview strategies did not pay off at sentencing, but they starkly illustrated the dynamics of hegemonic masculinity. Resisting their pathologization by the regime as individuals, these men nevertheless affirmed both its valorization of soldiering as the zenith of manliness and its construal of male homosexuality as aberrant and immoral. As Crouthamel's survey of Weimar writers makes clear, the topic of martial homosexuality locked into historical anxieties about the moral hazard of the *Männerbund* that were not peculiar to Germany, even if German thinkers were unusual in spinning an entire metaphysics around them.[21] It was one with which the SS would grapple for the next decade.[22] These veterans' war records constituted a rebuke to the Nazi regime's undifferentiated homophobia. They also subverted its cloying emphasis on the pleasures of martial male togetherness by depicting homosexual conduct as its situational product. The incendiary implications of Paul von B.'s assertion that his predilections reflected a "very comradely" *habitus* become fully visible only in this context.

Like Paul von B., the Jewish veterans explored in the article by Geheran discovered that the Iron Cross was a depreciating gender asset in the "racial state." Geheran offers a sensitive reading of Jewish men's gendered defiance in the face of Nazi persecution, which powerfully contests the trope of passivity popularized by Hannah Arendt and Raul Hilberg in the 1960s. As he notes, the outstanding scholarship that has done so much to recover the lived experience of Jewish women under Nazism has tended to overshadow the agency of Jewish men. The fruitful focus on everyday social practice reveals self-confident males resisting the regime's project to unman them as the Jewish "other." At least in the early years of the dictatorship, military credentials still proved a resonant rhetorical and cultural resource. Geheran's material on Erich Leyens's defiance during the antisemitic boycott sharply highlights his personal *Handlungsspielraum*, or agency. It is equally significant that local citizens and newspapers celebrated his self-assertion, even several months after the Nazi "seizure" of power. Masculine soldierly capital evidently trumped a supposedly pervasive "eliminationist antisemitism."[23]

The "coping strategies" of these veterans recall the social conception of *Resistenz* developed by historians at the Munich Institute for Contemporary History in the 1970s.[24] In distinction to acts of organized political "resistance" (*Widerstand*), this focused on civil disobedience and the warding off by individuals of the Nazi regime's "total" claims on society. The objection to this latitudinous understanding of resistance is that it did not amount to any practical threat to the state. What Geheran demonstrates so impressively is

[20] Tim Grady, *The German-Jewish Soldiers of the First World War in History and Memory* (Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 2011).

[21] Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick, *Between Men: English Literature and Homosocial Desire* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1985); John Tosh, "What Should Historians Do With Masculinity? Reflections on Nineteenth-Century Britain," *History Workshop Journal* 38, no. 1 (1994): 187.

[22] Geoffrey J. Giles, "The Denial of Homosexuality: Same-Sex Incidents in Himmler's SS and Police," in *Sexuality and German Fascism*, ed. Dagmar Herzog (New York: Berghahn, 2005), 257-70; Christopher Dillon, *Dachau and the SS: A Schooling in Violence* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2015), 184-86, 213-14.

[23] Daniel J. Goldhagen, *Hitler's Willing Executioners: Ordinary Germans and the Holocaust* (Abacus: London, 1996).

[24] For a nuanced assessment, see Ian Kershaw, *The Nazi Dictatorship: Problems and Perspectives of Interpretation*, 4th ed. (London: Bloomsbury, 2000), 192-207.

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how these resistive actions were constitutive of gender subjectivities. His subjects demarcated a subjective space for the performance of gender. Their strategies remind us that masculinity is a social status dependent on constant assertion and affirmation.[25]

Echoing the pioneering research of Kim Wünschmann, Geheran finds Jewish men deploying these resistive strategies in the traumatic environment of the concentration camps after the November 1938 *Kristallnacht*. Positive comradely gestures—not, it seems, coded feminine—provided emotional sustenance to peers and masculine scripts for veterans, who sought to filter the camp situation through the prism of their past war experiences. The quasi-military rituals of camp life offered them scope to demonstrate manly competencies. Indeed, the opportunities to do so would have been more extensive were it not for the extraordinary overcrowding in the camps, which precluded most of the barracks hazing that ordinarily framed inmates' lives.[26] SS guards schooled in hoary antisemitic tropes about the service-evading Jew were nonplussed when confronted with military passes and medals. The historian must, of course, be vigilant with bullish, retrospective inmate accounts of the camp experience. These are, as already noted, a form of masculine self-affirmation. But there is sufficient corroboration from non-Jewish inmate testimony for all this to contest the characterization of the camps as sites of "absolute" power.[27] Instead, it illustrates the more equivocal and brittle power dynamic of hegemony. On the one hand, like the veterans discussed by Crouthamel, these Jewish men personified the internal contradictions in the Nazi gospel of the *völkisch* warrior male. In their preoccupation with military service, on the other, they validated a patriarchal order underpinned by the equation of masculinity with soldiering. Even as they assailed the militarist *lèse-majesté* of the camp SS, they offered legitimation to the militarist ideology.

Patrick Farges's article also notes Jewish male affirmation of militarism—this time in the Zionist cult of the soldier-pioneer. He offers a fascinating analysis of the masculine ideals and self-conceptions of German-Jewish migrants (*Yekkes*) to British Mandatory Palestine in the 1930s. Farges's approach differs from that of the other contributors to this special issue in its close attention to the bodily rhetoric of masculine display. Focusing on German-speaking Jews born between 1910 and 1925, he explores how "new body postures and gestures" constituted an aspirational "cultural repertoire" for the Zionist "New Jew." Farges draws here on Pierre Bourdieu's theorizing of *habitus*, a set of (pre)dispositions, capital, and capacities acquired by individuals through socialization.[28] The concept of *habitus* traverses the space between social environment and personal agency. Every individual has their own *habitus*, and this constrains the repertoire of gendered performances available to them. Men make situationally specific choices from a learned repertoire of masculine behaviours. *Habitus* is,

[25]Tosh, "What Should Historians Do With Masculinity?"

[26]Dillon, *Dachau*, 165.

[27]Kim Wünschmann, *Before Auschwitz: Jewish Prisoners in the Prewar Concentration Camps* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2015), 196-210; Wolfgang Sofsky, *The Order of Terror: The Concentration Camp* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1997). Sofsky's inattention to gender is criticized in Jane Caplan, "Gender and the Concentration Camps," in *The Concentration Camps in Nazi Germany: The New Histories*, ed. Jane Caplan and Nikolaus Wachsmann (London: Routledge, 2010), 82–107.

[28]Pierre Bourdieu, *In Other Words: Towards a Reflexive Sociology*, trans. M. Adamson (Cambridge: Polity, 1994), 168-71. On Bourdieu's development of the concept, see Karl Maton, "Habitus," in *Pierre Bourdieu: Key Concepts*, ed. Michael Grenfell (Durham: Acumen, 2008), 47-68. For sociological applications to male concentration camp guards, see Sofsky, *Order*; Marc Buggeln, *Arbeit und Gewalt: Das Außenlagersystem des KZ Neuengamme* (Göttingen: Wallstein, 2009).

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therefore, historically specific and conditioned. It also tends to be extremely difficult for historians to recover. As opposed to the Australasian sociologists, for example, who have driven so much of the research on social masculinities, historians cannot conduct field observations, surveys, and focus groups with their subjects. They can, at best, glimpse *habitus* in the historical record through photographs, film, newspapers, and eyewitness accounts. Ulrike Pilarczyk's powerful interdisciplinary analysis of Zionist youth photographs points to the analytical potential here.[29]

I am less convinced that oral histories recorded in the 1990s can tell us much about everyday social practices in the 1930s and 1940s. As Farges concedes, the informants were reconstructing their youthful selves back in a highly emotive and mythologized era of Zionist history.[30] Handled carefully, however, they certainly provide the residue of gender *ideals* and, in this case, their entwinement with ethnicity and power. The muscular *Yekke* body authorized patriarchal Zionist supremacy, while his bodily deportment and manner of speaking were enmeshed in competing sets of ideas about what constituted desirable masculine characteristics. Farges's material on the gendered interactions between the "civilized" settler and "primitive" Arab masculinities is particularly compelling. As he notes, these encounters were framed in commonplace tropes of European settler colonialism. But it seems equally striking that Zionist discourses on Arab masculinities so closely resembled those of antisemites on Jewish manhood. Arab males were depicted as crafty, swindling, cowardly, and indolent. They were also invested with an untamed masculine character typical of antisemitic stereotypes. This reminds us that seemingly fixed gender stereotypes can prove "protean" in practice, available to diverse constituencies as a form of cultural disarmament. Even as they repudiated Prussian conceptions of soldierly masculinity, these soldier pioneers constructed a very familiar antitype.

Elissa Mailänder's especially memorable article is also marked by her attention to longer-term gender ideals following the defeat and disgrace of Nazi conceptions of masculinity. It stands out in this special issue for being the one contribution to grapple with femininities in the plural, as opposed to a non-pluralistic notion of a subordinated female "other." Femininity remains comparatively underconceptualized in the sociology of gender, and this includes the role played by women in the construction of masculinities.[31] Mailänder's finely textured case studies involving three "hyperlibidinous" males illustrate the potential for a more integrated historical scholarship. The female protagonists in each case demonstrate an emphatic personal agency, drugging unwanted husbands and abruptly terminating strategically unpromising relationships. Even the polygamous Professor M.'s wife ostensibly supported his adulterous sexuality, at least initially. Mailänder shows that female self-assertion occasioned much unmanly whining and self-pity. These women embodied competing

[29]Ulrike Pilarczyk, *Gemeinschaft in Bildern. Jüdische Jugendbewegung und zionistische Erziehungspraxis in Deutschland und Palästina/Israel* (Göttingen: Wallstein, 2009).

[30]This recalls the methodologically problematic use of 1990s testimonies in Eric Johnson and Karl-Heinz Reuband, *What We Knew: Terror, Mass Murder, and Everyday Life in Nazi Germany* (London: John Murray, 2005).

[31]Mimi Schippers, "Recovering the Feminine Other: Masculinity, Femininity, and Gender Hegemony," *Theory and Society* 36, no. 1 (2007): 85-102; Shelley Budgeon, "The Dynamics of Gender Hegemony: Femininities, Masculinities and Social Change," *Sociology* 48, no. 2 (2014): 317–34; Carrie Paechter, "Rethinking the possibilities for hegemonic femininity: Exploring a Gramscian framework," *Women's Studies International Forum* 68 (2018): 121–28.

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ideals of femininity during an era of remarkable flux in a gender order that had not yet alighted upon the "configuration of gender practice" that authorizes masculine hegemony.[32] The ensuing hegemony of the industrious *paterfamilias* was not assured, and it is easy to see why West German feminists looked back regretfully on this liminal period as a "lost opportunity."[33] Mailänder's case studies register the decline in female willingness to validate male authority previously identified by Elizabeth Heineman.[34] Much like the storied "new woman," these females embraced a self-reliance and independence that were traditionally coded masculine. Marianne had the will and financial capital not to conform to the culturally sanctioned maternalist femininity promoted from the early 1950s. Her preference for female comradeship was also a marker of dissonant femininity—if not quite what an emergent body of theoretical literature dubs a "pariah femininity."[35] As always, however, a distinction must be drawn between social constructions and social practice, between what women *do* at any point in history, and what they were held to be doing. Contemporary discourse constructed women like Marianne as benighted and "standing alone," the antitype to fulfilled domestic femininity.[36] As Mailänder's research reveals, this could, at the level of lived experience, scarcely have been further from the truth.

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The contributors to this special issue of *Central European History* demonstrate that historians of masculinity in Nazi Germany have moved far beyond the recovery of men's activities and experiences demanded by Burleigh and Wippermann in 1991. They analyze the histories of males and masculinities to reveal the dynamics of power and domination in a racial dictatorship "structured and disciplined by extreme and malevolent concepts of identity and difference."[37] This is not to assert that the vast majority of men's lives in the Third Reich *have* been recovered. Innovative as the essays in this volume are, apart from Mailänder, they focus either on "pariah" masculinities (German Jews and alleged homosexuals) or on the already well-established subfield of martial masculinity. As Kühne notes in the Introduction, we still know comparatively little about civilian masculinities or gendering institutions beyond the paramilitary formations and the army. The competition between the early Nazi regime and other forms of cultural authority—in particular, public institutions and the churches—has not yet been examined through a gendered lens. The broader relationship between masculinity and religion is only beginning to be unpicked.[38] Another promising area for deeper research is sport, mentioned fleetingly only in Mailänder's piece, but a critical site for the production and dissemination of exemplary bodily masculinity.[39] Above all, there

[32]Connell, *Masculinities*, 77.

[33]Elizabeth D. Heineman, *What Difference Does a Husband Make? Women and Marital Status in Nazi and Postwar Germany* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1999), 76.

[34]Ibid., 108-36.

[35]See the studies in note 28.

[36]Heineman brilliantly explores the "woman standing alone" trope throughout *What Difference Does a Husband Make?*

[37]Caplan, "Gender," 84.

[38]Patrick Pasture and Jan Art, eds., *Gender and Christianity in Modern Europe: Beyond the Feminization Thesis* (Leuven: Leuven University Press, 2012); Barbara Stollberg-Rilinger, ed., *"Als Mann und Frau schuf er sie": Religion und Geschlecht* (Würzburg: Ergon-Verlag, 2014).

[39]Daniel Wildmann, *Der veränderbare Körper. Jüdische Turner, Männlichkeit und das Wiedergewinnen von Geschichte in Deutschland um 1900* (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2009); Nadine Rossol, *Performing the Nation: Sports, Spectacles, and Aesthetics in Germany, 1926–1936* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010);

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are immense analytical opportunities for historians in shifting the scale of analysis from the artificial, imagined canvas of the nation state to the cities, regions, and localities where masculinities were "constructed in the arenas of face-to-face interaction of families, organizations, and immediate communities."[40] Scholars of gender and National Socialism have also moved in the other direction, toward transnational and global articulations of gender identities. Elizabeth Harvey, Nancy Reagin, and Wendy Lower have provided compelling studies of German imperial femininities in Nazi-occupied Europe.[41] Uncovering the "geography of masculinities" in the wartime Nazi empire would similarly illuminate the intersection of gender, war, and ethnicity in the representation and practices of domination.[42]

In a celebrated theoretical intervention over thirty years ago, Joan Scott argued that historians were unable to recover the lived experience of gender and should thus focus instead on the gendering of discourse and symbols as primary resources for the legitimation of power.[43] Many cultural historians heeded this call, but others were concerned that an exclusive focus on representation would obscure the quotidian social operation of patriarchy.[44] Fortunately, all the contributors to this volume pursue an integrative approach that seeks to reconcile cultural representations of masculinity with the social practices of gender. This research strategy is both felicitous and methodologically sensible, because the two are indeed intimately intertwined. As the sociologist Shelley Budgeon has noted, "representational practices are recursively grounded in the concrete social interactions of everyday life."[45] This insight offers particular opportunities to anchor gender more securely in the mainstream of the historiography of Germany, where the "history of everyday life" (*Alltagsgeschichte*) has such a strong intellectual pedigree. It is regrettable that advocacy is still necessary here. In a recent edited volume showcasing fresh and innovative research on the microhistory of the Holocaust, few of the seventeen contributors had anything to say about gender, which, as a research *desideratum*, is also entirely absent from the editors' introduction.[46] Even now, it seems, the history of gender struggles to escape bureaucratic categorization as a research specialism. As Jane Caplan has warned: "gendered perspectives have been unable to permeate any field of historical research without a struggle to assert their relevance in each successive case … [A]chievements may well be partial and provisional."[47]

Veronica Springmann, "Boxen im Konzentrationslager: Erzählmuster und Interpretationen," in *Männlichkeitskonstruktionen im Nationalsozialismus*, ed. Anette Dietrich and Ljiljana Heise (Frankfurt/Main: Peter Lang, 2012), 185-200; Bernd Bahro, *Der SS-Sport: Organisation–Funktion–Bedeutung* (Paderborn: Schöningh, 2013).

[40]Connell and Messerschmidt, "Hegemonic Masculinity," 849.

[41]Elizabeth Harvey, *Women and the Nazi East: Agents and Witnesses of Germanization* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2003); Nancy Reagin, *Sweeping the German Nation: Domesticity and National Identity in Germany, 1870–1945* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007), 181-217; Wendy Lower, *Hitler's Furies: German Women in the Nazi Killing Fields* (Boston, MA: Houghton Mifflin, 2013).

[42]Connell and Messerschmidt, "Hegemonic Masculinity," 849-51.

[43]Joan W. Scott, "Gender: A Useful Category of Historical Analysis," *American Historical Review* 91, no. 5 (1986): 1053–75.

[44]For a lucid discussion, see Sonya O. Rose, *What is Gender History?* (Cambridge: Polity, 2010), 102-5, 112-15.

[45]Budgeon, "The Dynamics of Gender Hegemony," 319.

[46]Claire Zalc and Tal Bruttmann, eds., *Microhistories of the Holocaust* (New York: Berghahn, 2017).

[47]Caplan, "Gender," 83-85.

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Still, attention to the history of masculinity does not simply enrich historians' apprehension of the past. It is intimately bound up with the operation of power and enmeshed in other forms of identity construction. Indeed, it only has meaning in this wider context of identity markers.[48] A more concerted, holistic conception of these intersections will necessarily entail new forms of interdisciplinarity and a greater appetite among historians of Nazism to pursue comparative and transnational approaches. This is critical if the innovative scholarship on display in this volume is to speak to wider audiences and contribute to a broader historicization of masculinity.

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[48] Tosh, "The History of Masculinity," 23.

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