

the reunification of Germany in 1989 may have put an end to the experiment in East German communism, but its historical assessment is far from over. Where most of the literature over the past two decades has been driven by the desire to uncover the relationship between power and resistance, complicity and consent, more recent scholarship tends to concentrate on the everyday history of East German citizens.

This volume builds on the latest literature by exploring the development and experience of life in East Germany, with a particular view toward addressing the question: What did modernity mean for the East German state and society? As such, the collection moves beyond the conceptual divide between state-level politics and everyday life to sharply focus on the specific contours of the GDR's unique experiment in Cold War socialism. What unites all the essays is the question how the very tensions around "socialist modernity" shaped the views, memories, and actions of East Germans over four decades.

An impressive volume drawing together rich, diverse essays by some of the most interesting, well-known, and experienced scholars on the GDR in the field, on both sides of the Atlantic."

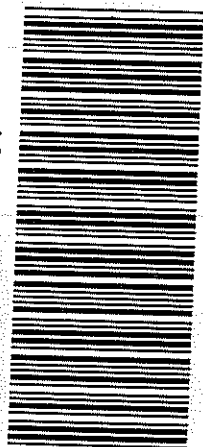
Dr. Jan Palmowski, Senior Lecturer in European Studies at King's College London, and Review Editor of *German History*

Delving into many sides of the GDR modern, Pence and Betts present both new empirical evidence and more insightful theoretical perspectives. The idea of 'Socialist Modern' provides an excellent conceptual framework; the focus on culture fills a hole in the literature, the introduction is theoretically sophisticated and well-grounded in the historiography, and the span and heterogeneity of the articles are impressive."

Monica Harsch, Associate Professor of History, Carnegie Mellon University

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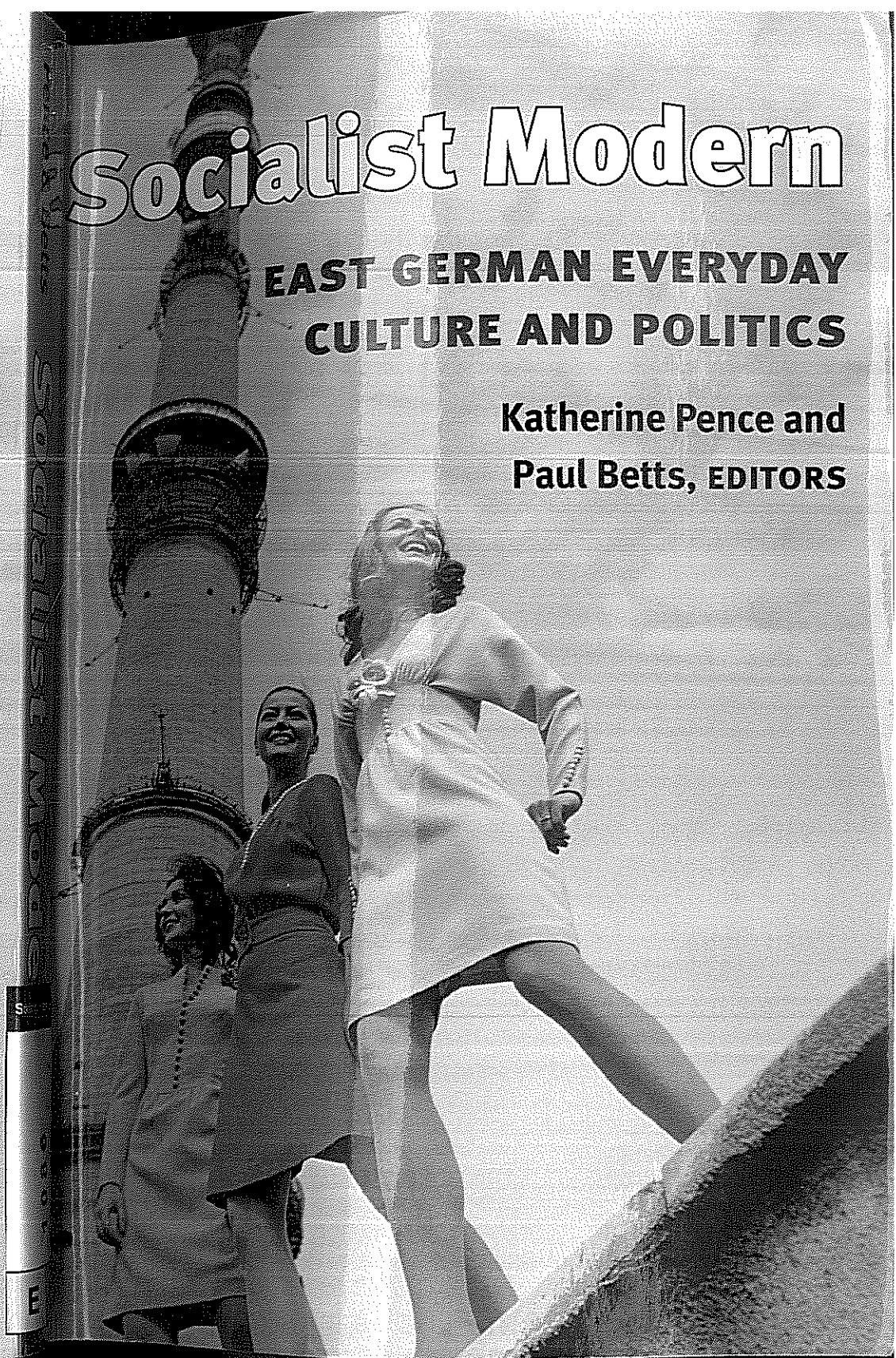
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Socialist Modern

EAST GERMAN EVERYDAY CULTURE AND POLITICS

Katherine Pence and
Paul Betts, EDITORS



Hanns Schwarz (Jena: Gustav Fischer, 1971), 87–91; Hans Szewezky and Ingrid Dreschler, "Untersuchungen von Alterssittlichkeitstätern," in *Kriminalität der Frau*, ed. Schwarz, 93–100; F. Barylla, "Zur Klinik und forensischen Psychiatrie der Pädophilie," *Psychiatrie, Neurologie, und medizinische Psychologie* 17 (1965): 217–21.

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115. Stephen Kotkin, *Magnetic Mountain: Stalinism as a Civilization* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1995).

116. See Greg Eghigian, Andreas Killen, and Christine Leuenberger, eds., *The Self as Project: Politics and the Human Sciences in the Twentieth Century*. Vol. 22, *Osiris* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2007).

117. Christine Leuenberger, "Constructions of the Berlin Wall: How Material Culture Is Used in Psychological Theory," *Social Problems* 53 (2006): 18–37.

118. I wish to thank Moritz Föllmer and Rüdiger Graf for raising this issue with me.

119. Albrecht Göschel, *Kontrast und Parallele—Kulturelle und politische Identitätsbildung ostdeutscher Generationen* (Stuttgart, Berlin, and Cologne: W. Kohlhammer, 1999). This appears to have been the case throughout Eastern Europe. See Katherine Verdery, *What Was Socialism and What Comes Next?* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1996), 61–82.

East Germany's Sexual Evolution

Dagmar Herzog

There was no sexual revolution in East Germany. Unlike West Germany, where the mid- to late 1960s saw a liberalization of the social and cultural landscape so dramatic that to many observers it seemed as though it had happened virtually overnight, East Germany experienced a far more gradual evolution of sexual mores. By the late 1960s, West Germany had been inundated by the commodification of sex in every facet of existence—from highly sexualized advertising to easily available hard-core pornography, from a constant stream of news reportage about sexual matters to sex enlightenment films and curricula and a culturewide discussion of nudity, adultery, and group sex. Market-driven voyeurism had become an inescapable part of everyday life in the West. By contrast—and although East Germany entered a period of sexual conservatism in the 1950s and the first half of the 1960s in many respects comparable to the sexual conservatism of West Germany in those years—there were already in the 1950s notable elements of liberality in East Germany that had no parallel in West Germany. These early liberal aspects of East German culture would have a decisive impact on the subsequent trajectory of sexual politics in the decades that followed.

In what did this liberality consist? One major difference between East and West Germany in the 1950s was not so much the extent of female labor force participation, although it was indeed somewhat higher in the East (since also in the West women worked outside the home to supplement the family's income while in the East there were still numerous women, especially in the older generations, who were solely housewives). Rather, the difference lay in the combination of institutional structures and strong rhetorical support in the East, which made women's work for wages not only possible but also much less guilt inducing. The double burden of

work for wages and household chores (or rather triple burden, if one added the demands of political participation in party- or workplace-linked organizations) did cause East German women in the course of the 1950s to retreat to more part-time work. But there is no question that the psychological misery induced in so many West German women in the 1950s (and also later) by the idealization of faithful, home-bound femininity and self-sacrificing wifedom and motherhood was much less evident in the East. East German women were continually told that they should improve and develop themselves through further studies, and men were enjoined to support this. Indeed, already in the 1950s, East German men were expressly encouraged to participate in housework and child rearing, a suggestion unthinkable in 1950s West Germany (where the message from the government and popular magazines alike was that a wife's whole purpose was to create a warm and nurturing home for her husband and children and to tend to her husband's little psychic wounds after his stressful day feeling underappreciated at work). The idea that a man might be the househusband and care for the baby and assist his wife through her studies was familiar enough in the East already in the mid-1950s that one author approvingly noted the phenomenon had become so prevalent a part of the landscape that one could "already recognize a certain type."¹

Beyond these economic and social factors, there were also the Socialist Unity Party (SED) regime's clear stances in defense of both premarital heterosexual activity and unwed motherhood. West Germany too had technically abolished legal discrimination against illegitimate children. But in the East, a push to end social discrimination and the culture of shame surrounding illegitimacy was a genuine government objective. In the West, by contrast, with its officially Christianized political culture under Christian Democratic Union (CDU) auspices, shaming was standard. Moreover, although in West and East Germany alike premarital heterosexual intercourse was practiced by a large majority of the population, West Germany in the 1950s and early 1960s saw a major campaign against premarital sex. This campaign was not only promoted by the Protestant and Catholic churches through sermons and sex advice tracts running into millions of copies. Christian perspectives also informed government policy, teacher education, and school curricula, and popular West German magazines too reinforced the idea that good girls did not permit premarital sex and that a gentlemanly young man should respect this. Girls were told that, if a boy really loved them, he would wait until the wedding day; the idea that girls might have desires of their own was simply

not considered. Far from being a trivial matter, the postwar Western campaign to clean up German sexual mores was a core element in securing West German Christianity's antifascist moral authority, for during the Third Reich sexual matters had formed a main focus of conflict between the Nazis and the Catholic Church in particular and Nazis had continually ridiculed Christian prudery and opposition to premarital heterosexuality.

In the officially secularized East, by contrast, sex was not a main site for managing the legacies of Nazism because the East secured its antifascist status above all by emphasizing its anticapitalism. While fully aware of Nazism's encouragements to premarital sexual activity, the SED felt no particular need to break with this legacy, since it was congruent with popular values, which simply saw sex as the customary way to express love.² Instead, the main concern in the East was to show citizens that socialism provided the best conditions for lasting and happy love. (In fact, Eastern authors frequently pointed out that sexual relationships really were more love based and hence honorable in the East than in the West specifically because under socialism women did not need to "sell" themselves into marriage in order to support themselves.) In the East, discussion of sex was seen not so much as a means for mastering the past but rather as a means for orienting people toward the future—a future that was declared to be always already in the making and that required all citizens' engaged participation. Socialism, it was constantly stressed, was steadily en route to perfection. And no sex advice text in the East was complete without reference either to the idea that only socialism provided the context for the most loving and satisfying marriages or to the notion that a couple's commitment to and struggle on behalf of socialism would enhance their romantic relationship.

While a number of East German doctors in the 1950s and 1960s counseled against premarital sex and/or cautioned that the East German government's support for illegitimate children should not be interpreted as direct encouragement to bear children out of wedlock, the overwhelming message from the government and from advice writers was that premarital heterosexual activity was both natural and normal. Medical doctor Hanns Schwarz, for example, in an SED-sponsored sex advice lecture delivered more than forty times throughout the East between 1952 and 1959 (and circulated in hundreds of thousands of copies), criticized promiscuity but otherwise energetically endorsed premarital sex and rejected "moralistic preachments" against it. "Sensuality," he told his listeners, "can be something glorious and positive" and should not be "branded as a sin by

uptight people [*Mucker*]." All that mattered, according to Schwarz (as he revealed his heteronormativity), was that this sensual activity should occur between "two people of the opposite sex who in addition to physical attraction to each other are emotionally entwined, have similar ways of looking at the world and have shared interests."³ And in a book published in 1959, Schwarz again described sex as "the quintessence of being alive." Moreover, unlike more conservative East German writers who unreflectingly collapsed intercourse with reproduction, Schwarz declared forthrightly that "we as free people know that intercourse does not just serve the propagation of the human race, but also furthers pleasure very significantly."⁴ A similar message was communicated by the medical doctor Rudolf Neubert's *Das neue Ehebuch* (The New Marriage Book), the single most popular East German advice book in the late fifties and early sixties. Although Neubert thought it advisable for teenagers between the ages of fourteen and eighteen to avoid "regular [*regelmässigen*] intercourse" (even as he was rather unclear what he meant by "regular"), he was completely in favor of premarital intercourse for the nineteen-to-twenty-five-year-old set. "No one," he announced confidently, "will take moral offense if these matured people also love each other in the bodily sense." And this generosity extended also to nonmarital pregnancies. In Neubert's opinion, there was no need to rush into marriage. For as long as the child was "conceived and received in love, it is completely irrelevant when the parents marry."⁵

By the early 1960s, a government statement formalized the view that love made premarital sex permissible. The SED's memorandum on youth (*Jugendkommuniké*) formulated in 1963 stated that "every true love between two young people deserves candid respect" and implicitly instructed parents and grandparents that they should be understanding of young couples' loving relationships also when these turned sexual. The German Democratic Republic's (GDR) gender egalitarianism and practice of coeducation, together with the incontrovertible fact that young people were simply experiencing puberty at an earlier age than previous generations had, it was held, made support for young love both sensible and ethical. The "morality of the convent" was anathema; "prohibitions, prudery, secrecy and punishment" were inappropriate. Romantic happiness was inspiring and life enhancing. "True love belongs to youth the way youth belongs to socialism," the memorandum announced, and "To be socialist is to help young people toward life-happiness and not to create tragedies." At the same time, the memorandum emphasized, the govern-

ment was definitely not advocating indiscriminate sexual experimentation. Love relationships, it advised, should be "deep" (*tief*) and "clean" (*sauber*).⁶

Yet despite the SED's consistent commitment to female economic independence and professional advancement and despite its apparent acceptance of premarital heterosexual intercourse, the GDR in the 1950s and 1960s also developed a distinctively socialist and in many ways quite oppressive brand of sexual conservatism. What needs to be grasped, in short, as the 1963 memorandum's language already implies, is the double quality of the messages sent about sex in the 1950s and 1960s. There was in numerous texts, in all the sympathy expressed for the inevitability of premarital sex, nonetheless a strongly normative expectation that this sex would be entered into in the context of a relationship heading toward marriage and that ideally sexual relations would not start until "psychological maturity" had been attained. Numerous advice writers expended considerable energy emphasizing the importance of delaying the onset of sexual relations until this "psychological maturity" was evident, even as they variously associated this term with the capability for long-term commitment, a willingness to become parents in case contraceptives failed, or the attainment of a certain level of education and hence the capacity for economic independence from one's own parents.

A fundamentally conservative attitude was also powerfully evident in the SED's notions of socialist virtue, the suspicion that private bliss might draw citizens away from socialism rather than toward it and a generalized skepticism about the pursuit of pleasure as potentially depoliticizing. This, then, was the grounds for hectoring injunctions that lasting happiness was only possible when human beings involved themselves in political struggle. As, for example, divorce court judge Wolfhilde Diehrl put it in 1958 in her especially tendentious attack on pleasure seeking, "there is no fulfillment of existence in an idyll set apart from human society," and although she conceded that "a healthy marital life is generally not possible without the harmony of bodily union" she nonetheless drew on the authority of examples from her work encountering unhappy couples to argue that excessive sexual activity caused severe psychological and physiological damage. "An unmastered indulgence [*ein unbeherrschtes Geniessen*], a perpetual stimulation of the nerves so that pleasure can be achieved [*ein ständiges Aufpeitschen der Nerven zur Erreichung der Wollust*] and dissipation [*Auschweifungen*] in sexual life," Diehrl declared in her frequently reprinted book, "rob people of joy, tension and strength, drive them to perversities,

cause bad moods and satiation. Such people show apathy in their dealings with others, enervation, indifference for one's own tasks and the problems of society." And to prove that lack of social concern also hurt the individual, Diehl reinforced her point with a frightening tale of a couple that had so much sex right after they were married that they became physically ill and also turned against each other. Only by redirecting them to their social responsibilities, she asserted, was the marriage rescued.⁷

Normativity made itself aggressively felt in other ways as well, as the recurrent rhetorical emphasis on "clean" relationships implied not only sexual fidelity but also a rejection of homosexuality. East German advice writers throughout the 1950s and 1960s did not only deem homosexuality a perversion, pathology, or deviance. They also often replicated the predominant Nazi analyses of homosexuality as they either asserted that most homosexuality resulted from seduction during the adolescent phase when sexual orientation was not yet fixed on the opposite sex and/or associated homosexuality with mental deficiency and crime.⁸ In his book for young teens, for example, the oft-reprinted *Die Geschlechterfrage* (The Question of the Sexes), Rudolf Neubert pretended to be sensitive to the small minority of "true" homosexuals when he stated that homosexuality was sometimes caused by a "deformation of the inner glands" (*Missbildung der inneren Drüsen*) and went on to say that "these people are to be pitied just as much as those born with any other deformation." But Neubert also observed that even these congenital cases should be treated with hormone preparations, surgery (transplantation of "glandular tissue"), and above all psychotherapy (or, as he indicatively defined it, "pedagogic influencing by the doctor"). In addition, like Nazis before him and like so many in West and East Germany in the 1950s, Neubert insisted that, while the number of true homosexuals was small, the number of those seduced in youth was larger. Yet even as he announced that homosexuality occurred primarily among "pleasure-addicted progeny of rich families" or "asocial elements from other social strata," Neubert also assured readers that the incidence of homosexuality was far less frequent in a "young, constructively developing" society like the GDR than it was in (presumably capitalist) societies in a state of "dissolution."⁹

In 1957, the SED quietly instructed police and judges no longer to prosecute or imprison adult men engaged in consensual homosexual activity, and this certainly marked an important contrast to the ongoing coordinated criminalization, replete with police raids and prison sentences, in West Germany.¹⁰ And in 1968 the GDR abolished Paragraph 175, one year

ahead of the Federal Republic of Germany's (FRG) modification of the law. Yet at the same time, a newly introduced law, Paragraph 151, under the guise of "protection of youth," criminalized same-sex activity for both men and women if it occurred between someone over the age of eighteen and someone under the age of eighteen. SED officials strenuously sought to avoid the topic of homosexuality altogether, in a double inability to acknowledge that homosexuality existed at all in a socialist society and to acknowledge that there could be within socialism "marginal" groups of any sort that could not be integrated seamlessly into the social whole.¹¹ Throughout the 1960s, what little was written about homosexuality continued to treat it as a "perversion." This, for example, was the term chosen by Gerhard and Danuta Weber in their popular advice book *Du und ich* (You and I)—the advice book most frequently consulted by East German youth in the mid- to late 1960s—as they advised young women not to marry homosexual men.¹² And since the SED was always apprehensive and anxious to keep from international attention any empirical data that could possibly be used against socialism by its "enemies," it was no surprise that research that was able to demonstrate an especially low incidence of youth homosexual activity in the GDR was published.¹³ The official tendencies to denigrate homosexuality and attempt to steer youth away from it and above all to force youth caught in homosexual encounters to undergo coercive psychotherapy remained disturbing features of East German life throughout the 1950s and 1960s and well into the 1970s.¹⁴

Meanwhile, and all through the 1950s and 1960s, East German sex advice writers also struggled to find imaginative arguments for frightening young people away from "too early" heterosexual activity. In the gynecologist Wolfgang Bretschneider's view, for instance, premarital intercourse should preferably be avoided altogether, and in his advice book for parents of teens he provided a battery of arguments against it. For example, he argued that premarital intercourse could disrupt the proper psychological maturation process. He not only felt compelled to point out that, although the GDR had equalized the status of illegitimate with legitimate children, it was nonetheless exceedingly difficult to parent a child alone but also strategically argued that the contraception that would likely be used to prevent unwed motherhood tended in almost all cases to inhibit sensation, and he warned readers that this inhibition of sensation in turn could cause lasting sexual dysfunction. He further said that long-standing use of contraceptives could cause female infertility. Moreover, he declared, the "abnormal" locations in which most premarital intercourse

occurred—park benches, courtyard corners, behind the bushes—and the accompanying anxieties about fear of discovery were not well suited to the development of female sexual responsiveness in particular (even as elsewhere he downplayed the importance of that responsiveness and declared that female orgasm really was not as important as many women seemed to think it was). At the same time, Bretschneider also adopted, with only the slightest modification, ideas from the Swiss Protestant (and devout Christian) advice writer Theodor Bovet, whose writings were enormously influential in 1950s West Germany. For example, Bretschneider's recommendations to men to help them distract themselves from the desire to indulge in masturbation were lifted directly from Bovet. And Bretschneider's ideas about the deleterious impact of masturbation on the potential for marital happiness were also indistinguishable from those advanced in West German Catholic and Protestant advice writings. Girls were warned that they would have trouble transitioning from clitoral stimulation to vaginal sensation during intercourse, while boys were informed that "masturbation is a pitiful substitute for real love" and that "one remains stuck in oneself."¹⁵ Socialist sexual conservatism, in short, despite the critical asides about Christian sex hostility in most East German sex advice texts, appeared quite compatible with Christian sexual conservatism.

In part, then, as noted, the conservative tendencies of the 1950s and 1960s had their source in the profoundly conventional views of the German communist leadership and the directives coming from the Soviet Union. The conservative tendencies of the 1950s and 1960s can also in part be ascribed to both the public's and the government's worries about the still fairly desperate state of the economy, and the atmosphere this created in which regime arguments about the need to concentrate energies on the basic daily task of survival could appear plausible.¹⁶ Rationing, for example, was not ended until 1958. The "brain drain" of qualified technocratic and professional elites that continued unabated throughout the 1950s until the building of the Berlin Wall in 1961 not only increased regime paranoia but also exacerbated the difficulty of economic reconstruction after the combined devastations of wartime damage and Soviet appropriation of infrastructure, resources, and reparations payments. Basic consumer goods were frequently unavailable, and mismanagement and bad decisions in economic planning at the highest levels continually made production processes and their coordination uneven and unreliable.¹⁷ The housing shortage remained acute well into the 1970s—even as, fascinatingly, a marriage book published in 1972 was still able to blame this on Nazism.

(While encouraging their readers to have multichild families, the authors conceded that "there is without a doubt a contradiction between the demands of the society for larger families and the demands of families for larger living spaces." But alas, "after the terrible devastations of the fascist war our social means simply do not as yet permit us to offer every child-rich family anything like a four- or five-bedroom apartment—as much as we are making an effort to do this.")¹⁸ Indeed, there was hardly a sex advice text written that did not refer to the problems—such as self-consciousness or inadequate privacy—caused for young couples by the inevitable need to continue living with parents even after they had married (only once a child was born did most couples have a chance at a tiny apartment of their own).

In sum, then, it is no surprise that the 1950s and at least the first half of the 1960s in East Germany have been remembered by contemporaries as the dark ages of an enforced fixation with conventionality and respectability. As one man put it, the atmosphere was "thoroughly sterile, there was very little to delight the senses."¹⁹ There was in that era "no public discourse about many questions related to sexuality" but rather a "self-disciplining morality, unfriendly to pleasure, chaste . . . ascetic or pseudo-ascetic, uptight, interventionist," the leading East German sexologist Kurt Starke recalled in the 1990s.²⁰ And the prominent West German sexologist Volkmar Sigusch, who lived in East Germany until he fled to the West in 1961, said that "the climate in the East was horribly philistine [*furchtbar spiessig*]. You couldn't get more petty-bourgeois or philistine than that. Ulbricht? Honecker? They were so narrow and provincial. All the liberal, sophisticated people had gone to the West."²¹ Starke and others recollect a climate of invasive surveillance of private lives and public humiliation for any departure from the expected narrow norms. This was especially true for Party members. Young people in Party-run boarding schools were forbidden from forming into couples ("*keine Pärchenbildung*"), student dormitories were monitored at night to make sure no one was having sex, and also after marriage the SED wanted its functionaries to maintain stable and conformist arrangements.²² If married functionaries had extramarital affairs or one-night stands, they were expected to confess all and publicly castigate themselves and recommit to their spouses at a Party forum.²³

Yet at the same time, and all through the 1950s and 1960s, popular practices elicited significant regime concessions. Rates of illegal abortions, unwed teen motherhood (only at age eighteen was it legal to marry in the GDR), youthful divorces (especially among couples who had only married

because a child was on the way), and even the strains on "student mothers" struggling to juggle child care and professional development all caused consternation in SED circles and led the regime to reevaluate its priorities. Empirical studies ordered by the regime to assess these issues turned up incontrovertible evidence that each was a genuine social concern.²⁴ The government responded, among other things, by directing doctors already in 1965 to handle abortion requests more leniently and to consider a woman's psychological well-being in addition to her physical health. And in a law that went into effect in 1966, family, marriage, and sex counseling centers were established throughout East Germany.²⁵ The experts involved in organizing these centers and coordinating continuing education for staff advanced some of the most progressive perspectives on sexuality in the GDR; they forged strong ties to the International Planned Parenthood Federation and sponsored conferences on sexuality, which received respectful international notice. In turn, the issues that brought individuals and couples to these centers in ever-rising numbers—above all worries about contraception and about sexual dissatisfaction within marriages—again created opportunities for professionals concerned with sexual matters to persuade the government that more expansive research, public education, and therapeutic services were needed.²⁶

The second half of the 1960s saw a strong oscillation between conservative and liberal perspectives. On the one hand there were texts that explicitly reacted against what they found to be a too value-neutral tendency in early 1960s empirical studies and tried to find novel arguments for a return to sexual conservatism. (In this vein, for instance, experts warned of the deleterious impact especially on females of a sexual encounter experienced in a relationship not heading toward marriage; used the idea that the female capacity for orgasm during coitus might be an acquired skill that took some practice as a reason to put off sex until a marriage partner had been found; or even declared outright that females under the age of twenty were simply unlikely to achieve sexual satisfaction so it was best not to try.)²⁷ On the other hand in these years an increasing effort to present the GDR as a desirable site for young romance was also evident. Sometimes both tendencies were combined, as for example when Heinrich Brückner proudly published his finding that more youth in the GDR than in the FRG felt that premarital abstinence was physically possible, even as he was also pleased to find that GDR youth had more sexological savvy than their Western counterparts.²⁸ A similar combination could be found in Klaus Trummer's 1966 advice book for young teens. While parents and

teachers should never advance "the moral views of the convent," too early intercourse would disturb an individual's psychological and intellectual development. At the same time, love was definitely better in the East, because "how people live together here is no longer determined by the laws of capitalism ('everyone is only looking out for himself') and 'love is not a commodity.'"²⁹

Indeed, the comparison between East and West became a major motif in East German writings on sex after the mid-1960s—even as West Germans increasingly ignored the East. (This was an interesting departure from the powerful role anticommunist rhetoric had played in the West in the 1950s, as the West had sought to justify its efforts on behalf of female subordination and confinement within the domestic realm through constant rhetorical invocations of the purported horrors of female emancipation in the GDR.) It was almost as though, now that the West was no longer the stuffy place it had once been and had started to resemble a pleasure palace in sexual terms, the East needed to stress also the sexual advantages of socialism. What was most noticeable in the efforts to disseminate a new socialist message about sex was an apparently urgent—if nonetheless also ambivalent—SED intention not to be perceived as overly puritanical.

Thus the socialist ethicist Bernd Bittighöfer in an essay on youth and love from 1966 registered approval that more and more parents in East Germany were letting go of the remnants of bourgeois "prejudices" and "inhibitions." On the one hand, Bittighöfer declared himself in favor of "the moral cleanness of our socialist way of life," and he expressly criticized the titillating material disseminated by West German radio and television. The West was, in his view, purveying "imperialist ideology," propagating "skepticism and anarchism in the realm of morality," encouraging "sexual excess" and "trivialization and brutalization of relations between the sexes," and—as he awkwardly put it—"stimulating adolescents' natural urge for recognition [*Geltung*] onesidedly in the sexual realm." Yet on the other hand, and significantly, premarital chastity was not his recommendation. This idea, he said, was "antiquated." He went on to contend that "the satisfaction of the sexual drive is . . . one of the most elementary needs of human life-expression," and he invoked August Bebel's point that those who were prevented from satisfying drives that were so "closely connected with their innermost being" would be damaged in their development. "Fulfilling love," Bittighöfer concluded, "includes sexual union" and "is an essential element in personality development and fulfilled existence."³⁰

A similar kind of uncertainty marked the government's approach to sex in literature. When the Central Committee of the SED met in 1965, for instance, it considered the apparent problem that East German writers increasingly included sex scenes that were not in tune with the regime's notions of socialist morality. Rather than strictly censoring narrative representations of sexual acts and encounters (as it had done only a year earlier), the SED now declared itself in favor of sex scenes—the Party expressly did not want “prudery and prettification” (*Prüderie und Beschönigungstendenzen*). Once again, however, the message was mixed: Such scenes would only be allowed if they occurred in a proper partnership, or, if not, the narrative must in some way censure the characters' actions.³¹

In the face of the government's apparent disorientation through the sixties and into the seventies, progressive professionals concerned with sexuality, whether medical doctors or pedagogues, did their utmost to use the evidence of the populace's desires and difficulties as a wedge to influence the SED and to redirect national debate on sexual matters. Collectively, through their support for each other and through their publications, these professionals—notable among them Lykke Aresin, Peter G. Hesse, Karl-Heinz Mehlan, and Siegfried Schnabl—managed to make open discussion of sexual matters possible. Hesse was an early and eloquent advocate of more broad-based public education about contraception, rejecting worries about a declining birthrate and insisting on the “higher” morality of sex free from fear; he subsequently provided a major service by organizing and coediting a massive three-volume encyclopedia of sexological knowledge, the first of its kind in the GDR.³² Mehlan was singularly important in the liberalization of abortion law.³³ And Aresin was enormously influential in making the Pill widely acceptable and available in the GDR. She and Schnabl were also pioneers in the treatment of sexual dysfunctions and marital disharmony; they followed the work of such American sexologists as William Masters and Virginia Johnson, and they created individual and couple therapy in the GDR. (Strikingly, it must be noted that rather than seeing these centers as potentially invasive institutions, couples flocked to them.)³⁴ Schnabl also conducted the theretofore largest empirical study on sexual dysfunction and sexual practices within marriage, based on interviews with and anonymous questionnaires answered by thirty-five hundred men and women. Aresin's and Schnabl's works were crucial in making issues of sexual conflict within marriages an acceptable subject for public discussion. Schnabl's sex advice

book of 1969, *Mann und Frau intim* (Man and Woman Intimately), based on his research findings, became a runaway best-seller. His reassuring, no-nonsense recommendations for facilitating female orgasmic response were the centerpiece of his broader campaign to affirm the joys and the importance of heterosexual sex apart from its potential reproductive consequences.³⁵ By the GDR's end in 1989, this book (together with a guide on gardening) had the highest sales of any book in the nation's history.

Above all, GDR citizens plainly carved out their own freedoms. Nude bathing, for example (known as FKK, for *Freikörperkultur*), became an important part of GDR culture. Starting in the middle of the 1960s nude bathing became acceptable for growing numbers of GDR citizens, and by the 1970s full nudity was clearly the norm at GDR beaches, lakeside or oceanside. Early attempts by municipal authorities to prevent this practice were simply overridden by the adamant masses, who stripped and would not move. Nakedness for the whole family also within the home became increasingly standard practice as well, especially for that generation that had grown up together with the GDR; for their children, nudism simply became the cultural commonsense. As subsequent studies showed, homes in which parent and child nakedness were routine tended also to be those in which parents advocated progressive attitudes about sex and where there was generally warm, trusting, and open parent-child communication; this second GDR generation was raised with far more liberal and tolerant perspectives toward all aspects of sexuality.

In an interview published in 1995, the Leipzig sexologist Kurt Starke evocatively summarized the gradual transformation of the GDR's sexual culture in this way:

At the latest in the 1970s the citizens in the GDR started to defy all kinds of possible constrictions with respect to their partner- and sexual behavior. They became FKK-fans. They birthed illegitimate children in droves. They handed in divorce papers when love had faded. They casually got involved with a coworker if they felt like it. At some point kissing couples lay on the grass in Leipzig's Clara-Zetkin-Park or female students sunbathed naked, and no police intervened. The few sex enlightenment books that appeared were not disdained but rather passed from hand to hand and by no means secretly. Often they provided the occasion for conversations between parents and their adolescent children. All of this came together with the improvement of living conditions, for example the creation of more housing;

after all, one needs a place for living and loving. . . . This process was also combined with a more positive valuation of sexuality. An affirmative attitude toward sexuality developed, very connected with family and with love. So: somehow a romantic ideal.³⁶

Still, it would take another decade before the gains claimed by many in the GDR in the course of the 1970s became fully visible to all. Starke's own research—conducted under the auspices of the Center for Youth Research in Leipzig together with the center's director, Walter Friedrich, and in creative circumvention of the regime's monitoring efforts—would play no small part in helping GDR citizens see for themselves their own achievements. And by the early 1980s, when Starke published *Junge Partner* (Young Partners) and together with Friedrich published *Liebe und Ehe bis 30* (Love and Marriage until Thirty), it became manifestly apparent that East German women in particular not only had been special objects of their government's solicitude but had successfully reconfigured their private relationships as well.

Just as there had been no momentous or spectacular sexual revolution in East Germany, so too there would be no large-scale and dramatic feminist protest movement or development of a women-centered counterculture. While especially in the course of the 1980s, a number of women's organizations were founded in the GDR, their self-definition was rarely feminist. To a great extent, feminism in East Germany was simply perceived by East German women as a redundancy.

The hesitancy about feminism felt by East German women was due in no small part to the state-sponsored advantages East Germany offered them. So many of the desiderata West German feminists had to fight for in the 1970s—abortion rights, child-care facilities, economic independence, and professional respect—were things East German women by that point could largely take for granted. First-trimester abortions upon demand were legalized in 1972, an achievement never matched in the West. While West German women were continually encouraged to feel guilty if they placed their young children in daycare, and options to do so remained few and far between in any event, and while West German women constantly experienced motherhood and careers as conflicting, East German women increasingly tended to consider this combination fully manageable.

Another major impetus for the West German feminist movement was the pervasiveness of pornography and, more generally, the objectification

of women's bodies in advertising and all media. Although available as contraband, pornography was illegal in the East; its distribution was severely limited. Whereas in the West, consumer capitalism functioned to a large degree via the (always distorted) representation of female sexuality, East German state socialism was not driven by this imperative. In East Germany, the populace did walk around naked, but nothing was being sold by this. Occasionally, products made in the GDR were advertised with a hint of sexual innuendo, and one popular magazine (*Das Magazin*) published a nude female centerfold every month, but these photographs were remarkably tame compared with representations in the West and generally lacked the lascivious look and the nonaverage bombshell bodies so prevalent in Western porn. Meanwhile, the heterosexual male anxieties that both funded and were fostered by the porn typically available in the West were not provoked in the same way in the East.

Yet another significant difference from the West was East Germany's state-sponsored insistence that men should respect women who were their superiors at work and that men should assist their female partners with household and child-care responsibilities. In both cases, and while the realization of these aims certainly remained imperfect, the standard set by the state had important consequences. East German women found themselves routinely in positions of authority and responsibility in work and public life. As the East German journal *Visite* (produced for Western visitors' consumption) exulted already in 1971, one-third of all judges in the GDR were female, "an impressive number that no capitalist country in the world can even approach." Every fourth school was run by a female principal. More than one thousand women were mayors—13 percent of all East German mayors (compared with less than 1 percent in West Germany). Hundreds of thousands of women held offices in unions; tens of thousands were members of production committees; thirteen hundred women were directors of industrial enterprises. And, importantly, "sociological research shows that the majority of the workers take a female as their superior just as seriously as they would a man." The journal article also emphasized that only men's help with the household and child rearing made this socialist female emancipation possible. And of course *Visite* did not fail to conclude sonorously that these amazing female achievements were no miracle but rather due to "the socialist relations of production that set free the creative forces of all people. Where the exploitation of the human being has been overcome, where the driving force of the society is no longer the striving after profit but rather the coincidence of individual

and social interests, there is no ground in which egoism, self-glorification and oppression of woman could grow."³⁷ But for all the unwarranted self-congratulation, there was nevertheless a significant enough kernel of truth to these claims. For East Germany did develop its own distinctive standards of masculinity and femininity. The ideals propounded by the leadership were more than just empty phrases; they were also practically approximated in the daily interplay between social conditions and individual negotiations.

Importantly, socialism was cast as not just about better love but also and specifically about better sex. Indeed, meticulous and elaborate attention to intensifying female pleasure became the most significant innovation in East German sexological writing in the 1970s and early 1980s. And an emphasis on heterosexual men improving their performance in bed was strongly assimilated in East Germany.³⁸ When Starke and Friedrich in 1984 published *Liebe und Sexualität bis 30*, based on extensive empirical research among East German youth, they not only found that young GDR women had their first orgasm on average at the age of sixteen or seventeen—and that already 70 percent of sixteen-year-olds had orgasmic experience—but also that two-thirds of all the young women surveyed had an orgasm “almost always” during sex, with another 18 percent declaring that they had one “often.” In fact, the majority of informants—female and male alike—were very satisfied with their sex lives in general (and interestingly the authors found no differences in sexual experience or happiness between the Christian minority and the atheist majority). Moreover, the authors resolutely concluded that East German social conditions—“the sense of social security, equal educational and professional responsibilities, equal rights and possibilities for participating in and determining the life of society”—were preeminently responsible for the high rates of female pleasure. “The young women of today are in general more active and more discriminating, less inhibited and reticent, expecting to have their personality and wishes honored, striving much more self-confidently for higher sexual satisfaction,” and “they are accustomed to demanding happiness in love . . . and to tasting it fully.” These young women started having sex earlier, they switched their partners more frequently, and they enjoyed themselves more. And Starke and Friedrich were also convinced that whatever male ambivalence was still being expressed among the somewhat older men about this new state of affairs was just a passing phase of adjustment, since they found that such ambivalence had already disappeared

almost entirely within the younger generation. Precisely those young men and women who had grown up in supportive families and whose parents had been loving toward each other were the ones who were most secure in themselves and the most creative and experimental in their own love lives.³⁹ Nor were these conclusions contradicted by subsequent research. On the contrary, when the first comparative East-West German study of female students' sexual experiences was conducted in 1988, the results showed (to the Western scholar's amazement) that East German heterosexual women liked sex more (and experienced orgasms more frequently) than their West German counterparts.⁴⁰

The East German experts' endless reiterations of the idea that socialism produced especially charmed conditions for mutually satisfying sex, in short, was not just a figment of their own fantasy lives. While Starke and Friedrich had also considered the introduction of the Pill as a key factor that made all this newfound female pleasure possible, the comparison with West Germany suggests that their argument about gender equality under socialism was far from insignificant. In the seventies and eighties, the West German feminist movement loudly proclaimed Western women's fury at heterosexual coital practices that left them cold, and they made men's boorish and selfish behavior in bed a major public issue. During that same era, East German women made no such accusations; instead, they simply could (and did) break up with unsatisfactory men specifically because they possessed economic independence and because theirs was a social environment that treated singlehood, including single motherhood, as acceptable and feasible—and even a social norm. (By the end of the GDR, one in three children was born out of wedlock; in the FRG it was one in ten.)⁴¹ Once East and West German women encountered each other more frequently after the collapse of the GDR, East German women could only roll their eyes and express astonishment at many West German heterosexual women's apparent lack of satisfaction with the men in their lives and at the fuss that Western feminists continued to make about sexual practices. “Those that enjoy it don't need to talk about it in public,” one East German woman in her fifties said in exasperation in the 1990s, summarizing her feelings about her first experiences with West German feminists.⁴² And also in the later 1990s a forty-something formerly East German woman proudly—almost patronizingly—announced: “East-women have more fun, everybody knows that [*Ost-Frauen haben mehr Spass, das weiss jeder*]. Orgasm rates were higher in the East, all the studies show that.” And then

(revealing a misconception some Easterners still had about Westerners) she added: "After all, it was a proletarian society. None of this bourgeois concern with chastity until the wedding night."⁴³

The collapse of the Berlin Wall in 1989 and the reunification of Germany under Western auspices in 1990 brought immediate change to the sexual culture of the East. The day after the Wall came down, the entrepreneur Beate Uhse had her staff ship truckloads of sex toys and pornography into the five East German states; supply could not keep up with demand. Pornography shops proliferated, and Easterners queued up for hours for a chance both finally to look and to purchase. "We felt like we'd been left out," one fortyish male East German librarian commented with both pathos and irony, and numerous comments made by Easterners to West German reporters suggest much the same.⁴⁴ The long lines in front of porn shops quickly became part of the standard self-congratulatory Western narrative of communism's collapse, and Western journalists gleefully seized upon each instance an East German articulated regret over a sex-commodity-deprived existence under socialism. Yet what got drowned out in these facile assumptions of Western superiority were more reflective East German voices that sought to articulate what had been valuable about East German sexual culture—as that culture itself began rapidly to dissolve.

There were indisputably gains made. It was not at all insignificant, for instance, that the collapse of East Germany helped liberalize major aspects of reunified Germany's sexual culture. While East German women's distress over the possible elimination of abortion rights was widely discussed in the media, Western feminists remained optimistic that the process of reunification might provide an opportunity for the West to adopt the more progressive East German arrangement. In large part, they were proven accurate. What resulted was a compromise; now all German women were granted first-trimester approval (standard in the East since 1972) if they agreed to pre-abortion counseling (as had been required in the West). Notably the process of reunification also provided the occasion for a new advance for gay rights, as—continuing a further legal liberalization implemented in the GDR in 1988—Paragraph 175 was finally abolished in all its dimensions in reunified Germany in 1994.

Yet for the most part, the former East German sexual culture found itself the object of condescending bemusement and ruthless ridicule as a cacophony of competing theories was promoted. The East German psy-

chotherapist Hans-Joachim Maaz, for example, made a big name for himself with his book *Der Gefühlsstau: Ein Psychogramm der DDR* (Emotional Congestion: A Psychological Diagnosis of the GDR), which caricatured his former fellow citizens as emotionally repressed and sexually deprived. "The GDR was a land with widespread sexual frustration," Maaz said, seeing this deficit of Eastern life as a crucial symptom of a broader paranoia and psychic deformation induced by living under tightly controlled conditions and constant surveillance.⁴⁵ Contradictorily, others proposed that, because there had not been much else to do in the East and daily life had been so gray and monotonous, sex had emerged as a favorite pastime. Now, East Germans would have to learn to pull themselves together and acquire the work ethic necessary for success under capitalism. Rejecting as communist propaganda the notion that Eastern women's reportedly higher orgasm rates might have their source in higher levels of female economic independence, for instance, the right-wing tabloid *Bild* provided this countervailing analysis in May 1990: "Everywhere that human beings are offered nothing or very little—aside from much work and little pay—everywhere where there are few discos, restaurants, amusement parks, in other words few opportunities for entertainment—in all those places sex is practiced more frequently and more intensively."⁴⁶ Meanwhile, the East German habit of naked display at the beach was variously interpreted as quaint and odd, as a trifle disturbing, or as (misplaced) compensation for East Germans' lack of political independence. "Wasn't this FKK-cult a kind of expression of your will to freedom?" a female reporter from Hamburg asked her younger East German colleagues, a question interpreted by the *Ossis* as yet one more exemplar of Western snobbery and cluelessness.⁴⁷

Above all, however, there was among Easterners a profound sense of loss. The flood of Western pornography effectively demolished the Eastern culture of nakedness. As West Germans rushed to stake out the beaches on the formerly East German shores of the Baltic Sea as they sought out cheap and beautiful vacation spots, they proceeded to take offense at the widespread nudity and insisted their children be spared the sight of guilelessly self-displaying *Ossis*. In effect, the West Germans achieved what the GDR police had failed to do decades earlier. Many East German women no longer felt safe going naked now that they were viewed with Western men's "pornographically schooled gaze" (*pornographisch geschulter Blick*).⁴⁸ And they did begin to cover themselves. Indicatively, too, after they had sated their initial curiosity, many *Ossis* turned away in

disappointment at the poor quality and (what they saw as) lack of genuine eroticism in the Western porn products. (Already by 1995, two-thirds of the porn video shops that had opened in the formerly East German states shut their doors.)

Without a doubt, most devastating for the former East was a loss of economic security and the new idea that human worth would now be measured primarily by money. East German citizens felt enormous anxieties about the loss of jobs and social security, rising rents, and uncertain futures. Once it became clear that Germany would be reunified under Western auspices (rather than developing some mutually worked out "third path") and once the full consequences of such Westernization became apparent (it would not just mean Easterners finally acquiring Western goods and a strong currency and political freedoms but also a huge rise in unemployment and social instability), Easterners scrambled to acquire new job skills and a whole new style of comporting themselves. These developments also had incalculable consequences on sexual relations. Many long-term East German relationships went into crisis; couples first clung together despite conflicts and then crashed as they struggled with varying degrees of success to reinvent themselves under new conditions.⁴⁹

Little wonder, then, that the disappearing sexual ethos of the GDR quickly became an especially important site for *Ostalgie*—a popular coinage that joined together *Ost* (East) and *Nostalgie* (nostalgia). "In the East the clocks ran more slowly," the East German journalist Katrin Rohnstock remembered with retrospective longing in 1995. In the West, in her view, lust for capital had replaced desire for another person. With reference to capitalism's competitive climate, she said: "Eroticism feels with its fingertips, elbows destroy that. The pressure to achieve makes human beings sick and has a negative impact on sexuality."⁵⁰ Or as another formerly East German woman phrased it, as she explained that GDR sexuality was in some respects more emancipated than that of the West: "Money played no role. In the East, sex was not for sale."⁵¹ The East German cultural historian Dietrich Mühlberg too emphasized in 1995 that "the cost-benefit analysis" so constantly employed in human interactions in the West "was largely absent" in the East and that this inevitably affected sexual relations and partnerships as well.⁵² And the Magdeburg-based sexologist Carmen Beilfuss spoke of "the difficult path of love in the market economy."⁵³ Throughout the 1990s, and over and over, Easterners (gay and straight alike) articulated the conviction that sex in the East had been

more genuine and loving, more sensual, and more gratifying—and less grounded in self-involvement—than West German sex.⁵⁴

Whether these memories were fully accurate or not, there is no question that the GDR's sexual culture was remarkable, for it differed not only from capitalist West Germany but also from the rest of socialist Eastern Europe. While men in other Eastern European cultures were notorious for their "socialist machismo" (their patriarchalism and misogyny existing in counterpoint to gender-egalitarian Soviet bloc rhetoric), East German men's domesticity and self-confident comfort with strong women were both legendary.⁵⁵ Prostitution hardly occurred at all in the GDR, even while it was commonplace in Warsaw and Budapest. Homosexual men were thrown into prison in the Soviet Union and Romania up until the demise of communism; this had not occurred in the GDR since 1957. The Polish Church was thoroughly homophobic; in the GDR, gays and lesbians were able to organize in the 1980s under church auspices.⁵⁶ In its rejection of prostitution and pornography, the GDR appeared prudish by Western standards. Yet precisely the absence of these two means of marketing sex allowed other liberties to flourish. The moralism and asceticism the SED tried to enforce was undermined by the very processes of secularization that the SED also fostered. In the end, there was something peculiarly *German* about East Germany, even if former East Germans did not necessarily recognize that. The easy relationships to nakedness and sexual matters had their source not least in a distinctive tradition going back to Weimar and even before.

Without a doubt, the West German sexual revolution had been perceived by the SED as a threat that needed to be countered. But the sexual liberalization in East Germany that happened from the mid-1960s on, and with growing force through the 1970s and 1980s, was *not* just an imitation of the West but took its own peculiar form not least because of a precursor liberalization that had already occurred in the otherwise gloomy 1950s and early 1960s. While in West Germany the realm of sexuality repeatedly became the site for attempts to master the past of Nazism and the Holocaust, in East Germany the emphasis was always on what was yet to come—on the constant declaration that "the future belongs to socialism," a wishful prescription pretending to be a description.⁵⁷ Only once the GDR itself was a thing of the past did sex and memory in the GDR become firmly conjoined. All through the history of the GDR, there was in the SED the never-ending hope that the populace's affections might yet be won, if only the right formula of select consumer goods and managed free-

doms were found. Love and sexuality became absolutely crucial elements in this struggle to win popular approval. The majority of the populace, however, never was taken in by the endlessly announced romance of socialism itself. Instead, it was the romance for which the GDR had indeed created important preconditions but that ultimately the people had simply claimed for themselves that became the eventual site for *Ostalgie*.

NOTES

1. Rudolf Neubert, *Das neue Ehebuch: Die Ehe als Aufgabe der Gegenwart und Zukunft* (Rudolstadt: Greifenverlag, 1957), 192.
2. A valuable source on ordinary GDR citizens' attitudes about premarital sex in the 1950s are the letters collected in Hanns Schwarz, *Schriftliche Sexualberatung: Erfahrungen und Vorschläge mit 60 Briefen und Antworten* (Rudolstadt: Greifenverlag, 1959). The letters make clear that in the populace premarital heterosexual activity was simply taken as a given; it was the commonsense behavior in 1950s East Germany. Whenever qualms or anxieties were expressed, they had to do with masturbation, not premarital intercourse. The letters also make clear that girls and women were hardly fearful shrinking violets but rather often the active ones who willingly made overtures to men. Not only do the letter writers remark in passing on their experiences with premarital sex, but they also openly asked Schwarz for advice in resolving sexual problems they were having within nonmarital relationships.
3. Hanns Schwarz, *Sexualität im Blickfeld des Arztes: Vortrag* (Berlin: Verlag Volk und Gesundheit, 1953), 10–11.
4. Schwarz, *Schriftliche Sexualberatung*, 34, 48.
5. Neubert, *Das neue Ehebuch*, 130, 188.
6. See "Der Jugend Vertrauen und Verantwortung" (1963), in *Dokumente zur Jugendpolitik der DDR* (Berlin: Staatsverlag der DDR, 1965), 93–94; and see the discussion in Heinz Grassel, *Jugend, Sexualität, Erziehung: Zur psychologischen Problematik der Geschlechtererziehung* (Berlin: Staatsverlag der DDR, 1967), 11–12.
7. Wolfhilde Diehl, *Liebe, Ehe—Scheidung?* (1958, 1961), reprinted in Wolfhilde Diehl and Wolfgang Bretschneider, *Liebe und Ehe* (Leipzig: Urania, 1962), 198, 201.
8. A classic expression of all three of these assumptions can be found in Wolfgang Bretschneider, *Sexuell Aufklären—Rechtzeitig und Richtig* (Leipzig: Urania, 1956), 63–64.
9. Rudolf Neubert, *Die Geschlechterfrage: Ein Buch für junge Menschen* (Rudolstadt: Greifenverlag, 1955, 1966), 80–82.
10. See Gudrun von Kowalski, *Homosexualität in der DDR: Ein historischer Abriss* (Marburg: Verlag Arbeiterbewegung und Gesellschaftswissenschaft, 1987), 26–27; and James Steakley, "Gays under Socialism: Male Homosexuality in the GDR," *Body Politics* 29 (1976–77): 15–18.
11. The Committee of Antifascist Resistance Fighters, for example, rejected the East German physician and homosexual rights activist Rudolf Klimmer's efforts

to get homosexual victims of Nazism officially acknowledged as victims of fascism with the following words: "The overwhelming majority of surviving homosexuals are in the FRG. . . . In the rule they belonged to bourgeois or petty bourgeois strata and were hostile to the socioeconomic changes that took place in the GDR after 1945." Quoted in von Kowalski, *Homosexualität*, 26. See also Marianne Krüger-Potratz, *Anderssein Gab Es Nicht: Ausländer und Minderheiten in der DDR* (Münster: Waxmann, 1991), 2.

12. Gerhard and Danuta Weber, *Du und ich* (Berlin: Verlag Volk und Gesundheit, 1965), 102–3. On *Du und ich*'s popularity, see Werner Kirsch, *Zum Problem der sexuellen Belehrung durch den Biologielehrer* (Berlin: Verlag Volk und Wissen, 1967), 78–79.

13. For example, see Helmut Rennert, "Untersuchungen zur Gefährdung der Jugend und zur Dunkelziffer bei sexuellen Straftaten," *Psychiatrie, Neurologie und Medizinische Psychologie: Zeitschrift für Forschung und Praxis* 17, no. 10 (October 1965): 364; and Helmut Rennert, "Untersuchungen über die sexuelle Entwicklung der Jugend in der DDR," *Wissenschaftliche Zeitschrift der Universität Rostock (Mathematisch-Naturwissenschaftliche Reihe)* 17, no. 6–7 (1968): 707.

14. Conversation with L. S., 2003.

15. Bretschneider, *Sexuell Aufklären*, 40–41, 67–68, 131.

16. The widely held 1950s conviction about the need to sublimate libidinal energies into reconstruction is documented persuasively by Matthias Rothe in "Semantik der Sexualität," manuscript, 2001. Only in the 1960s, Rothe finds, did the SED—turning to the theory of "cybernetics"—consider the possibility that sex could be a source of energy rather than an energy drain.

17. See André Steiner, "Dissolution of the 'Dictatorship over Needs': Consumer Behavior and Economic Reform in East Germany in the 1960s," in *Getting and Spending: European and American Consumer Societies in the Twentieth Century*, ed. Susan Strasser et al. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998), 167–85.

18. Hans-Joachim Hoffmann and Peter G. Klemm, *Ein offenes Wort: Ein Buch über die Liebe* (Berlin: Verlag Neues Leben, 1972), 175–76.

19. Conversation with L. U., 2001.

20. Kurt Starke, ". . . ein romantisches Ideal" (interview conducted by Uta Kolano), in Uta Kolano, *Nackter Osten* (Frankfurt/Oder: Frankfurter Oder Editionen/Sammlung Zeitzeugen, 1995), 83, 86.

21. Conversation with Volkmar Sigusch, 2002.

22. Starke, ". . . ein romantisches Ideal," 82–83; and conversation with Kurt Starke, 2001.

23. Conversation with L. U., 2001; Heiner Carow, ". . . da kommt niemand gegen an," in Kolano, *Nackter Osten*, 153. For the transcript of a 1967 SED shaming session, see Felix Mühlberg, "Die Partei ist eifersüchtig," in *Erotik macht die Hässlichen Schön: Sexueller Alltag im Osten*, ed. Katrin Rohnstock (Berlin: Elefant Press, 1995), 122–43.

24. For example, see Heinz Grassel, "Studentin und Mutterschaft," *Wissenschaftliche Zeitschrift der Universität Rostock (Gesellschaftliche und Sprachwissenschaftliche Reihe)* 13 (1964): 541–47; K. Lungwitz, "Die Stabilität frühzeitig geschlossener Ehen im Spiegel der Statistik," *Neue Justiz* 19 (1965); and Karl Heinz

Mehlan, "Die Abortsituation im Weltmassstab," in *Arzt und Familienplanung: Tagungsbericht der 3. Rostocker Fortbildungstage über Probleme der Ehe- und Sexualberatung vom 23. Bis 25. Oktober 1967 in Rostock-Warnemünde* (Berlin: Verlag Volk und Gesundheit, 1968), 85-86.

25. See H. Rayner and J. Rothe, "Zur Entwicklung von Richtlinien über Arbeitsweise und Organisation des medizinischen Zweiges der Ehe- und Familienberatung (Ehe- und Sexualberatung)," in *Arzt und Familienplanung*; and Lykke Aresin, "Ehe- und Sexualberatungsstellen und Familienplanung in der DDR," in *Sexuologie in der DDR*, ed. Joachim Hohmann (Berlin: Dietz, 1991), 72-94.

26. See Siegfried Schnabl, "Die Sexualberatung bei der Anorgasmie der Frau und der Impotenz des Mannes," *Zeitschrift für ärztliche Fortbildung* 60, no. 132 (1966): 815; Lykke Aresin and M. Bahder, "25 Jahre Ehe- und Sexualberatung an der Universitäts-Frauenklinik Leipzig" (1973-74), Magnus Hirschfeld Archive, Berlin; the entry on the GDR in "Familienplanung in Europa aus persönlicher Sicht," and "Hindernisse für die Kontrazeption," both in *IPPF Europa: Regionale Informationen* 8 (1979).

27. See, for example, Grassel, *Jugend*, 110; Weber and Weber, *Du und ich*, 107.

28. See Heinrich Brückner, *Das Sexualwissen unserer Jugend, dargestellt als Beitrag zur Erziehungsplanung* (Berlin: Deutscher Verlag der Wissenschaften, 1968), 134-37; and "Hüben wie drüben," *Der Spiegel*, May 26, 1969, 72, 75.

29. Klaus Trummer, *Unter vier Augen gesagt . . . : Fragen und Antworten über Freundschaft und Liebe* (Berlin: Verlag Neues Leben, 1966), 7, 11-12.

30. Bernd Bittighöfer, *Deine Gesundheit*, June 1966, 169-71.

31. See Grassel, *Jugend*, 141, 155-56. In 1964, the SED directly censored Irma Morgner's *Rumba auf einen Herbst*, among other things rejecting outright as unnecessary and inappropriate a sex scene in which an unfaithful wife appeared to be having fun; if Morgner was not willing to change her text, it would simply not be able to appear in the GDR.

32. Peter G. Hesse, *Empfängnis und Empfängnisverhütung* (Berlin: Verlag Volk und Gesundheit, 1967), 39. See also *Sexuologie: Geschlecht, Mensch, Gesellschaft*, 3 vols., ed. Peter G. Hesse et al. (Leipzig: S. Hirzel, 1974-77).

33. See Donna Harsch, "Society, the State, and Abortion in East Germany, 1950-1972," *American Historical Review* 102, no. 1 (February 1997): 62-66.

34. See Lykke Aresin, "Sexologische Probleme in jungen Ehen," *Psychiatrie* 20 (1967): 3-7; Aresin and Bahder, "25 Jahre," 87; and Siegfried Schnabl, *Intimverhalten Sexualstörungen Persönlichkeit* (Berlin: Deutscher Verlag der Wissenschaften, 1972), 265.

35. See Siegfried Schnabl, *Mann und Frau intim: Fragen des gesunden und des gestörten Geschlechtslebens*, 5th ed. (Berlin: Verlag Volk und Gesundheit, 1972).

36. Starke, ". . . ein romantisches Ideal," 87-88.

37. Staatssekretariat für westdeutsche Fragen, "Das schöne Geschlecht und die Gleichberechtigung in der DDR," *Visite* 3 (1971): 17-21.

38. See on this point also Starke, ". . . ein romantisches Ideal," 94.

39. Kurt Starke and Walter Friedrich, *Liebe und Sexualität bis 30* (Berlin: Deutscher Verlag der Wissenschaften, 1984), 187, 202-3.

40. Ulrich Clement and Kurt Starke, "Sexualverhalten und Einstellungen zur Sexualität bei Studenten in der BRD und in der DDR," *Zeitschrift für Sexual-*

forschung 1 (1988): 30-44; conversations with Ulrich Clement and Kurt Starke, 2001 and 2002. See also Gunter Schmidt, "Emanzipation zum oder vom Geschlechtsverkehr," *ProFamilia Magazin*, no. 5 (1993); and Wolfgang Engler, "Nacktheit, Sexualität und Partnerschaft," *Die Ostdeutschen: Kunde von einem verlorenen Land* (Berlin: Aufbau, 1999), 271-72.

41. See Hans-Joachim Ahrendt, "Neue Aspekte der Familienplanung und Geburtenregelung in Ostdeutschland," in *Sexualität und Partnerschaft im Wandel: Jahrestagung 1991 der Gesellschaft für Sexualwissenschaft* (Leipziger Texte zur Sexualität 1, no. 1 [1992]), 6.

42. Conversation with N. U., 1997.

43. Conversation with H. N., 1998.

44. Conversation with L. U., 2001.

45. See Hans-Joachim Maaz, *Der Gefühlsstau: Ein Psychogramm der DDR* (Berlin: Argon, 1990); and Dietrich Mühlberg, "Sexualität und ostdeutscher Alltag," *Mitteilungen aus der kulturwissenschaftlichen Forschung* 18, no. 36 (1995): 10.

46. "DDR-Frauen kriegen öfter einen Orgasmus," *Bild*, May 30, 1990, 1.

47. Holger Kaukel, *Schweriner Volkszeitung*, October 23, 1993, quoted in Ina Merkel, "Die Nackten und die Roten: Zum Verhältnis von Nacktheit und Öffentlichkeit in der DDR," *Mitteilungen aus der kulturwissenschaftlichen Forschung* 18, no. 36 (1995): 80.

48. Conversation with Kurt Starke, 2001.

49. See Carmen Beilfuss, "'Über sieben Brücken musst Du geh'n . . .': Der schwierige Weg der Liebe in der Marktwirtschaft," in *Sexualität und Partnerschaft*, 18-27.

50. Katrin Rohnstock, "Vorwort," in *Erotik macht die Hässlichen Schön*, ed. Rohnstock, 9-10.

51. Conversation with T. T., 2001.

52. Mühlberg, "Sexualität und ostdeutscher Alltag," 20.

53. Beilfuss, "'Über sieben Brücken.'"

54. See Bert Thinius, "Vom grauen Versteck ins bunte Ghetto: Ansichten zur Geschichte ostdeutscher Schwuler," in *Schwuler Osten: Homosexuelle Männer in der DDR*, ed. Kurt Starke (Berlin: Christoph Links Verlag, 1994), 73; Starke, *Schwuler Osten*, 300-301; Kolano, *Nackter Osten*; Konrad Weller, *Das Sexuelle in der deutsch-deutschen Vereinigung: Resümee und Ausblick* (Leipzig: Forum, 1991); Werner Habermehl, ed., *Sexualverhalten der Deutschen: Aktuelle Daten, intime Wahrheiten* (Munich: Heyne, 1993), 28.

55. See Aleksandar Stulhofer, "Sexual Freedom and Sexual Health in Times of Post-Communist Transition," paper delivered at the International Academy of Sex Research, Hamburg, Germany, June 20, 2002; Katrin Rohnstock, ed., *Stiefbrüder: Was Ostmänner und Westmänner voneinander denken* (Berlin: Elefant, 1995).

56. Kurt Starke makes these points in "Die Unzüchtige Legende vom pruden Osten," in *Erotik macht die Hässlichen schön*, ed. Rohnstock, 157. See also Eduard Stapel, "Schwulenbewegung in der DDR" (interview conducted by Kurt Starke), in Starke, *Schwuler Osten*, 91-110.

57. Diehl, *Liebe, Ehe—Scheidung?* 199.