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Thinking through the Silence: Theorizing the Rape of Jewish Males during the Holocaust through Survivor Testimonies

(Forthcoming in *Holocaust Studies*)

By: Tommy J. Curry*

Introduction:

Throughout the various literatures in history, genocide studies, and gender theory, the stories of racialized males—conquered men and boys—are told by their deaths and written through the scars etched upon their corpses. Historians and theorists, as well as governmental and non-governmental organizations, have been trained to look upon these bodies with an intuitive understanding that rotting male flesh is the natural consequence of racism and armed conflict. Regardless of the method of inquiry deployed, there is an obvious expectation to find slaughtered male bodies as the evidence that war and genocide have occurred that is largely unquestioned. The horrors of violence imposed upon the bodies of “lesser men” inspire no outrage, for these casualties are *men* who were targeted because of their sex. The images of flaccid male bodies, mutilated frames and flesh, become placeholders for war, ethnic conflict, and genocide so much so that there is a synonymy between death and the least powerful male body in our cultural schemas. Little else about the male victim of violence is thought to be asked or theorized about beyond his corpse.

Over the last two decades, theorists and historians have focused primarily on the gender-specific killings of combat-capable males as the lens to interpret and understand the sex-specific violence imposed on males in wars, genocide, and other mass atrocities. In “Gendercide and Genocide,” Adam Jones argues that conflicts in modern patriarchal societies have specifically targeted battle-aged men. As Jones states, “Non-combatant men have been and continue to be the most frequent targets of mass killing and genocidal slaughter, as well as a host of lesser atrocities and abuses. The mass killing of males, particularly of “battle age” men, has roots deep in the history of conflict between human communities.”¹ Jones suggests the vulnerability of racialized men to gendercide (gender-selective mass killing) is, in fact, an ignored but “frequent and often defining feature of human conflict, and perhaps of human social organization, extending back to antiquity.”² Jones builds off the work of Errol Miller, a Jamaican theorist, who explains that Western patriarchal societies create rigid and violent divisions between dominant group males and alien (racialized) males. Miller’s analysis argues that modern patriarchal societies target racialized male groups because they are threats to the kinship relations of the dominant racial or ethnic group. According to Miller,

Patriarchy has historically marginalized men not covered by the covenant of kinship. Filial and fraternal bonds have always mitigated how men used power over other men who belonged to the group... Throughout history such men have been perceived as threats and treated as such. Patriarchy’s treatment of such men has always been more brutal and harsh than its treatment of women. This contradictory and inconsistent feature of patriarchy has been mostly ignored.³

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Jones and Miller both argue that the extermination of males from different races, ethnicities, tribes, or religious sects have been a salient and consistent feature of human conflict since before modernity.⁴ Despite the empirical evidence supporting these theories, many scholars still struggle to think of male deaths as a sexual vulnerability, or men as victims of patriarchal power, even when these men are victims of the world's greatest atrocities. To extend the sexual vulnerability of racialized and subordinate males in these conflicts to sexual violence and rape is often unthinkable and certainly untheorizable.

The association of *maleness* and men with the perpetration of violence, rape, and war dissuades researchers from perceiving actual differences between groups of men. Additionally, researchers are unlikely to recognize the evidence of various forms of male sexual victimization during war, genocide, or other mass atrocities, even when the evidence of such violence is encountered within the archive. All men are thought to be violent, so men, be they racially dominant or racialized as subordinate, are not thought to be the victims of their own horrors. Men are theorized as the perpetrators of rape, not its victims. Consequently, speaking of male sexual vulnerability to rape and other sexual violence infringes on a well-established ontological problem in our study of gender and sex within academic disciplines. The social cues and disciplinary paradigms utilized to interpret sexual violence during war and genocide suggests to us that sexual violence is a gendered phenomenon. Since males are thought to have no gender, they are not often the victims of sexual violence and rape.⁵ In *The Landscape of Silence: Sexual Violence against Men in War*, Amalendu Misra explains that “throughout human history male members of the enemy have often been subjected to sexual violence. Yet it is rarely mentioned. If anything, there resides an overwhelming silence over it.”⁶ Theorizing certain groups of men as vulnerable to rape and sexual violence is often engaged as heresy, or the most exceptional of cases within war and conflict; yet, male rape is an endemic feature of most human conflicts, be they modern or ancient.⁷ While the research on male victims of rape during war and genocide is still quite new, focusing primarily on the conflicts in Uganda, the Congo, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Darfur, and Yugoslavia, there is a notable absence in the present literature—the Holocaust.⁸

It has long been acknowledged that there is a strong connection between rape and genocide. Various scholars have argued that rape is used as a tool of dehumanization that instills inferiority within the subjugated population.⁹ As Sareta Ashraph writes, “Sexual violence, when employed as a genocidal strategy, aims to destroy the victim as an incremental step to annihilating the group. It is simultaneously an assault on the victim, and on the existence, identity, and cohesiveness of the group.”¹⁰ Within Holocaust Studies, the research and debates concerning the role rape has played within this particular genocide has primarily considered only the female victim of rape. This is not so surprising given that rape is a relatively recent intervention into Holocaust historiography.

Recognizing the rape of Jewish women was an important intervention into Holocaust historiographies that Helene Sinnreich argued were dominated by experiences of “forced labour, ghettoisation, beatings, and starvation.”¹¹ Zoë Waxman has argued that “traditional Holocaust narratives can make it difficult to discuss anything considered to be outside the range of accepted Holocaust experiences as outlined by existing testimony. Witnesses may feel obliged to stay silent about certain aspects of their experiences for fear that they do not belong to the history of the Holocaust, or that the experiences will not be easily understood.”¹² Because survivors of the Holocaust may fail to report their experiences of rape and sexual violence, as they see such events as less significant than the overall violence of the Holocaust all Jews endured, there is the erroneous assumption by scholars that sexual violence and rape were indeed rare occurrences. Similarly, Sonia M. Hedgepeth and Rochelle G. Saidel write in their introduction to *Sexual Violence against Jewish Women during the Holocaust* that “although there has been an impressive proliferation of Holocaust memorials

and museums since the late 1970s, sexual abuse has hardly been acknowledged as a theme, much less a central topic, worthy of investigation.”¹³ Theorizing rape during the Holocaust was a correct response to what many Jewish women scholars understood to be a de-emphasizing of the gendered violence women endured during the Holocaust. Consequently, one of the effects of a female-specific account of gender and gendered violence was that these histories did not include or consider the rape of Jewish men and boys within their purview.

It is not uncommon for the scholarship involving rape and sexual violence to draw upon the testimonies of survivors housed at the Shoah Foundation Visual History Archives (VHA) in California. In fact, one of the commonalities of the research by Waxman, Sinnreich, and others is the use of survivor testimonies from the VHA to substantiate the prevalence and horrors of rape during the Holocaust.¹⁴ In *Sexual Violence against Jewish Women during the Holocaust*, Hedgepeth and Saidel note that “more than five hundred testimonies housed in the University of Southern California Shoah Foundation Institute for Visual History and Education mention rape.”¹⁵ The same archive also houses almost seventy stories of gay male sex (sexual activity between men), and by my cataloguing in January of 2017, over forty personal stories and observations of men raping other men. The absence of the stories by male survivors of rape during the Holocaust in scholarship is somewhat unexplainable since the archive’s algorithm presents both male and female victims of sexual violence together under the gender category. To not encounter Jewish men’s testimonies in this search would require the researcher to *deselect* male testimonies and only present female narratives. As the previous classification of male rape was under “gay male sex” or “same-sex activities,” it is possible that these were deselected by previous researchers who did not believe that these stories pertained to rape or sexual assault more generally. However, the classification of male stories of sexual assault and rape by other men as gay sex and not rape, also deserves inquiry.

The literature on the rape of men during genocide remains small, but the absence of Jewish men’s experience of sexual violence during the Holocaust is noticeable. This article attempts to remedy this absence by thinking through the decades of silence surrounding the survivor testimonies of Jewish men who were victims of rape and sexual violence. It has often been acknowledged that silence, or the absence of accounts of rape or sexual violence, is not so much evidence of such violence not happening, but the effect of the lens used to read the archive. Often what is asserted by scholars as normal or prevalent emerges from the kinds of violence and events that appear more emphasized or shared by survivors’ recollections. The scholarship theorizing the use of rape in Holocaust Studies has been defined solely by the experiences of Jewish women and girls, neglecting the rape of Jewish men and boys for any number of reasons. This article will be the first to discuss the implications Jewish male survivor testimonies have for our current conceptualizations of sexual violence and theorizations of rape during the Holocaust.

Conceptualizing the Assault of Jewish Men within Present Understandings of Wartime Sexual Violence against Men and Boys

The discovery of the rape of Jewish men and boys presents some conceptual challenges to how historians and theorists alike have come to understand the deployment of violence within Holocaust historiography. For example, in “Gendering Genocide Studies,” Amy E. Randall writes, “Historically, the leaders and perpetrators of genocide have promoted deliberately gendered genocidal strategies and processes, which, not surprisingly, have then produced gender-specific traumas or gendered harms.”¹⁶ While Randall does acknowledge that there are particular and extreme forms of violence against males in genocides, saying “for instance,

in many genocides, mass violence has been directed first at battle aged boys and men, followed by root and branch killings that aim for the wholesale annihilation of the targeted group,”¹⁷ the gendered violence of rape or sexual assault is described as a violence inflicted solely upon females. Because gender continues to be understood as synonymous to woman—and suggests at the level of theorization that subsequent analyses change and tend towards complexity when the female body or experience is introduced—the racialized male body, even when shown to suffer lethal violence and endure the most specific dehumanizing stereotypes, is presented as normative experience and not a sexually specific one. In many cases, male experience is theorized as unneeded or, even worse, as a subject needing to be de-emphasized within gender analyses because *he* is ultimately an obstacle that obscures the perception of women’s sexual oppression. For Randall, Jewish men may be killed first because they are male, but all Jews, including women, are eventually killed by the act of genocide. Rape, however, is female-specific. So, while all Jews may be killed, only Jewish women may be raped.

There is also a tendency among scholars to think of sexual violence towards Jewish males as exceptional in that it is not tied directly to *Jewish maleness* but is primarily associated with sexual orientation. This view suggests that it is not the conditions of captivity or the ubiquitous violence committed against Jewish males during the Holocaust that breeds sexual vulnerability but the quality of homosexuality or sexual difference from maleness that would make Jewish men subject to sexual violence. David Eichert’s “Homosexualization Revisited: An Audience Focused Theorization of Wartime Male Sexual Violence” is an example of this tendency to see sexual violence within concentration camps as revolving around the sexual identity of inmates, not their subjugated racial position in relation to the Nazi regime. Eichert, for instance, argues that

sexual humiliation and other forms of individual-level sexual violence were commonplace for homosexual camp inmates. Guards would employ a variety of slurs against the prisoners, such as “menwomen” and filthy queers...Camp guards further weaponized identity and bodily integrity to eradicate “effeminate” personality traits among inmates. This violence included sexual assault (such as anal rape) and violence against the genitals.¹⁸

Eichert presents sexual violence as specific to homosexuality in concentration camps, not as part of the violence Jewish men experiences in the camp more generally.

It has been long-established that the Nazi regime was anti-homosexuality and used various strategies of violence to eradicate the homosexual practices in its own ranks and among prisoners in camps. Richard Plant’s *The Pink Triangle: The Nazi War against Homosexuals* explained that Nazism was not only anti-homosexuality but understood the practice of homosexuality as a threat to the future of the Aryan race.¹⁹ Plant’s analysis highlights the effects of Jewishness and homosexuality through the life of the gay Jewish physician Magnus Hirschfeld. The Nazis instituted a racial program dedicated to eradicating homosexual men. Nazism’s view of racial endogamy made homosexuality an actual pathology. Males were especially vulnerable under this Nazi anthropology, because Nazism viewed masculinity as the basis of the nation. The historian Harry Oosterhuis has argued that “Nazis considered male homosexuality much more dangerous than female homosexuality. In contrast to male homosexuality, for example, same-sex behavior of women was never criminalized.”²⁰ Homosexuality became a bio-cratic matter—a social ill that required a medical explanation and a biological remedy—under the Nazi regime.

Employing a rhetoric of medical emergency, many leading nazis indeed saw their politics as applied biology. In their biomedical worldview, the German people suffered from deadly diseases. Their 'cure' was racial purification that would progress from coercive sterilization, euthanasia, segregation, and concentration for supposedly 'hygienic' reasons, to direct medical killing and genocide. From the notion that racial hygiene, the nazi vision of a 'total cure' by means of a medically oriented purification, dictated their treatment of homosexuality, it was only a small step toward bracketing homosexuals with Jews, the Sinti and Roma, ethnic minorities, psychiatric patients and hereditarily ill people as principal victims of nazi terror.²¹

What creates the difference of kind between homosexuals and racial/ethnic groups, like the Jews, Sinti, and Roma, such that homosexuals would be sexually violated but heterosexual (straight) Jewish men would not be? For better or for worse, many of our assertions about who is vulnerable to sexual violence are tied to our assumptions about gendered identities like femininity or queerness. Because our theories do not engage a historical view of maleness as having suffered from rape, there have been few theoretical efforts to actually understand why one could, or should, confidently assume that sexual and gender differences are sexually vulnerable to rape and sexual violence, while racial and ethnic identities are not. Consequently, sexual violence against Jewish men is, and has been for quite some time, left unthought, so to speak; derivative of some other gendered quality or identity besides maleness.

The scholarship surrounding male rape in war and genocide is new and perplexing for many scholars and poses a challenge to many of the established theories of gendered violence. Whereas previous scholarship simply assumed that women were rape victims and men were the perpetrators of rape, the discovery of male victims of rape has forced many researchers to rethink the politicized nature of the older paradigms. Misra, for example, has argued that “most of the contemporary scholarship on sexual violence in armed conflicts is not only biased towards the female gender but is heavily influenced by a feminist monopolization of that space that has sought to describe such violence as binary in nature: it is only perpetrated against the female gender by male members of the society.”²² This binary of violence renders male victims of sexual violence and rape conceptually invisible. Researchers and scholars are simply unable to interpret males, even men subjugated within genocide and war, as victims because their encountering of the male rape victim in real life conflicts with the pre-determined view of men as perpetrators of rape in theory. Misra continues, “Thanks to this biased interpretation where the feminist concern is primarily to highlight the victimization of women by men, male sufferers have simply become ‘absent victims’ in such gender analyses of conflict dynamics. Therefore, it would not be incorrect to suggest that there is a conceptual and definitional confusion over gender-based violence.”²³ Marysia Zalewski’s “Provocations in Debates about Sexual Violence against Men” takes a similar view of how male victims of rape and sexual violence are theorized. She writes:

it can be argued that the putative innocence of feminist scholarship, traditionally presented as an emancipatory justice project, works to conceptually conceal not only women’s proclivities to violence, including sexual violence, but also to conceal the ‘truth’ of male victimhood. The veracity of all of these claims might easily be challenged (or confirmed), yet there is surely something about the gendered focus on women and all her epistemological, ethical, ontological scaffolding that might go some way in explaining why there has been so little attention to sexual violence against men, at least until very recently.²⁴

How we come to understand victimization, specifically what kind of violence creates victims, is of the utmost importance in our interpretation of Jewish male victims and their suffering. Jewish male rape cannot be truly understood if it is thought to be exceptional or a lesser form of violence when compared to death. These young men and boys understood themselves—as males—being raped. Said differently, Jewish men are not simply analogues of female sexual experience. Scholars cannot hear the stories and accounts of Jewish males and imagine them to be females to understand how they could suffer rape. Inevitably, one is drawn back to their socialized idea of a rape victim who is often a girl or woman. In doing so, the researcher asks: “How do women or girls who are raped react?” This is not the proper question to ask in the listening to or reading of Jewish male survivor stories. Jewish men and boys suffered within their male body. In some cases, they surrendered their bodies to attain food, clothes, and protection. In other words, these young men endured the violence of rape and the excruciating pain of anal penetration to escape death or to help spare the lives of their friends. Each one of these experiences, however, are interpreted, felt, and apprehended through their corporeality as male.

Without using the female body or female experience as the template for rape, many theorists, scholars, and researchers are left without a model or working definition of rape that would serve as the basis to analyze male victims. Even worse yet, they may have no method to decide what would actually constitute an act of rape or sexual assault against men and boys. The *Elements of Crimes* defines rape as an act where “the perpetrator invaded the body of a person by conduct resulting in penetration, however slight, of any part of the body of the victim or of the perpetrator with a sexual organ, or of the anal or genital opening of the victim with any object or any other part of the body.”²⁵ This definition, used within international law, is meant to be gender neutral and account for male victims. Similarly, on January 1st, 2013, the Department of Justice enacted a new definition of rape quite different from the early 20th century understanding of the term as “the carnal knowledge of a female forcibly and against her will.”²⁶ The new definition of rape adopted in the Uniform Crime Reporting program defines rape as “penetration, no matter how slight, of the vagina or anus with any body part or object, or oral penetration by a sex organ of another person, without the consent of the victim.”²⁷ While these definitions do make some attempt to capture male victims of rape and sexual assault, they do not fully consider the violence associated with coercing men and boys to penetrate other bodies, or provide the scholar and theorist with a schema through which we can animate representations, agents, and environments that would allow us to better grasp how the rape of men occurs.

Absent a heuristic that enables scholars to contextualize the vulnerability of males within various conflict scenarios and events, definitions are of little use. If scholars do not understand, or more accurately cannot imagine the circumstances by which male bodies are subject to sexual violence, then it becomes impossible to reconstitute the experiences of survivors or formulate trends of violence from existing testimonies. When men are made to penetrate others under the threat of death, as was the case in the Congo and Rwanda, a different lens is necessary to understand how being forced to perform sexual acts against their will is violence.²⁸ The sexual brutality most readily associated with male sexual victimization is rape, or anal penetration. However, male victims also experience “forced nudity, various forms of rape, genital mutilations, forced masturbation, and blunt trauma to the genitalia.”²⁹ As Chris Dolan explains, “Generally, the scenarios shared by [male] victims are of extreme coercion: “do it or be killed.”³⁰

The sexual victimization and rape of men in war and genocide has real world consequences that harm survivors and those around them. Similar to female victims of sexual violence, male victims of sexual violence and rape often suffer tremendous stress and psychological scars. Male victims of sexual assault are often burdened by the psychological

effects of their trauma decades after the event. These victims often report suffering from post-traumatic stress disorder, depression, and feelings of hopelessness.³¹ In other cases, male victims of sexual violence also deal with physiological ills such as high blood pressure, night sweats, tremors and tachycardia.³² Considering the physical consequences of sexual violence is essential to our theorizations of trauma and the quality of life these violent events cost survivors even though they did not succumb to death. As many of the Jewish males raped in camps were young boys, the long-term effects of their assaults are especially relevant to how we theorize their rapes.

Considering the Rape of Jewish Males: Breaking the Silence of Male Sexual Assault during the Holocaust.

The rape of young Jewish men and boys could involve any number of agents within the camp. The sexual violence a Jewish boy could witness, experience himself, or avoid was unpredictable. While not previously accounted for in Holocaust or genocide literatures, the testimonies of Jewish men seem to indicate that the sexual assault and rape of boys was well-known among Jewish men in the concentration camps. Within the camp, survivors describe the rape of young boys as routine. The male rape victim could emerge from any of the conditions in the camp: the threat of death, starvation, or the will of other men. German SS, kapos, *Blockältesten*, even other pipls (boys used for sex) could be agents of sexual violence. As scholars we must attempt to think about what the vulnerable Jewish male body, the Jewish boy, the young starving Jewish child, was subjected to and, by effect, was able to be coerced into doing or accepting for survival.

It was not uncommon for Jewish boys to describe the sexual violence of male-to-male rape as homosexuality. For many young boys, such as Reinhard Frank, the camp was the first time they saw or understood homosexuality.³³ Mark Auerbach similarly recalled that Gleiwitz III was where he and other boys first encountered homosexuals. “The cook was, had, a green triangle. Unfortunate to say that a few young boys had slept with him for food.”³⁴ Homosexuality does not seem to mean gayness or queerness in the testimonies of male survivors. These men appear to use homosexuality in the context of male-on-male sexual assault by German officers, kapos, or building elders. For example, Eli Gever, a Jewish survivor from Dunaberg, explained that “some of the [German] officers were homosexuals, and they had a liking to some of the boys, some good-looking boys. And...although I am not a witness to it, but I know for sure there was at one time they used to come in, the German officers, with food with chocolate to get some of the boys to get satisfaction.”³⁵ When the interviewer asks, “They had sex with them?” Mr. Gever says, “Right.”³⁶ Many of the survivors were young boys or teenagers who had no familiarity with sex, so it is not surprising that homosexuality takes on a meaning tied to an expression of violence within the camps across multiple interviews. Many of the Jewish survivors’ first encounter with homosexuality was within the confines of the camp and was the only expression they had to describe male-on-male sex. While the description of homosexuality as predatory and violent certainly runs counter to our present-day sentiments, it is important to understand the recollection of events through the eyes of the survivors themselves.

The sexual assault of young men and boys was well-known and widespread according to survivor testimonies. The testimony of David Katz describes sexual violence within the camp as common place. The interviewer asked, “Were you ever a witness to any other kind of abuse in all the experiences you had with the camp’s abuse of women or men.” He answered,

“Yes. I was a witness to...they used to keep the young boys as their servants. It was the Blockältesters. They were in charge. It was in Birkenau, Auschwitz, and Melk and Mauthausen. It was all over. Whenever they could get a youngster to do their will, and um, they were abused sexually, and they got like maybe a little food or a little better clothing for it. Especially Birkenau was famous for it, and Auschwitz was famous for it.”³⁷

Similar to other survivor testimonies, young boys were vulnerable to the will and power of older men in the camp. German kapos often used sexual violence to initiate these young men into servitude. Mr. Katz testifies that sexual violence was widespread and that some camps were famous for their abuse of young boys. Auschwitz, however, is mentioned by multiple survivors as being well-known for the rape of young boys. Fred Silberstein’s recollection of Auschwitz adds some support to David Katz’s account. Mr. Silberstein’s testimony states that he is only talking about Auschwitz. Like Mr. Katz, Mr. Silberstein lived in constant fear of sexual assault. He believed if he made friends or associated with anyone, he could be raped. To avoid being a victim of homosexuality, he said that he stayed to himself. After he was released from Auschwitz, he said that he learned that “all food that we got, first day, second day, got laced with caustic soda to kill us from the inside—to burn us out. Of course, it affected women, the chemical reaction. It affected us men. I think they told us it was for the purpose, that you don’t have any sexual activities.”³⁸ When the interviewer asked, “And did you?” He replied, “I never had any sexual activities in any way, and it was an instinct in me because that was the reason why I never made any friends, I never mixed with people really. I kept to myself, as much away from everybody, because I was scared, of it, could happen to me.”³⁹ When his interviewer asked him to clarify as to whether or not there were any sexual activities in the camp and to describe what they were doing, Mr. Silberstein replied “Absolutely, absolutely. [They were doing] homosexuality. Men used boys mostly and it was scary. I was lucky because of my attitude that I don’t mix with people.”⁴⁰

Silberstein saw the sexual assault, the filth, the disease, as creations of the camp. “We turned into something. What the German, Nazi people, wanted us to look like, sub-human. What they call us cockroaches, because they wanted to show the whole world, that is what Jewish people look like, that is what they smell like.”⁴¹ Throughout Silberstein’s interview he describes the violence built into the camp, and how these conditions not only threatened their survival but their very being. Even other Jewish boys who were being sexually abused became an agent of violence against other Jews in the camp. Abraham Traub tells how a pipl in Fürstengrube in 1944 forced him to be naked in the freezing cold. He explained that the kapos, “They wanted to punish us. [It] was already in the later part of 1944. [It] was very cold outside, so all of the sudden they would come and pick us wake us up, naked, completely naked and pour cold water on us and he leave us out there for quite a while, and I remember only thing we could [do to] try to help ourselves is each one of us would turn around to warm each other. A pipl was like a kapos used a boy for sex. Homosexual. That pipl had powers that no one else could imagine...he used to pour water on the beds.”⁴²

For many young Jewish boys, being raped was about enduring one kind of violence to escape more deadly forms of violence. Kenneth Roman was imprisoned at Flossenbürg in 1944. Like other male captives, Mr. Roman speaks of the insufferable labor conditions of the camp and in particular the horrible treatment by the kapos. At Flossenbürg, there was a double perimeter electrified fence around the camp and watchtowers.⁴³ The kapos used to play a game to amuse themselves. They would snatch a cap of an inmate and throw it towards the fence. “You had to go and get it, because it was illegal to not wear a cap. As you rush towards the fence [you would be] shot from the watch tower. Some of them managed to reach

the fence, or some of the pick [up] the caps and they rush into the fence to commit suicide. Such was the joy of Flossenbürg,” said Mr. Roman.⁴⁴

The violence from the kapos was so threatening that Mr. Roman and his friend Max needed protection from the games they played, and he found that protection through a *Blockältester* at an extraordinary cost.

In his interview, Mr. Roman recounts a particularly violent rape at the hands of his *Blockältester* that secured his protection. One night his *Blockältester* told him to strip and go into his bed. Mr. Roman recalled, “Saying no, he’ll kill me there and then, look you have no choice so I did. So he...I was there quite a while and I was so frightened. I was shivering so much, the bed was shaking I didn’t know what he was going to do to me. So eventually he comes into bed...and I’m just lying...he says turn over, so, so I did. So then, and there, he raped me. Well, its impossible to describe the excruciating pain. It was something. I’ve been hit. I’ve been beaten but [this] was no equivalent. I was screaming. The more I was screaming the wilder he got. He was going mad. I was expected to be beaten any minute. Eventually he spent himself. It was over.”⁴⁵ Mr. Roman recalls that he was raped by his *Blockältester* several times afterwards but being a sex slave to a *Blockältester* offered him and his friend Max extra protection from kapos. “I was his property you see, so that was the plus,” said Mr. Roman. He and Max was safer, but Max was none the wiser of the arrangement.

Besides for protection, enduring rape to hold off death by starvation was the most common experience shared amongst survivors’ testimonies. Mark Auerbach said very plainly, “[If] boys were hungry they had sex for food.”⁴⁶ Gabor Altmann recounts that sex with Jewish boys by German SS [for food] was common.⁴⁷ It was simply the structure of the camp. For survival, Jewish boys submitted to the sexual coercions and rape of themselves and others. Some boys suffered rape and were anally penetrated for commodities as simple as chocolates or sardines, or even a piece of bread. Arthur Gelbart describes the horror of being asked to trade sex for food:

[Blechhammer] was only a male camp. There were other things that went on. We were young children, and young children usually, especially boys, sometimes, in camps with no women, become a prey for homosexuals. And I’ve never mentioned it to anybody because I don’t know, its not that pleasant. I, one time, was invited to the second in command from the German man in charge of the camp. He was limped. He had a short leg that’s why he wasn’t at the front and boys would go there at night and he would feed them with all of the delicacies. A lot of things: sardines, breads, fruit, and all of that. I never went until this time. One of the boys said would you like, would you mind coming with us. We’re going to get something to eat and all this. So I said fine. I of course did not know. We were very naïve people and I came there and it was a lot of boys and this German, and it was like an apartment suite, and then I kind of caught wind that something is not right. Why all this, and I questioned it and then I could see what was going on that some of the boys were in the other room with the German and I didn’t say anything. I would never go back... never asked to go back.⁴⁸

The rape of young Jewish boys was sometimes a group activity. In order to maximize the chances for survival, young Jewish boys recruited each other to exchange sex for food. While some might suggest agency is being shown by the young men through sexual bartering or in using their bodies in transactions, I would caution that for many of these boys death was imminent from the violence built into the camp.⁴⁹ Mr. Gelbart’s refusal could have spelled doom just as easily as the discovery of one of the young boys being raped for food could

have. The testimony of male survivors expresses an understanding of men given authority within the camp as having the power to kill without penalty. As young boys, the survivors recount that any resistance or embarrassment of German SS, kapos, pimps, or blockältesters could be punishable by death. The whole process of sexual violence in the camp was described as coercive. Despite the fear and humiliation of being raped, these young men could not refuse the will of German SS or kapos. An interviewer asked Frank Burstin, who was imprisoned at Auschwitz, to explain what he meant when he said that “[some] people were privileged and could stay in the barracks because they had boyfriends.”⁵⁰ Mr. Burstin explained that “they were actually male prostitutes.” When asked if these were young men in the barracks and who these young men were involved with, Mr. Burstin replied, “Kapos, some were German SS, who took them out and sent them back.”⁵¹ During the course of the discussion, the interviewer asked, “Do you know [if] this was voluntary on their part or was this coerced?” Mr. Burstin replied, “No, nothing was voluntary. Either for the weakling who went for the food, or good looking and took. But it was widespread. I knew some of the boys that were taken. So if you are hungry, people would do anything. The hunger is more persuasive than the will. Cause nobody can imagine what it means to be starved for years.”⁵²

“The hunger is more persuasive than the will.” The conditions of gratuitous violence that surround the lives of these young men were unimaginable. Death, starvation, disease, and the random violence from anyone in the camp made death an expectation for many of the young men. To make sense of the sexual violence these young Jewish men experienced during the Holocaust requires new theoretical resources concerning the nature of genocide and whether or not sexual violence against men prolongs life or merely extends the death through a form of dying.

In some respects, the rape of men during Holocaust interrupts the temporal conceptualizations of genocide offered by Helen Fein in *Accounting for Genocide: Victims—and Survivors—of the Holocaust* published in 1979.⁵³ Fein distinguishes genocide as a species of violence that cannot be synonymous to the more common oppression and subjugation of groups throughout human history. Fein writes: “Genocide...differs from collective violence—the deliberate injury or extraordinary punishments inflicted against people just because they are members of a collectivity (religious, ethnic, or racial groups)—in that it is centrally planned and purposeful, and in that its intent is total. While collective violence often serves to put (or keep) a subjugated group in its place, genocide *eliminates* the group.”⁵⁴ To accomplish this aim, “the very existence of the Armenians and Jews was construed as alien.”⁵⁵ These groups were condemned and made into pariahs. Because they were removed from the communality of the social order that housed moral considerations of persons and the immorality of violating one’s humanity, being ostracized made them less concerning to heinous acts of violence. Fein refers to this as stigmatization whereby “such groups are more readily defined as strangers by the dominant group—strangers not because they were alien but because the dominant group was alienated from them by a traditional apathy, Jew-hatred, or hatred of the infidel.”⁵⁶ The ethnic-religious distinction through ostracization and stigmatization becomes racialized in the sense that the ostracized group now acquires through the power of the dominant group characteristics that separate them from the human category, now made synonymous to that of the dominant more powerful racial-ethnic group.

However, does the rape of Jewish men qualify as a genocidal violence or is it merely injury or punishment? As currently conceptualized, sexual violence replicates the Feinian strand of genocidal violence along the male axis through extermination or gendercide, while suggesting the vulnerability of the female to rape forces women to endure an extended

dehumanization. Like Amy E. Randall's schema, gender offers an intermediary violence—rape—that can result in death, but which is distinct from death. Consequently, the gendering of genocide studies then accomplishes part of its project by showing that the immediacy of the annihilation of targeted groups such as the Jews were mediated or prolonged through sexual violence. If genocide is ultimately geared to the elimination of certain stigmatized groups, as claimed by Fein, then, in so far as rape extends the physical existence of the individual within such genocidal regimes, it can be said that rape is a rupture in the chronologies of genocide itself.

For Jewish males, rape qualitatively changes how one can reconstruct the processes of dehumanization within the camp. If extermination and labor are joined by rape and sexual assault, what is the complete expression of Jewish male vulnerability to genocidal violence? Do scholars *describe* the violence against Jewish males as sexual because there is now evidence of sexual violence against Jewish men? Or is there something more fundamental that was, and is, missed by learning that Jewish men were subjected to extreme forms of sexual abuse? The sexual violence against Jewish men and boys is not merely *descriptive*, or meant to be a historical recounting of these events, but somewhat causal in that there is an actual relationship between the racist violence imposed on Jewish males through genocidal violence and the sexual violence and rape they experienced within the camp. The motivating question concerning Jewish men and boys is this: what kind of maleness is created through genocidal violence like that of the Holocaust such that *this created racialized* male flesh is as rape-able as it is disposable.

Racializing Cause: Introducing a Theory of the Racialized Male in the Discussions of Sexual Victimization

Scholars interested in explaining why the rape of men occur in conflicts and regimes marked by asymmetrical power relations have relatively few theories to draw from currently. The rape of men in armed conflicts, wars, and genocides tend to be explained by the dominant groups' desire to demonstrate power and dominance over men of the subordinate group. The legal scholar Sandesh Sivakumaran, for instance, has insisted "that sexual violence against men in war occurs for much the same reason as sexual violence against women striving for equality and independence in male-dominated societies, namely that in both situations, there is an attempt to suppress challenges to the social status of the dominant group."⁵⁷ Sivakumaran believes that the rape of men communicates the disempowerment of specific men within communities. Sexual violence against men interrupts, at a symbolic level, the status that raped men have among other men and women in their society. Sivakumaran explains:

Sexual violence against male members of the household and community would thus suggest not only empowerment and masculinity of the offender but disempowerment of the individual victim. The effects of disempowerment do not just take place at the individual level. Sexual violence against male members of the household and community also suggest disempowerment of the family and community in much the same way as the chastity of the family and community is considered lost when female members are sexually violated. Disempowerment thus takes place not just through women's bodies, but those of the men themselves.⁵⁸

The rape of men can also strip males of their masculinity and, perhaps more consequentially, debilitate their social standing. In some societies, being a male victim of sexual violence might be incompatible with that society's understanding of masculinity. "Victims are

considered weak and helpless, while men are strong and powerful. Masculinity and victimhood are thus seemingly inconsistent,” writes Sivakumaran.⁵⁹ Through emasculation, or taking away of men’s masculine attributes, dominant groups assert that they are in fact the superior man, since the now lesser men could not prevent their own sexual victimization.⁶⁰

In succumbing to the violence of the dominant male, the now subordinate male reifies the hegemonic masculinity of the dominant male group. For Sivakumaran, the dominant male group uses sexual violence to establish their hegemonic masculinity over the subjugated group. This hegemonic masculinity believes that heteronormativity is the basis of real masculinity. Through rape and sexual violence, the hegemonic male group engages in three processes of that negate the self-hood of male victims: feminization, or the lowering of “the social status of the male survivor by reducing him to a feminized male”;⁶¹ homosexualization, which aims to have the subordinate male question their sexuality and heterosexual status during the act of rape; and the prevention of procreation, where “survivors of sexual torture often relate anxiety about the possibility of having children to injury to the sexual organs or may experience psychological difficulties leading them to suffer from sexual and relationship difficulties.”⁶²

Gendercide scholars have emphasized the significance that hegemonic masculinity and feminization have as driving forces behind the rape and eventual extermination of subordinate male groups globally. In “Straight as Rule: Heteronormativity, Gendercide, and the Noncombatant Male,” Adam Jones extends his analysis of gendercide to include the rape of subordinate males within wars, conflicts, and genocides. According to Jones, “One of the most lethal gender roles in modern times is that of the “feminized” male—by which I mean the male who has adopted or had imposed on him a cultural identification with traditionally feminine roles and behavior.”⁶³ Feminization is a process of inferiorizing subordinated men. According to Charlotte Hooper, feminization helps create and sustain masculine hierarchies by downgrading some men in relation to others.⁶⁴ Hegemonic masculinity establishes itself as superior and aspirational because it aims to dominate other male identities both physically and ideologically. Besides hegemonic masculinity claiming itself to be the apex heteronormative idea, it is also actively militaristic, extremist, and constituted by victories over others.⁶⁵ Hegemonic masculinity constitutes itself through the vitiation of others, specifically other kinds of men. This dynamic is at the heart of Jones’s conceptualization of male-on-male sexual violence. Jones writes:

The issue of male-on-male sexual violence in wartime has barely begun to receive sustained attention, whether from scholars or international governmental and nongovernmental organizations... One of the most intriguing elements of male-on-male rape and sexual violence is the gendered positioning of rapist and victim: the way in which victims are feminized while rapists are confirmed in their heterosexual, hegemonic masculinity. This reflects more broadly on patterns of intermale sexual relations. It is a well-established fact, for example, that in highly patriarchal societies such as those in Latin America and the Balkans, as well as in the hypermasculine environment of men’s prisons worldwide, feminine status is assigned to the “passive” (receptive) partner in anal intercourse but not to the “active” (penetrating) one. Indeed, the latter finds his masculinity and his heterosexual identity actually reinforced: in Lynne Segal’s pungent phrasing, “A male who fucks another male is a double male.”⁶⁶

Jones offers a powerful explanation of hegemonic masculinity as a theory that illustrates why hegemonic patriarchal regimes use sexual violence, however his theory focuses primarily on the relationship between the militaristic and aggressive male types and non-combatant males.

While this does establish a salient relationship between dominant and subordinate male groups, there is no systematic articulation of why specific groups of males are systematically raped or targeted for sexual violence while others are not or are, alternatively, just exterminated. Jones's theory requires that all dominant male groups' idealizations of their own hegemonic masculinity becomes actualized through rape, and that hegemonic male groups must aim to achieve greater hegemonic status through rape. Otherwise, subjugation through other means would suffice. While it is certainly possible that hegemonic masculinity does operate in this way, it is a proposition that is currently unverifiable given the state of research on male sexual victimization and rape. Jones does present his analysis as "fragmentary and often speculative," such that it inspires future research questions and engagement about the nature of rape and its relationship to hegemonic masculinity.⁶⁷ He acknowledges that "despite powerful work done in the past on the militarism/masculinity nexus, we still lack a nuanced theoretical picture of the diversity of noncombatant statuses and the way these intersect with variables of gender, age, ethnicity, and social class."⁶⁸

On the other hand, Sivakumaran offers a descriptive account of sexual violence that tends to view the rape of men individualistically. While there are dominant male groups that use rape and sexual violence as strategies of war and conflict, Sivakumaran does not analyze rape as a systemic strategy of domination against men of a subjugated racial or ethnic group. Sivakumaran does acknowledge that "in conflicts of an ethnic, racial or religious character, sexual violence is often targeted against individuals belonging to particular ethnic, racial or religious groups rather than being sporadic or opportunistic in nature in order to symbolically dominate that entire group."⁶⁹ This statement, however, is descriptive and offers no actual account as to why racialized males become symbols of the entire racial group, or why males with this symbolic association to the larger racial group are targeted through sexual violence. These theories simply cannot explain to the theorist how and why the Jewish male, the young Jewish boy, in the camp is perceived as a sexual object to be enjoyed by men with authority. What creates the rape-able Jewish male?

While there has been some acknowledgement that the rape of men by dominant racial groups seems to communicate to the community, and eventually the nation, that their men are of a lesser breed and kind, there has yet to be any theories attempting to locate the rape of racialized males in the process of racialization itself. Despite the deeply racialized history and bio-centric anthropologies coming out the Nazi regime, Jewish maleness is largely absent from contemporary discussions of race and racism in the West. Over the last two decades, scholars have begun analyzing genocides, specifically the Holocaust, as being produced by and sharing close relationships to the processes of colonialism and racialization.⁷⁰ The historian A. Dirk Moses argues that the Holocaust is a product of international and intra-national racial struggle and imperial competition reaching back to the mid-19th century where "the hundred years roughly following 1850 can be conceptualized as the 'racial century' whose most basic feature was competition between rival projects of nation-building and 'people making' (that is, the fashioning of ethnically homogeneous populations domestically) that culminated in the Holocaust of European Jewry and other racial minorities in the 1940s."⁷¹ Similar theses have been proposed in *Hitler's American Model: The United States and the Making of Nazi Race Law* by James Q. Whitman, who argues that there was a deliberate reproduction of American racist ideology, segregationist policies, and xenophobia in the racial anthropology and racist policies of Nazism.⁷² François Haas has suggested that the very idea of a final solution against Jews was driven by Germany's genocidal experiments on African people and an insidiously anti-Black racial anthropology. According to Haas,

Central to Nazi philosophy was the paradigm—broadly accepted as fact by scientists and community—that the Nordic race was not only superior to the "lower" races,

notably Blacks and Jews, but involved in a terminal struggle with them for survival of the fittest. It is little recognized that this scientific framework did not rise de novo with the Nazis but had evolved over the previous 80 years from the related notions of eugenics and Social Darwinism. It had already legitimized Germany's earlier racial policy in South West Africa during their Colonial period and was the founding core of Nazi racial hygiene.⁷³

While these associations are highly debated within Holocaust and Genocide studies, there are historical and theoretical justifications to analyzing the hyper-sexualization and rape of Jewish men and boys as a product of racism and racialization. In the construction of the Jew as an enemy and threat to the German folk, racist caricatures of Jews, especially Jewish men, became part of the Nazi's logic of extermination.⁷⁴

Well before the rise of Nazism, antisemitic caricatures of Jewish men depicted their spirituality and intellect as less masculine, feminine traits.⁷⁵ John M. Hoberman has argued that there was "an intuitive sense of the Jew's deficient masculinity [that] had been germinating for centuries, dating from the Middle Ages. This image of the Jewish male has always combined interrelated physical and characterological critiques of its subjects. This medieval association of Jews with the devil gave rise to a set of popular beliefs bearing on the bodily peculiarities of the Jews, ascribing to them horns, a tail, an odor, mysterious skin diseases, and even male menstruation."⁷⁶ Despite the effeminization of Jewish men, there was still a deeply racist mythology that viewed them as sexually insatiable rapists. Otto Weininger, for example, wrote that "the Jew is always more lecherous, hornier, if also oddly enough, perhaps in connection with his not actually antimoral nature, sexually less potent, and certainly less capable of all great pleasure than the Aryan man."⁷⁷ The sexual inferiority of Jewish men to Aryan men suggested not only a defect of the body but also of one's character. While the Jewish man is supposedly the sexual inferior to the Aryan male, he is nonetheless, more sexual and more promiscuous, even as he is less virile. According to Barbara Hyams, "the male Jew was often portrayed as an economic bloodsucker and a seducer, and in caricatures his nose symbolized his disproportionately large phallus."⁷⁸ This depiction of Jewish men was not isolated to Nazi propaganda and pseudo-science. Throughout the popular culture of Germany and Central Europe, even in pornography, "the Jew played a sexual role similar to that assigned to the Black male in the United States. He was presented as combining oversized genitals, insatiable appetites, and an irresistible approach."⁷⁹

Antisemitism throughout Europe lent credence to stereotypes of Jewish men as unclean, dangerous to women, and threats to the existence of whole populations. Our contemporary depictions of Jews tend towards de-racialization in the United States, so there is very little scholarship that tries to connect the historical stereotypes about Jewish men to the stereotypes of other racial male groups like Black men. Harry Brod makes a similar point: "The dominant contemporary image of Jewish male heterosexuality in our culture is of sexual incompetence like Clark Kent or Woody Allen...in Nazi ideology the Jewish male was the rapist, cast in images very similar to the myths of African-American men in the United States."⁸⁰ Like Black men, the Jewish male was thought to be incapable of actual love or affection towards women. He was thought to use his sexuality, his insatiable lust, for power. Consequently, "his sexuality can only emerge as a deformation that plunges fellow human beings into torment and disaster."⁸¹

The connection between Jewish men and Black men illuminates a central aspect of sexual racism directed at racialized males, namely that they are defined as bodies of contradiction. They are feminine in relation to the dominant group male, but hyper-masculine and rapists at the same time. This tension is found throughout the depictions of Black men in

the United States and Africa in the late 19th and early 20th centuries.⁸² For racialized men, this untenable contradiction in which they embody hyper-masculine and hyper feminine characteristics simultaneously illustrates Abdul JanMohamed's previous point that in the "discursive formation of racialized sexuality the process of racialization is always already a process of sexualization, and the process of sexualization is also always already—or at least functions as if it were—a process of racialization."⁸³ As Gargi Bhattacharyya explains in *Dangerous Brown Men*,

In accounts of sexual racisms, most famously in relation to racist fantasies of the Black man and his mythical penis, the scrutiny of the body of the subordinated man is an indication of the insecurities of the powerful. This is racism as a battle between men, played out through the demonstration of masculine prowess and comparison of masculine attributes. The fixation on the Jewish male body has had elements of this sexualized competition as shown in a host of anti-Semitic stereotypes from wily seducer to white-slave-holder to spreader/carrier of syphilis to alien rapist. Although these mythologies have existed in parallel with ideas of a feminized Jewish male who is too degenerate or too cerebral to be a real man, there is a sexual fascination in racist mythologies of Jewishness.⁸⁴

Understanding racialization as a sexualized process implies that racialized men are malleable, able to be forcefully contoured and disfigured by the desires and violence of others. There is no actual Jewish male, or Black male, that exists in racist colonial conditions. Racialized men are caricatures, deleterious representations of the oppressor's imagination.⁸⁵ Whereas Frantz Fanon writes that "in relation to the Negro, everything takes place on the genital level,"⁸⁶ so too can we see that the Jew is racialized and thought to be sexually aberrant as a function of *its* Jewishness. "One of the elements of [antisemitic] hatred is a profound sexual attraction," according to Jean Paul Sartre.⁸⁷ This fascination with the Jew has its roots in sadism, where the racial defect imposed upon Jews is imagined to be an indication of their sexual excess. The power of the racially superior rips apart the being of the Jew and replaces him with their image of him. He is contradicted in kind because he is imagined as such by the Nazi and the antisemite.

The creation of inferior racialized men has consistently involved feminization. Despite the overwhelming evidence of this process, current research has singularly associated the feminization of men that causes sexual violence with the theory of hegemonic masculinity and descriptions of patriarchy. As shown above, the males of the subordinate racial group have been defined as feminine and less masculine, as well as hyper-sexual rapists. Unlike previous accounts of male rape, which rest on assumptions of hegemonic masculinity theory—and can only seem to explain the feminization of men that can cause male-on-male rape and the lethal violence that causes the extermination of the very same group of men almost by chance—a theory of racialization can explain why genocidal violence and the rape of Jewish men can occur simultaneously. If feminization is indeed the causal mechanism of rape, then the racializing of a whole group of men explains why men of those races have been subject to rape by dominant racial groups better than a hegemonic masculinity theory that would require each soldier or male citizen in the dominant group to aim to achieve the hegemonic masculine ideal through the raping of others.

Accepting that the process of subjugation and racialization creates a *different kind* of male body will appear strange to many scholars who have understood sexual vulnerability primarily through the sexual orientation and gender performance of the sexes. Just as Black men were raped during slavery, Jim Crow, and on various colonial geographies, the rape of the Jewish male during the Holocaust suggests that racist ideology and sexual vulnerability

are connected.⁸⁸ Said differently, the racialized male is made rape-able in being defined as a racial inferior. In my previous works, I have suggested that the phallus of racialized men is defined in opposition to itself—teetering in an ambiguity of philia and phobia defined by the relation the dominant racial group has to the racialized male body.⁸⁹ If the dominant group intends to justify the extermination of racialized men, the phallus is weaponized. It becomes an instrument of death that is used to spread disease and pestilence, or, worse yet, birth more racialized men to do the same. The racialized male is attacked to destroy the ability of his penis to reproduce itself and doom the civilization of others. However, if the dominant group wishes to satisfy its libidinal fantasies—to rid itself of its sexual excess—the racialized male body becomes a remedy of the oppressor’s lust. He is not simply a weaker man, but made savage, an insatiable male; disposable. His penis is merely phallic flesh that is defined by the will of the more powerful—man or woman. Because it is not a real phallus, and makes no real indication of manhood or masculinity, the lesser racialized male, because he is feminine and not-man, may also be penetrated.

The consequence of racist dehumanization is not simply the lessening of oppressed males to the status of the non-human. The subjugation of racialized males is carnal and involves fetishized caricatures that imagine them as salacious savages and wanton creatures.⁹⁰ The racialized male is deliberately constructed as sexually esurient and animalistic—the antipodean to Man. It is through this symbolic and consequently anthropological distortion of the racialized male, him as a savage penis, or phallicism, that the racialized (or ethnicized) male group is simultaneously imagined to be a sexual threat and predatory; libidinally constituted as sexually desirous by the fantasies/fetishes of the dominant racial group. This concept is not only meant to guide a seemingly inexplicable tension between the description of racialized males under murderous regimes as deserving death because they are rapists and deviants and their description as hyper-sexual objects of desire, possession, and want, but also aims to be predictive. It suggests that in colonial and genocidal (highly racialized) contexts where men are defined through phallic distortion, there will be the rape and murder of racialized men by dominant group men and women. Racialized maleness then describes a register of inversion whereby the established gender hierarchies presuming manhood as being fundamentally tied to aggression and the perpetration of sexual violence he becomes not-man, and now subject to the violent aggression and sexual violence of the dominant—more masculine—racial group. This transubstantiation results in racialized maleness becoming not male and feminine, while not female but rapist. He is both raped and rapist within the genocidal order that defines him as a *racial other*.

Conclusion

Élise Féron has recently stated that “despite a widespread recognition of the relational and intersectional character of gender, much of the existing literature has shown a tendency to treat gender as a women’s issue, especially when it comes to wartime sexual violence.”⁹¹ Despite the increasing visibility of male victims of wartime sexual assault, “monographs or articles addressing wartime sexual violence in general rarely dedicate more than a paragraph or a section to wartime sexual violence against men, and never mainstream it in the analysis.”⁹² So a continuing analysis of the rape and sexual assault of Jewish males by German SS, kapos, *Blockältesten*, and other individuals during the Holocaust should not only add nuance to our disciplinary accounts of patriarchy and center male victims of wartime/genocidal sexual violence, but also provide content and case studies to enrich how scholars theorize and describe the strategies of survival young Jewish boys created to resist Nazism and antisemitism.

Discovering the rape of young Jewish men and boys during the Holocaust is a re-orienting event that should expand how historians, genocide scholars, and philosophers think about sexual violence and the suffering of Jewish people. While the rape of Jewish males is a particular violence, like other kinds of sexual violence and the trauma these events produce, these assaults affect the collective consciousness and life of Jewish people. By framing the rape of Jewish males as a problem for our present conceptualizations of gender and sexuality, I argue that Jewish maleness suffers from an enduring sexual stigma that is not simply racist or antisemitic but specific to the construction Jewish males share with other racialized males across multiple colonial and neo-colonial spaces. This realization is key to building more accurate theorizations of sexual violence and sexual vulnerability as experienced by oppressed men. The similarities between Jewish male sexual victimization and the rape and sexual assault of Black men throughout the 20th century should alert scholars not only to the similarities that the colonialism, slavery, and genocide share through the burden of race, but the significance of Jewish men and boys to race theory. Given the significance of now knowing that Jewish boys were victims of rape, studies of racism, gender, and rape should not remain unchanged. The Jewish male, his peculiar race-sex burden, makes him an indispensable subjectivity to theorize racism and sexual violence in the 21st century.

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- ¹ Adam Jones, "Gendercide and Genocide," *Journal of Genocide Studies* 2.2 (2000): 185-211, 186
- ² *Ibid.*, 185-186.
- ³ Errol Miller, *Men at Risk* (Kingston: Jamaica Publishing House Ltd, 1991), 342.
- ⁴ Adam Jones discusses the repetitive nature of subordinate male death., "Gendercide and Genocide," *Journal of Genocide Studies* 2.2 (2000): 185-211, 186. The paradigm he draws upon was introduced by Errol Miller. Miller explains his theory of male marginalization and alien male subjugation within patriarchy in several works, see Errol Miller, *Men at Risk* (Kingston: Jamaica Publishing House Ltd, 1991); *Marginalization of the Black Male: Insights from the Development of the Teaching Profession* (Barbados: Canoe Publishing, 1994), and "Male Marginalization Revisited," in *Gender in the 21st Century: Caribbean Perspectives, Visions and Possibilities*, eds. Elsa Leo-Rhynie & Barbara Bailey (Kingston: Ian Randle Publishers, 2004), 99-133.
- ⁵ Elisa von Joeden-Forgey, "Gender and Genocide," in *The Oxford Handbook of Genocide Studies*, eds. Donald Bloxham & A. Dirk Moses (New York: Oxford University Press, 2015), 61-80.
- ⁶ Amalendu Misra, *The Landscape of Silence: Sexual Violence against Men in War* (London: Hurst Publishers, 2015), 1.
- ⁷ See Élise Féron, *Wartime Sexual Violence against Men* (Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield, 2018), Will Storr, "The Rape of Men: The Darkest Secret of War," *The Guardian*, July 17, 2001. Retrieved from <https://www.theguardian.com/society/2011/jul/17/the-rape-of-men>, and Sarah Solangon & Preeti Patel, "Sexual Violence against Men in Countries Affected by Armed Conflict," *Conflict, Security, and Development* 12.4 (2012): 417-442.
- ⁸ Helen Touquet & Ellen Gorris, "Out of the Shadows? The Inclusion of Men and Boys in Conceptualizations of Wartime Sexual Violence," *Reproductive Health Matters* 24 (2016): 36-46; Mlader Loncar, Neven Henigsberg, Pero Hrabac, "Mental Health Consequences in Men Exposed to Sexual Abuse During the War in Croatia and Bosnia," *Journal of Interpersonal Violence* 25.2 (2010): 191-203; Mervyn Christian, Octave Safari, Paul Ramazani, Gilbert Burnham & Nancy Glass, "Sexual and Gender Based Violence against Men in the Democratic Republic of Congo: Effects on Survivors, Their Families, and the Community," *Medicine, Conflict, and Survival* 27.4 (2011): 227-246; Janine Natalya Clark, "Masculinity and Male Survivors of Wartime Sexual Violence: A Bosnian Case Study," *Conflict, Security, Development* 17.4 (2017): 287-311, and Gabrielle Ferrales, Hollie Nyseth Brehm, & Suzy McElrath, "Gender-Based Violence against Men and Boys in Darfur: The Gender-Genocide Nexus," *Gender and Society* 30.4 (2016): 565-589.
- ⁹ Adam Jones, "Straight as Rule: Heteronormativity, Gendercide, and the Noncombatant Male," *Men and Masculinities* 8.4 (2006): 451-469.
- ¹⁰ Sareta Ashraph, "Acts of Annihilation: The Role of Gender in the Commission of Crime of Genocide," *Confluences Méditerranée* 103 (2017), 15-29.
- ¹¹ Helene Sinnreich, "And It Was Something We Didn't Talk About: Rape of Jewish Women during the Holocaust," *Holocaust Studies: A Journal of Culture and History* 14.2 (2008): 1-22.
- ¹² Zoë Waxman, *Writing the Holocaust: Identity, Testimony, Representation* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2006), 138.
- ¹³ Sonia M. Hedgepeth & Rochelle G. Saidel, *Sexual Violence against Jewish Women in the Holocaust* (Waltham, MA: Brandeis Publishing, 2010), 2.
- ¹⁴ See Helene Sinnreich, "And It Was Something We Didn't Talk About," 4; and Zoë Waxman, *Women in the Holocaust: A Feminist History* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2017), 92.
- ¹⁵ Sonia M. Hedgepeth & Rochelle G. Saidel, *Sexual Violence against Jewish Women in the Holocaust*, 1.
- ¹⁶ Amy E. Randall, "Gendering Genocide Studies," in *Genocide and Gender in the 20th Century: A Comparative Study*, ed. Amy E. Randall (London: Bloomsbury, 2015), 1-34, 2.
- ¹⁷ *Ibid.*, 4.
- ¹⁸ David Eichert "Homosexualization Revisited: An Audience Focused Theorization of Wartime Male Sexual Violence," *International Feminist Journal of Politics* 21.3 (2019): 409-433, 425.
- ¹⁹ Richard Plant, *The Pink Triangle: The Nazi War against Homosexuals* (New York: Henry Holt & Co., 1986).
- ²⁰ Harry Oosterhuis, "Male Bonding and the Persecution of Homosexual Men in Nazi Germany," *Amsterdams Sociologisch Tijdschrift* 17.4 (2001): 27-45.
- ²¹ Harry Oosterhuis, "Medicine, Male Bonding, and Homosexuality in Nazi Germany," *Journal of Contemporary History* 32.2 (1997):187-205, 188.
- ²² Amalendu Misra, *The Landscape of Silence*, 13-14.
- ²³ *Ibid.*, 14.

²⁴ Marysia Zalewski, “Provocations in Debates about Sexual Violence against Men,” in *Sexual Violence against Men in Global Politics*, eds. Marysia Zalewski, Paula Drumond, Elisabeth Prugl, Maria Stern (New York: Routledge, 2018), 25-42, 30-31.

²⁵ See the *Element of Crimes*, specifically section Article 7 (1) (g)-1—The Crime against Humanity of Rape and Article 8 (2) (e) (vi)—The War Crime of Rape.

²⁶ S.B. Carbon, An Updated Definition of Rape (Washington D.C.: U.S. Department of Justice, 2012). Retrieved from <https://www.justice.gov/archives/opa/blog/updated-definition-rape>.

²⁷ Ibid.

²⁸ Laura Sjoberg, *Women as Wartime Rapists: Beyond Sensation and Stereotyping* (New York: New York University Press, 2016). See Kirsten Johnson et al., “Association of Sexual Violence and Human Rights Violations with Physical and Mental Health in Territories of the Eastern Democratic Republic of the Congo,” *JAMA* 304.5 (2010): 553-562.

²⁹ Chris Dolan, “Men who are Victims,” *The Oxford Handbook of Gender and Conflict*, eds. Fionnuala Ni Aoláin, Naomi Cahn, Dina Francesca Haynes, Nahla Valji, (New York: Oxford University Press, 2018), 86-104, 94.

³⁰ Ibid.

³¹ Kirsten Johnson, Jana Asher, Stephanie Rosborough, Amisha Raja, Rajesh Panjabi, Charles Beadling, & Lynn Lawry, “Association of Combatant Status and Sexual Violence with Health and Mental Health Outcomes in Post-Conflict Liberia,” *JAMA* 300.6 (2008): 676-690; and Kirsten Johnson, Jennifer Scott, Bigy Rughita, Michael Kisielewski, Jana Asher, Richardo Ong, & Lynn Lawry, “Association of Sexual Violence and Human Rights Violations with Physical and Mental Health in Territories of the Eastern Democratic Republic of the Congo,” *JAMA* 304.5 (2010): 553-562.

³² See Mladen Loncar et al., “Mental Health Consequences in Men Exposed to Sexual Abuse during the War in Croatia and Bosnia,” 191-203.

³³ Reinhard Frank, Interview 28165, Segment 15, *Visual History Archive*, USC Shoah Foundation, 1997. Accessed July 1, 2019.

³⁴ Mark Auerbach, Interview 24423, Segment 27, *Visual History Archive*, USC Shoah Foundation, 1997. Accessed July 1, 2019.

³⁵ Eli Gever, Interview 1416, Segment 10, *Visual History Archive*, USC Shoah Foundation, 1997. Accessed July 1, 2019.

³⁶ Ibid.

³⁷ David Katz, Interview 28672, Segment 149, *Visual History Archive*, USC Shoah Foundation, 1997. Accessed July 1, 2019.

³⁸ Fred Silberstein, Interview 36981, Segment 15, *Visual History Archive*, USC Shoah Foundation, 1997. Accessed July 1, 2019.

³⁹ Ibid.

⁴⁰ Ibid.

⁴¹ Ibid.

⁴² Abraham Traub, Interview 34791, Segment 24, *Visual History Archive*, USC Shoah Foundation, 1997. Accessed July 1, 2019.

⁴³ Kenneth Roman, Interview 40310, Segment 171-180, *Visual History Archive*, USC Shoah Foundation, 1997. Accessed July 1, 2019.

⁴⁴ Ibid.

⁴⁵ Ibid.

⁴⁶ Mark Auerbach, Interview 24423, Segment 27, *Visual History Archive*, USC Shoah Foundation, 1997. Accessed October 1, 2018.

⁴⁷ Gabor Altmann, Interview 26994, Segment 15, *Visual History Archive*, USC Shoah Foundation, 1997. Accessed October 1, 2018.

⁴⁸ Arthur Gelbart, Interview 24368, Segment 21, *Visual History Archive*, USC Shoah Foundation, 1997. Accessed October 1, 2018.

⁴⁹ For a discussion of sexual bartering, see Anna Hájková, “Sexual Barter in Times of Genocide: Negotiating the Sexual Economy of the Theresienstadt Ghetto,” *Signs: Journal of Women in Culture and Society* 38.3 (2013): 503-533.

⁵⁰ Frank Burstin, Interview 37151, Segment 133, *Visual History Archive*, USC Shoah Foundation, 1997. Accessed July 1, 2019.

⁵¹ Ibid.

⁵² Ibid.

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- ⁵³ Helen Fein, *Accounting for Genocide: National Responses and Jewish Victimization during the Holocaust* (New York: The Free Press, 1979).
- ⁵⁴ *Ibid.*, 7.
- ⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, 6.
- ⁵⁶ *Ibid.*
- ⁵⁷ Sandesh Sivakumaran, "Sexual Violence Against Men in Armed Conflict," *The European Journal of International Law* 18.2 (2007): 253-276, 267-268.
- ⁵⁸ *Ibid.*, 268.
- ⁵⁹ *Ibid.*, 270.
- ⁶⁰ David Eichert has pointed out that Sivakumaran's system is incomplete and rests on several undemonstrated assumptions about homosexualization. Eichert notes that some victims of male rape are already homosexual, so "Individuals who are homosexual or who claim some other non-heterosexual sexuality cannot be 'homosexualized' by having their social status reduced" ("Homosexualization Revisited: An Audience Focused Theorization of Wartime Male Sexual Violence," 413), and that "it is also important to recognize the role that other frames of analysis such as race and class (which are absent from Sivakumaran's dynamics) play in the decision to use sexual violence during armed conflict" (414).
- ⁶¹ *Ibid.*, 271.
- ⁶² *Ibid.*, 273.
- ⁶³ Adam Jones, "Straight as Rule: Heteronormativity, Gendercide, and the Noncombatant Male," *Men and Masculinities* 8.4 (2006): 451-469, 452-453.
- ⁶⁴ Charlotte Hooper, *Manly States: Masculinity, International Relations, and Gender Politics* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2001).
- ⁶⁵ See Jones, "Straight as Rule," 453-454; and R.W.S. Connell, *Gender* (Cambridge: Polity, 2002).
- ⁶⁶ Jones, "Straight as Rule," 459.
- ⁶⁷ *Ibid.*, 462.
- ⁶⁸ *Ibid.*
- ⁶⁹ *Ibid.*, 274.
- ⁷⁰ See A. Dirk Moses & Dan Stone, eds., *Colonialism and Genocide* (New York: Routledge, 2007); and Damien Short, *Redefining Genocide: Settler Colonialism, Social Death, and Ecocide* (London: Zed Books, 2016).
- ⁷¹ A. Dirk Moses, "Conceptual Blockages and Definitional Dilemmas in the 'Racial Century': Genocides of Indigenous Peoples and the Holocaust," *Patterns of Prejudice* 36.4 (2002): 7-36, 33.
- ⁷² James Q. Whitman, *Hitler's American Model: The United States and the Making of Nazi Race Law* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2017).
- ⁷³ François Haas, "German Science and Black Racism—Roots of the Nazi Holocaust," *The FASEB Journal* 22 (2008): 332-337, 337.
- ⁷⁴ For a discussion of the German folk idea as the basis of racialization, see Dan Stone, "Race Science, Race Mysticism, and the Racial State," in *Beyond the Racial State: Rethinking Nazi Germany*, eds. Devin O. Pendas, Mark Roseman, & Richard F. Wetzell (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2017), 176-196. For a discussion of the negative stereotypes associated with Jewish masculinity, see John M. Hoberman, "Otto Weininger and the Critique of Jewish Masculinity," in *Jews and Gender: Responses to Otto Weininger* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1995), 141-154.
- ⁷⁵ See Benjamin Maria Baader, "Jewish Difference and the Feminine Spirit of Judaism in Mid-Nineteenth-Century Germany," in *Jewish Masculinities: German Jews, Gender, and History*, eds. Benjamin Maria Baader, Sharon Gillerman, & Paul Lerner (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2012), 50-71.
- ⁷⁶ John M. Hoberman, "Otto Weininger and the Critique of Jewish Masculinity," 143.
- ⁷⁷ Quoted in Barbara Hyams, "Weininger and Nazi Ideology," in *Jews and Gender: Responses to Otto Weininger* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1995), 155-170, 159.
- ⁷⁸ *Ibid.*
- ⁷⁹ *Ibid.*
- ⁸⁰ Harry Brod, "Of Mice and Supermen: Images of Jewish Masculinity," in *Gender and Judaism: The Transformation of Tradition*, ed. Tamar Rudavsky (New York: NYU Press, 2005), 279-294, 287-288.
- ⁸¹ Barbara Hyams, "Weininger and Nazi Ideology," 159.
- ⁸² See Tommy J. Curry, *The Man-Not: Race, Class, Genre, and the Dilemmas of Black Manhood* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 2017).
- ⁸³ Abdul JanMohamed, "Sexuality On/Of the Racial Border: Foucault, Wright, and the Articulation of Racialized Sexuality," in *Discourses of Sexuality: From Aristotle to Aids*, eds. Donna Stanton (Ann Arbor, University of Michigan Press, 1992), 94-116, 112.

⁸⁴ Gargi Bhattacharyya, *Dangerous Brown Men: Exploiting Sex, Violence, and Feminism in the War on Terror*, (London: Zed Books, 2008) 87-88.

⁸⁵ See Frantz Fanon, *Black Skin, White Masks* (New York: Grove Press, 1967), 110-114.

⁸⁶ Fanon, *Black Skins, White Masks*, 157.

⁸⁷ Jean Paul Sartre, *Antisemite and Jew: An Exploration of the Etiology of Hate* (New York: Schocken Books, 1976), 33.

⁸⁸ See Tommy J. Curry, *The Man-Not: Race, Class, Genre, and the Dilemmas of Black Manhood*;" Tommy J. Curry, "Killing Boogeymen: Phallicism and the Misandric Mischaracterizations of Black Males in Theory," *Res Philosophica* 95.2 (2018): 235-272; and Vincent Woodard, *The Delectable Negro: Human Consumption and Homoeroticism within U.S. Slave Culture* (New York: New York University Press, 2014).

⁸⁹ See Tommy J. Curry, "Killing Boogeymen: Phallicism and the Misandric Mischaracterizations of Black Male in Theory."

⁹⁰ Frantz Fanon, *Black Skin, White Masks* (New York: Grove Weidenfeld, 1967), especially chapter 6 "The Negro and Psychopathology;" E. Franklin Frazier, "The Pathology of Race Prejudice," *The Forum* (1927):856-861; Vincent Woodard, *The Delectable Negro: Human Consumption and Homoeroticism within U.S. Slave Culture* (New York: NYU Press, 2014). The sexual savagery of racial groups often occurs through simianization, see David Livingstone Smith & Ioana Panaitiu, "Aping the Human Essence: Simianization as Dehumanization," in *Simianization: Apes, Gender, Class, and Race*, eds. Wulf D Hund; Charles W Mills; Silvia Sebastiani (Zurich: Lit Verlag, 2016), 77-104.

⁹¹ Élise Féron, *Wartime Sexual Violence against Men*, 1.

⁹² *Ibid.*, 2.