

“If Only I Had A Girlfriend!”

Towards A Queer Reading Of *The Diary Of A Young Girl*

by

Cheryl D. Hann

Submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements  
for the degree of Master of Arts

at

Dalhousie University  
Halifax, Nova Scotia  
August 2016

© Copyright by Cheryl D. Hann, 2016

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

ABSTRACT.....	iv
LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS USED.....	v
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS.....	vi
CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION.....	1
CHAPTER 2: ANNE DECONSTRUCTED.....	4
2.1: ANNE FRANK: FIGURAL MOTHER.....	4
2.2: ANNE FRANK: FIGURAL CHILD.....	8
2.3: ANNE THE SYMBOL: TROPES OF PASSIVE FEMININITY IN HOLOCAUST REPRESENTATION.....	10
2.4: TO THE RESCUE: PETER VAN DAAN AND THE PROMISE OF HETEROSEXUAL REPRODUCTION.....	14
CHAPTER 3: ANNE REIMAGINED.....	16
3.1: ANNE AND THE SENSE OF UNBELONGING.....	16
3.2: A SHIFT IN ORIENTATION: ANNE AND PETER RE-EXAMINED.....	18
3.3: EMOTIONAL DURESS AND CLOSE PROXIMITY: ANNE AND PETER UNDER SCRUTINY.....	21
CHAPTER 4: HISTORICAL CONTEXT AND “EPISTEMIC INJUSTICE”.....	24
4.1 THE CULTURAL – HISTORICAL ORIGINS OF HOMOPHOBIA IN NAZI GERMANY.....	24
4.2 THE DISSOLUTION OF QUEER CULTURE IN NAZI GERMANY AND ITS LINGERING EFFECTS.....	28
4.3 EPISTEMIC INJUSTICE: THE IMAGINED THREAT OF ANNE’S QUEER TESTIMONY.....	31
CHAPTER 5: CONCLUSION.....	35

BIBLIOGRAPHY.....37

## ABSTRACT

This thesis examines the January 6, 1944 entry from *The Diary of A Young Girl*, in which Anne Frank openly discusses her own queer desire. This project will explore why said passage has received so little attention from scholars, despite its potential to undermine prevailing interpretations of Anne's identity and experience within the Annex. Looking to Miranda Fricker's 2007 text, *Epistemic Injustice: Power and the Ethics of Knowing*, this thesis will examine how the prolonged suppression of Anne's queer testimony serves to safeguard her credibility as a witness to the trauma of the Holocaust. I will demonstrate how the subdual of Anne's homoerotic desire works to de-gender and de-sexualize her testimony, ensuring her iconic status as child witness: the symbolic representation of innocence for all Holocaust victims. Because the construction of Anne as a symbol erases her feminine identity and sexual agency, my thesis—by providing a queer reading of *The Diary*—seeks to undermine said construction at its heterosexist foundations. By recovering Anne's queer desire, my project will recontextualize *Anne Frank: The Diary of a Young Girl* within the emergent field of Queer Holocaust Studies.

## LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS USED

*DM*            *Days of Masquerade*  
*HH*            *Hidden Holocaust*

## **ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

I want to thank Amy Elman, whose brief musings on Anne's queer confession ("Lesbians and the Holocaust" 1999) pushed me to "read between the lines" (10) of Anne's testimony. I would also like to thank Dr. Dorota Glowacka, whose guidance and seemingly endless wealth of knowledge in Holocaust studies (specifically the gendered elements thereof) made this project possible.

## CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

The aim of this project is to investigate why the following passage from January 6, 1944—which suggests Anne’s potential queer sexuality—has not been afforded an in-depth analysis by modern Holocaust scholars, and why for seven decades Anne has been presumed straight. It is not the intention of this project to somehow “prove” that Anne Frank was gay. No one is entitled to determine Anne’s sexuality but Anne herself, and she was cruelly denied the right to do so. It is the intention of this project, however, to challenge the automatic assumption of heterosexuality in women’s writings, and the centrality of heterosexuality within Holocaust studies more generally.

*Thursday, January 6, 1944*

*Once when I was spending the night at Jacque’s, I could no longer restrain my curiosity about her body, which she’d always kept hidden from me and which I’d never seen. I asked her whether, as proof of our friendship, we could touch each other’s breasts. Jacque refused. I also had a terrible desire to kiss her, which I did. Every time I see a female nude, such as the Venus in my art history book, I go into ecstasy. Sometimes I find them so exquisite I have to struggle to hold back my tears. If only I had a girlfriend! (The Diary of a Young Girl: Definitive Edition 162)*

At present, no in-depth scholarly work has attempted a queer reading of *The Diary of A Young Girl*. Nor have any scholars performed an extensive analysis of the above entry. It

is the aim of this paper to explore why this is, and to illuminate the potential impact of what now feels like a powerful proclamation of queer self-discovery. My project looks to connect the lack of contemporary scholarship on this passage to the narrative structure of *The Diary of a Young Girl*. The entries that surround Anne's queer testimony lend insight into Anne's own confusion about her developing sexual identity. Importantly, this confusion has been used as a means of dismissing Anne's queer confession. By imbedding her queer testimony among entries that seemingly guarantee her passage into heterosexuality, Anne inadvertently neutralizes her own queer confession, allowing heterosexist presumptions about her lesbian desire to prevail. Because the above entry is preceded by Anne's discussion of her future motherhood, and followed by her first mention of her romantic feelings for Peter van Daan, the organization of Anne's testimony allows for the assumption that her desire for Jacque is a fleeting curiosity, a detour on the inevitable path to heterosexual reproduction. I will explore why it is that, for so many years, Holocaust scholars have upheld this interpretation alone, ignoring the possibility that Anne's confusion may have resolved itself into a queer identity rather than a heterosexual one.

In the first section of my thesis, I will examine how understandings of Anne Frank as a potential mother, as well as a pre-sexual child have combined to turn Frank from an individual into an icon—indeed, into one of the most iconic Holocaust victims in the canon. I contend that the understanding of Anne's queer desire as trivial and non-threatening has served to protect the integrity of her iconic, canonical testimony from the epistemic threat of queerness.



In Sections II and III, I will be looking to Miranda Fricker's 2007 text, *Epistemic Injustice: Power and the Ethics of Knowing*, to demonstrate how Anne's queer confession could conceivably damage her status as a Holocaust witness in the eyes of some, and jeopardize the value of *The Diary* qua canonical text. I will explore how deep-seated presumptions of heterosexuality within and beyond Holocaust scholarship have influenced scholarly readings of *The Diary*. Working against these presumptions, I will examine the supposed guarantors of Anne's heterosexuality—her desire to be a mother, and her heterosexual relationship with Peter van Daan. I contend that neither of these elements offer any concrete proof of Anne's sexual orientation. Indeed, it is my intention to reveal a queer subtext that permeates *The Diary*, and to examine how this subtext should color our reading of Anne and Peter's relationship, as well as Anne's sexual identity more generally.

Looking to Amy Elman—whose article “Lesbians and the Holocaust” first inspired me to take on this project—I will explore the possibility that Anne's confusion about her own sexuality is not, somehow, proof of her inevitable passage into heterosexuality, but a reflection of the delayed sexual development of (especially lesbian) women in Anne's cultural-historical moment. I will explore the possibility that it was, in fact, Anne's relationship with Peter that was the detour, and not her queer desire.

## CHAPTER 2: ANNE DECONSTRUCTED

*The Diary of a Young Girl* remains one of the most widely read works of Holocaust literature. For many North Americans, including myself, it is the first piece of Holocaust testimony we encounter. *The Diary* has been published in more than 60 languages, has sold more than 30 million copies, and has gone through endless revisions – with the final *Definitive Edition* of the text appearing in 1995. It is in *The Definitive Edition* that readers encounter for the first time significant sections of testimony removed from the original text. These passages—the bulk of which detail Anne’s investigation of her own gendered body—demonstrate a general tendency within Holocaust literature to suppress those aspects of Holocaust experience which are uniquely feminine, especially when sexual.<sup>1</sup> Because *The Diary* was edited by Anne’s father, the text presents a unique (and quite literal) case of patriarchal censorship within Holocaust literature, and thus can help illuminate some of the mechanisms at work in gendered (and queer) silencing within the discipline.

### 2.1 ANNE FRANK: FIGURAL MOTHER

Because of the complicated editorial history of *The Diary*,<sup>2</sup> it is difficult to say which elements of the original text were omitted by Anne, and which were omitted by her

---

<sup>1</sup> For more on this see (among others): Heineman, Elizabeth. “Sexuality and Nazism: The Doubly Unspeakable?” and Goldenberg, M. “Sex-Based Violence and the Politics and Ethics of Survival.”

<sup>2</sup> The original *Diary* was the red and white checked notebook Anne received for her thirteenth birthday. This notebook, along with several others filled between 1942 and 43, make up what scholars call the *A Version* of the text. When Gerrit Bolkenstein requested that writings made during the occupation be kept, Anne rewrote her original diary in the form of a novel. This became *Version B*. From these two manuscripts Otto Frank made

father. However, it is known that the following passage—which, tellingly, has raised recent concerns that *The Diary* is “pornographic”<sup>3</sup> and should be banned from public schools—was removed from initial editions of the diary by Otto Frank:

Between your legs there are two soft, cushiony things, also covered with hair, which press together when you're standing ... They separate when you sit down and they're very red and quite fleshy on the inside. In the upper part, between the outer labia, there's a fold of skin that, on second thought, looks like a kind of blister. That's the clitoris. (*Definitive Edition* 236)

Anne’s exploration of her female body, and her focus on the clitoris, emphasize the uniqueness of her gendered experience, and imply the potential for unregulated (perhaps self-induced) female sexual pleasure. Passages like these—which were removed from initial editions of *The Diary*—help create a distinction between the so-called *safe* and *dangerous* aspects of Anne’s testimony, and gendered Holocaust testimony in general. Anne’s queer confession (the focus of my research), as well as passages dealing with menstruation and heterosexual contact were left in the original diary. Otto did not remove these passages, as they were considered safe enough for publication. But, why? What is it that marks a passage as safe within a gendered Holocaust testimony? The following passage may help answer this question:

---

the *C Version* of the diary. This final version was edited and re-edited over the next fifty years by Otto Frank and Mirjam Pressler, until *The Definitive Edition* appeared in 1995.

<sup>3</sup> In 2013, concerned parent Gail Horalek filed a complaint with the Northville, MI school district that passages from *The Definitive Edition* in which Anne explores and describes her own anatomy were “pornographic” and that the book should be banned from the classroom. See, Huffington Post article on April 29, 2003, “Anne Frank’s Diary Too ‘Pornographic’ for 7th-Grade Students, Claims Michigan Parent.”

I forgot to mention the important news that I'm probably going to get my period soon ... I can hardly wait. It's such a momentous event. Too bad I can't use sanitary napkins, but you can't get them anymore, and mama's tampons can be used only by women who've had a baby. (*Definitive Edition* 60)

Although this passage deals with the uniquely feminine experience of menstruation, it is safe for publication, as the link between menstruation and “women who've had a baby” is made explicit. By juxtaposing Anne's developing female body with the ultimate end of motherhood, it is implied that Anne will eventually be able to use “mama's tampons” after she herself gives birth. Anne's inevitable induction into the realm of heterosexual reproduction becomes the underlying focus of the passage, thereby neutralizing the threat posed by her female agency. As I will show, it is this promise of motherhood that also makes Anne's queer confession *safe*.

The section of the January 6, 1944 entry in which Anne discusses her queer desire is immediately preceded by another discussion of menstruation—“Whenever I get my period...I have the feeling that...I'm carrying around a sweet secret” (161). The entry also includes Anne's musings on the nature of motherhood: “I imagine a mother as a woman who, first and foremost, possesses a great deal of tact” (160). Indeed, in a December 24 entry, Anne imagines “the kind of mom [she]'d like to be to [her] children later on” (154). These passages effectively guarantee that Anne, who through menstruation is able to imagine herself as a mother, will enter into the reproductive realm. As I will show, the additional inclusion of Anne's romantic feelings for Peter in this section promise that this realm will be reached through heterosexual intercourse. The

implication here is that Anne's queer desire is somehow temporary, destined to be dissolved into so-called normal heterosexual behaviour. This dissolution of Anne's queer desire is fundamental to her status as a symbol of the Holocaust, as scholarly conceptions of Anne have relied on her ability to embody certain archetypes of femininity and victimhood.

In her article "Rachel Laments Her Children: Representations of Women in Holocaust Memorials," Judith Tydor Baumel identifies "repetitive patterns" (101) in representations of women in Holocaust art. Baumel lists the principal female tropes in Holocaust memorials as "the mother, universal giver of life and, thus, assurer of the future" (often shown protecting or mourning her children) (106-107); "the virgin" (111), often linked to images of "female subjugation, captivity and violation" (Jacobs 31); "weeping and elderly women" (Baumel 111), and the "warrior" (110). In memorials, as in canonical narratives, these female archetypes—these tropes of femininity—are given preference in accounts of the trauma of the Holocaust. Because these women fit euro-centric cultural notions of what it means to be a woman, these stories are easier for euro-centric audiences to identify with. The tragedies of these women's lives become more tragic. We see some of these archetypes at work in the public perception of Anne Frank.

In "The Nazi Assault on the Jewish Soul through the Murder of the Jewish Mother," David Patterson discusses the foundational role of the mother in Jewish culture and religion. He asks, "What is exterminated in the extermination of the Jewish mother" (164)? Because the racial-religious identity of the child is passed on matrilineally within Judaism, the mother is the literal and figurative "source of the Jewish people" (164). By admitting passages about menstruation and future progeny, the editors of *The Diary*

position Anne as a lost potential mother. Thus, Anne represents the loss not only of future Jewish children, but also of the foundation of Jewish culture and religion; as, “through the mother we have the Torah: bearing life into the world ... For the Torah is life ... the ‘Tree of Life’ that sustains all” (Patterson 167). Anne’s fulfillment of this symbolic role requires her adherence to established gender norms. Anne’s queer desire—the sexual autonomy and gender deviance it implies—go against these norms, and conventional images of the mother.

## 2.2 ANNE FRANK: FIGURAL CHILD

Importantly, within *The Diary*, there are *two* juxtaposing attempts to control Anne’s gender identity. One posits Anne as a potential Jewish mother; the other presents her as a Jewish Child—the *Young Girl* eternal. Even though Anne exclaims, on April 11, 1944, “I know that I’m a woman, a woman with inner strength and a great deal of courage!” (262), she has been cemented in the collective imagination as a child. The passage in which Anne explores her own vagina, and examines her clitoris is dangerous because it challenges this view. As the editors of the 1995 *Definitive Edition* note, “several passages dealing with Anne’s sexuality were omitted at the time of the diary’s initial publication ... [as] it was not customary to write openly about sex, and certainly not in books for young adults” (vi). The removal of passages that detail Anne’s sexual and psychological maturation silence the ‘woman,’ she had become within the Annex. These acts of literal patriarchal censorship expose not only Otto’s need for his daughter to remain pre-sexual and pure, but a cultural need for this as well.

Anne must remain ‘innocent’ in order to perform her double duty as a symbol of the Holocaust. On the one hand, Anne must be frozen in time as a literal child, so that she

may serve as the symbolic representation of the innocence of all Holocaust victims. On the other, she must be preserved as a *figural* child, so that she can stand symbolically for the loss of Jewish futurity. In order for Anne to remain pure, on both counts, she must be divorced from her sexuality, as in Western thought carnal knowledge is directly linked to the loss of innocence. “The child/adult distinction is crucially a distinction between sexlessness and sexuality” (Heinze 18). As Christine Piper notes, “We find it difficult to sustain an image of a child who is both sexualized *and* deserving of protection” (28). Because sex is conflated with sin, there is a tendency to view children who are sexually active or sexually aware as contaminated, somehow implicit in their own oppression (Piper 30). “The [child] deserving of full help and protection must be ‘blameless’ – there must be no hint of wrongdoing in the one seeking justice ... the possibility of independent action, particularly of actions that are not childlike, undermines images of vulnerability and dependency” (32). Thus, as a symbol of the innocence of all Holocaust victims, Anne must be distanced from her own sexual autonomy, lest she risk contaminating not only herself, but also the mass of victims for whom she is the representative. This is why passages where Anne discusses her own implied sexual pleasure must be erased, and why Anne’s potential queer desire must be suppressed. Hetero sexual desire is damaging to the innocence of a child, then homosexuality, already labeled deviant within heterosexist Western cultures, must be catastrophic. Anne’s innocence and pre-sexual status must also be preserved so that she may serve as a *figural child* for the Jewish people/culture. In *No Future: Queer Theory and the Death Drive*, Lee Edelman examines how, in Western culture, the child has become “the obligatory token of futurity” (12). The figural child represents the culture of which it is a

part, a culture that must be protected from destructive outside forces.<sup>4</sup> If Anne remains pre-sexual and pure, then she never matures beyond childhood; she remains, as *The Diary*'s title would suggest, "A Young Girl." As a simultaneous figural child and mother, Anne can serve as a symbol of the loss of the Jewish future, and the Jewish past – both of which were brought to the brink of destruction by the Shoah.

### **2.3 ANNE THE SYMBOL: TROPES OF PASSIVE FEMININITY IN HOLOCAUST REPRESENTATION**

Virgin, future Mother, child in need of protection – Frank has come to embody many of the acceptable tropes of femininity repeated within the Holocaust canon. This is, in itself, deeply problematic, as if Anne becomes a mere symbolic representation, then her own personal narrative is lost. On page 164 of *The Diary*, Anne mourns the loss of her friend Hanneli, who she says, "still symbolizes for me the suffering of my friends as well as that of Jews in general, so that when I am praying for her, I'm also praying for all the Jews" (*Definitive Edition* 164). Unknowingly, Anne appears to describe herself, or at least the role assigned to her in the decades following the war. The canonization of her de-gendered, desexualized testimony has transformed her from person to symbol, from individual to icon. This transmogrification is dangerous, especially to female victims of the Shoah. As Joan Ringelheim notes, turning women from individuals to symbols is a kind of "erasure" (171). Anne Frank, like the characters Ringelheim analyzes in Bruno Bettelheim's *The Informed Heart*, has become a "legendary figure, yet she is not the most

---

<sup>4</sup> Interestingly, in Edelman's book, those destructive outside forces are social "others" like homosexuals and POC, who threaten the figural child inasmuch as they threaten white, heterosexual reproduction. Thus, in transforming Anne into a figural child, the editors of *The Diary* once again contort her narrative until she herself becomes and emblem of the heterosexist culture that silences her potential queer testimony.



important part of the story. She is used [and] appropriated ... by those who write about her. The *woman* in [her] stor[y] is lost” (172 her italics). Because she has become a symbol par excellence of the innocence and loss of all Holocaust victims, Anne’s story has ceased to be Anne’s story. This becomes doubly problematic as these feminine archetypes—with the exception of the Warrior, who Baumel notes “received relatively little expression in the plastic and graphic commemorative spheres during the 1950s and 1960s”—imply a kind of innate passivity on the part of female victims and witnesses of the Shoah.

The mother, and the (especially female) child have both been idealised as “asexual, domestic, and pure” (Piper 39). Within euro-centric, heterosexist cultures, both women and children tend to be seen as “voiceless ... innocent,” “vulnerable and dependent” (40). This assumed dependence and passivity are a large part of why Anne Frank has been viewed unquestioningly as heterosexual. As Claudia Schoppmann notes in her book *Days of Masquerade: Life Stories of Lesbians During the Third Reich*:

[T]he process of discovering [one’s] identity as [a] lesbian[] took many years, or even decades for some [women] ... A significant reason for this was the gender-specific socialization of girls and young women to remain sexually passive and chaste. (117)

This perception of women as ‘sexually passive’ has informed euro-centric views on lesbianism for centuries. In “The Position of Lesbian Women in the Nazi Period,” Schoppmann discusses how, during the Nazi occupation, the image of women as inherently passive meant that, “female homosexuality was not perceived as “dangerous to

society” (8)<sup>5</sup>. The dissolution of the Women’s Movement in 1933, and the removal of women from public occupations meant that homosexual women were less visible than their male counterparts. As such, their sexuality was deemed less threatening. Because women’s homosexuality was essentially invisible (following the destruction of lesbian clubs and magazines beginning in 1933), it lacked the ability to corrupt the morality of the German youth. Indeed, lesbian women themselves were viewed as simply having been corrupted, or “seduced” (10). That seduction was largely considered to be temporary.

In *Hidden Holocaust: Gay and Lesbian Persecution in Germany 1933-45*, Günter Grau compiles an extensive catalogue of official Nazi documents regarding homosexuality and population policy. In an extract from the minutes of a Population Policy subcommittee meeting held March 2, 1936, officials discuss the nature of lesbianism:

For it can generally be assumed that if a woman is seduced she will not for that reason lastingly withdraw from normal sexual relations, but will be useful as before in terms of population policy. Furthermore, the practice of this vice does not by any means do as much damage to a woman’s psyche as in the case of a man, and the danger for the state is therefore by no means as great. A further reason to refrain from any penal sanctions lies in the danger of denunciations – one which is especially

---

<sup>5</sup> Henceforth citations taken from this article will be cited as (Schoppmann *HH* #), and citations from Schoppmann’s own book *Days of Masquerade*, will be cited as (Schoppmann *DM* #).

great because of woman's natural inclination toward  
effusiveness and caressing. (72)

There is a lot to unpack here. The narrative structure of this excerpt eerily mirrors the narrative structure of *The Diary*, in which Anne's potential lesbianism—a temporary seduction—poses no threat to 'normal sexual relations.' The use of the word 'vice' is key, as the predominate cultural-moral view of the era saw homosexuality not as a permanent, innate aspect of one's identity, but a misstep in action—a break in moral decency. This view was echoed and supported by medical literature of the time, which also saw homosexuality either as a vice, or a "pathological affliction" (Kronfeld quoted in Grau 22). Because this 'vice does not ... do as much damage to a woman's psyche' as to man's, the implication is that this vice, and the "illness" (19) that caused it can be cured. Often, in Nazi documents, the proposed cure is "compulsory mat[ing]" (Schoppmann *HH* 10). A woman can be relieved of her affliction when she engages in heterosexual intercourse. Whether or not she consents seems of no consequence. Heterosexual intercourse, then, guarantees that a queer woman will retain her 'useful[ness]' as a progenitor of the race, and her 'natural inclination toward effusiveness and caring' ensures that she will take to motherhood like a fish to water.

These concepts of female homosexuality play into ideas developed at the turn of the century that considered lesbianism is, at best, a kind of "pseudo-homosexual[ity]" (Schoppmann *HH* 9). Medical and cultural ideas about 'pseudo-homosexuality' were linked to (among other things) the popular view that lesbian relationships were a natural extension of women's innate, "naturally ... tender" (12) behaviour. "[R]omantic friendships" (Spurlin 9) between women were common and were commonly accepted –

as long as they eventually dissolved into heterosexual marriages. It was when these friendships persisted, when they suggested a refutation of accepted gender norms that they became dangerous. When lesbianism began to resemble a permanent part of a woman's identity she, and her sexuality, were labeled "deviant" (De Block 276-278). Thus, the promise of heterosexuality implied in the narrative structure of *The Diary* shields Anne against any allegations of sexual deviance that a permanent lesbian identity would bring.

## **2.4 TO THE RESCUE: PETER VAN DAAN AND THE PROMISE OF HETEROSEXUAL REPRODUCTION**

The entry that immediately follows Anne's queer confession provides that promise, as it is in this passage that Anne first mentions her developing romantic interest in Peter van Daan. As Schoppmann notes, "the Nazi state assumed a comprehensive 'natural' dependence of women upon men – especially in sexual relations ... Any self-determining female sexuality, including lesbian forms, was unthinkable within a centuries-old patriarchal tradition that identified passivity as a female sexual characteristic" (*HH* 9). The introduction of Peter as a romantic interest in this section of *The Diary* appears to confirm this heterosexist notion of female sexuality, cementing Anne's passivity not only as witness and victim, but as a sexual agent: "It gave me a wonderful feeling when I looked into his dark blue eyes and saw how bashful my unexpected visit had made him ... [but] at the same time [I saw] a flicker of awareness of his masculinity" (162). Anne's "awareness" of Peter's "masculinity," here associated with a "wonderful [and implicitly sexual] feeling" implies that Anne's promised induction into the reproductive realm will be accessed through heterosexual intercourse—

an intercourse that upholds the gender binary. After all, if Peter is masculine in this scenario, then Anne—the future mother—is unmistakably feminine.

In “Lesbians and the Holocaust,” Elman briefly discusses how Anne and Peter’s “heterosexual intimacy” has contributed to the “dismissal” of Anne’s potential lesbianism (14). The entry in which Anne discusses her “active[] attract[ion] to girls” is “conveniently ignored” (14) and Anne’s relationship with Peter seems to expose it as innocent curiosity – an impermanent part of her now cemented heterosexuality. Because Anne’s exploration of her own queer desire is nested among supposed guarantors of heterosexuality, its weight—that is to say, its ‘danger’—is obscured. The promise of motherhood, coupled with implied heterosexual intercourse, work together to minimize the impact of Anne’s queer testimony, and suggest Anne’s confusion surrounding her sexual identity. By beginning this section of *The Diary* with a young girl’s fantasy of adulthood—and indeed, Anne often conflates the promise of heterosexual reproduction with the fully-formed self: “Oh, I long to get my period. Then I’ll really be grown up” (52)—and ending it with the introduction of Peter as a romantic interest, the narrative structure of the diary implies that Anne’s sexual interest in Jacque, or the “female nude” (162) in general, is a temporary detour on the path toward heterosexual coitus and reproduction. This string of entries suggest that Anne’s confusion will eventually resolve itself, as her heterosexual identity stabilizes and becomes permanent. Crucially, however, neither Anne’s desire to be a mother, nor her relationship with Peter van Daan are actual guarantors of heterosexuality.

### CHAPTER 3: ANNE REIMAGINED

The desire to become a mother is not a strictly heterosexual one. It is a desire that many women possess, regardless of sexual orientation. This desire was even more prevalent in Anne's specific cultural-historical moment. In the mid-twentieth century, culturally sanctioned gender norms instilled in many young women the desire and felt duty to produce children. Even Anne, whose children would have been considered "lives unworthy of life," would have been exposed to this rhetoric. Thus, Anne's desire to one day become a mother provides absolutely no concrete evidence that she was heterosexual. Nor does her apparent sexual confusion suggest any specific outcome. Anne's confusion over her own sexual identity falls in line with Schoppmann's analysis of lesbian identity in the Nazi era. While Anne's sexual confusion has led many scholars to dismiss Anne's queer desire as temporary curiosity, it is equally likely that Anne's uncertainty is the marker of a developing lesbian identity, hampered by the "gender-specific socialization of girls ... to remain sexually passive and chaste" Schoppmann addresses (117). Indeed, Anne herself notes that she is only "just beginning to discover" that she is "an individual[] with [her] own ideas, thoughts and habits" (161). This reading of Anne's uncertainty is supported when, upon closer inspection, one realizes that the queer subtext of Anne's diary extends far beyond the January 6, 1944 entry. In actuality, *The Diary* is filled with confessions that mirror the lesbian testimony gathered in Schoppmann's *Days of Masquerade*.

#### 3.1 ANNE AND THE SENSE OF UNBELONGING

Anne's diary is heavily marked by the feeling that she "do[es]n't fit in" (29). She says, "I fall asleep with the strange feeling of wanting to be different than I am or being

different than I want to be, or perhaps of behaving differently that I am or want to be” (75). She wishes God would “give [her] another personality” but accepts that she is “stuck with the character [she] was born with, and yet [she] is sure [she] is not a bad person” (84). This kind of confusion surrounding self-identity, this moral struggle with ones own difference and sense of un-belonging (Anne felt that she “would always be an outsider” [168]) persists throughout *The Diary*. Anne also describes a felt need to “hide [her] real sel[f]” (17). She goes on, “I think it’s horrible that you can’t ever confide in anyone, not even those closest to you” (17). These feelings are echoed in the testimonies of lesbian women interviewed for Schoppmann’s book. Many women describe similar feelings of isolation from their families – what one woman calls, “the pressure to live a secret life” (Zimmerman quoted *DM* 117). Most of the testimonies Schoppmann collects reflect a prolonged feeling of “self-censorship” (Knittel quoted in *DM* 101), and not knowing “where [you] belong” (‘Johnny’ quoted in *DM* 42).

For the lesbians in Schoppmann’s book, that long-sought-after sense of belonging came when they discovered public lesbian culture for the first time—once they saw themselves reflected beyond their own four walls. In *The Diary*, Anne describes how she is “different ... from other girls” (281). In Schoppmann’s book, lesbian women describe what it is like to meet other girls who, like them, are “different.” Here one woman describes her first visit to a lesbian club: “it was a great liberating experience to see that there are really so many women like yourself ... this is where you belonged” (Sandmann quoted in *DM* 85). Anne seems to experience a similar sense of belonging through her romantic friendship with Jacque. If Anne and Jacque shared romantic feelings for one another (as evidence by their shared “kiss”), then they could have provided each other a

safe haven from shared feelings of un-belonging – protection from the persecution that comes when the heterosexual world realizes it is “definitely knocking on the wrong door”

(10). Here Anne is literally discussing her reaction to heterosexual male suitors:

As soon as a boy asks if he can bicycle home with me and we get to talking, nine times out of ten I can be sure he’ll become enamoured on the spot and won’t let me out of his sight for a second. His ardor eventually cools, especially since I ignore his passionate glances and pedal blithely on my way ... These are the most innocent types. Of course, there are those who blow you kisses or try to take hold of your arm, but they’re definitely knocking on the wrong door. (*Definitive Edition* 10)

This entry, which suggests Anne’s disinterest in heterosexual romance, was not included in original editions of *The Diary*.

### **3.2 A SHIFT IN ORIENTATION: ANNE AND PETER RE-EXAMINED**

If we take *The Diary* at its word, it is Jacque to whom Anne first talks to about sex:

“When I was twelve and a half, I learned [about sex] from Jacque, who wasn’t as ignorant as I was” (223). It is Jacque with whom Anne has her first (recorded) sexual experiences. When one “read[s] between the lines,” (Elman 10)—as we must if we are to recover any of the many thousands of lost queer narratives from the Holocaust—the queer subtext of *The Diary* virtually leaps of the page. The queer subtext of *The Diary* offers a new lens through which to view Anne’s time in the Annex. Take, for instance, the following scene in which Anne and Peter play “dress up” (49). Read through a queer lens, this passage takes on new meaning:



[Peter] and I have one thing in common: we like to dress up ...  
One evening we made our appearance with Peter in one of  
mother's skin-tight dresses and me in his suit. He wore a hat; I  
had a cap on. The grown-ups split their sides laughing, and we  
enjoyed ourselves every bit as much. (49)

When examined through a queer lens, this scene becomes more than just “dress up.” It becomes something more like drag. Here, Anne resembles the women from Schoppmann's book whose masculine style of dress allowed them to express their difference from other, heterosexual women (42, 44, 49). In this scene, Anne and Peter engage in a kind of self-forming, subversive gender play that evokes Judith Butler. Their play is “subversive to the extent that it reflects on the imitative structure by which hegemonic gender is itself produced and disputes heterosexuality's claim on naturalness and originality” (7). Anne is critical of the strictures of hegemonic gender and heterosexuality elsewhere in *The Diary*. In an entry dated June 13, 1994, Anne “condemn[s] ... our system of values ... [that] don't acknowledge how great, difficult, but ultimately beautiful women's share in society is” (319). By May 3, 1944, Anne has already “made up [her] mind to lead a life different from other girls, and not to become an ordinary housewife later on” (281).

Importantly, in this scene, the reader becomes aware of a crucial element of Anne and Peter's relationship. As with Jacque, Peter represents someone who is also struggling with his developing (sexual) identity: “Both Peter and I are struggling with our innermost feelings. We're still unsure of ourselves and are ... vulnerable, emotionally” (*Definitive Edition* 197). It is because of this uncertainty, this vulnerability that Anne is able to feel

safe with Peter – safe enough to engage in gender play. It is this sense of safety, I believe, that is the impetus for Anne’s developing feelings for van Daan. As Anne’s time in the Annex goes on, we actually see her undergo a shift in orientation, as her feelings for Jacque are displaced onto Peter: “After New Year’s a second big change occurred: [a] dream, through which I discovered my longing for...a boy; not for a girlfriend, but for a boyfriend” (209). Anne herself is surprised at her shifting desires. This displacement is made even more apparent when Anne notes the “strong feeling of fellowship” she feels for Peter, “which [she] only remember[s] having had with [her] girlfriend” (Jacque) (187). Indeed, Anne’s discussions of sex often begin with a memory of Jacque, and transform into a present experience with Peter.

In an entry from March 18, 1944, Anne remembers her early conversations about sex with Jacque—“Jacque and I found out about the hymen” (223)—and transitions almost seamlessly into, “Even though it’s Saturday, I’m not bored! ... I’ve been up in the attic with Peter. I sat there dreaming with my eyes closed, and it was wonderful” (223). The quickness of this transition makes it difficult to discern what, and *whom* Anne is dreaming about. Anne’s emotional and sexual leap from Jacque to Peter in this entry mirrors the leap that follows her queer confession, emphasizing her sexual confusion. Importantly, though, in this section the emphasis leans more to the side of a queer reading than a heteronormative interpretation.

On May 19, 1944, Anne wonders if perhaps she isn’t “merely a better substitute for Boche” (Peter’s old cat) (299). “I don’t mind,” she goes on. “He’s so happy just knowing someone loves him” (299). Here, in an interesting twist, Anne seems aware of the potential for emotional and sexual transference, but focuses it on Peter and his lost cat.

Reading this passage through a queer lens, it is easy to wonder for whom Peter is a “substitute,” and whether Anne also is more attached to the feeling of being loved than the relationship itself. This question is answered when Anne admits that her feelings for Peter are, in actuality, feelings of friendship that “automatically” escalated to romance due—I believe—to hetero-normative pressures:

When I finally got him to be my friend, it automatically developed into an intimacy that, when I think about it now, seems outrageous. We talked about the most private things, but we haven't yet touched upon the things closest to my heart ... I soon realized he could never be a kindred spirit. (331)

### **3.3 EMOTIONAL DURESS AND CLOSE PROXIMITY: ANNE AND PETER UNDER SCRUTINY**

Although the queer subtext of Anne's testimony undermines heterosexist interpretations of *The Diary*, scholars have largely ignored it. Heterosexist views of lesbian relationships throughout the Shoah, especially relationships formed inside concentration camps, have coloured views of Anne's queer testimony. Many scholars assert that, “in concentration camps women who would otherwise regard lesbianism with abhorrence could gradually slide into the acceptance of such liaisons” (quoted in Elman 14). This echoes a commonly held belief that women who engage in same-sex affection within the camps somehow “got that way from being locked up together” (‘Johnny’ quoted in *DM* 52). The implication here is that these women shifted away from their true orientation while inside the camps to due extreme emotional duress, desperate loneliness and close proximity. Elman's issue with this, and I wish to echo it here, is that these same parameters—this

same scrutiny—are never applied to heterosexual relationships, even when they occur under the same circumstances.

Anne's newfound longing for Peter is a big change from her take on him at the beginning of the diary, which was, simply, "Oh. Ugh!" (40). To use the words of the heterosexist analysis quoted above, Anne too is able to "gradually slide into the acceptance of [a] liaison" she previously regarded with "abhorrence." It goes without saying that both Anne and Peter were under extreme emotional duress throughout their stay in the Annex, and that this fear led to their romance: "We're cooped up here, cut off from the world, anxious and fearful, especially lately ... Why shouldn't we kiss each other times like these" (*Definitive Edition* 267)? Close quarters were also a factor in the development of their relationship. Anne often describes needing to go up to Peter's room just to have space to breathe. Her roommate Dussel becomes too much to bear: "As if I don't hear 'shh, shh' enough during the day because I'm always making 'too much' noise, my dear room-mate has come up with the idea of saying 'shh, shh' to me all night too." (81). An ensuing fight over a shared table in their room pushes Anne upstairs just so she has a place to think. It is these repeated visits to Peter's room that begin her emotional interest in him, and Peter's room becomes a safe haven in the tumult of life in the Annex. "If you only knew how much I used to cry at night, how unhappy and despondent I was, how lonely I felt, you'd understand my wanting to go upstairs" (282), she says on May 5, 1944. Yet, Anne's relationship with Peter has not been dismissed as "an adolescent act exacerbated by dire circumstances and the absence of female companionship." (14-15). Rather it has been taken as 'proof' of her true heterosexuality – a way to dismiss the contents of her queer confession. But, Even as Anne's feelings for

Peter develop, she insists, “You mustn’t think I’m in love with Peter, because I’m not. If the van Daans had a daughter instead of a son, I’d have tried to make friends with her” (163). Of course, we can only speculate what kind of romance may have blossomed had this been the case.

## **CHAPTER 4: HISTORICAL CONTEXT AND “EPISTEMIC INJUSTICE”**

In the introduction to *Days of Masquerade*, Schoppmann notes, “biographers have often purged the stories of lesbians of that supposedly reputation-harming aspect, thus depicting the women as heterosexual” (*DM* 25). This is what I see happening in the story of Anne Frank. Her queer confession has been purged from the story of her life to protect her from the ‘reputation-harming aspect[s]’ of queer sexuality. But, how, specifically, does queer desire harm Anne Frank’s reputation? Or, more importantly, how does it affect her status as a witness to the trauma of the Holocaust? The depreciatory view of Anne’s lesbian desire that developed out of her own apparent sexual confusion mirrors all too well the view of lesbianism still held within Western culture. To understand how heterosexist notions of lesbian identity manifest within Holocaust scholarship (and specifically within scholarship on *The Diary*), it is important to investigate the cultural-historical origins and development of these notions, specifically within the context of the Holocaust.

### **4.1 THE CULTURAL – HISTORICAL ORIGINS OF HOMOPHOBIA IN NAZI GERMANY**

For centuries, within Western cultures, anyone who engaged in same-sex sexual contact was simply considered a sodomite: kindred to the doomed citizens of Sodom. Under this classification, a sodomite was not a type of person, but a person who committed a particular type of sin. In short, one’s classification as a sodomite had nothing to do with one’s sexual identity. Before 1533, and the induction of the Buggery Act under King Henry VIII, sodomites were typically tried in ecclesiastical courts, but

with the rise of the modern state, ecclesiastical authority began to wane and the religious abhorrence of homosexual practices was carried over into secular law (Bayer 15-17). Under the Buggery Act, sodomy wasn't simply a sin; it was a crime. Indeed, sodomy was considered a capital offence: “[i]f the evidence was ... strong enough ... [perpetrators were] sentenced to death” (Adriaens and De Block 279). While it is difficult to pinpoint homosexuality's exact moment of manifest, most historians regard the period at the end of the 19th century – when the term “homosexual” came into wider use – as deeply significant.<sup>6</sup> Until this time, the field of sexual perversion had remained the prerogative of the courts. The law punished acts like sodomy, but did not assign the perpetrator a particular criminal status. “[T]he arrival of the doctor on a scene that had been reserved for the judge,” changed this (Tamagne 210). Now the criminal was defined by his/her perversion: “[s]he was a homosexual, pedophile, sadist or fetishist” (210). The emerging sexologists who sought to explain homosexuality during this period were divided into two groups: those who saw homosexuality as an “acquired characteristic” and those who viewed it as “inborn” or innate (Bayer 19). Among these latter thinkers was Karl Heinrich Ulrichs. In 1864, Ulrichs presented gay men and women as a ‘third sex.’ Neither distinctly male nor female, Ulrichs’ ‘urnings’ were men and women whose souls belonged to the other gender. Ulrichs theorized that:

The human embryo possessed both male and female sex organs,  
losing one as it developed in the uterus ... [M]ale  
homosexuality came about when the embryo shed the female sex  
organ, but the same change did not occur in the part of the brain

---

<sup>6</sup> The term *homosexuality* (*Homosexualität*) was first used in 1869 by Karl Maria Kertbeny, a German-Hungarian, in his anonymous pamphlet that campaigned for the abolition of Prussia's Sodomy Law, Paragraph 143.

that regulates the sex drive ... [Thus,] homosexuality was not just an 'inversion' in the choice of sexual object but an 'inversion' of one's broader gender characteristics as well. (quoted in Miller 14)

This view, that homosexuality was an innate characteristic that could not be annihilated, was a giant leap from the religious take on the sodomite and his/her sin. It was also a movement away from the legal view of homosexuality. By arguing that homosexuality was inborn, Ulrichs could insist that it was neither criminal nor sinful (14). Thus, Ulrichs, and those who supported his view—including prominent German sexologist Magnus Hirschfeld—began to push for the eradication of legal penalties against homosexual acts. For Hirschfeld, whose legacy is especially important in this case, as he became a target of Nazi furor, homosexuality was “no more a disease than a vice; it is a constitutional variant, a middle term between the male-female opposition – one which must exist because nature makes no leaps but everywhere presents fluid transitions” (quoted in Grau 23). Hirschfeld and his followers made huge strides in generating awareness and empathy for what they called the “third sex” (23). Throughout the Weimar period, queer activist groups banded together to create safe public spaces for homosexuals living in cities like Berlin, and to fight against anti-gay legislature. However, this all came to an end as the Nazis assumed power in Germany.

The medicalization of the criminal system—the very shift that saw homosexuality transform from act to identity—was also a major underpinning of the Nazi genocide. By the early 1900s arguments that “persistent...criminals were primarily the product of hereditary degeneracy” (Evans 31) began to gain a public foothold, and eugenics began to emerge as a predominant sociological theory. The belief that “with the decline in the



German birth rate... ‘less valuable’ members of society were reproducing themselves faster than the ‘fully valuable’” became “almost universal” among medical and political professionals involved in discussions of “the social problem” by the eve of the First World War (31). With Germany’s defeat in the war, “the social problem” grew, as homelessness, vagrancy and prostitution increased due to the economic devastation of prolonged combat. In this situation the need for “boundaries between respectable society and its outcasts” (37) became imperative. Ideas about eugenics, paired with rapidly developing ideas about “racial hygiene” (33) became central in creating those definitions. When the Nazis came to power, they cemented these definitions into law. In the case of homosexuals, these laws had already been in existence since the 1870s. The Nazis simply expanded upon them.

Homosexuals were considered a threat to the ‘volk’ because homosexual men were thought to lose their interest in heterosexual reproduction as a result of their same-sex desire. Because the Nazis were so concerned with population policy — with ensuring that only those considered ‘fully valuable’ were producing children — this threat was intolerable. Gay men who couldn’t be cured of their homosexuality — through castration or forced mating — were sent to concentration camps. Homosexual men and women stood in direct opposition to the Nazis’ belief in and enforcement of concrete gender norms. These gender norms were considered crucial for “preserv[ing] the heterosexist social structure and thereby ... the stability” of the Nazi regime (Schoppmann *HH* 10-11). Thus it became imperative that the Nazis eradicate these individuals, as well all traces of their culture, literature and progressive ideology.

## 4.2 THE DISSOLUTION OF QUEER CULTURE IN NAZI GERMANY AND ITS LINGERING EFFECTS

Lesbian clubs and publications came under fire during the Nazi regime as totems of obscenity. On February 23, 1933 the government issues an edict declaring, “taverns frequented solely or mainly by persons who indulge in *unnatural sexual practices*...can no longer be tolerated” (quoted in Grau 28, his italics). Following the issue of this statement, regular raids of gay and lesbian clubs began. “[A]fter 1938 there were more and more raids” (Anneliese quoted in *DM* 51), until it became so dangerous to own, operate and attend gay clubs that many shut down, and purveyors and patrons retreated into “private life” (Leithäuser quoted in *DM* 130). Queer publications, too, were banned from appearing in public. The Protection of Youth from Obscene Publications Act, passed in 1926, became a valuable tool for “attacking the homosexual media and its public visibility” (Schoppmann *DM* 6). “In the interests of the moral renewal of the German people” (Grau 29), obscene publications could “no longer be tolerated” (29). “As early as March 1933 all homosexual magazines were banned within the scope of Nazi efforts to ‘combat obscene writings’” (*DM* 139). In *Hidden Holocaust*, Grau reprints a Nazi “report” which chronicles the destruction of Magnus Hirschfeld’s center for research, the Sexual Science Institute:

On the morning of 6 May 1933 the *Berliner Lokalanzeiger* reported that the purging of books with an unGerman spirit from Berlin libraries would take place ... students ... wished to begin the operation at the Sexual Science Institute ... [T]heir real concern, was not to seize a few books ... but to *destroy the*

*institute* ... [N]umerous manuscripts of Krafft-Ebbing, Karl Heinrich Ulrichs and others, many of them unpublished, fell victim to the intruders. (quoted in Grau 30-33)

The dissolution of Germany's queer subculture, along with the suppression and destruction of progressive scientific work on homosexuality within the country, meant that the only publicly supported and disseminated views on homosexuality were the homophobic views of the Nazi party and their conservative cultural predecessors. The official take on homosexuality during this period (and for decades afterward) had regressed, and the accepted view held that homosexuality was either a moral defect, or a pathological illness:

There is not a shred of convincing evidence for the hypothesis that homosexuality is based upon an innate organization of the brain ... on the contrary, it is been established that in psychopathological personalities homosexuality develops through the effect of unfavourable sexual experiences upon an immature ... poorly controlled sex drive. (Kraepelin quoted in Grau 20)

The toxic climate of homophobia engendered throughout the Nazi Occupation did not dissipate with the end of the War. Unlike anti-Semitism, homophobia remained an officially sanctioned discriminatory practice long after the fall of the Third Reich. Part of the reason for this is that the anti-gay laws expanded during the Nazi Occupation were not repealed immediately after the war. Indeed, according to Dagmar Herzog, "persecution of homosexual men actually escalated in the postwar years" (119). In *Lost*

*Intimacies: Rethinking Homosexuality Under National Socialism*, William Spurlin describes how “paragraph 175 of the German Penal Code criminalized homosexuality, [so] the German government’s position in the years immediately after the war was that the sentences passed onto homosexuals under the Nazi regime were ... legally and socially justified” (87). Because of this line of thinking, homosexuals were not viewed as victims of the Holocaust in the same sense that victims of illegal, racist persecution were. Indeed, homosexuals were not officially recognized as victims of the Shoah until 1985, when then German President Richard von Weizsäcker gave a speech that openly acknowledged the “the homosexuals and the mentally ill who were killed” (Speech Commemorating the end of National-Socialist Tyranny 2). Still, even in this speech of remembrance, the link between homosexuality and pathology persists, and an air of homophobia lingers.

Additionally, the medicalization of criminality that prevailed during the Nazi Occupation continued after, both in Germany and elsewhere. Even after homosexuality was decriminalized in Germany, it remained as a pathology in the *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders*—the standard classification of mental disorders used by mental health professionals—until 1973, and continued long after to be linked to ill-health.<sup>7</sup> The stigmatization of homosexuality led to the development and persistence of homophobic stereotypes that posit queer individuals as deviant, sick and morally corrupt.

---

<sup>7</sup> For example, the classification of HIV/AIDS as a “gay disease.” For more on this see Greene, Beverly and Gregory M. Herek. *AIDS, Identity, and Community: The HIV Epidemic and Lesbians and Gay Men*.

### 4.3 EPISTEMIC INJUSTICE: THE IMAGINED THREAT OF ANNE'S QUEER TESTIMONY

These stereotypes, whether conscious or not, interfere with our ability to view homosexuals as credible witnesses and contribute to what Miranda Fricker calls the 'epistemic injustice' executed against queer individuals. Prolonged, culturally engrained homophobic ideologies have created what Fricker calls an "*identity-prejudicial credibility deficit*" (4) for queer folk. *Identity Prejudice* occurs when our "shared social-imaginative conceptions" of social groups result in "prejudices against people *qua* social type" (4). The long-held, scientifically sanctioned view that "[the homosexual] suffers from a pathological disturbance to the activity of the mind" (Oyen quoted in Grau 22) renders queer individuals—living within a heterosexist society that promotes these views—incapable of providing testimony viewed as reliable. The dismissal of queer testimony under these terms is what Fricker calls *testimonial injustice*. *Testimonial injustice* occurs when a person's *identity-prejudicial credibility deficit* results in the speaker "receiving deflated credibility from the hearer owing to identity prejudice on the hearer's part" (4). *Testimonial injustice* is damaging because the recipient is "degraded *qua* knower, and [so] they are degraded *qua* human. They are "prevent[ed] ... from successfully putting knowledge into the public domain" (43).

That the suppression of Anne Frank's queer testimony has prevented the entrance of her (possibly) homosexual narrative and therefore knowledge into the public domain is clear. It is the contention of this work that this suppression was done to safeguard Anne's Holocaust testimony from the *testimonial injustice* that a queer identity invites. *The Diary of a Young Girl* is one of few texts by female authors to have been admitted into the

Holocaust canon. That the text is an anomaly is already problematic in terms of the systematic erasure of female testimony about the Shoah, and the assumption that there could be a universal (which in Euro-centric culture always means straight, cis and male) perspective on, or experience of its horrors.<sup>8</sup> Add to this the fact that women's testimonies are already given less epistemic credibility than those of their male counterparts, and it becomes clear why the convenient erasure of Anne's queer desire has persisted for so long. Because *The Diary* has become such an influential text, the desire to protect the credibility of Anne's testimony is palpable. As a Jewish woman, Anne is already in a kind of epistemic double jeopardy, as—according to Fricker—our conscious and unconscious stereotypes about marginalized groups impact our ability to view them as reliable transmitters of knowledge. Women, viewed for centuries as emotional, irrational and naïve, already make Fricker's list of those who face unfair discrimination in their capacity as knowers (23). We have culturally distanced femininity from the realm of objective, reliable knowledge. Similarly, Fricker notes how the Jewish people have been culturally deadlocked by a “grim catalogue of clichés” that label them as “wily,” untrustworthy and dishonest (23). Indeed, the Nazis in their anti-Semitic propaganda employed many of the same historically transmitted, racist clichés Fricker points out. According to Fricker, then, Anne Frank is already at a considerable “credibility deficit” (21), as her gender and race mark her as an inherently unreliable witness.

The addition of lesbianism places Anne in an epistemic triple jeopardy, and it must therefore be eliminated, because this threat has yet to be dismantled within Holocaust scholarship. This imagined threat—the result of the homophobic collective

---

<sup>8</sup> For more on this see Ringelheim, Joan. “Women and the Holocaust: A Reconsideration of Research” (1993).

imaginings of a heterosexist culture—has led to the erasure of countless queer testimonies of the Holocaust. Because of this lingering, legally sanctioned homophobia, victims’ testimonies were not analyzed through a queer lens in the decades following the Holocaust. Even to this day “research using same sex desire as a lens of inquiry into the holocaust has remained marginal” (Spurlin 5), whereas research on Anti-Semitism is the foundation of Holocaust studies, and gendered issues have been studied now for almost 30 years. For Anne Frank specifically, the focus has been on honoring and recovering her as a Jewish victim of the Shoah. Through her representation as a figural mother and child, that recovery has taken on a deeply gendered aspect. Still Anne’s sexual autonomy (and, more specifically, her potential homosexuality) has not been part of the discussion.

Even when homosexuality was included in discussions of the Holocaust, the initial inclusion of homosexuals as a victim group really meant the inclusion of homosexual men. Lingering assumptions within Holocaust studies that “lesbians were not as systematically persecuted” as homosexual men (Spurlin 10) meant the value of their experiences was minimized. What Spurlin calls the “masculinist bias in narratives about Holocaust victims and survivors” (46) meant that lesbians were rendered invisible within a group already struggling to be seen. Indeed, numerous newspaper articles from as recently as 2010 cite “upset” among Holocaust historians over the decision to include lesbians in Berlin’s Memorial to Homosexuals Persecuted Under Nazism.<sup>9</sup>

Lesbian women have been categorically erased from the cultural narrative of the Holocaust. It is extremely difficult to trace lesbian women’s paths through Nazi occupied Europe. It is especially difficult to locate lesbian women within the concentration camp

---

<sup>9</sup> See news reports at <http://www.thelocal.de>, <http://www.queerty.com> and <http://www.dailymail.co.uk> (March 2010).

system, as many lesbians were simply marked with the Black Triangle, indicating asociality. Their sexuality was not listed on their records. It is thus impossible to say how many women were imprisoned for their sexuality, though we know from anecdotal evidence that many were – despite the fact that the laws surrounding Paragraph 175 did not explicitly target lesbians. Because so many queer women were lost in the system, their stories have been lost as well. Indeed, so few lesbian stories of the Holocaust have been collected that at the time of this writing, only two books exist which chronicle lesbian experience during the Holocaust: Claudia Schoppmann’s *Days of Masquerade* and Erica Fischer’s *Aimee & Jaguar*.<sup>10</sup> In many texts readers are forced to speculate since explicit discussion of one’s own lesbianism was so rare. “This does not mean that one discovers lesbians where none exist. Rather ... one is especially careful to avoid presumptions of heterosexuality” (10). This is how we must approach *The Diary* of Anne Frank. Even though Anne does discuss her queer desire in explicit terms, the critical interpretation of her sexual confusion has led to its disappearance. The uncertainty of Anne’s queer sexuality has led to its erasure. It is my hope that by recovering Anne’s queer confession, and illuminating the queer subtext of *The Diary*, a new means of analyzing this canonical text may be revealed.

---

<sup>10</sup> Grau should also be applauded here for his inclusion of lesbian narratives in his book, *Hidden Holocaust....*, and Michael Spurlin also addresses lesbian erasure in *Lost Intimacies*, but neither are exclusively lesbian texts.



## CHAPTER 5: CONCLUSION

By imbedding her own queer testimony among entries that seemingly guarantee her passage into heterosexuality, Anne's demonstrates a marked uncertainty surrounding her sexual identity that has inadvertently led to heterosexist presumptions about her lesbian desire. Because her queer confession is preceded by a discussion of future motherhood, and followed by a love-letter to Peter van Daan, the organization of Anne's testimony allows for the assumption that her queer desire is nothing more than innocent curiosity. It takes very little scrutiny to dismantle these supposed guarantors of heterosexuality, and once this is done, a wealth of queer subtext emerges and flourishes within *The Diary*. This queer subtext offers a new means of analysing a canonical text within Holocaust literature, and can help scholars reclaim and rediscover some of the countless lesbian narratives that have been lost within the discipline. This recovery is important as it broadens the scope of Holocaust studies, and incorporates the upward thrust of queer studies—the desire to challenge the silencing of LGBTQ+ voices in literature—into a discipline whose past has been sorely marked by a dangerous tendency to neutralize difference.

I began my thesis by asserting that it is not my goal to 'prove' that Anne Frank was gay, but I do want to fight against what Schoppmann calls "the felt need to 'prove' that a woman is a lesbian before referring to her as one" (*DM* 25). It has been my goal simply to challenge the automatic assumption that Anne Frank was straight. For, as Elman puts it, "Anne Frank lived and died in a world similar to our own, a world that presumed she was (and would be) straight" (Elman 15). It is my hope that my work here will shed some

light on why there has been such a dearth of scholarship on Anne Frank's sexuality—on why no in-depth analyses have challenged the assumption that Anne was heterosexual. For decades Anne's potential queerness has been hidden in plain sight, concealed by heterosexist assumptions about female sexuality. It has been the aim of this thesis to pull back that curtain.

## BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Baumel-Schwartz, Judith Tydor. *Double Jeopardy: Gender and the Holocaust*. London: Vallentine Mitchell, 1998. Print.
- Bayer, Ronald. *Homosexuality and American History: The Politics of Diagnosis*. New Jersey: Princeton UP, 1987.
- Bernard-Donals, Michael and Richard Glejzer, eds. *Between Witness and Testimony: The Holocaust and the Limits of Representation*. New York: State of New York Press, 2001. Print.
- Bromberg, Daniel S. and William O'Donohue, eds. *Handbook of Child and Adolescent Sexuality: Developmental and Forensic Psychology*. Oxford: Elsevier, 2013. Print.
- Butler, Judith. *Bodies That Matter: On the Discursive Limits of 'Sex.'* New York: Routledge, 1993. Print.
- De Block, Andreas and Pieter R. Adriaens, eds. "Pathologizing Sexual Deviance: A History," *The Journal of Sex Research*, Vol. 50, No. 3 (2005): 276-298.
- Edelman, Lee. *No Future: Queer Theory and the Death Drive*. London: Duke UP, 2004. Print.
- Elman, Amy. "Lesbians and the Holocaust." *Women and the Holocaust: Narrative and Representation*. Esther Fuchs, ed. New York: UP of America, 1999: 9-19. Print.
- Evans, Richard. "Outsiders in German History from the Sixteenth Century to 1933." *Social Outsiders in Nazi Germany*. Robert Gellately and Nathan Stoltzfus, eds. Princeton: Princeton UP, 2001. Print.

Frank, Anne.

-----. *The Diary of a Young Girl: Anne Frank*. Otto H. Frank and Mirjam Pressler, eds.

New York: Doubleday, 1952. Print.

-----. *The Diary of a Young Girl: The Definitive Edition*. Otto Frank, Mirjam Pressler

and Susan Massotty, eds. New York: Doubleday, 1995. Print.

Fricker, Miranda. *Epistemic Injustice: Power and the Ethics of Knowing*. New York:

Oxford UP, 2007. Print.

Fuchs, Esther Ed. *Women and the Holocaust: Narrative and Representation*. New York:

UP of America, 1999. Print.

Gellately, Robert, and Nathan Stoltzfus, eds. *Social Outsiders in Nazi Germany*.

Princeton: Princeton UP, 2001. Print.

Goldenberg, Myrna. *Different Horrors / Same Hell: Gender and the Holocaust*. Seattle:

University of Washington Press, 2013. Print.

Grau, Günter. *Gay and Lesbian Persecution in Germany 1933-45*. London: Fitzroy

Dearborn, 1995. Print.

Hayes, Peter, and John K. Roth Eds. *The Oxford Handbook of Holocaust Studies*. New

York: Oxford UP, 2010. Print.

Heinemann, Marlene. *Gender and Destiny: Women Writers and the Holocaust*. New

York: Greenwood, 1986. Print.

Heinze, Eric. *Of Innocence and Autonomy: Children, Sex and Human Rights*. Hampshire:

Ashgate, 2000. Print.

Herzog, Dagmar. *Sexuality in Europe: A Twentieth-century History*. New York:

Cambridge UP, 2011. Print.

- Jacobs, Janet Liebman. *Memorializing the Holocaust Gender, Genocide and Collective Memory*. London: Tauris, 2010. Print.
- Jennings, Kevin. *Becoming Visible: A Reader in Gay & Lesbian History*. Boston: Alyson Publications, 1994. Print.
- Lagerwey, Mary. "Reading Anne Frank and Elie Wiesel: Voice and Gender in Stories of The Holocaust." *Contemporary Jewry*. 17.1 (1996): 48-65. Web.
- Levi, Neil and Michael Rothberg, eds. *The Holocaust: Theoretical Readings*. New Brunswick: Rutgers UP, 2003. Print.
- Miller, Neil. *Out of the Past: Gay and Lesbian History from 1869 to the Present*. New York: Vintage Books, 1995. Print.
- Müller, Melissa. *Anne Frank: The Biography*. New York: Metropolitan, 1998. Print.
- Ofer, Dalia and Lenore J. Weitzman, eds. *Women in the Holocaust*. New Haven: Yale UP, 1998. Print.
- Piper, Christine. "Historical Constructions of Childhood Innocence: Removing Sexuality." *Of Innocence and Autonomy: Children, Sex and Human Rights*. Eric Heinze, ed. Hampshire: Ashgate, 2000: 26-47. Print.
- Reading, Anna. *The Social Inheritance of the Holocaust: Gender, Culture, and Memory*. New York: Palgrave, 2002. Print.
- Renold, Emma, Jessica Ringrose and Danielle Egan. *Children, Sexuality and Sexualisation*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2015. Print.
- Roskies, David G. and Naomi Diamant. *Holocaust Literature a History and Guide*. Waltham: Brandeis UP, 2012. Print.

Schoppmann, Claudia.

----- . *Days of Masquerade: Life Stories of Lesbians During the Third Reich*. New York: Columbia UP, 1996. Print.

----- . "The Position of Lesbian Women in the Nazi Period." *Hidden Holocaust? Gay and Lesbian Persecution in Germany 1933-25*. Gunter Grau, ed. London: Fitzroy Dearborn, 1995. Print.

Spurlin, William J. *Lost Intimacies: Rethinking Homosexuality Under National Socialism*. New York: Peter Lang, 2009. Print.

Tamagne, Florence. *A History of Homosexuality in Europe, Vol. 1*. New York: Algora Publishing, 2000. Print.

Tirosh-Samuelsan, Hava. *Women and Gender in Jewish Philosophy*. Bloomington: Indiana UP, 2004. Print.

Von Weizsäcker, Richard. "Speech During the Ceremony Commemorating the 40th Anniversary of the End of War in Europe and of National-Socialist Tyranny." 8 May 1985, Bonn. Web.

Weiss-Wendt, Anton. *Eradicating Differences the Treatment of Minorities in Nazi-Dominated Europe*. Newcastle: Cambridge Scholars, 2010. Print.