

# QUEER IDENTITIES

## IN DIFFERENT TIMES

# Interactive CityWalk

## Trans History During Nazi Rule

*A historic walk through Berlin based on the biography of Käthe Rogalli*

The following reader is a result of research work by historian **Kai\* Brust**, used to accompany a series of workshops in cooperation between **Educat Kollektiv, Prismatica and Jugendnetzwerk Lambda Berlin-Brandenburg**. The reader can be used as input for the interactive city walk.

You can start the online tour by scanning the QR code below or visiting <https://citywalk.educat-kollektiv.org/en/>.

If you are in Berlin, the reader can give you some hints for a guided tour. For questions or to book a tour, write to [edu.news@educat-kollektiv.org](mailto:edu.news@educat-kollektiv.org) or on **Instagram @educatkollektiv**.

The materials can be shared and used for educational purpose only. Please mention the creators.





*Welcome to this interactive walk, based on the biography of Käte Rogalli, a trans woman who lived during Nazi rule. Her life is an example of the persecution and oppression many trans people faced during that time. The walk is a small contribution to the commemoration of all victims of Nazi ideology.*



**! WARNING ! - the following pages contain triggering and disturbing information.**

# Introduction: Käte Rogalli



## Käte Rogalli (EN)

born:	17.09.1903
died:	11.04.1943 (between 6 and 7 in the morning)
parents:	Oswald Rogalli (merchant), Alice Rogalli (house wife)
Job:	Technical draftsman, precision mechanic (watchmaker)
civil status:	divorced
Exfrau:	Gertrud Rogalli (born Gräbert)
Kinder:	twins (born in 1929)

<b>1928</b>	Issuing of a „Transvestitenscheins“, probably assessed by Magnus Hirschfeld
<b>05.06.1928</b>	Official name change to a name that was given by the authorities (not Käte, trans people were only allowed to chose from a very limited list of names, that were seen as gender neutral, for example Toni, Alex, Gerd)
<b>1929</b>	Married Gertrud Rogalli (born Gräbert) according to her own statements, Käte wore women's clothing to the registry office
<b>1936</b>	Revocation of the "Transvestitenschein" probably as early as 1933, denunciation after putting on "women's clothing", resulting in 4 weeks of protective custody
<b>27.05.1937 till 22.03.1938</b>	Imprisoned in the Sachsenhausen concentration camp under the prisoner category "transvestite" after another denunciation, again for dressing in women's clothing
<b>1938</b>	Divorce from the wife because Käte suspects that the wife has denounced her and because of the wife's adultery. Presumably Käte was disadvantaged in the divorce because she had been in a concentration camp because of her being trans (withdrawal of custody of the children sometime between spring 1938 and summer 1941)
<b>1938-1940</b>	1st court case for causing a public nuisance because she climbed naked into the garbage bin of her apartment building and was found there by a neighbor. Forensic medical report: attribution of the categories transvestite and masochist, sanity present, which is why she will not be taken to psychiatric care, conviction, forced labor in the Bavarian Ostmark prison system during the construction of the Bavarian Ostmarkstrasse (various penal camps and previously the Lehrter Str. pre-trial detention center and Berlin Tegel prison). The fact that Käte had previously been imprisoned in a concentration camp and supposedly not "improved" since then, was negatively interpreted in the court proceedings
<b>1941-1943</b>	2nd court case for causing a public nuisance, again for a similar act, climbing into a trash can of the apartment building she lived in. New psychiatric report: re-attribution of the categories transvestite and masochist, additional diagnosis of psychopathy, attribution of insanity, conviction and compulsory admission to the Wittenau sanatorium (before that, again to the Lehrter Str. detention center). In the Wittenau sanatorium, Käte experiences transphobic violence (her hair is cut off, clothing with feminine connotations is taken away from her). As a skilled worker she is also exploited by the psychiatric hospital, where she repairs watches.
<b>08.1942</b>	Assessment by the German Institute for Psychological Research and Psychotherapy, also known as the Göring Institute (evaluator Dr. Marie Kalau from Hofe attributes psychopathy to Käte, the chance of Kätes release from psychiatry soon being destroyed by the report)
<b>11.04.1943</b>	Died in the Wittenau Sanatorium due to either suicide or accidental death during a BDSM act in the toilet of the psychiatry. Because of the way she died, the criminal police suspected her of being gay even after her death.

Drawing by Tomka Weiß

## Location 1: Institute of Sexual Science [physical stop]

Bettina von Arnim Ufer, 10557 Berlin



Stumble Stone, Memorial and Picture of Dr. Magnus Hirschfeld



Das „Institut für Sexualwissenschaft“  
(Dr. Magnus Hirschfeld-Stiftung) Berlin.

© Lili Elbe Bibliothek

The Institute of Sexual Sciences opened in July 1919 by Magnus Hirschfeld, a German sexologist and doctor. It soon became a hub not only for researchers from all over the world, but also for many trans people. It was the first institution that provided systematic medical and legal guidance for trans people. Hirschfeld himself wrote many medical reports, which helped trans people acquire medical care and legal recognition. The so called “Transvestitenschein” (transvestite license) was a result of his lobbying with police. With it, trans people were registered and able to live with the clothes they preferred to wear, but only if they didn’t spark “public nuisance”. It also enabled some to officially change their names, starting from 1920.

## Location 1: Institute of Sexual Science [physical stop]

Bettina von Arnim Ufer, 10557 Berlin

### The “Transvestitenschein”

Käte Rogalli acquired a „Transvestitenschein” (“transvestite certificate”) in 1926. This is what it could have looked like.



6. September 1928

The worker Erna Katter, 14.3.1910 Berlin born in Britz Wuthesiushof 8 resident, is known here for wearing men's clothing.

Strewe  
Kriminal-Kommissar.

Gerd Katter's  
“Transvestitenschein”  
issued to him in 1928

Taken from Magnus-Hirschfeld-  
Society Berlin

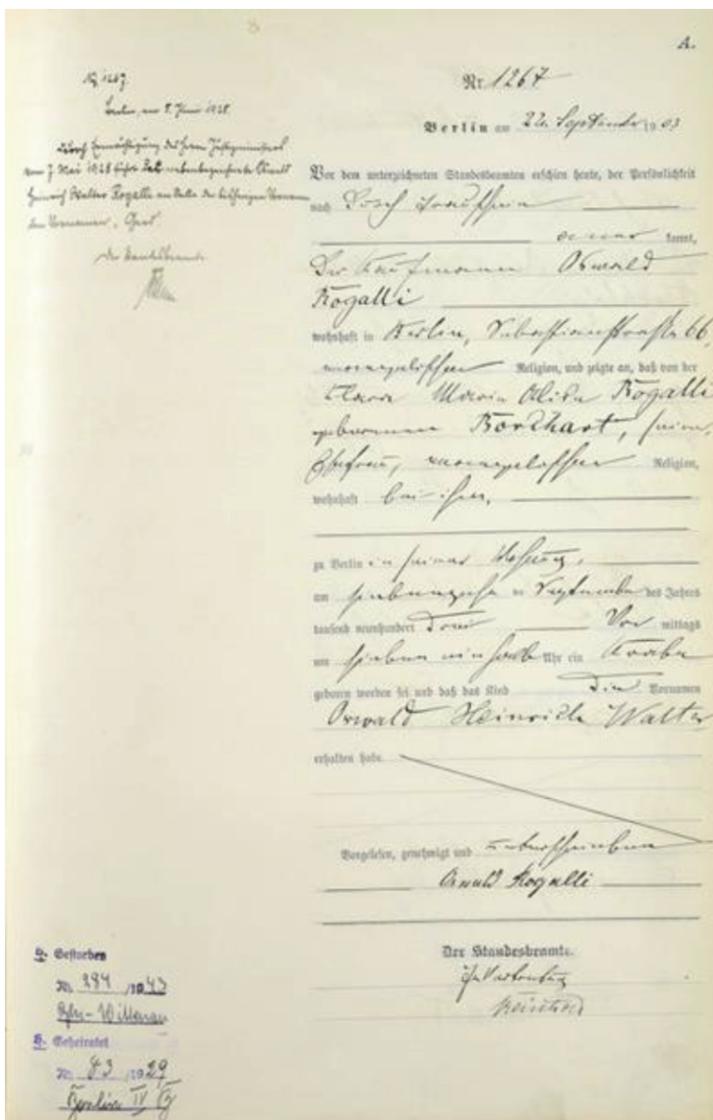
While some trans people were able to acquire a “Transvestitenschein” and change their names, others were less lucky. In 1930, Paula Haas, a poor trans woman, was denied a “Transvestitenschein” by Bernhard Strewe. He was the leader of the Berlin police's so-called “Homosexuelendezernat” (homosexuals department). He thought that she couldn't pass well enough as a woman in public, not to spark “public nuisance”. In addition, he argued that Paula was too poor to buy herself “proper” women's clothes.

# Location 1: Institute of Sexual Science [physical stop]

Bettina von Arnim Ufer, 10557 Berlin

## Käte's name change

With the „Transevstitenschein“ and a medical report, Käte was able to change her name in 1928. This is documented in the left upper corner of her birth certificate, where it says:



Berlin, on 5. January 1938

By authorization of the Minister of Justice  
On May 7, 1928, the below named Oswald Heinrich Walter Rogalli, instead of the previous first names now goes by the first name "Gerd".

The registrar  
Signature

Taken from Berlin State Archives, registry office  
Berlin, Nr. 1267, 22.09.1903

## Location 1: Institute of Sexual Science [physical stop]

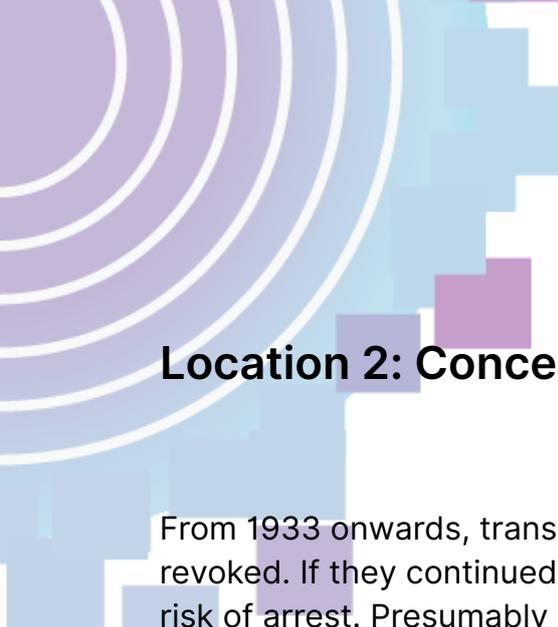
*Bettina von Arnim Ufer, 10557 Berlin*

### Raid and book burnings of the institute



*Scan from the Magnus-Hirschfeld-Society Berlin*

*On 6th of May 1933 nazi students stormed the institute and destroyed it. In public book burnings, hundreds of books from the institutes vast library were burned. This meant that not only a huge amount of unique materials was destroyed, but also a great amount of queer knowledge. This photo is a propagandist photo taken from the raid of the institute. Journals and books are piled up and journals with naked people are deliberately placed, so that the viewers eyes are directed to the "scandalous" material.*



## Location 2: Concentration camp Sachsenhausen [digital]

From 1933 onwards, trans people increasingly had their “Transvestitenscheine” revoked. If they continued to wear their preferred clothing afterwards, they were at risk of arrest. Presumably Käte Rogalli also had her “Transvestitenschein” revoked in 1933. Because she continued to wear women's clothing, she was arrested by the Gestapo at the end of 1936 and taken into “Schutzhaft”. She was probably denounced by her wife and/or mother and/or other people for continuing to wear clothing with feminine connotations.

The so called “Schutzhaft” (protective custody) made it possible to arrest opponents of the National Socialist regime and people who had no place in Nazi ideology. The arrested people could be imprisoned indefinitely, for example in a concentration camp. These arrests were mostly carried out by the SS and the Gestapo, without a court order or conviction. The legal basis for this was established on February 28th 1933 with the “Verordnung zum Schutz von Volk und Staat” (Ordinance for the Protection of the People and the State). Some people, like Käte, spent several months in captivity, were forced to work and then released again. Others continued to be held captive, were forced to work and many were murdered.

## Location 2: Concentration camp Sachsenhausen [digital]

0 139

**POLITISCHE ABTEILUNG!** Oranienburg, den \_\_\_\_\_ 193

An die Lagerleitung  
H i e r :

Folgende Häftlinge sind am \_\_\_\_\_ zu \_\_\_\_\_ entlassen  
überführen

Häftl. Nr.	N a m e n:	Vorname:	Bemerkungen:
✓	Graf	Guino	B. V.
✓	Wamke	Gustav	B. V.
✓	Wagner	Arvid	B. V.
✓	Fischer	Hein	klüßig
✓	Rogalli		<del>§ 175</del> (transvestite)

*Admission notification to Sachsenhausen concentration camp dated May 27, 1937; taken from Brandenburg State Main Archives Potsdam, Pr. Br. Rep. 35H (KZ Sachsenhausen)/32*

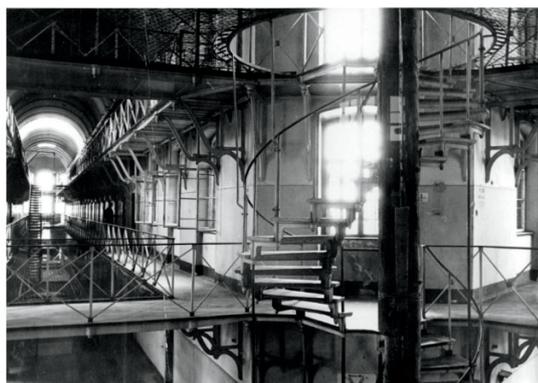
Here is the entry report to the Sachsenhausen concentration camp from the day Käte Rogalli was incarcerated. It is visible that something has been crossed out in the column of the reason for her detention. Behind the crossed out section “transvestite” is written in brackets. If you look closely and compare Käte's entry with other reports, accessible in the same database it becomes clear, that the crossed out word was “§ 175”. Under this paragraph of the penal code, people were prosecuted as homosexual men. The fact that “transvestite” appears in brackets next to § 175 indicates, that the Gestapo saw transness as a form of homosexuality. This idea was widespread at the time of National Socialism, but also before that. If a person assigned male at birth identified as female or presented as feminine, this was often used by the police, Gestapo, or in court to claim that they were a gay man. That is why, as a transfeminine person, Käte ran at a high risk of being categorized as a gay man. The fact that the paragraph was crossed out later means, that Käte had been incarcerated in the concentration camp because of alleged homosexual acts, but this suspicion could not be confirmed. Her feminine gender presentation was therefore read as a kind of indication of homosexuality. Perhaps Käte had protested this reason for her incarceration? We cannot know for sure. What is certain, however, is that Käte was in a concentration camp for almost 10 months because of her transness, even though it was not actually a punishable offense.

## Location 3: Cell prison on Lehrter Str. [physical]

*Lehrter Str. 5B, 10557 Berlin*



*today*



*in the 20s and 30s*

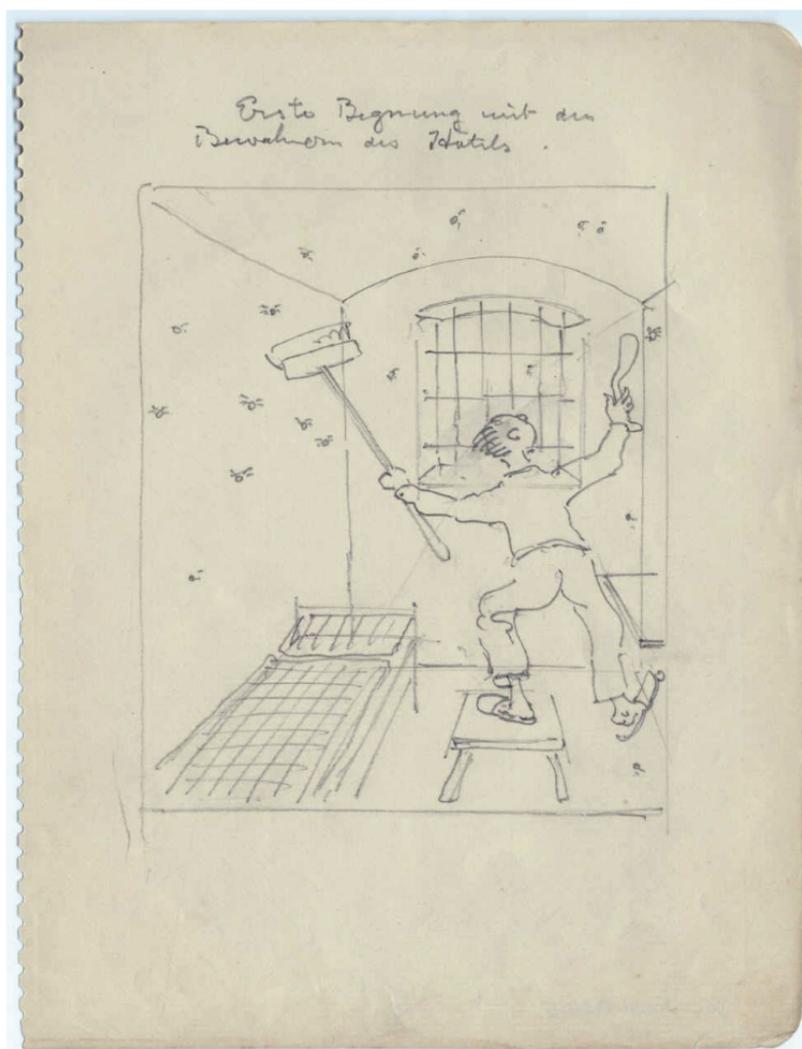
On July 16, 1938, less than four months after her release from Sachsenhausen concentration camp, Käte was taken to the Moabit cell prison on Lehrter Strasse. She had been arrested four days earlier for allegedly "causing a public nuisance." A neighbor had found her naked in the garbage can of her apartment complex and reported the incident to the police. As Käte explained to the police, she had developed this compulsive behavior after her ex-wife and the Gestapo repeatedly told her that someone like her "belonged in the trash."

From July 16, 1938, to August 27, 1938, Käte was held in the Lehrter Strasse prison. The prison doctor, Dr. Kurt Frommer, prepared a medical report on her, which was used in her trial. During her second trial in 1941, she was again held in pretrial detention at Lehrter Strasse from June 23, 1941, to November 10, 1941.

## Location 3: Cell prison on Lehrter Str. [physical]

Lehrter Str. 5B, 10557 Berlin

This drawing by an inmate in the Lehrter Straße cell prison shows one of the horrific truths that inmates there had to contend with: a plague of vermin, especially bedbugs. As a trans person, Käte not only had to deal with these conditions, but was also certainly deprived of her feminine clothing and possibly her hair. The cell prison was intended exclusively as a men's prison. Käte's gender identity was therefore ignored. As a queer person, she also could not count on the goodwill of her fellow inmates and prison staff.



*Drawing by Friedrich Leon, who was imprisoned on Lehrter Street during the Nazi era. Taken from ©Gedenkstätte Deutscher Widerstand*

## Location 4: Berlin Federal Court [physical]

*Turmstr. 91, 10597 Berlin*

Today (Tiergarten District Court) Berlin Federal Court in 1906

In early November 1938, the main hearing in the trial against Käte took place at the Berlin Regional Court. The public was excluded from the hearing before the Berlin lay judge court due to "endangering morality." The public prosecutor's office requested two years of imprisonment, including time spent in pretrial detention. They argued that Käte's imprisonment in a concentration camp had been "in vain," thus linking the reason for her imprisonment in the concentration camp (wearing women's clothing) to the compulsive act of climbing into the garbage bin. This assessment of Käte's imprisonment by the prosecutor shows that they considered her previous imprisonment in the concentration camp to be justified. The prosecutor's office thus pursued the strategy of portraying Rogalli as perverse and her transgender status as part of this ascribed perversion.



Today (Tiergarten District Court)



*Berlin Federal Court 1906*

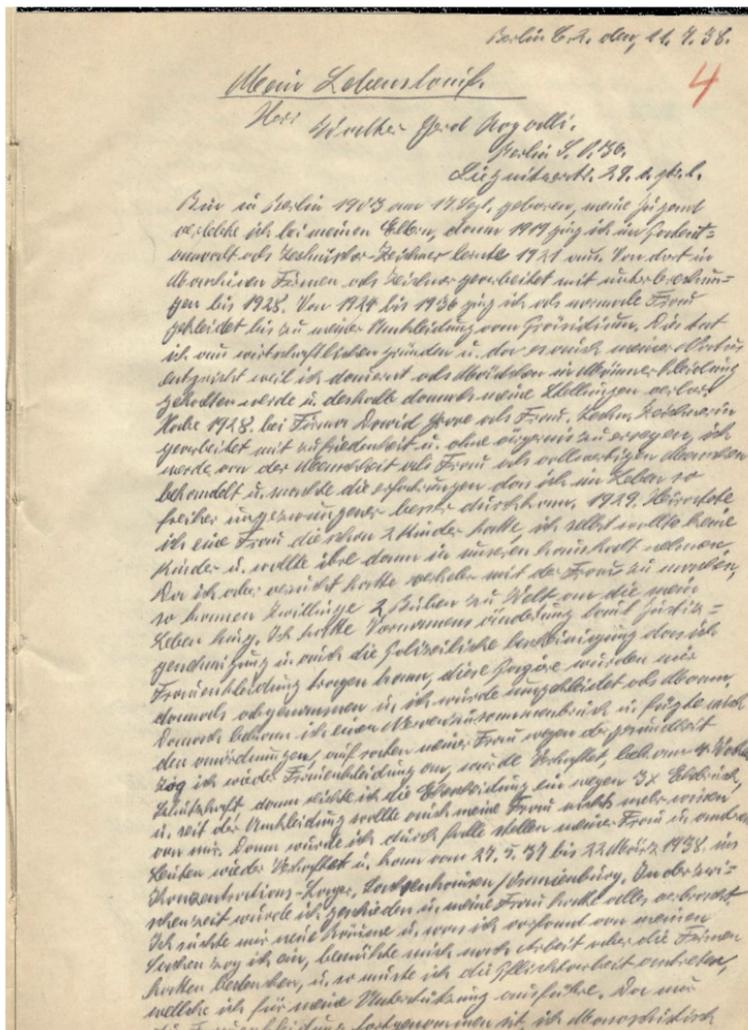
The court agreed with the prosecutor's office. The timing of the garbage can act, just a few months after her release from the concentration camp, constituted an aggravating factor (thus leading to a higher sentence). The court and the public prosecutor both assumed that her imprisonment in the concentration camp had been "in vain." This linked the wearing of women's clothing and the garbage can act. Both acts were considered sex crimes with a similar "perverse" origin. The sentence was two years in prison, with the six weeks of pretrial detention already served being deducted. Käte was ordered to pay the legal costs.

## Location 4: Berlin Federal Court [physical]

Turmstr. 91, 10597 Berlin

The decisive factor in determining the severity of the sentence was primarily the expert opinion by Dr. Kurt Frommer, who deemed Rogalli sane even though she had been under the influence of alcohol when she committed the garbage can act. This assessment by the expert supported the view that Käte had brought her situation upon herself.

## Transcript of handwritten CV



Handwritten CV of Käte Rogalli, written shortly after her arrest on July 11, 1938, in pre-trial detention as part of the first criminal proceedings against her.

Taken from Berlin State Archives, A Rep. 358-02, No. 116723

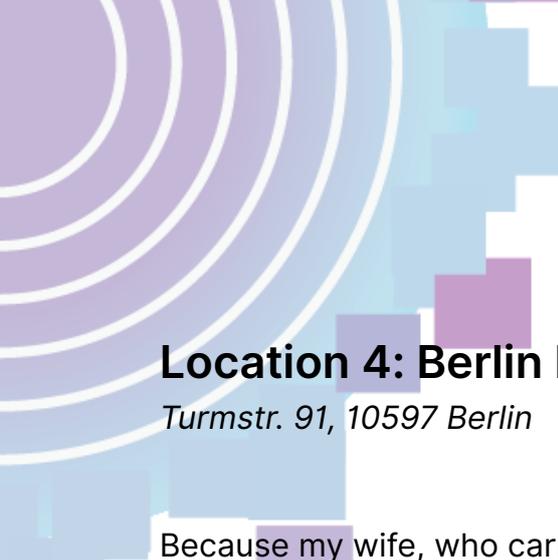
## Location 4: Berlin Federal Court [physical]

*Turmstr. 91, 10597 Berlin*

I was born in Berlin on September 17, 1903. I spent my youth with my parents. Then in 1919 I went to the patent office as a technical draftsman, completing my apprenticeship in 1921. From there, I worked as a draftsman in machine companies, with interruptions, until 1928. From 1924 to 1936, I dressed as a normal woman until I changed clothes at the presidium. I did this for economic reasons and because it was also in keeping with my nature, because I was constantly dressed as a girl in men's clothing and therefore lost my positions at that time.

In 1928, I worked as a woman, a technical draftswoman, at David Grove, with satisfaction and without causing offense. I am treated by humanity as a woman, a fully-fledged human being, and I have experienced that I get through life more freely, more easily, and better this way. In 1929, I married a woman who already had two children. I didn't want any children myself and wanted to take hers into our household. However, because I had tried to have sex with the woman, twin boys were born, and my life depended on them. I had a first name change according to judicial approval and also a police certificate stating that I could wear women's clothing. These papers were taken away from me at the time, and I was re-clothed as a man. After that, I had a nervous breakdown and complied with the orders. At my wife's advice for health reasons, I re-clothed as a man. I was arrested, given four weeks of protective custody, then I filed for divorce on three counts of adultery, and since the re-clothing, my wife also wanted nothing more to do with me. Then, through a trap set by my wife and others, I was arrested again and imprisoned in the Sachsenhausen/Oranienburg concentration camp from May 27, 1937, to March 22, 1938.

In the meantime, I was divorced, and my wife had spent everything. I looked for new quarters and moved in what I found of my belongings. I tried to find work, but the companies had reservations, and so I had to take on compulsory labor, which I perform to support myself. Since I was deprived of women's clothing, I am a masochist, I fought against it and turned to doctors.



## Location 4: Berlin Federal Court [physical]

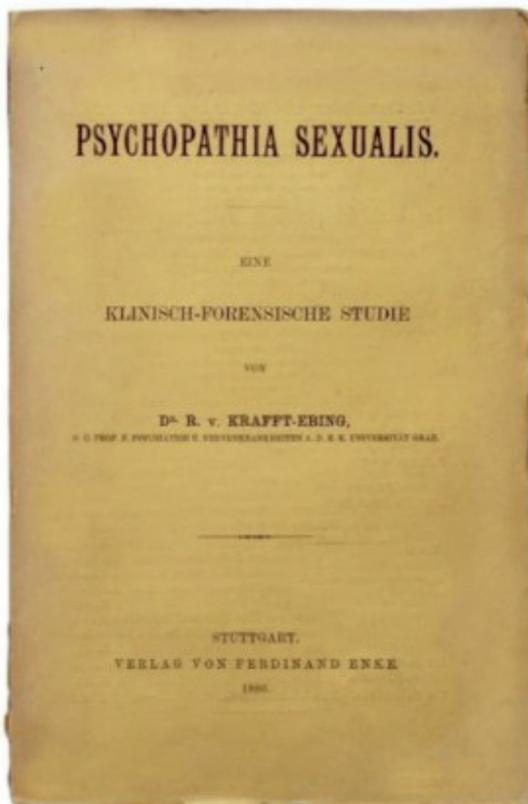
*Turmstr. 91, 10597 Berlin*

Because my wife, who carried out my work during our nine-year marriage, justified it as something she only did out of love, and I lacked that, even as a woman, and I was considered nothing, I found no work despite my efforts. Despite my efforts, I found myself in a state of emotional turmoil, especially since my wife was to blame for everything, lied to me, cheated on me, and caused so much trouble, so I had to file a complaint with the public prosecutor. I live a completely withdrawn life and therefore feel rejected, despised, and abandoned by the world. Since I was doing dirty work on compulsory labor such as shoveling piles of gravel, blasting, carting gravel, shoveling gravel, unloading and loading old iron, sawing logs, chopping wood, and so on. I worked independently as a watchmaker from 1919 to 1936, and even today I still carry out repairs when I'm asked to. However, the hard work makes it more difficult for me. I feel like nothing, and as I was once told that someone like me should be thrown away, and my wife said it back then too, I let my wife cover me with garbage after I'd climbed into the chest, and she had her way. My wife did this often, and I also stayed in there during the day and let everything wash over me. I have feelings about it, but without any outpouring, even though I don't want it.

Since I am now alone, abandoned, despised, and again not considered a fully human being, doing the dirty work, which I find annoying again and again, despite my energetic struggle, the thought came to me: "Who are you?" Get out of here, you're just garbage, waste. But I held my ground. I did my neighbor a few favors, and since his wife had given birth to a boy, he asked me to join him for a beer, which I couldn't refuse. Since I'm not a drinker, I can't stand anything, and it was good. The next evening, on an empty stomach, I drank a bottle of malt beer, which left me feeling foggy from the previous day. When I went to sleep, I was overcome by bitterness and the feeling that I was nothing in the world. So I went into the trash can, also remembering earlier that my wife had poured the trash over it, and I must have fallen asleep. When I woke up, more had been poured in, and it was broad daylight. I opened the lid and was about to hurry out when a tenant spotted me. I was ashamed of myself.

## Location 5: Masochism (BDSM) in National Socialism [digital]

In 1894, the psychiatrist Richard von Krafft-Ebing published "Psychopathia Sexualis." It was the first comprehensive work on sexual psychology, which became a standard work for sexology in the following decades. It presented male sadism and female masochism as the norm. Conversely, male masochism and female sadism were described as a "perversion of the psychological-sexual nature." Krafft-Ebing declared masochism in men to be pathological. However, he saw no problem in sexually submissive women. He considered sexual submissiveness in women to be a natural "instinct for subordination." This sexist view was also shared by the Duisburg criminal inspector Dr. Walter Hauke.



In October 1936, he published an article on masochism in the police journal "Kriminalistische Monatshefte."

In it, he accepted sadomasochism, which fits into the binary gender norm, and presented it as natural: "Masochism is actually only a pronounced perversion in the male sex. Women, as the naturally more passive part in sexual life, already exhibit a certain predisposition to mild masochistic sensations. Suffering and endurance are perceived as part of their nature, but a man whose inner inclinations include the urges of submission and humiliation to the female sex appears to healthy sensibilities to be contrary to nature."

## Location 5: Masochism (BDSM) in National Socialism [digital]

Hauke believed that masochistic men were also more likely to commit crimes, for example, crimes such as "distributing pornographic material." Masochists, he argued, possessed a great deal of "obscene literature," because constant visits to a "massage parlor," comparable to a BDSM studio, were too expensive in the long run.

Sexist notions of sadomasochism also led to the assumption that it was perfectly normal for transgender people to be masochistic. Lily, a transgender author of a trans magazine that was still published illegally until 1937, provides an explanation for why this view was widespread: "The transgender woman can [...] live out her urges; indeed, according to our current cultural concepts, it is viewed as an ascent, a progress, whereas for men it represents a descent, a degradation, a weakness. Transvestism in men is therefore often linked to masochism; indeed, it is actually synonymous with it, for it is the urge for degradation [sic!], even self-degradation, the feeling of pleasure through humiliation and submission."

Like Hauke and Krafft-Ebing, Lily defined (sexual) passivity and submissiveness as unmasculine and (sexual) activity and dominance as unfeminine. Hauke believed that masochistic practices in individuals assigned the male gender fell under what "[...], according to common sense, merits punishment." In police practice, both sadism and masochism were indeed used as categories of offender.



Photo of one of the "massage salons"  
(from Hauke's Article)

### Sex in National Socialism

National Socialist ideology wasn't necessarily prudish. Under Nazi rule, there was a veritable "encouragement" to heterosexual desire. This meant that even non-reproductive sexual practices among cis-heterosexual members of the "national community" were encouraged by the state. Cis-heterosexual desire was considered natural. This led to relatively progressive sex education.



## Location 5: Masochism (BDSM) in National Socialism [digital]

The "Black Corps," the SS's combat and promotional publication, advocated starting sex education as early as possible. This was intended to remove the shame and guilt that held future mothers and fathers back from an "instinctive" sex life. This would make them less susceptible to the "seduction" of homosexuality. Prudish sexual morality was obsolete. But that didn't mean that sexual morality itself was abolished. It now focused much more on the "who with whom" than on the "how." Jewish people, as well as other people, were violently excluded from sexuality and reproduction. Numerous people deemed not to be of reproductive value were sterilized, including many affected by ableism.

### **The National Socialist "Volksgemeinschaft" and the "Volkskörper"**

The idea of the "Volksgemeinschaft" was created through nationalist propaganda during the First World War to keep the population together during the war. During the First World War, many Jewish men volunteered for military service, among other things to finally be recognized as part of the nation. In the National Socialist "Volksgemeinschaft," which excluded Jewish people from the outset, Jewish participation was unthinkable. In the "Volksgemeinschaft" of Nazi ideology, racism, anti-Semitism, and ableism determined who belonged and who did not. With the help of social and cultural norms, such as gender and body norms, certain groups were further excluded. This denied the "others" the right to "be different."

An important concept in Nazi ideology was the so-called "Volkskörper" (people's body). The idea behind it was that the entire nation was a kind of body in which certain individuals were viewed as a "virus." These individuals were therefore to be removed from the "national body." These individuals included not only political opponents. Laws and regulations based on this idea led, for example, to the murder of disabled people. Furthermore, thousands of people were sterilized because their reproduction would supposedly produce children who were undesirable in the "national community."

## Location 6: Tegel Prison and Viechtach/Leuchtenberg/ Bischofsgrün Prison Camp [digital]

After Käte was sentenced at the regional court, she was transported to Tegel Prison. From there, she was transported to Bavaria after just over a week. She spent her two years in prison in various prison camps in Bavaria. These were all located near the so-called Ostmarkstraße. The road was being built between Passau and Marktredwitz during Käte's imprisonment. It also served a military function as part of the Reich Road and Autobahn program. Today, it is a tourist route. The fact that Käte gradually moved up the Ostmarkstraße over time through various camps suggests that her labor was exploited for the construction of the road. As a draftswoman, she was an important skilled worker whose skills were useful in the construction of such a road.



*New part of the Ostmarkstraße, 1936;  
taken from Bavarian State Library, 4 Bavar. 198 t-48*

On September 21, 1940, Käte was released from prison after serving her full sentence and returned to Berlin. After her return, she lived at Hagelberger Straße 21. However, on June 19, 1941, she was arrested again, again for a similar garbage-trash act.



## Location 6: Tegel Prison and Viechtach/Leuchtenberg/ Bischofsgrün Prison Camp [digital]

She was taken into custody and returned to the cell prison on Lehrter Straße on June 23. The second trial, however, proceeded differently than the first. The medical expert, Dr. Wittenburg, described Käte as an incompetent "transvestite," "masochist," and "psychopath." During the trial, Käte's sexuality was intensively investigated. The public prosecutor even ordered a physical examination. If certain characteristics, such as schizophrenia or epilepsy, had been found, Käte could have been sterilized and, in the worst case, become the victim of a eugenically motivated murder.

According to the district court's decision of October 6, 1941, Käte was found guilty of causing a public nuisance. Because Dr. Wittenburg had found her mental capacity unfounded and the court considered a repetition of the acts likely, her involuntary commitment to a psychiatric hospital was ordered. "Naturally, this endangers public order and disturbs and impairs the peace of the national community [...] as long as [she] feels and acts in such a pathological manner."

Käte's actions were classified as pathological in the second trial, which made her release dependent on her "cure." Her own statements received little attention during the trial. The fact that she stated that she had only stepped into the garbage can because she was drunk and that she had felt the same disgust after waking up did not mitigate her sentence. She also noted that she had suffered from depression since losing custody of her two children.

### **Eugenics**

Eugenics is a pseudoscience that emerged in the second half of the 18th century. It was dedicated to investigating the "quality" of a nation and was ableist and racist. In German-speaking countries, the field of research was also known as "racial hygiene." During the Nazi era, eugenic laws and directives were issued, with the help of which, primarily, disabled people and Jews were murdered and sterilized.

## Location 7: Wittenauer Heilstätten Psychiatry [optional physical or digital]

Oranienburger Str. 285, 13437 Berlin | Haus 10

Today (exhibition „totgeschwiegen“)



Source Friedrich Albert Schwartz

Wittenauer Heilstätten 1985

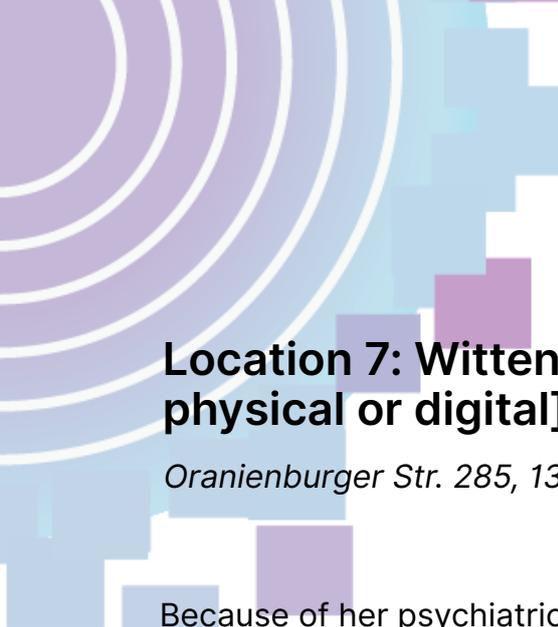


1985 back then still named „Irrenanstalt Dalldorf“

On November 10th 1941, Käte was transported from the cell prison in Lehrter Strasse to the Wittenauer Heilstätten at Oranienburger Str. 285. At the time “Wittenauer Heilstätten” was Berlin's largest psychiatric hospital, hopelessly overcrowded and involved in the sterilization and murder of thousands of people during the Nazi regime.

Since Käte's work as a precision mechanic was highly sought after, her work force, estimated by the doctors to be around 75%, was exploited by the psychiatric hospital. This was also the reason why she was one of the better-nourished patients.

In the psychiatric ward, Käte was again suspected of being homosexual. In a nursing report dated March 5th 1942, the nursing staff wrote: “Pat. R. cried for about 2 minutes earlier. When asked why, he said: You know, my honor has been taken away from me, all that chatter up there. Because I don't want to have anything to do with women, most people think that I have a different disposition, which is certainly not the case with me, as you and the other nurses well know.”



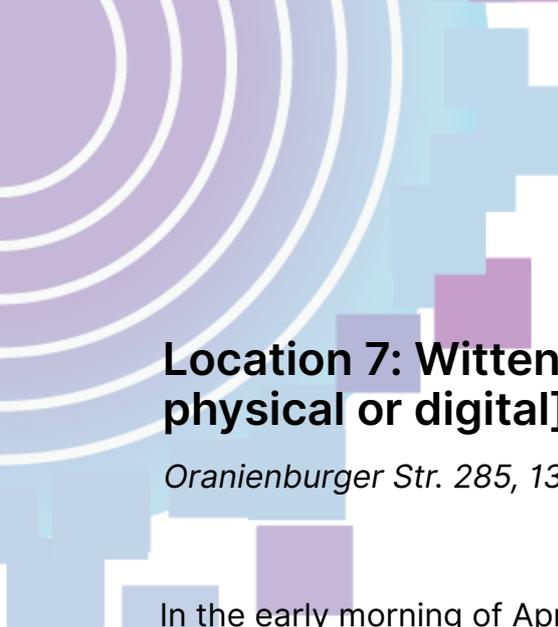
## Location 7: Wittenauer Heilstätten Psychiatry [optional physical or digital]

*Oranienburger Str. 285, 13437 Berlin | Haus 10*

Because of her psychiatric treatment, Rogalli was not only threatened with losing her apartment. In Wittenau she also experienced numerous forms of transphobic violence in attempts to “cure” her transness. A medical report shows that she was “angry” and “indignant” that her hair had been cut off and her beloved apron had been taken away from her. However, all attempts to “defeminize” Käte failed. “He maintains that he is a girl and that he is unfairly treated as a man. He also makes no effort to get away from his morbid ideas and to show, purely externally through his hairstyle and his clothes, that he is really trying to assume the position as a man that nature has given him.”

Because Käte made no attempt to identify as a man, she had to stay in the psychiatric hospital. Diagnosing her as sane was tied to her rejecting her own gender identity. This particularly shows how her transness was linked to the trash can act. The fact that Käte continued to live her identity openly despite her predicament, can be read as a practice of queer resistance. In the last assessment from the psychiatric hospital to the public prosecutor’s office on October 23rd 1942, it was noted that Rogalli could only be released under supervision. Käte’s lawyer tried to find a supervisor that would be accepted by the police. The only candidate was Käte’s former neighbor Anna Jackmus, who was the only person that visited Käte regularly in the psychiatric hospital. According to the police’s assessment, Ms. Jackmus was too old to constantly supervise Käte.

The police argued primarily, that Käte would be easy to relapse, as it had been stated in the assessment from the IPFP. The police demanded Käte’s immediate transfer to “Vorbeugungshaft” (Crime Prevention Inspectorate) if she were to be released from the psychiatric ward. This meant preventive detention, in the worst and most likely case incarceration in a concentration camp, and was also a common practice in the persecution of homosexual men. The public prosecutor denied Käte’s release on December 7th 1942. The next date to consider her release was set for November 1st 1943, but it never happened.



## Location 7: Wittenauer Heilstätten Psychiatry [optional physical or digital]

*Oranienburger Str. 285, 13437 Berlin | Haus 10*

In the early morning of April 11th 1943, Käte was found hanging from the ceiling slats of the toilet by another Wittenau patient. The nursing, doctor and police reports on her death are consistent with the following information: Two rubber aprons and curtain cords were wrapped around Käte's body.

An attempt at resuscitation was unsuccessful. The health department was informed of Käte's death on the same day:

“This is a psychopath and transvestite who has been tying himself up for years, including at home at night. There is a probability that he died in the course of a sexual act and that the suicide attempt was not intentional.”

On the same day, the Berlin police station reported to the public prosecutor's office: It was a case of suicide by hanging because the toilet door was tied shut from the inside. The prison doctor Dr. Bloëßer explained that he and the doctor on duty at the time of Käte's death, Dr. Ilse Rentsch assumed that Käte had not intended to kill herself. According to both of them, it was an “accident during a masochistic act”. They stated that Käte had also “never expressed suicidal intentions” and had “not been in any way depressed recently”. If you believe the nursing report from March 5th and a report from the director of the hospital, Dr. Waetzoldt from January 9<sup>th</sup> 1942, these two claims are not true. Waetzoldt even clearly described in his report that Käte had expressed suicidal thoughts to him.

## Location 8: Institute for Psychological Research and Psychotherapy [physical]

*Budapester Str. 29, 10787 Berlin – Keithstr. 41, 10787 Berlin (ab 1941)*



*Budapester Straße, beginning of 1941  
from Landesarchiv Berlin*

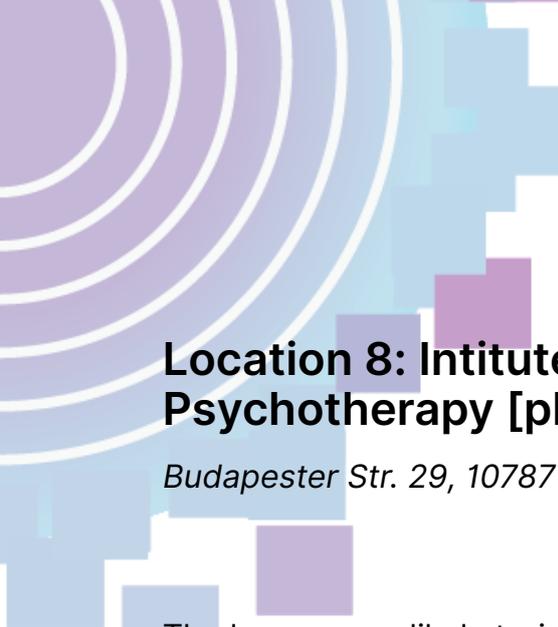
## Location 8: Institute for Psychological Research and Psychotherapy [physical]

*Budapester Str. 29, 10787 Berlin – Keithstr. 41, 10787 Berlin (ab 1941)*



*Keithstraße 1925, left is Wichmannstraße  
from Landesarchiv Berlin, F Rep. 290 (01) Nr. II12814*

Due to still-unclear circumstances, Käte came to the attention of the lawyer Julius von Weltzien. He had previously defended homosexual men in court. Since October 9, 1941, he had been trying to organize "psychotherapeutic or hypnotic-medical treatment" for Käte. This treatment was intended to cure her of "the pathological ideas that triggered her abnormal actions." She was thereby expected to "soon become a useful member of the national community again." He wanted to commission the assessment from the German Institute for Psychological Research and Psychotherapy (IPFP) in Berlin.



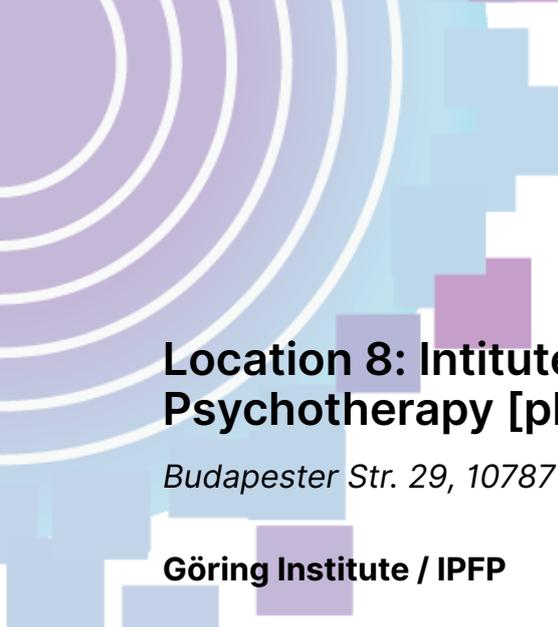
## Location 8: Institute for Psychological Research and Psychotherapy [physical]

*Budapester Str. 29, 10787 Berlin – Keithstr. 41, 10787 Berlin (ab 1941)*

The lawyer was likely trying to secure Käte a chance of release from the psychiatric hospital by obtaining a positive psychological report. Particularly interesting, and not otherwise evident in the file, is that the lawyer notes in his letter that Käte had "certainly been corrupted by Dr. Hirschfeld's incorrect treatment." In doing so, he not only raises the possibility of "proper" treatment and thus a possible "cure" for Käte. His comment reveals that Käte appears to have been treated by Magnus Hirschfeld during the Weimar Republic. This is very likely, especially since Käte already had a "transvestite license" in Berlin before 1933.

The license was only available with a medical report, and such reports were issued in Berlin during the Weimar Republic, primarily at the Institute for Sexology. Since Hirschfeld had been declared an enemy of the Nazi movement, the lawyer hoped to gain the sympathy of the public prosecutor's office by denigrating his treatment methods. He likely wanted to ensure that his request would be granted. The same intention probably applies to his reference to Käte's usefulness to the "national community." The lawyer had managed to secure a session for Käte at the IPFP. On July 8, 1942, she was examined there by the neurologist and psychoanalyst Dr. Marie Elisabeth Kalau vom Hofe. Kalau vom Hofe's research focused on sexuality, specifically homosexuality. In her report dated July 29, 1942, she deemed therapeutic treatment for Käte "not appropriate."

The "prospects of success" were "too slim," because Käte suffered from neuroses, was neglected, and did not have a particularly high "intellectual level," which meant she could not develop a "sufficient understanding" of the "method of psychotherapy." A release of Käte from the "criminal symptoms" attributed to her was unlikely. Kalau vom Hofe refused to continue treating Käte. Her report placed even greater pressure on Käte. The head of the psychiatric department, Dr. Waetzoldt, could not afford to release Käte, as he would have had to assume responsibility if further abnormalities had occurred. The lawyer's efforts to expedite Käte's release through an expert opinion had backfired.



## Location 8: Institute for Psychological Research and Psychotherapy [physical]

*Budapester Str. 29, 10787 Berlin – Keithstr. 41, 10787 Berlin (ab 1941)*

### **Göring Institute / IPFP**

The IPFP, also called the "Göring Institute" after its director, Matthias H. Göring (Hermann Göring's cousin), was founded in May 1936. It was one of the well-connected National Socialist umbrella organizations.

The IPFP's mission was to unite the various currents of psychoanalysis and create a "New German Psychological Medicine." It also served as a power base for non-medical psychotherapists. Unlike in its predecessor organizations, these psychotherapists could obtain full membership even if they were not physicians (i.e., psychiatrists). Therefore, the institute was a thorn in the side of many psychiatrists. The IPFP first moved to Wichmannstrasse 10, the premises of the former Psychoanalytic Institute of the German Psychological Society (DPG). From July 1, 1937, the IPFP operated from Budapesterstrasse. 29, and in April 1940, some departments moved to Keithstrasse 41. The other departments followed in 1941. In September 1939, it was taken over and financed by the Labor Front. Sterilization reports were also prepared at the IPFP. According to the "Hereditary Health Law" (in force from January 1, 1934), people with "congenital mental retardation" were most frequently sterilized. A large number of "socially undesirable behaviors" could fall into this category. Even people considered "asocial" and "psychopaths" could be sterilized in this way. Although the law did not specifically include these categories, a "diagnostic scheme" was developed at the IPFP that assigned "incurable psychopaths" to the sterilization candidates. During its time, the institute ordered approximately 300,000 to 400,000 forced sterilizations as a result of genetic data collection. It also arranged for numerous deportations to concentration camps and psychiatric hospitals. The decisive factor in the assessment was "life-proof." This could include measuring intelligence.

"Life-proof" was also conceived in a very gender-specific way: for men, the ability and willingness to engage in paid work was decisive, while for women, the ability and willingness to engage in reproductive work was decisive. Sexual promiscuity could be an argument for sterilization, especially for women. Between 1936 and 1940, the institute also issued the diagnosis of "transvestism." Käthe may have been among the people with this transvestism diagnosis.

## Location 9: T4 central office [physical stop]

*Tiergartenstraße 4, 10965 Berlin*

The T4 Central Office was responsible for organizing and carrying out the murders of disabled people during the Nazi era. From here, the systematic murder of over 70,000 people was coordinated. Today, this murder is known as the "T4 Action." The Central Office was formally subordinate to the "Führer's Chancellery," but for reasons of secrecy, this was not to be visible to the outside world.



T4 Central Office, 1935  
*Landesarchiv Berlin, F Rep 290-0152461/Walter Köster*

## Location 9: T4 central office [physical stop]

*Tiergartenstraße 4, 10965 Berlin*

The office was divided into four institutions:

- 1) The "Reich Working Group for Hospitals and Nursing Homes" (RAG): Responsible for registering the victims, i.e. the dispatch and assessment of registration forms
- 2) The "Gemeinnützige Kranken Transport GmbH" (Gekrat): Responsible for all matters related to the deportation of those affected to the killing centers
- 3) The "Gemeinnützige Stiftung für Anstaltspflege" (Foundation): Employed approximately 400 employees, concluded rental agreements, and handled financial tasks
- 4) The "Zentralverrechnungsstelle Heil- und Pflegeanstalten" (ZVSt): Managed all financial matters and maintained contact with the funding bodies



<https://www.t4-denkmal.de/Die-Aktion-T4>

## Location 10: Stolperstein (stumbling stone) [physical stop]

Hagelberger Str. 21, 10965 Berlin



*Stumbling stone for Käte Rogalli, set as part of Cultures of Remembrance project 2023.*

A Stolperstein (stumbling stone) was laid for Käte Rogalli at her last voluntary place of residence at the end of August 2023. It is the first and so far only Stolperstein bearing the self-chosen name of a trans person persecuted under the Nazi regime and does not contain a deadname.



video of the event in German on taz at Instagram



article of the event on in German on taz.de



<https://citywalk.educat-kollektiv.org>

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