

## *Genders and Sexualities in History*

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Palgrave Macmillan's series, *Genders and Sexualities in History*, aims to accommodate and foster new approaches to historical research in the fields of genders and sexualities. The series will promote world-class scholarship that concentrates upon the interconnected themes of genders, sexualities, religions/religiosity, civil society, class formations, politics and war.

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*Surviving Hitler's War: Family Life in Germany 1939–48* is a groundbreaking revision of the burgeoning scholarship in history and sociology on the effects of Nazism, war, and post-war reconstruction upon gender and the traditional nuclear family in Germany. In this seminal book, Hester Vaizey provides a meticulously researched, incisive, and moving account of the remarkable tenacity of emotional bonds in the traditional family unit, in spite of the invasiveness of Nazi policy in the private sphere, extended periods of family separation during the war and its aftermath, and the traumas of family reunion. Through examination of the emotional and practical side of family life in Germany, Vaizey deconstructs hugely influential scholarly paradigms in German scholarship for this crucial period, such as the 'Hour of the Woman', and notions that post-Nazi German masculinity was particularly ill equipped to cope with the realities of defeat. The book contrasts evidence of emotional realities, with the institutional, representational, and demographic evidence that has dominated scholarship to date. *Surviving Hitler's War* recasts the history of German families in a radical new light, and repositions our understanding of society in the new West Germany after 1948. In common with all volumes in the 'Genders and Sexualities in History' series, Hester Vaizey's *Surviving Hitler's War* presents a multifaceted and meticulously researched scholarly study, and is a sophisticated contribution to our understanding of the past.

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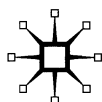
# Surviving Hitler's War

Family Life in Germany, 1939–48

Hester Vaizey

*Postdoctoral researcher with a Hanseatic Scholarship courtesy of the Alfred Toepfer Stiftung in Hamburg*

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*In memory of my grandmother, Mary McGlashan,  
who nurtured my interest in the past*

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# Preface

Used to climbing into his mother's bed every morning, a young boy, Rolf, was most put out when one day his father returned home from war and sat on the end of the bed. Perhaps fearful that the close relationship with his mother would be threatened by his father's return, he shouted at his father 'Go away! Go away! Can't you see that this space is taken?' A chance reading of this anecdote got me thinking about the impact of war on family relationships. How did men, women and children in Germany experience wartime separation and postwar reunion? What follows seeks to address this question.

It gives me great pleasure to thank all the people who helped bring this book to fruition. I would like to thank the Arts and Humanities Research Council who supported my doctoral research at Cambridge University and the Alfred Toepfer Stiftung FVS whose generous funding enabled me to turn my PhD into this book. Trips to the archives were also made possible by grants from the German History Society and the Sir John Plumb Memorial Fund.

I owe many thanks to the numerous archivists across Germany whose assistance allowed me to gather the material for this research. In particular, I should like to mention Gerhard Seitz and the volunteers at the German Diary Archive in Emmendingen, and Thomas Jander at the Field Post Letters Archive in Berlin.

I am thankful for the permission to use some of my research already accepted for publication in *European History Quarterly*, 'Husbands and Wives: An Evaluation of the Emotional Impact of World War Two in Germany', and in the *Journal of Contemporary History*, 'Parents and Children in World War Two Germany: An Inter-Generational Perspective on Wartime Separation'. I am also grateful to the following for granting me permission to quote from material to which they hold the copyright: Das Bundesarchiv Deutschland; Das Archiv des Diakonischen Werkes der EKD, Berlin; Das Deutsches Tagebucharchiv, Emmendingen; Der Allensbach Institut für Demoskopie, Allensbach am Bodensee; Das Statistisches Landesamt, Berlin, Das Statistisches Bundesamt Deutschland, and Emmy Werner. I was unable to trace the copyright holder of picture 8, which I found in the now-folded magazine *Constanze*. To anyone whose copyright I have unwittingly infringed I offer my sincere apologies.

On numerous occasions, input from others has made me think again. Members of the German History Workshop in Cambridge provided an invaluable sounding board for my ideas. Fruitful discussions of my work at the Women's History Group in New York and the Centre for the History of Emotions in Berlin also made me consider the subject from new angles. I would like to thank Christopher Clark, Ute Frevert, Elizabeth Harvey, Mary Nolan and Nick Stargardt, all of whom offered helpful suggestions at various stages of this project. Michelle D'Arcy, Christian Goeschel, Victoria Harris, David Motadel, Tom Neuhaus, Catherine Orme, Astrid Swensen and Elizabeth Wakely also kindly commented on early drafts. Above all, I am hugely indebted to my PhD supervisor, Richard Evans, for whose steadfast support and encouragement I will be forever grateful.

A number of friends took a particular interest in my work. The wise words of Angela Abmeier, Michelle D'Arcy, Catherine Orme, Matilda Smith, Gardner Thompson and Elizabeth Wrangham urged me on when I needed it. Michael Strang and his team at Palgrave have also been extremely supportive of this project.

Throughout this project my partner David Tinnion has been a constant source of wit and wisdom. The bonhomie of my parents and brother too has provided a welcome antidote to the seriousness of the task at hand. Each of the people I have mentioned played an important part in bringing this book together: I am grateful to them all.

# Abbreviations

ADW	( <i>Archiv des Diakonischen Werkes – Innere Mission</i> , Berlin)
BA	( <i>Bundesarchiv</i> , Koblenz)
BDM	( <i>Bund Deutscher Mädel</i> , or League of German Girls)
CARE	(Cooperative of American Remittances to Europe)
CRALOG	(Council of Relief Agencies Licensed to Operate in Germany)
DTA	( <i>Deutsches Tagebucharchiv</i> , Emmendingen)
DZI	( <i>Deutsches Zentralinstitut für Soziale Fragen</i> , Berlin)
HJ	( <i>Hitler Jugend</i> , or Hitler Youth)
KA	( <i>Kempowskiarchiv, Akademie der Kunst</i> , Berlin)
KdF	( <i>Kraft durch Freude</i> , or the Strength Through Joy organization)
KPD	( <i>Kommunistische Partei Deutschlands</i> or The Communist Party of Germany)
LAB	( <i>Landesarchiv</i> , Berlin)
MKB	( <i>Museum für Kommunikation</i> , Berlin)
NSF	( <i>Nationalsozialistischer Frauenbund</i> or the German Women's League)
OMGUS	(Office of Military Government, United States)
PoW	(Prisoner of War)
RSHA	( <i>Reichssicherheitshauptamt</i> or Reich Security Head Office)
SA	( <i>Sturmabteilung</i> or Storm Division)
SD	( <i>Sicherheitsdienst</i> , or Security Service)
SED	( <i>Sozialistische Einheitspartei Deutschlands</i> , or Socialist Unity Party of Germany)
SPD	( <i>Sozialdemokratische Partei Deutschlands</i> or The Social Democratic Party of Germany)
SRS	(Statistical Research Sample)
SS	( <i>Schutzstaffel</i> or Nazi Protective Squadron)
StaAH	( <i>Staatsarchiv</i> , Hamburg)