

source of oppression for women, children, and men. That said, these observations do not detract from the overall quality of the work.

Most heartening, throughout the study, Reynolds retains her commitment to giving voice to women who are otherwise silenced and unheard, and their voices are woven into and throughout her narrative. The result is a rich, in-depth, accessible, and often moving study of Caribbean women's experiences of mothering, their struggles, and triumphs. Significantly, what emerges with great clarity is their individual and collective agency and indomitable will to challenge racial inequality and injustice in order to create meaningful existences for themselves, their families, and communities.

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Sex after fascism: memory and morality in twentieth-century Germany

Dagmar Herzog; Princeton University Press, Princeton/Oxford, 2005, ISBN 0-691-11702-0, £21.50 (Hbk)

'The personal is political'. In Germany as elsewhere in the Western World this slogan motivated a broad-based attack on the social and sexual conservatism of the 1950s and the post-war political atmosphere that a younger generation had come to find oppressive and unbearable. It has become a commonplace of progressive scholarship to note the political power of this phrase and the successes that feminists, gay and lesbian movements, and broader campaigns for social rights have achieved under its banner. But Dagmar Herzog's book faces proponents of the strategy to politicize bodily and especially sexual needs with uncomfortable truths. *Sex after Fascism* tells a specifically German story about the trauma of memory in post-fascist society and the particular 'force and fury' of the sexual revolution in a country where the guilt of genocidal crimes became intertwined with sexual politics. And although Herzog is extraordinarily successful in destroying commonly held assumptions about the trajectory of the history of sexuality in Germany, her book demands a broader audience beyond those interested in German history. It should be read by anyone exploring the relationship between sex and politics, anyone researching the social and political impact of historical memory, and anyone seeking to understand the successes and the failures of the make-love-not-war generation.

Herzog initially set out to examine the motivations and arguments of student activists and sexual revolutionaries in the still emerging West German democracy of the 1960s. She quickly discovered, however, that those calling loudly for free

love and sexual emancipation were immersed (or at least thought they were immersed) in the history of the Third Reich and that her investigation would have to begin earlier to make sense of how sexual politics had become intertwined with the question of the relationship between pleasure and evil. Beginning in the late 1960s, members of Germany's New Left, most of whom were born too late to have experienced Nazism, began to argue that the Nazis had deployed sexual repression to produce 'authoritarian personalities' – people willing to commit violence and to acquiesce to the demands of a murderous regime. These arguments, Herzog finds, were not based on a sound evaluation of experience under Nazism but were rather a response to the specific ways that members of the war generation – the parents of New Left activists – were coping with actual memories and the guilt of association with the Third Reich. For the two decades after Konrad Adenauer's Christian Democratic Union came to power in 1949, political discourse was dominated by those who wished to master the Nazi past (or obfuscate their own complicities) by rhetorically replacing murder (genocide) with sex as the primary locus of human sin. Christian commentators and policy makers in the 1950s succeeded in overcoming the sexual tumult of the early post-World War II years and creating an atmosphere of extreme sexual conservatism that included a crackdown on homosexuality and other 'perversities' and a rhetorical sanctification of the ideals of family and motherhood. They argued that the Nazis had undermined German civilization through the promotion of licentious behaviour and promiscuity and that only a return to traditional family values could guarantee the survival of freedom and democracy.

The generation of progressive intellectuals that came of age in the late 1960s reacted to these arguments by denying their historical validity. Partly out of personal resentment for restrictive upbringings, and partly in rapturous adoption of the theories of Weimar sexologist Wilhelm Reich and other Freudian Marxists (including a selective reading of the Frankfurt School), the New Left argued that National Socialism was the original source for the authoritarian and sexually repressive attitudes with which they had grown up. They linked sexual repression to Nazism so convincingly that scholars ever since have confidently portrayed National Socialism as the apotheosis of state attempts to control and constrain human sexuality. But Herzog's meticulous investigation shatters this neat narrative. It reveals that post-war representatives of both the Protestant and Catholic churches, despite their own recent complicity in Nazi crimes and their self-serving unwillingness to face the enormity of the Holocaust, were actually presenting the more accurate version of sexual life in the Third Reich. The Nazis, Herzog convincingly demonstrates, had developed an ingenious social programme of simultaneous 'incitement and disavowal': they spoke a language of sexual restraint and purity for those who wanted to believe in it, but they promoted extra-marital sexual activity in a variety of ways and as part of a conscious strategy to seduce citizens into following the goals of the regime. The New Left's

arguments about Nazi prudery must thus be seen, she insists, as articulating an anti-postfascist critique. Quite unselfconsciously, the New Left was reacting only to the sexual mores that their parents had adopted since the collapse of Nazism in 1945. They neither explored nor even really wished to know the details about what sex had looked like under fascism. The Holocaust was invoked as a means of reinforcing the point, sometimes at the risk of extreme insensitivity to its victims. These insensitivities were displayed not only by Christians who compared abortion to the Holocaust, but also by feminists whose justified struggles with their erstwhile colleagues in the New Left often involved the argument that women had been among the primary victims of Nazism.

Herzog's dismantling of the New Left's argument is utterly convincing and eloquently written. Her critique is simultaneously fair-minded and unrelentingly critical of all sides of the debate. Eschewing all temptations to simplify, she skewers the hypocrisy of both camps, while remaining appreciative of the humane and progressive impulses in the New Left and the diversity of views, strength of conviction and ultimate pragmatism of Christian commentators. She reinforces her point about the complexity and political nature of memory and its relationship to sexuality in a chapter on the GDR that emphasizes how a more future-oriented, less commercialized, less sexist and less overtly politicized approach to sexuality was consciously integrated into state legitimization projects, and the personal life stories and memories of East German citizens. Even in this chapter, Herzog's source base includes a wide diversity of scholarly and popular literature with few archival sources. This is both a strength and a weakness. Post-World War II German society is described for us in vivid and convincing detail, and groups with cultural clout but little formal political power are appropriately credited with motivating massive shifts in public opinion. The integration of more archival sources might have provided insight into how these cultural transformations were translated into shifts in law and policy. But this is a quibble. *Sex after Fascism* is path-breaking and field-defining. No specialist in the history of sexuality should ignore it.

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**Transforming masculinities: men, cultures, bodies,
power, sex and love**

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Transforming Masculinities is presented as a multidisciplinary text, which critically explores the ways in which men and masculinities are commonly