

Russian Homophobia from Stalin to Sochi ii Russian Homophobia from Stalin to Sochi by Dan Healey

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Introduction 2013 - Russia's Year of Political Homophobia

Tragedy in Volgograd Late on the night of May 9, 2013 Victory Day holiday, in the central Russian city of Volgograd, a twenty-three-year-old electrician, Vladislav Tornovoi, met a pair of friends not far from his home. One was Alexander Burkov, twenty-two, a neighbor and classmate on Tornovoi's electrical engineering course. The other was a friend of Burkov's, Anton Smolin, twenty-seven, a graduate of the same course, only recently out of prison, for theft. They bought beer and sat down to drink in a kids' playground in the courtyard of the apartment block where Burkov and Tornovoi lived. What happened next is difficult to establish. Tornovoi did not come home and at 2 a.m. on 10 May, his grandmother phoned Burkov to find him; Burkov, heavily drunk, told her that her grandson was sleeping. Five hours later Tornovoi's body was discovered in the courtyard. He was dead. His head had been crushed with a paving stone; his genitalia were mutilated; a beer bottle had been shoved into

his anus. His attackers had dragged his body into a cardboard box and attempted to burn it. The police quickly arrested Smolin and Burkov as the principal suspects; blood matching Tornovoi's was found on their clothing. Almost immediately, Smolin's supposed motive for the attack was revealed by a police investigator speaking to the media: while drinking with his courtyard buddies, Tornovoi had admitted he was gay, and Smolin claimed their outrage at his "nontraditional orientation" set off the attack. "When things got out of hand, they decided not to stop," the investigator said.¹

The anti-gay hatred that apparently spurred Vladislav Tornovoi's murder ignited national and global attention. The reason was plain: Russia was then in the throes of a national conversation about the status of its lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender (LGBT) citizens. The talking-point of this debate was a bill given first reading in the Duma, lower house of Russia's parliament, in January 2013, which would ban "propaganda for homosexuality, lesbianism, bisexuality, transgender" among minors.² The conversation was far from civil: it was marked by homophobic hate speech, threats of abuse, and actual kidnappings of and violence against men thought to be gay. Against the backdrop of these brutal assaults on fellow citizens, the numerous firings of gay and lesbian teachers, media personalities, and others who dared to speak in favor of LG BT rights went almost unreported.³

It is impossible to know whether the poisonously homophobic atmosphere generated in the media and social networks prodded Smolin to claim a defense of "homosexual panic." The murderer was already apparently well versed in the ideologies of hatred and conspiracy: his Facebook page listed his favorite book as Adolf Hitler's *Mein Kampf*; his favorite movies as "skinhead [flicks], the American X-Files, and anything to do with Nazis"; his favorite pastimes included not just "home" and "starting a family" but "cleansing Rus of black-assed shit."⁴

Undoubtedly, Smolin's recent prison stint was marked by the insecurity about masculinity that finds its expression in homophobic insults, sexual threats, and male rape. Friends of Tornovoi, who denied the victim had been anything but a "normal guy," were quick to argue just that. If homosexuality had been the trigger for this crime, they said, it was because Tornovoi had

probably made a drunken joke about Smolin's sexual experience behind bars, a homophobic insult to the ex-con's male honor. The murderer's claim of outrage at Tornovoi's supposed homosexuality was in their view a ruse to get sympathy from judges and win respect and fear from his future cellmates. The charges of murder with aggravating circumstances (the use of extraordinary violence and committed by a group) and the investigation in court silenced all hint of the homophobic "factor" in the crime. After a long trial held behind closed doors, in June 2014, Volgograd judges gave both Smolin and Burkov long sentences. The judges ignored Smolin's plea of "homosexual panic" and also ignored any consideration of a "hate crime" in their sentence.⁵

Vladislav Tornovoi's murder, whatever the facts of the case, encapsulated many fears and responses to homosexuality that convulsed Russian society in 2013. The ruling United Russia Party (UR) had been stoking anxiety about L G BT rights and lifestyles from the launch of Vladimir Putin's campaign to return to the presidency in late 2011, culminating in his election in May 2012. The campaign of political homophobia sought to revitalize Putin's popularity before the election; but in the election's aftermath the campaign intensified, aiming to remasculinize the presidency after the limp incumbency of his tandem partner in the presidency Dmitry Medvedev, and mark out Russian distinctiveness in its gender, family, and demographic politics.

Putin's political homophobia campaign was launched for domestic consumption, but soon acquired an international component. Before turning to look at the evolution of the Kremlin's 2013 homophobia project, we need to consider the nature of "homophobia" in historical perspective. Homophobia in politics and history The word "homophobia" originated in the USA, after the 1969 Stonewall Riot and the explosion of gay liberation in New York City.⁶ As an idea, it crystallized in the early 1970s as U.S. gay activists and psychologists attempted to explain the psychological and social origins of hostility to homosexuality. Later Western activism and academic scholarship looked at ideas of "homophobia" through the lenses of lesbian and gay studies, feminism, and queer theory.

Between the 1970s and 1990s, new terms were proposed to refine the concept. Theorists spoke of “lesbophobia” (arguing that “homophobia” erased women); they proposed terms like “heterosexism,” “heterocentrism,” and “heteronormativity ” to focus attention on the dominance of heterosexual prejudice, privilege, and norm-setting.⁷

The theoretical debate continues. The concept of “homophobia” gained currency in the West and later, beyond it. Over the decades after Stonewall, “homophobia” was widely used in Western journalism, politics, and everyday speech. By the 1990s, at the dawn of the digital era, it had diffused rapidly as a descriptor of antiLGBT prejudice around the globe.⁸ Global diffusion has not been unproblematic. Finger-pointing at neighboring countries’ “homophobia,” and chauvinistic boasting about eradicating it at home, have come under attack as “homonationalism,” a form of chest-thumping self-congratulation that is less concerned with extending LGBT rights and much more to do with stoking international rivalries.⁹

Post-colonial entanglements also cloud how accusations of “homophobia” are read between former métropole and colony, with the British Commonwealth supplying some of the most acute examples in Africa and elsewhere.¹⁰ In the twenty-first century, rapid and transnational diffusion of “homophobia” as a political concept has obscured some of the historical and intellectual baggage that it acquired as it evolved in the West. That historical baggage “haunts” the use of the word beyond Western contexts and contributes to misunderstanding in transnational dialogues about anti-LGBT policies.

The imprint of European fascism, and specifically German Nazism, is a key component that haunts Western assumptions about homophobia. The work of Dagmar Herzog has demonstrated how Nazi ideologists deployed aggressively homophobic language and policies; she has also argued forcefully for the powerful impact of memory of the Nazi past in the shaping of post-1945 European sexualities, including liberalizing attitudes towards homosexual rights.¹¹ In West Germany and elsewhere, political arguments about the lingering legacies of fascism underpinned the 1960s repeal of laws making male homosexuality a crime. The liberalization of European sexual regulation accelerated in the 1980s under the

influence of interpretations of international human rights law that foregrounded rights to a private life protected from state intrusion.¹² Moreover, LG BT campaigning effectively mobilized memory of the Nazi experience in Europe to win the argument for sexual rights. A politics of commemoration of gay and lesbian suffering served to popularize sympathy for contemporary rights struggles. Gay and lesbian activists in the West invoked the Holocaust as a homosexual catastrophe in historical writing, in campaigns and demonstrations, and in “outward” directed polemics with mainstream media and wider society.¹³ Activists appropriated the pink triangle, the symbol assigned to male homosexuals in Nazi concentration camps, and wore it as a link between contemporary homophobia (including AIDS-related prejudice), and the murderous violence directed at queer men and women under fascism.

In 1985, German President Richard von Weizsäcker, speaking in the Bundestag, acknowledged the homosexual victims of Nazism for the first time. The commemoration of homosexual victims of fascist violence gained official approval and became more commonplace in the late 1980s and 1990s in museums and concentration camp memorials in Europe, and at the Holocaust Memorial Museum, established in Washington, D.C.¹⁴ History teaching acknowledged fascism’s political homophobia alongside its racial and ethnic hatreds. A form of prejudice that scarcely had a name before 1969, in the Western imagination “homophobia” has become a marker of the authoritarian mindset, tied to political machismo and violence, and after its apogee under the Nazi regime, associated with genocide. The burden of historical memory that haunts Western notions of “homophobia,” calls for sensitivity when applying the word to places beyond the West. We are obliged to criticize homophobia where we discern it, but we must do so reflectively, remembering that homophobic violence at home took decades to recognize. We must also consider the entanglements of homonationalist rivalries and post-colonial relationships. Such care was seldom taken when Western journalism and social media attacked Russia’s policies in 2013-14.

Accusations of homophobia cast at Russia proceeded from a cluster of contradictory and “memoryless” assumptions about Russia’s place in Europe and the world. We cannot decide if

Russia is a part of Europe, or a distinctive “civilization” of its own, and the battles over that ambiguity cloud our reactions.¹⁵ In our amnesia, we also struggle with the idea that a country so much “like us” might take as long as we did (or longer) to wrestle with ubiquitous social and political homophobia. Masha Gessen was surely right to point out in 2013 that we were particularly disturbed by Russian homophobia not only because “Russians are white” and their homophobes could be stylish and fluent, but also because Russia in 2013 presented “the spectacle of history shifting abruptly into reverse.”¹⁶

In the USA and Europe, we have come to expect an unbroken curve of progress in the construction of full LG BT citizenship. Yet, as Weimar Germany’s history shows, LG BT “progress” is not automatic but can be arrested when political tectonic plates shift. Moreover, the memoryless accusations of “homophobia” betray an expectation that “we” know best how to get to a better place. At the risk of stating the obvious, there is no single correct path to a “post-homophobic” society and polity, and there is no common starting point in an equally “homophobic dark age.” The rights debates about LG BT people in the new accession states of the European Union over the past decade demonstrate that the path to tolerance is not found on a technocrat’s roadmap alone, but is built on a subtle blend of cultural, social, and political contestation.¹⁷

What is more, the ultimate design of “full LG BT citizenship” in the European Union is not found in any charter or policy document; it is instead evolving patchworkstyle, as Europe’s different societies with their different religious, cultural, and historical characters explore what tolerance might look like at home.¹⁸ Political scientists have begun to analyze the uses of “homophobia” as a political tool. In the process, they have developed conceptually sophisticated frames for understanding contemporary outbursts of hostility to the threat of the sex or gender dissident.¹⁹ Historians have been less engaged with studying homophobia in the past; at least, they have not produced similarly comparative and analytical studies.²⁰

Students of political homophobia have largely been motivated by the rise of vigorous anti-LGBT movements in Africa and Asia, but also by the continuing activities of well-organized homophobic political forces in Europe and North America. Comparative and transnational

perspectives allow us to see when and how state actors and elites “choose” to build a “homophobic project” and what transnational “influence peddling” offers local leaders in terms of ideas and funding. The political trigger for most modern political homophobia campaigns is an economic or national security crisis threatening state stability. Such “homophobic projects” presume a backdrop of genuine or “imitation” democratic politics with elections and other forms of popular mobilization. At stake is usually a contest over national identity construction, in which the nation is said to be under threat from an external, often Western (and previously colonial), ideology of gender and sexual difference. Local “traditions” of kinship, marriage, and gender relations are recast as timeless patterns, often presented as under stress from neoliberal globalization, digital technologies, and social change. Elites deploying a project of political homophobia offer the “solution” of a stronger national community, forged around “traditional” and explicitly anti-LGBT values, frequently, backed by religious teaching. They raise the specter of a dangerous LG BT minority said to be in the grips of Western or colonial influence.

Ironically, of course, the nationalism they celebrate is a European invention; so is the panoply of anti-homosexual measures they propose; and local religious institutions are often supported and encouraged in their homophobia by U.S. and European evangelical churches. The payoff for homophobe-politicians is political legitimation, electorates distracted from intractable economic and social problems, and stronger allies among churches and other civil society institutions. Virtually all these features apply to Russia’s “year of homophobia,” 2013, described later in this Introduction.

This book is an attempt to trace the roots of this recent homophobia from a historian’s perspective. It is not an exhaustive study of homophobia in Russia’s past; instead, I offer a series of essays, “case histories” that reveal something of the character of modern Russian anti-LGBT attitudes and their origins in the country’s troubled twentieth century. In this Introduction, I set out the context for Russia’s “year of political homophobia” and chart the evolution of its centerpiece, the country’s federal law that bans “gay propaganda” and its impact. I then consider President Putin’s views on LG BT citizenship and his promotion of Russia’s “traditional values” as the world’s attention turned toward his country as host of the Sochi 2014 Winter Olympics. The last section of this introduction offers an overview of the

questions this book discusses, and introduces the essays that follow, grouped into three sections: histories of homophobic persecution after 1945, the challenge of LG BT visibility in late twentieth-century Russian society, and the obstacles to writing and commemorating Russia's queer past.

The introduction concludes with conceptual remarks on the terminology of LGBT/queer existence, and its applicability to Russia. Through its case histories, this book will reveal some of the origins of homophobia in modern Russia; and it will illustrate the dilemmas facing Russia's LG BT community in its attempts to write itself into the national story and claim full citizenship. A historical understanding of Russia's persecution of its "sexual minorities" will also enable allies and scholars to appreciate the scale of the cultural battle that Russia's lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender people face today. Toward a project of political homophobia Russia's fresh politics of homophobia arose against a specific economic and political backdrop. The economic crisis of 2008-9 cut the country's booming growth rates of the early 2000s - the source of Putin's popularity - from a peak of 8.5 percent in 2007 to a contraction of 7.8 percent in 2009. Growth stumbled after that, faltering in 2013, the year of the "gay propaganda" debate, at just 1.3 percent.²¹

The campaign of political homophobia seemed calculated to distract public anger about declining living standards and rising prices. Sections of the public were also coming out to street demonstrations against the Putin political "system" of manipulated elections ("imitation democracy" in one influential diagnosis), state-controlled mass media that gave the opposition no airtime, and the corrupt administration provided by Putin's party, United Russia (UR).²² In 2011, UR's electoral base in the regions was weakening significantly; this was evident even before the December 2011 parliamentary elections triggered the wave of anticorruption protest. At an infamous Moscow wrestling match in November 2011, Putin's appearance, which reminded spectators of his intended resumption of the presidency, was met with stunning derision from a mostly male audience of presumed bedrock supporters.²³ A re-launch of the Putin "system" was necessary to bring these core voters back to the paramount leader in time for his election to a third term as President in May 2012, and nationalism and religion were mobilized to the task. A surge in xenophobic, anti-Muslim, and pro-Christian

campaigning on TV media, to co-opt Russian ethnic nationalist sentiments, was orchestrated by public intellectuals with Kremlin backing in 2012-13.²⁴

At the same time, Putin accelerated an existing process of “re-clericalization” of the state: bringing the Russian Orthodox Church (ROC) closer to government and directly involving it in shaping social policy, providing social services, and projecting Russia’s voice abroad. This assertion of “moral sovereignty” is part of a wider domestic and international political narrative developed by the Kremlin, U R, and the RO C condemning feminism and LG BT politics as “extremist” and foreign, while promoting heterosexual, “traditional family values” as true to Russian nationhood. The degree to which the RO C influences such discussions within Russia’s ruling elite is disputed by scholars; the Church’s ties with U.S. conservative Christians offer an ironic vector of influence in an otherwise cooling relationship between Washington and Moscow.

Nevertheless, it is clear that in its anti-feminist and homophobic turn, the Kremlin has drawn heavily on rhetoric about protecting religious values.²⁵ Conservative-nationalists in post-Soviet Russia have been developing anti-LGBT political ideas and proposing laws to give them force since the end of the 1990s. They were prompted by religious and secular revulsion with post-communist Russia’s “sexual revolution” of the 1990s, when sex exploded on screen and in print after decades of Soviet silence. Eager to enact sweeping reform quickly before Communist rule might return, in a 1993 omnibus bill, then-president Boris Yeltsin had repealed Stalin’s law against male homosexuality. However in the wake of decriminalization, novels and films of the 1990s used homosexual themes not to celebrate the liberation of a previously repressed sexuality, but to mark characters and scenarios as taboo, strange, or non-Russian. Many spectators and the politicians who listened to them preferred to believe that visible homosexuality was a foreign import, not Russian in origin. These politicians sought to recriminalize gay male sex.²⁶ In a farcical parliamentary debate in 2002, the Duma considered restoring the Stalin law, and also debated the banning of lesbianism and even fines for masturbation. The initiatives, discussed in Chapter 6, failed dismally. From this debacle, Russia’s conservative-nationalist politicians realized that the return to Stalinist criminal penalties for homosexual acts was impossible. In his first term, President Putin was evidently not ready to abandon Russia’s commitment to European human rights norms, and while there

was little public affection for the idea of non-heterosexual lifestyles, there was no appetite for repression. Conservatives found they had to refine their anti-LGBT story. They turned to the problem of the visibility of gay, lesbian, and gender-non-conforming identities in the public sphere, and continued working on their political language, particularly at the level of local government. From 2006, the mayor of Moscow year-on-year refused applications from lawyer and activist Nikolai Alekseev for a Gay Pride march in the capital, condemning the idea as “satanic,” and mobilizing local Orthodox and Muslim leaders to join in the vilification of queer visibility.²⁷

Ultimately, pride marches met with mixed fortunes across the country, usually attracting many more anti-gay nationalist, right-wing skinhead, and religious counterdemonstrators than pride marchers, and often ending in violence against the small numbers of LG BT citizens claiming their rights to speech and assembly. Many in Russia thought that battles over pride marches pitted “extreme” positions against each other in an unsophisticated shouting match with limited political value. “Pride” on the streets of Moscow seemed to matter more to the Western international media than to domestic queer activists and wider society. Most of Russia’s LG BT activists apparently opposed the pride parades as unsuited to Russia’s narrowing and increasingly nationalist political conditions. The parades were needlessly provocative in a society that still required basic education about sex and gender diversity. Such attitudes were based on hard-won experience. A “first” generation of post-Soviet Russian gay and lesbian activists had largely adopted public and “international” (or “European”) tactics in the uncontrolled democracy of the 1990s, with street demonstrations, public LG BT festivals, media conferences, and close financial and intellectual ties with European and U.S. activists and nongovernmental organizations (NGOs), and the International Lesbian & Gay Association (ILGA).²⁸

Yet the 1993 repeal of Stalin’s anti-sodomy law had come about as a result of wholesale packages of reform pushed through parliament by Yeltsin’s anti-Communist reformers, not because of activist efforts. The “first” generation of LG BT activists, despite some impressive community-building and intellectual activity, had little to show for their efforts by the 1998 financial crisis. That crisis hit gay male publishing ventures and deterred queer activism; many lesbian and gay activists emigrated or abandoned “politics.” The crisis also marks a

convenient turning point between activist generations with the end of the pre-internet era. From 1999, a turn in Russian politics to incoming President Putin's tougher political rhetoric eventually embraced "managed" or "sovereign" democracy in his second term of office (2004-8); the "first generation" of lesbian and gay activists gave way to a new cohort in new conditions. The "second," early twenty-first-century generation of activists was the product of the expanding middle class; they were beneficiaries of the rise of digital media and virtual social networks. Gender and sexual dissidents could come together virtually without the need for the printing press, post office boxes, and bricks and mortar shops, bars, and saunas (although these businesses flourished in the new affluence of Moscow and a few other large cities). This second generation was more committed to low-key community support and carefully targeted public interventions. They focused on "inwardfacing" activity aimed at helping L G B T fellow-citizens, while their "outward facing" initiatives were not aimed scattergun at the full spectrum of mainstream Russia, but were targeted to build alliances with human-rights and oppositional political movements that still understood little about L G B T issues.²⁹

By the end of the first decade of the 2000s, a strategy of grassroots community building and the slow education of likely allies were yielding a richer network of local organizations and perhaps an incipient awareness in some parts of Russian society of the problems of L G B T existence. These activities were extremely limited, and arguably less overtly public thanks to digital technologies. Nevertheless, the fear of queer visibility continued to agitate conservative nationalist politicians. The lack of a vocal, visible and ubiquitous Russian L G B T movement did not deter political homophobes seeking to extend their anti-LGBT narratives. As David Murray has pointed out for the case of Barbados, the threat of "spectral sexuality" can be an effective fear-producing bogeyman even in conservative societies where L G B T activism scarcely exists.³⁰

Moreover, the increasing ubiquity of the internet makes relatively exotic information accessible to far larger audiences than in the pre-digital age. All governments have paid greater attention to the problems of regulating information access, especially attempting to reproduce and preserve "age-appropriate" child-protection restrictions that prevailed with print, radio, and television. Among the devices to which Russia's conservative politicians

turned was the idea of banning “gay propaganda” among minors or schoolchildren. Similar measures originated most notoriously in Margaret Thatcher’s Britain in 1988 (where “Section 28” of the Local Government Act was not repealed in England until 2003), and many were adopted and are still in effect at local and state level in the USA.³¹ Russian versions of the ban on “gay propaganda” law originated from drafts amending the Criminal Code presented to the Duma between 2003 and 2009 by Deputy Aleksandr Chuev, a campaigner for Christian morality in the Duma’s religious affairs committee. He has also targeted abortion and pornography.³²

Having examined Chuev’s proposals, government and Duma committees conclusively rejected them in 2009 as contradicting criminal law and human rights conventions. The Chuev law would have criminalized public forms of “propaganda for the homosexual way of life or homosexual orientation,” and punished perpetrators of the proposed crime with a ban on working in schools, youth services, the army, and prisons. Chuev’s unsuccessful law lacked any distinction between children and adults as targets of “propaganda,” and ultimately it foundered on his apparent determination to criminalize adult speech about something that was not in itself a criminal activity. Russia’s regions served as test-beds for variations on the anti-propaganda law, offering conservatives opportunities to craft the language and messages of political homophobia. In 2006, Riazan Province passed an ordinance banning “propaganda for homosexuality among minors.” Irina Fedotova and Nikolai Baev, arrested on March 30, 2009 for carrying signs near schools and a children’s library saying “Homosexuality is normal” and “I am proud of my homosexuality - ask me about it,” were convicted under this law.³³

Their appeal to the Constitutional Court of the Russian Federation in January 2010 yielded a significant setback for the LG BT community. The court said their constitutional rights had not been infringed by the Riazan authorities, and its positive analysis of the local “gay propaganda” ordinance embedded in Russian jurisprudence the tendentious concepts of “traditional [versus] non-traditional marital relations,” terminology which had already circulated in media and popular sexological discourse for some twenty years.³⁴ In 2011 and especially in 2012, provincial and regional assemblies around Russia began adopting local versions of the “gay propaganda” law.³⁵ Did a direct connection exist between the Riazan ordinance and later ones which suddenly blossomed across the country during and after the 2

0 1 1 -1 2 election cycle? Did Putin's Kremlin coordinate this burst of political homophobia across the country - was it a "homophobic project" in the calculated, political sense that Barry Adam proposes?³⁶

It is impossible to say with any certainty, given that no comparative research on the regional "gay propaganda" laws exists, and since the Kremlin's decision-making processes have become exceedingly opaque in recent years. President Putin later claimed his government was responding to a genuine public clamor in enacting the national "gay propaganda" ban. Indeed, from available sources a varied picture of local initiative and party coordination driving the local laws emerges, and the geographic and demographic spread of the regional ordinances against "gay propaganda" suggests a resonance with *la Russie profonde*. The texts of these laws varied slightly (some banning propaganda just for "homosexuality"; others mentioned bisexuality, transgender, and a few tendentiously added pedophilia). Local discussion and styles of adoption varied considerably. In first-adopting Arkhangelsk, in September 2011, local authorities organized a broad consultation of representatives of religious confessions, civil-society organizations, and scientific experts; members of the region's only small LG BT community group boycotted the meeting.³⁷

United Russia and other parties close to the Kremlin backed the measures in Novosibirsk, Magadan, and St. Petersburg. Youth leaders in local legislatures (Arkhangelsk), governments (Magadan), and universities (Arkhangelsk again) expressed support for the laws, and youth leaders may have been key in inter-regional promotion of the law.³⁸ Elsewhere the law simply appeared on legislative agendas and was adopted unanimously (Bashkortostan). Some opponents of the "gay propaganda" bans emerged where debate appeared to be less controlled. Legal advisors to local authorities in Samara and Moscow City expressed reservations based on technicalities, similar to those raised by the federal parliament over Chuev's law. Among local politicians, the handful of liberal Yabloko Party deputies in the St. Petersburg legislature opposed the law most consistently and vociferously. Yet St. Petersburg also furnished the national stage with some of its most articulate and aggressive political homophobes. Valentina Matvienko, a Putin ally from the northern capital, declared in November 2011, soon after assuming the post of Chair of the Federal Assembly (parliament's upper house), that a law analogous to the local ban on "gay propaganda" then under debate in

her hometown should be passed for all of Russia.³⁹ Vitaly Milonov, a deputy in the city's legislature, acquired international notoriety, and considerable Russian praise, for the blunt ferocity and crudeness of his anti-gay campaigning.⁴⁰ From Siberia to Moscow - a federal "gay propaganda" ban The regional debates apparently showed the Kremlin that a national ban on "gay propaganda" would be understood and supported by politicians and the broad public, and that a national debate on LG BT issues could injure Russia's democratic opposition by challenging its patriotism and political virility. The political advantages of launching such a homophobic campaign by the end of 2012 were clear. Late 2011 and the first half of 2012 had been a period of unprecedented rockiness for the presidential system, as urban voters protested corruption and vote-rigging. Re-elected president in May 2012, Putin responded with selective repression to divide and quell the protest movement. One thrust of this repression targeted a Moscow feminist punk band, Pussy Riot, whose guerrilla performances of political protest songs became YouTube hits. Their February 21, 2012 action in the Cathedral of Christ the Savior, singing "Mother of God, Chase Putin Away," was interrupted by church security officials. In March, three of the singer-activists were arrested and charged with "hooliganism motivated by religious hatred." All were denied bail and in their August 2012 trial they received sentences of two years; two of the Pussy Riot feminists served fourteen months in prison colonies before release in a pre-Olympics amnesty in December 2013.⁴¹

The Pussy Riot affair of 2012 dramatized key themes that pre-figured the political homophobia campaign of 2013. It presented a "spectral" threat - feminist "gender" ideology, which has had limited popular purchase in modern Russia - as an existential one for the country's survival. Feminist "gender" thinking challenged "traditional values" and the sanctity of the Russian Orthodox Church. It suggested that feminism was foreign to Russia, "extremist," and inspired by Western forces that desired an unstable and weak Russia. It stirred a loud, negative reaction in the Western media that took on an anti-Russian tinge. It concentrated fire on a corner of the opposition movement that was challenging for Russia's democrats to defend in the court of public opinion. The government's harsh treatment of the Pussy Riot feminists appeared to defend the dignity of the R O C , defend Russia against hostile forces ranged against it, and threw an unflattering light on yesterday's heroes, the democratic opposition movement associated with the protests of 2011 - 12. (British Prime Minister Thatcher had used Section 28 to damage her opponents in the Labour Party.)⁴²

These messages could be driven home with a fresh campaign to keep the “gender” issue in the public eye. No queer punk protest in a cathedral was needed to launch the next round in the Putinist argument for “traditional values.” A political “project” already existed, tested in the regions and ready to download for the national stage: the specter of “gay propaganda” threatening Russia’s children. The call for the law originated from Siberia in a request to the Duma. In March 2012, the legislature of Novosibirsk Province asked the federal parliament for a national ban on “propaganda for homosexuality” among minors. The Novosibirsk appeal was sponsored by a physician and UR politician, Sergei Dorofeev, and a former construction worker, Aleksei Kondrashkin, also a UR member. (It is unusual for such petitions from the regions to succeed: a clue that this was a Kremlin project.)⁴³

In the Duma, spearheading the promotion of the law fell to Elena Mizulina (of the Kremlin-loyal “A Just Russia” Party); Mizulina was the Chair of parliament’s Committee on the Family, Women and Children. Dorofeev and Mizulina introduced a federal draft “propaganda” law and on January 25, 2013, the Duma approved it on first reading by 388 votes to one, with one abstention.⁴⁴ In contrast to Chuev’s original proposal, this one did not add “propaganda for homosexuality” to the Criminal Code, but to the milder Code of Administrative Offences and other legislation on child protection. It was in that sense a less blunt, more refined, legal instrument. The early draft law listed specific forms of sexual and gender orientation to be banned from uncontrolled promotion: “homosexuality, lesbianism, bisexuality, transgender.” Mizulina conducted continued discussions behind closed doors on the law through the spring. By the third reading (June 11), the final version of the bill dropped this list of orientations, replacing it with the catch-all category of “non-traditional sexual relations.” By adopting the ambiguous “non-traditional sexual relations” in place of a list of orientations, lawmakers shifted the focus from individual identities to sexual acts which had previously been defined in Supreme Court judgments as “nontraditional.” This was done, presumably, to evade charges that the law discriminated against particular classes of people. The change, and its timing, may indicate that the storm over the Tornovoi murder compelled Mizulina to shed the unambiguously discriminatory list of orientations.⁴⁵ She had angrily rejected suggestions her law was generating anti-gay violence.⁴⁶

The concept of “traditional sexual relations,” incubated in legal decisions and the media, was conclusively embedded in Russian law and in the popular consciousness. The epithets “traditional/non-traditional” assert that the range of sexual activity under consideration is novel, alien, and by implication not indigenously Russian, but from abroad. The new legal concept of “traditional sex” enshrines an old myth of Russia’s sexual innocence in national law.⁴⁷ Elena Mizulina’s unsubtle promotion of the notion of “traditional” sex and family relations came to the fore during the national conversation about the rights and status of LGBT Russians that the “propaganda” law kicked off. When introducing the draft law in parliament she blamed “gay propaganda” for a rise in “pedophiles” attacking boy children.⁴⁸ Similarly, Mizulina frequently linked homosexuality, bisexuality, lesbianism, and transgender identity to pedophilia in her media interviews about the law. When liberal politicians and commentators dared to criticize the proposed law, she dismissed them as working for “the pedophilia lobby,” most egregiously when former Deputy Prime Minister Alfred Kokh observed that Mizulina’s son, a lawyer, worked for a Belgian law firm with pro-LGBT clients and policies.⁴⁹

The single-minded Duma member for Omsk had long claimed the “pedophile lobby” was behind obstacles to her previous childprotection projects.⁵⁰ She insistently argued the law was not “homophobic” but was targeted at promoting “traditional family values.” In 2013 she authored a parliamentary white paper (in Russian known as a “concept”) with a twelve-year plan for Russia’s family policy.⁵¹ The “concept” sets out policies aimed at strengthening the “traditional Russian family,” defined as exclusively heterosexual, and based on the values of religious confessions “which are an inalienable part of the historical legacy of the peoples of Russia.” It proposed that “propaganda for family happiness and traditional family values” should be a state priority.⁵² The “concept” sparked a series of calls from politicians across the country for a return to Stalin-style population management strategies, including banning abortion, raising the cost of a divorce sharply, and the conscription of reproductively inactive singletons.⁵³ Mizulina’s hostile public statements about “untraditional” sexual orientation and gender identity piloted a political and social language that large swathes of the Russian commentariat adopted once second and third readings were concluded on June 11, 2013, with 436 deputies approving the measure against one abstention.⁵⁴ President Putin quickly signed her bill into law, and it came into force on June 30, 2013. Banning “gay propaganda” and

making propaganda for “traditional sex” The impact of the president’s signature on this law was swiftly felt.

In contrast to Thatcher’s Section 28, which was never actually used against any “offender” promoting “homosexuality as a pretended family relationship,” the Russian “gay propaganda” law was put to immediate use against visitors to Russia and citizens of the country. Three weeks after the enactment of the ban, police investigated Dutch LG BT activists at a Youth Rights Camp in Murmansk; four citizens of the Netherlands were charged under the law and deported, with a three-year ban on returning to Russia. The “first arrests of foreign activists” were widely reported and gave the impression that the law was meant to hit outsiders bringing alien values to the nation.⁵⁵ Authorities across the country have investigated, charged, and convicted Russian LG BT campaigners, website and book publishers, journalists, teachers, and other citizens for “violations” of the “gay propaganda” ban.⁵⁶

In October 2013, UR politician Vasily Milonov raised complaints with prosecutors over a website aimed at helping gay teenagers, “Deti-404” (Children-404). A long legal battle ensued in two jurisdictions, and while the site’s originator Elena Klimova has been convicted and fined, her fight has not yet ended.⁵⁷ Russia’s embarrassing Minister of Culture, Vladimir Medinsky, denied that the nation’s most famous composer, Peter Ilyich Tchaikovsky, was homosexual, claiming there was no evidence to prove it, in a September 2013 debate over a planned film biography. (There are stacks of torridly homoerotic letters in the Tchaikovsky archives, as Alexander Poznansky has demonstrated.) The biopic was to be subsidized with funds from Medinsky’s ministry.⁵⁸ In October that year, the Heraldry Council of the President of Russia commissioned an expert from the Hermitage to examine the rainbow-banded flag of the Autonomous Jewish Province in Russia’s Far East to certify that it did not fall foul of the “gay propaganda” ban.⁵⁹

The orgy of symbolic homophobic witch-hunting sought ever sillier targets: in November 2014, a memorial to Apple founder Steve Jobs was dismantled after the CEO of the U.S. company came out as a gay man; more recently, a bus shelter in a small town was attacked by local conservatives for its colorful design as “too gay” and in violation of the propaganda

law.⁶⁰ Russians have been taught how to recognize “gay propaganda” in an astounding array of inanimate objects. Violence against gay men and lesbians surged in the wake of the passage of this law. Vigilante groups around the country were already operating under the brands “Occupy Pedophilia” and “Occupy Gerontophilia.” More cases of their activity were reported from the summer of 2013. They lured male victims with fake online chat, then kidnapped, beat, and tortured their targets once the victim appeared in person for a rendezvous.⁶¹ These groups made little secret of their activities and the authorities turned a blind eye as Western media reports clearly identified perpetrators and documented their stomach-churning crimes.⁶²

Reports of violence against LG BT people in the Russian media leapt to unprecedented numbers in 2013, although the actual numbers of documented victims of hate crimes remained small (twenty-five individuals, including Tornovoi, by one independent count).⁶³ The low numbers are first and foremost because no law prohibits hate crimes against LG BT citizens; information-gathering through media searches obviously does not capture many unreported incidents. Also affecting these numbers was the fear of victims to report violence against them based on their “nontraditional” sexuality; an increasingly fearful LG BT citizenry hiding to protect itself; and the state-controlled media’s reluctance to report such crimes sympathetically.⁶⁴

Expressions of contempt for LG BT individuals and their human rights were not confined to vigilante thugs and attention-seeking politicians. The Russian Orthodox Church’s leader, an alleged ex-KGB officer and a connoisseur of \$30,000 Breguet wristwatches, Patriarch of Moscow Kirill I, took the debate on LG BT citizenship to the question of equal marriage and the supposed demographic threat to the survival of the nation that it poses. Three weeks after the “gay propaganda” ban became law, he denounced Western recognition of same-sex unions as “approving sin and codifying it into law in order to justify it.” At a ceremony in a recently restored chapel on Red Square, of same-sex marriage he said, “This is a very dangerous apocalyptic symptom, and we must do everything in our powers to ensure that sin is never sanctioned in Russia by state law, because that would mean that the nation has embarked on a path of self-destruction.”⁶⁵ None of these views was new; the RO C had declared itself

against same-sex marriage and civil unions among other human rights for LG BT citizens years earlier.⁶⁶

What was significant was the timing and the mode of entry into the national conversation, raising new “spectral” threats: no advocate of equal marriage could be seen anywhere on the Russian political horizon in the summer of 2013. Quite the opposite. In August, on TV channel Rossiia-Vs popular public affairs program Vesti (News), one of the country’s leading media executives, Dmitry Kiselev, called for even more visceral restrictions on LG BT citizens. He zeroed in on the issue of sperm, blood, and organ donation. “I think that just imposing fines on gays for propaganda among teenagers is not enough. They should be banned from donating blood or sperm. And if they have an automobile accident, their hearts should be buried in the ground or burned as unsuitable for the continuation of life.”⁶⁷ The language was inflammatory, designed to evoke a visceral reaction in a studio audience, which applauded heartily at these words. Later that year, Putin made Kiselev chief of Russia’s international news agency in a restructuring that saw the relatively balanced news provider RI A-Novosti shuttered and its place taken by the tendentiously Kremlin-loyal R T (formerly Russia Today).⁶⁸

President Putin’s personal pronouncements about LG BT rights during 2013 merit attention, especially in the run-up to the Sochi Winter Olympics of February 2014. The president’s limited statements about the question carried particular weight in an information environment tightly restricting access to the paramount leader, and apparently designed to project an aura of confident, paternalistic authority. Putin adopted an avuncular but firm tone, asserting that Russia was a tolerant nation, but simultaneously a country determined to regulate morality according to its specific “traditions.” The president’s statements thus conveyed to foreign audiences the key messages to the West and potential international partners about Russia’s independence in conservative politics and its resurgence as a “sovereign” power. In April 2013, as the debate over Russia’s “gay propaganda” law roiled at home and abroad, President Putin made an official visit to the Netherlands as part of what would turn out to be a rocky year of celebrations marking four centuries of diplomatic ties between the two countries.⁶⁹

In Amsterdam, he encountered a large demonstration against Russia's political homophobia. During a media conference with Dutch Prime Minister Mark Rutte, journalists quizzed Putin about Russia's treatment of LG BT citizens' rights. Putin's responses began with assertions of tolerance: So that this is all clear and understood, in the Russian Federation the rights of sexual minorities are not being trampled upon. These people are the very same as all the rest, they enjoy full rights and freedoms. As President of the Russian Federation I consider it my duty to defend their interests and rights, and I suggest that like other citizens of Russia they have no other President but me. In this regard I want to say that they make their way in their careers, their careers prosper, they are awarded state prizes, orders and medals, honorific titles and honorable citations if they deserve them. That is the practice in our political life; I am certain that it will remain that way.⁷⁰

It is worth pointing out that no leader of Russia in its entire history has ever made such an explicitly positive public statement about the rights of LG BT citizens. ("Enlightened" leaders who decriminalized male homosexuality in the twentieth century - Vladimir Lenin in 1922, Boris Yeltsin in 1993 - were silent about their reasons for doing so. "Liberals" who relaxed Stalinist dictatorship, such as Nikita Khrushchev, were actively homophobic, or in the case of Mikhail Gorbachev, overwhelmed by the tide of events.)⁷¹ In the same interview, Putin chided the Dutch for tolerating "an organization that propagandizes for pedophilia" and a national political party that wants women out of politics; but he also said that talking about such differences was the essence of diplomacy.⁷² In subsequent media encounters, Putin developed an increasingly assertive tone, pushing back against Western criticism more insistently. In the "was Tchaikovsky gay?" debate of September 2013, he repeated his assertions of tolerance, noting that the country had long rid itself of the criminal sanction against homosexuality and that his door was open to meet with members of the LG BT community, to work with them, and to reward them for service.⁷³

Putin's invocation of toleration for the homosexual genius relied on a popular myth of Russian big-heartedness that finds room for eccentricity if not diversity. The same theme had been often invoked by conservatives as they refined their anti-LGBT rhetoric over the previous two decades.⁷⁴ Less than two weeks later, President Putin returned to the same rhetoric of paternalism and Russian assertion of difference. At the annual Valdai conference

bringing foreign academics and business partners together with Russia's leaders, he spoke about the challenges to Russia's identity in the twenty-first century. Here he argued for Russia's independence from the pathway taken by "Euro-Atlantic countries [which] are actually rejecting their roots, including the Christian values that constitute the basis for Western civilization." As evidence of this supposed rejection, he cited recognition of same-sex marriages and adoption, "political parties whose aim is to promote pedophilia," and the erasure of Christian holidays from national calendars. "And people are aggressively trying to export this model all over the world."⁷⁵ Challenged to elucidate his stance by Prof. Gerhard Mangott of Innsbruck University, the President reiterated Russian acceptance of the legality of same-sex relations while erroneously pointing out that some U.S. states supposedly still punish homosexuality. He also argued that Russia chose different solutions to its demographic challenges than those - including increased migration, same-sex marriage, and adoption - chosen by the West.⁷⁶

Vladimir Putin further emphasized the international dimensions of Russia's stance limiting L G BT rights in his December 2013 Presidential Address to the Federal Assembly, an annual political "state of the Federation" speech. Here he commented on the country's distinctive upholding of "tradition" in the face of "abstract, speculative ideas, contrary to the will of the majority, which does not accept the changes occurring or the proposed revision of values." Putin went on to assert that Russia was "defending traditional values. . . the values of traditional families" in a world where the alternative was a descent into barbarism. Russia would stand for "the spiritual and moral basis of civilization" against the forces of globalization that crushed local identities and cultures.⁷⁷ Tellingly, this striking passage defining Russia's gender conservatism appeared in the section of his speech devoted to Moscow's international image and its foreign relations strategy, especially with allies and trading partners in the Middle East and Africa. A domestic homophobic project was acquiring an international dimension. Sochi, the Olympic "industry," and Russia's global image The approaching Sochi Winter Olympics provided a flashpoint that Kremlin strategists had perhaps scarcely anticipated, when they gave the green light to Mizulina's "gay propaganda" ban in early 2013. From the summer of 2013, calls to Western governments to boycott the Sochi games began to come from L G BT leaders in the USA and UK, including Harvey Fierstein and Stephen Fry, who both recalled the world's indulgence of Nazi Germany's 1936 Berlin Olympics as a form of appeasement of fascism. "There is a price for tolerating

intolerance,” wrote Fierstein, pointing to the world war and Holocaust that followed soon after Berlin 1936.⁷⁸

Historically, national boycotts have only rarely blunted the prestige of host nations (e.g. the U.S.- led boycott of the Moscow 1980 games and the reciprocal Soviet rejection of the Los Angeles 1984 Olympics). Since the rise of new social media, the Olympic “industry” has had to respond to popular pressure in the form of online petitions, campaigns targeting commercial sponsors, and mobilization of real-world protests.⁷⁹ National Olympic teams argued successfully against refusing to participate at Sochi, relying on the notion of the supposed “apolitical” nature of sport. Yet many Western governments were sympathetic to the issue and spoke about their concerns for LG BT rights in Russia. Meanwhile, the chance for gestures of solidarity with LG BT Russians that the Olympics offered began to loom larger, as a controversy over two Swedish athletes’ rainbow-painted fingernails demonstrated in August 2013 at the World Athletics Championships in Moscow.⁸⁰ The same games saw widespread Western misreading on social media of a celebratory kiss between two Russian women competitors as a “podium protest” against LG BT oppression.⁸¹ Russian prevarication about the degree of latitude to be shown to LG BT athletes and visitors in Sochi, including insistence from Vitaly Mutko, Minister of Sport, Tourism and Youth that the “gay propaganda” law would be scrupulously enforced, drew international concern and further calls for podium and “silent” protests. In the wake of Mutko’s comments, Putin had to intervene in November 2013, defending the “gay propaganda” law, but warning citizens not to “create a torrent of hatred toward anyone in society, including people of non-traditional sexual orientation.”⁸² (We now know that the Nazis agreed, under U.S. Olympic Committee pressure, to suspend aspects of anti-Semitic and homophobic persecution during the Berlin 1936 Games.)⁸³

An ugly homophobic incident while the country was under close international scrutiny might mar a project so closely associated with the president’s personal prestige; the rising tide of homophobia generated by the government’s own activities was just one of a cluster of challenges to the staging of a successful games.⁸⁴ But Putin was not about to give ground to Western arguments about human rights. In January 2014, during a carefully staged pre-Games interview with Russian and foreign journalists, Putin reiterated his familiar script, although it

was subtly altered with falsehoods that were unlikely to be challenged.⁸⁵ He pointed out that Russia was a tolerant nation that does not criminalize homosexuality, in contrast to over seventy countries that do (and he repeated the misinformation about U.S. states' penalties for sodomy). The law merely forbade forms of "propaganda," not persons of a particular sexual orientation as such. There was no threat of arrest to spectators and participants coming to the Sochi Games. He defended the Russian Orthodox Church's right to call for re-criminalization of homosexuality, claiming that the R O C , the Vatican, and Islam were of one mind on this issue, and pointing out that the state and church are constitutionally separate in Russia. Putin went on the attack, linking homosexuality to pedophilia, in a duplicitous but obviously deliberate misremembering of the title of the controversial law which he gave as "On the banning of propaganda for pedophilia and homosexuality."⁸⁶ Nowhere in the law does the word "pedophilia" appear; Putin was borrowing Elena Mizulina's slur, tagging child abuse and homosexuality, albeit in a more subtle fashion. (No journalist noticed the president's deception.) Putin claimed, again falsely, that other countries, "including European ones," are considering "legalizing pedophilia" but that "the Russian people have their own cultural code, their own traditions." And he rehearsed the demographic arguments for promoting "traditional family values" in order to restore Russia's birth rate and avoid undesirable Western-style immigration and same-sex family recognition to bolster flagging populations.

Russia's year of political homophobia began with Mizulina's introduction of the "gay propaganda" law in the Duma with justifications that pedophilia was somehow tied to adult homosexuality. It ended with the country's president misleading domestic and world audiences about the state of the law in the USA and Europe, mocking these societies as incapable of defending Western "civilization," and using lies about the "spectral" threat of pedophilia to justify the persecution of a peaceful and harmless segment of Russia's population. Naturally, the "year of political homophobia" did not mark the end of anti-LGBT politics and popular sentiment in Russia. (In fact, during the Sochi Games, the government put new restrictions on adoption of Russian children to countries permitting same-sex marriage.)⁸⁷

The gathering storm in Ukraine that coincided with the Sochi Olympics nevertheless shifted the world's attention firmly toward the escalating geopolitical crisis. Yet questions about the

nature of the homophobic turn in Russia and its origins remain. Russian homophobia from Stalin to Sochi This book is not intended to trace a unified history of homophobia in Russia. Instead, it is my attempt to ask provocative questions and suggest where some answers might be found. Our knowledge about queer Russia is very limited by comparison to what we know about other countries. An enormous range of research still needs to be done. My questions are for the general reader who is puzzled by the current state of sexual politics in the Russian Federation, and for the next generation of scholars of queer Russia, “Western” and Russian, or from other post-Soviet republics, whose curiosity will take them beyond my interests in the chapters that follow.

The questions I discuss in this book relate to the nature of homophobia and what we understand by “homophobia in Russia.” What do we Westerners mean by “homophobia” ? Can our “homegrown” thinking about homophobia be easily transplanted to the Russian case? What is knowable right now, given the state of research, about the origins of modern hostility to LG BT lives and love in Russia? What are the obstacles to finding out more? How should we read Russian queer archives? How did gay and lesbian experience in the late Soviet, “socialist” world differ from Western, capitalist, queer life? How did Russians respond to a visible lesbian and gay movement after the collapse of Communism in 1991, and after decades of queer “invisibility”? What role does historical memory play in the construction of LG BT citizenship, and what are the barriers facing queer Russians to recovering and reconstituting “their” past? The three parts of this book focus attention on these themes in the history and the contemporary politics of Russian homophobia.

My use of terms for identities and sexual/gender practices requires some comment. I have used “L G B T” and “queer” interchangeably as shorthand for the broad spectrum of practices and identities that deviate from normative heterosexuality. “Homophobia” is an uncomfortable umbrella term for fear of the queer subject: the term tends to obscure more specific forms of “Othering,” whether it is hatred of lesbians, trans people, or more complexly queer sexual and gender dissidents. (In the Russian language, “L G B T” - LG B T - and “homophobia” - gom ofobii - have been widely adopted by friends and foes of queers.) The focus of this book is principally on gay men, and men who had sex with men, with some chapters referring as well to lesbians and women’s same-sex relations. This focus reflects the

concentration of my interest on state and expert persecution of queer subjects; it also partly reflects the relative weight of available source material. Nevertheless, there is new and important work on Russian lesbian lives emerging, and I rely upon it throughout the book. There is little material specifically addressing the “B ” and “T ” - bisexual and transgender - of LG BT in these essays. The reasons for this gap are conceptual and also reflect a lack of scholarship. So far, queer theorists have said little to conceptualize “bisexuality” in Russian lives and love. Most historians and scholars of literature and culture, myself included, have leapt straight to “gay” or “lesbian” as labels for the same-sex relations they observe in Russia’s past and present. It is undeniable that this reflex distorts realities: many of the “homosexual” lives discussed by scholars of Russia also present a “heterosexual” element.

Before the 1917 Revolution, Sophia Parnok, one of Russia’s greatest “lesbian” poets, was married to a man for two years, going on to have far longer relationships with women later in life.⁸⁸ In the same way, heterosexual marriage in Soviet times was a rite of passage for many of the “homosexual” men and women discussed in this book. In a world where LG BT ways of living were made invisible, many if not most queerly loving or feeling people intuited their desires through the prism of heterosexuality: it was the only script of love available.

Chapter 2 shows that men who had sex together in 1950s Leningrad Province did so while conducting simultaneous straight relationships; and they often used these relationships with women not only to conceal same-sex loves, but also to facilitate them. They used “quiet accommodationism” - the willingness of “straight” bystanders to look the other way when queer affairs happened in their midst - to tap male privilege, and exploit women as shields from suspicion, and also as “bait” for other men. Were these men “bisexual” in the contemporary Western meaning? Perhaps: but historical thinking looks beyond simple similarities to ask how lives in the past unsettle those assumptions. In her sensitive work on Soviet and post-Soviet lesbian lives, Francesca Stella has shown how for many lesbians, same-sex love figured in a life-course that routinely included heterosexual episodes. In other words, the women she interviewed had both “straight” and “lesbian” careers, sometimes simultaneously.⁸⁹ Should they be re-labeled “bisexuals” ? A few accept that term, but many “now” consider themselves homosexually oriented, albeit in a hostile social situation. Their experience, and that of male “bisexuals” in one major Ukrainian survey, has little room for

“bisexuality” as a liberating “portal” between monosexualities (heterosexuality or homosexuality), conceived by Western bi-theorists.⁹⁰ Stella’s subjects act and think strategically with their identities, putting more value “on managing one’s identity appropriately across different social contexts, which is associated with rules of propriety and risk-assessment, rather than on being ‘out’.”⁹¹

For Stella, this necessitates a rethinking of the “closet” in the Western sense of a burden of inauthenticity and oppression for same-sex loving people; the closet, in the lives of her subjects, becomes a place of safety and possibility. The everyday hostility to homosexual relations compels these Russian “lesbians” to navigate between poles of an outwardly heterosexual public life and a “lesbian” private or semi-private sphere. The scope for unfettered, liberating, post-homophobic “bisexuality” in the lives discussed by Stella is strikingly absent. Examples such as these suggest that conceptualizing “bisexuality” in Russia past and present requires more research, and simplistic labeling that draws upon contemporary Western models would be misleading. For these reasons, I have generally avoided speaking of a familiar “bisexuality” in the lives of the individuals discussed here - but like Stella, I have pointed out when straight and gay life courses have coincided in the same biography. Identifying “transgender” lives in the Russian past is another project fraught with complexities and contradictions. From the beginning, as a researcher of Russian queer history, I have sought to point out the challenges for historians in finding transgender subjects in history. In modern Russia (and beyond), doctors and police often labeled “trans-” personalities as “homosexual,” and “trans-” fates were determined by attitudes toward homosexuality, and toward gender as part of a “natural order.”⁹²

In this book, I mention some forms of gender-crossing and the ways that Soviet citizens understood it: in Stalin’s Gulag (Chapter 1), and in everyday speech in 1950s provincial and metropolitan life (Chapters 2, 3, and 4). Whether these examples and others should be claimed for a Russian transgender history is a question for queer theorists and future researchers. Research on the transgender subject in Russia is still emerging, with most work discussing contemporary questions of psychology and language.⁹³ This book probes the wider social and cultural frame of homophobic attitudes within which transgender lives were lived; more concentrated thinking on the trans subject in the history of Russia is undoubtedly needed. 5!-

* * This book is divided into three parts, and while each essay can be read separately, they are in roughly chronological order. Part I: Homophobia in Russia after 1945 examines three sites of homophobic violence, both physical and psychological, and some responses from same-sex loving men. Research to chart the history of experiences of homophobia in Soviet Russia after Stalin's enactment of his law against male homosexuality has hardly started. These essays shine a light on social worlds where male homosexuality coexisted with the heterosexual majority in an uneasy, and sometimes violently hostile, relationship.

Chapter 1 deals with the Gulag, Stalin's forced-labor camp system, through which millions passed over its quarter-century history from 1930, as a "homogenic" site of sexual violence, queer visibility, and fateful labeling. Both male and female queer relations are examined. After 1953, with the reform of the Gulag and de-Stalinization more generally, Soviet "enlightened bureaucrats" worried about the challenge of releasing Gulag inmates into "free" society, and the problem of stabilizing the sex/ gender order.

In Chapter 2, I present a microhistory of the worlds of same-sex loving men in 1950s semi-rural Russia, illuminating the popular mistrust of homosexuality, but also the degree to which commonplace attitudes accommodated the gender and sexual outcast. Violence was used by homophobes seeking to keep the "homosexual" at bay, but tragically, misogynist violence could also be used by "homosexuals" themselves in their search for self-realization. The final chapter of this section examines a rare artifact in Russia's queer archives - the journal of a victim of Stalin's anti-sodomy law. Soviet popular singer Vadim Kozin's 1955-6 diary reveals the impact of the homophobia surrounding him, and presents a remarkable window on how a "Soviet man" constructed a sense of himself as a homosexual subject. Taken together, these essays argue that the Stalinist anti-sodomy law of 1933-4 launched the modernization of the Soviet homosexual, stigmatizing queer men as political outcasts, and as psychologically "pathological" types.

Part II: Queer Visibility and "Traditional Sexual Relations" looks at the rise of a visible LGBT world in late Soviet and later post-communist Russian society. Chapter 4 charts the history of the gay and lesbian community of Moscow, capital of the Soviet Union and a magnet for

queer Soviet citizens because of its expanding opportunities underneath the surface of drab conformity and a rigid ideological carapace. This overview shows how European socialist-world lesbian and gay experience had a distinctive chronology and character quite different from the post-war rise of queer communities in capitalist Western Europe.

Chapter 5 analyzes an archive of post-communist Russian gay male erotica, and looks at the opportunities gay men seized in the 1990s to express desire explicitly and publicly, effectively for the first time in Russian history, in the midst of a post-Soviet “sexual revolution.” Russian gay men’s tastes harnessed national themes and settings, fashioning a distinctive pornographic style in a globalizing culture. This erotica wrestled with both internalized homophobia and society’s hostility to queers.

In Chapter 6, we examine some landmark responses to increasing LG BT visibility at the turn of the twenty-first century. In President Putin’s first term, conservative politicians, alarmed by the “sexual revolution” of the 1990s, debated its impact, including the increased visibility of LG BT Russians. A farcical 2002 debate on the re-criminalization of male homosexuality failed in that aim, but ultimately generated new political rhetoric about the national sexual character. The debate ignored problems with Russian masculinity, and blamed the discontents of the “sexual revolution” on women, male homosexuals, and youth. In this language, as politicians turned to “enlightened” experts for advice, Russian sex was reinvented as innocently “traditional,” heterosexual - and patriarchal. This section argues that LG BT freedom and visibility in Russia’s late twentieth century were the hard-won gains of countless personal and political struggles, against internalized homophobia, and fears of sexual difference expressed by family and society. The queer voices that emerged in the late Soviet period were not foreign imports, but “Made in the U SSR,” the product of the creativity and imagination of Soviet LG BT people. Visibility and freedom engendered a backlash, however, as political and “expert” opportunists tried to reinvent Russian “traditional sexual relations” with a new ideology of heteronormativity and political homophobia.

Part III: Writing and Remembering Russia's Queer Past investigates the problems of a “memoryless” LG BT movement in a cultural and political environment that resists the

recognition of its history. My argument here is that without adequate historical research and creative and thoughtful memory work, the future of Russia's LG BT citizens will be weakened. The troubling obstacles to documenting Stalinist and late-Soviet persecution of gay men are explored in Chapter 7.

The inaccessibility of archival records and their mis-reading by homophobic historians are not merely technical problems for the historical discipline. These irritants have implications for the Russian LG BT movement's mobilization of its own community, and for the effectiveness of its "outward-facing" conversations with allies in Russia's democratic opposition.

Chapter 8 turns to examine amnesia in biography as written in Russia today. Life histories of queer men composed by apparent "heterosexuals" in an unsympathetic culture of sex-denying biographical writing stifle LG BT memory.

Chapter 9 returns to singer and Gulag prisoner Vadim Kozin, to consider the divergent ways that LG BT memory works in the West and in Russia. Kozin's commemoration in Russia is strikingly different from that of "gay icons" in Europe. The geopolitics of LG BT rights and queer memory are not straightforward, but betray our assumptions about "history" and "progress" embedded in our cultures and our thinking. When it comes to Russia, we need to examine those assumptions more critically. Building queer cultures and reconstructing a queer past will follow unique paths in the countries of the former Soviet Union, but I am hopeful that the region's diversity and its peoples' creativity will spark new opportunities for queer visibility and freedom.

1 See <http://ria.ru/incidents/20130513/937002026.html#ixzz2WkJ5gUm7> (accessed July 16, 2015).

2 In Russian, there are two translations for “homosexuality” : gomoseksualizm, for which I use the somewhat archaic sounding “ homosexualism,” and the more neutral gomoseksuaVnost\ which I render as “ homosexuality.”

“Homosexualism” is regarded by Russia’s LG B T community as a homophobic term, originating in medical and Stalinist political usage (although in fact its use in political contexts predates Stalin’s rule). The form taking “-izm/ism” as its suffix is seen by some as reducing an individual’s sexual orientation or personal identity to a mere ideology. (There is no analogous “heterosexualism” - geteroseksualizm - in the Russian language, only geteroseksuaVnosf.) Russian jurisprudence and legislation routinely refer to “homosexualism” as do the state-controlled media.

3 One of the first to be fired for speaking out in support of LG BT rights was Il’ia Kolmanskii, a biology teacher in Moscow; he was fired just four days after the draft bill banning “ propaganda for homosexualism” was given first reading in the Duma. See <http://www.novayagazeta.ru/news/62543.html> (accessed July 16, 2015).

4 See <http://lenta.ru/articles/2013/05/23/volgograd> (accessed July 16, 2015).

5 Russian law does not recognize hate crime against LG BT citizens as a protected social group. On silence as a deliberate judicial strategy against LG B T citizens’ rights, see Alexander Kondakov, “ Resisting the Silence: The Use of Tolerance and Equality Arguments by Gay and Lesbian Activist Groups in Russia,” *Canadian Journal of Law and Society* 28, no. 3 (2013): 403-24.

“Homosexual panic” is my paraphrase for Smolin’s self-justification; on the “ homosexual panic” defense in Soviet practice, see Chapter 2. For the sentences, see <http://www.newizv.ru/accidents/2014-07-03/204166-korystvmestonenavisti.html> (accessed July 16, 2015).

6 My discussion of the origins of the concept draws upon: Barry D. Adam, “Theorizing Homophobia,” *Sexualities* 1, no. 4 (1998): 387-404; Daniel Borillo, *L’hom ophobie. Q ue sais-jef* (Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 2000); Louis-Georges Tin, ed., *Dictionnaire de Vhom ophobie* (Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 2003); Daniel Wickberg, “Homophobia: On the Cultural History of an Idea,” *Critical Inquiry* 27, no. 1 (2000): 42-57.

7 Wickberg, "Homophobia," 47-52; Adam, "Theorizing Homophobia," 387-9.

8 See Michael J. Bosia, and Meredith L. Weiss, "Political Homophobia in Comparative Perspective," in *Global Homophobia: States, Movements, and the Politics of Oppression*, eds Michael J. Bosia and Meredith L. Weiss (Urbana, Chicago, Springfield: University of Illinois Press, 2014); on sexuality's changes in the globalization era, see Dennis Altman, "Sexuality and globalization," *Sexuality Research & Social Policy* 1, no. 1 (2004): 63-8. 214 NOTES

9 The classic text is Jasbir K. Puar, *Terrorist Assemblages: Homonationalism in Queer Times* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2007); and see also Joseph Andoni Massad, *Desiring Arabs* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2007).

10 Corinne Lennox, and Matthew Waites, "Human rights, sexual orientation and gender identity in the Commonwealth: from history and law to developing activism and transnational dialogues," in *Human Rights, Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity in the Commonwealth: Struggles for Decriminalisation and Change*, eds Corinne Lennox and Matthew Waites (London: Human Rights Consortium, Institute of Commonwealth Studies, 2013).

11 See Dagmar Herzog, "Hubris and Hypocrisy, Incitement and Disavowal: Sexuality and German Fascism," *Journal of the History of Sexuality* 11, no. 1/2 (2002): 3-21; idem, *Sex after Fascism: Memory and Mortality in Twentieth-Century Germany* (Princeton & Oxford: Princeton University Press, 2005); idem, *Sexuality in Europe: A Twentieth-century History* (Cambridge & New York: Cambridge University Press, 2011).

12 Herzog, *Sexuality in Europe*, 122-9.

13 Erik N. Jensen, "The Pink Triangle and Political Consciousness: Gays, Lesbians, and the Memory of Nazi Persecution," *Journal of the History of Sexuality* 11, no. 1/2 (2002): 321-32.

14 *Ibid.*, 337-9.

15 Russia has long given off mixed messages about its European vocation. Russian President Vladimir Putin has trod an ambivalent line, emphasizing Russia's sovereignty and great power status while claiming to remain truer to Europe's fundamental values - usually characterized as "Christian"; see e.g. Roderic Lyne, "Russia's Changed Outlook on the West: From Convergence to Confrontation," in *The Russian Challenge*, eds Keir Giles, Philip Hanson, Roderic Lyne, James Nixey, James Sherr and Andrew Wood (London: Royal Institute of International Affairs, 2015).

16 See <http://www.theguardian.com/world/2013/nov/15/life-as-out-gay-russia> (accessed August 24, 2015).

17 Conor O'Dwyer, "Gay Rights and Political Homophobia in Postcommunist Europe: Is there an 'EU Effect'?" in *Global Homophobia: States, Movements, and the Politics of Oppression*, eds Meredith L. Weiss and Michael J. Bosia (Urbana, Chicago and Springfield: University of Illinois Press, 2013).

18 See e.g. Narcisz Fejes and Andrea P. Balogh, eds, *Queer visibility in postsocialist cultures* (Bristol: Intellect Books, 2013); Robert Kulpa and Joanna Mizielinska, eds, *De-centering Western Sexualities: Central and East European Perspectives* (Farnham: Ashgate, 2011); Roman Kuhar and Judit Takács, "Homophobia - a unifying experience?" *D ruzboslovne razprave* 29, no. 73 (2013): 7-10.

19 The following paragraph builds on Altman, "Sexuality and globalization"; Bosia and Weiss, "Political Homophobia in Comparative Perspective"; Lennox and Waites. *Human rights, sexual orientation and gender identity in the Commonwealth*; Michelle Rivkin-Fish and Cassandra Hartblay, "When Global LG B TQ Advocacy Became Entangled with New Cold War Sentiment: A Call for Examining Russian Queer Experience," *Brown Journal of World Affairs* 21, NOTES 215 no. 1 (2014): 95-111; Ryan Thoreson, "From Child Protection to Children's Rights: Rethinking Homosexual Propaganda Bans in Human Rights Law," *Yale Law Review* 124, no. 4 (2015): 1327-44; Valerie Sperling, *Sex, Politics, and Putin: Political Legitimacy in Russia* (New York & Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014).

20 An example of an entirely descriptive approach is Byrne Fone, *Homophobia: A History* (New York: Metropolitan Books, 2000).

21 Source: World Bank GDP Growth, <http://data.worldbank.org/indicator/NY.GDP.MKTP.KD.ZG?page=1> (accessed July 16, 2015).

22 The Putin political system is described in Alena V. Ledeneva, *Can Russia Modernise?: Sistema, Power Networks and Informal Governance* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013). On media control and “imitation democracy” see Dmitrii Furman, *Dvizhenie po spirali. Politicheskaia sistema Rossii v riadu drugikh sistem* (Moscow: Ves’ Mir, 2010), 101-16.

23 See <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nS48UuVXbjQ> (accessed July 17, 2015). For an argument that Putin has since achieved a “remasculinization” of the presidency, see Oleg Riabov and Tatiana Riabova, “The Remasculinization of Russia?” *Problems of Post-Communism* 61, no. 2 (2014): 23-35.

24 Vera Tolz, and Sue-Ann Harding, “From ‘Compatriots’ to ‘Aliens’: The Changing Coverage of Migration on Russian Television,” *The Russian Review* 74, no. 3 (2015): 452-77.

25 See Cai Wilkinson, “Putting ‘Traditional Values’ Into Practice: The Rise and Contestation of Anti-Homopropaganda Laws in Russia,” *Journal of Human Rights* 13, no. 3 (2014): 363-79; note also Gulnaz Sharafutdinova, “The Pussy Riot affair and Putin’s *démarche* from sovereign democracy to sovereign morality,” *Nationalities Papers* 42, no. 4 (2014): 615-21. The wider logic of the conservative turn is sketched in Marlene Laruelle, “Conservatism as the Kremlin’s New Toolkit: an Ideology at the Lowest Cost,” *Russian Analytical Digest* 138, no. 8 (2013): 2-4. On the Church in politics, see Irina Papkova, *The Orthodox Church and Russian Politics* (Washington: Woodrow Wilson Center Press; New York: Oxford University Press, 2011); John Gordon Garrard and Carol Garrard *Russian Orthodoxy Resurgent: Faith and Power in the New Russia*

(Princeton & Oxford: Princeton University Press, 2008). On the exchange of political ideas between U.S. and Russian Christians, see e.g. John September Anderson, *Conservative Religious Politics in Russia and the United States: Dreaming of Christian Nations* (Abingdon & New York: Routledge, 2015); and <http://www.thenation.com/article/how-us-evangelicals-fueled-rise-russias-pro-family-right> (accessed September 3, 2015).

26 On Russia's sexual revolution of the 1990s, see Dan Healey, "The sexual revolution in the USSR: dynamic change beneath the ice," in *Sexual Revolutions*, eds Gert Hekma and Alain Giami (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2014). Homosexuality in culture, and as "foreign import" is analyzed in, e.g. Brian James Baer, "Now You See It: Gay (In)Visibility and the Performance of Post-Soviet Identity," in *Queer Visibility in Post-socialist Cultures*, eds Narcisz Fejes and Andrea P. Balogh (Bristol: Intellect, 2013); and Vitaly Chernetsky, *Mapping Postcommunist Cultures: Russia and Ukraine in the Context of Globalization* (Montreal & London: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2007), 146-81. On Stalin's anti-sodomy law and the status of lesbianism in the Soviet Union, see Dan Healey, *Homosexual Desire in Revolutionary Russia: The Regulation of Sexual and Gender Dissent*. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2001).

27 See <http://www.guardian.co.uk/world/2007/may/28/russia.gayrights> (accessed July 23, 2015); on the Moscow pride parade confrontations more generally, see Francesca Stella, "Queer Space, Pride, and Shame in Moscow," *Slavic Review* 72, no. 3 (2013): 458-80.

28 The early LGBT movement in post-Soviet Russia is described in Chapter 4. On this generation's visibility and public responses, see Baer, "Now You See It," 39-42.

29 I draw the distinction in directions of address in LGBT activism from Jensen, "The Pink Triangle and Political Consciousness," 326. On activist tactics, see e.g. Sergei Mozhgorov, "... Zabyt' Queer! ili diskursy govoreniia/ umolchaniia v deiatel'nosti LGBT-dvizheniia v sovremennoi Rossii," in *Vozmozhno-li "kvir" po-*

ruski. LGBT-issledovaniia, ed. Valerii Sozaev (St. Petersburg: LG BT Organizatsiia Vykhod, 2010); and also the essays in Svetlana Barsukova and Valerii Sozaev, eds, L G B T K issledovaniia: aktuaVnye problem y i perspektivy. Materialy m ezhdunarodoi mezhditsitsiplinarnoi nauchno-prakticheskoi konferentsii posviashchennoi pamiati I. S. Kona. Sankt-Reterburg, 2 7 - 9 oktiabria 2011 g. (St. Petersburg: LG B T Organizatsiia Vykhod, 2011).

30 Quoted in Bosia and Weiss, “ Political Homophobia in Comparative Perspective,” 4.

31 The UK law was repealed in 2000 in Scotland but not until 2003 in England and Wales; see Thoreson, “From Child Protection to Children’s Rights.”

32 See

<http://asozd2.duma.gov.ru/main.nsf/%28SpravkaNew%29POpenAgent0cR N =311625-4& 02> (accessed August 3, 2015). Chuev was deputy chair of the Duma Committee on Social Associations and Religious Organizations; he was a member of Motherland Party and from 2006, A Just Russia Party. He lost his Duma seat in 2007 but remained associated with parliament as an advisor to the leader of A Just Russia; see <http://lenta.ni/lib/14160404/#42> (accessed August 5, 2015).

33 Valerii Sozaev, “Analiz pravoprimeritel’noi praktiki zakonodatel’sтва o zaprete propagandy gomoseksualizma sredi nesovershennoletnikh,” <http://www.ihahr-nis.org/dokumenty> (accessed August 3, 2015).

34 Ibid. On the significance of the invocation of tradition see Marianna Murav’eva, “ ‘(Ne)traditsionnye seksual’nye otnoshenii’ kak iuridicheskaiia kategoriiia: istoriko-pravovoi analiz,” in *N a p e r e p u f e : metodologiia, teoriia i praktika LG B T i kvir-issledovanii [sbornik statei]*, ed. Aleksandr Kondakov (St. Petersburg: Tsentr nezavisimykh sotsiologicheskikh issledovanii, 2014). Fedotova pursued a complaint to the U N ’s Human Rights Committee and won

a favorable decision in October 2012; see <http://www.gayrussia.eu/russia/5280> (accessed August 3, 2015).

35 Space does not permit a full examination of the circumstances in which these laws were debated and adopted; in order of adoption the regions are: NOTES 217 Arkhangelsk Province (September 30, 2011); Kostroma Province (December 27, 2011); St. Petersburg (March 17, 2012); Novosibirsk Province (June 7, 2012); Magadan Province (June 9, 2012), Krasnodar Region (June 20, 2012); Samara Province (June 26, 2012); Republic of Bashkortostan (July 23, 2012); Kaliningrad Province (January 24, 2013); Irkutsk Province (May 13, 2013). Other regions that considered banning “gay propaganda” include Moscow City, Kirov and Vladimir Provinces, Perm’ Region and the Republic of Yakutia (Sakha). A useful introduction to the local laws is found on Russian Wikipedia: https://ru.wikipedia.org/wiki/%D0%97%D0%B0%D0%BA%D0%BE%D0%BD%D0%BE%D0%B4%D0%B0%D1%82%D0%B5%D0%BB%D1%8C%D0%BD%D1%8B%D0%B5_%D0%B7%D0%B0%D0%BF%D1%80%D0%B5%D1%82%D1%8B_%D0%BF%D1%80%D0%BE%D0%BF%D0%B0%D0%B3%D0%B0%D0%BD%D0%B4%D1%8B_%D0%B3%D0%BE%D0%BC%D0%BE%D1%81%D0%B5%D0%BA%D1%81%D1%83%D0%B0%D0%BB%D0%B8%D0%B7%D0%BC%D0%B0_%D0%B2_%D0%A0%D0%BE%D1%81%D1%81%D0%B8%D0%B8#D0.90.D1.80.D1.85.D0.B0.D0.BD.D0.B3.D0.B5.D0.BB.D1.8C.D1.81.D0.BA.D0.B0.D1.8F_.D0.BE.D0.B1.D0.BB.D0.B0.D1.81.D1.82.D1.8C (accessed August 4, 2015).

36 Adam, “Theorizing Homophobia,” 398-9.

37 See <http://www.vz.rU/society/2011/9/28/526071.print.html> (accessed August 4, 2015).

38 In September 2011 Aleksandr Diatlov, Arkhangelsk legislature deputy and chair of its youth and sport committee, said he was actively seeking such contacts through United Russia channels (Ibid.). On misogyny and homophobia

in the youth wings of Russia's political parties, see Chapter 3 of Sperling, *Sex, Politics, and Putin*.

39 See <http://www.novopol.ru/-matvienko-v-rossii-mojno-zapretit-propagandugom-oseks-textll2668.html> (accessed August 4, 2015).

40 See e.g. <http://www.specletter.com/obcshestvo/2013-05-30/vera-dlja-menjauzh-izvinite-vyshe-zakona.html> (accessed August 4, 2015).

41 See e.g. http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2013/12/19/russia-to-free-pussy-riotmikhail-khodorkovsky_n_4472756.html (accessed August 5, 2015); Sperling, *Sex, Politics, and Putin*, 222-39. Sperling notes the feminist credentials of Pussy Riot remain contested, with some Russian feminist critics seeing too much violence and patriarchal rhetoric in their lyrics and tactics.

42 Sebastian Buckle, *The Way Out: A History of Homosexuality in Modern Britain* (London: I. B. Tauris, 2015), 104-15.

43 Dorofeev was a member of both the Novosibirsk Provincial legislature and the federal Duma. See http://www.mn.ru/politics_law/20120330/314570931.html (accessed August 13, 2015). On petitions from regions, I am grateful for the advice of Ben Noble.

44 See <http://www.duma.gov.ru/news/273/235815> and http://www.bbc.com/russian/russia/2013/01/130125_duma_gay_propaganda_law.shtml?print=1 (accessed August 13, 2015). It appears the one opposing vote was down to a new United Russia Party deputy's pushing "the wrong button": <http://grani.ru/people/1752> (accessed August 13, 2015). 218 NOTES

45 Explanations for the change in wording have been minimal and evasive. In an interview after the publication of the new draft law Mizulina suggested the

revision was a direct result of representations from the LG B T community; she also emphasized the pedigree in Russian jurisprudence of the concept of “traditional/non-traditional sexual relations.” See http://www.gazeta.ru/politics/2013/06/10_a_5375845.shtml (accessed August 13, 2015).

46 “ Our plans have not been affected by the talk about homophobia spreading through society in the wake of the incident in Volgograd,” she told RIA Novosti on 14 May 2013. “That’s just stupid. It’s a so-called objective opinion, and I absolutely reject it.” See <http://lenta.ru/articles/2013/05/23/volgograd> (accessed August 13, 2015).

47 I first discussed the myth of Russia’s sexual innocence in Healey, H omosexual Desire in Revolutionary Russia, 251-7.

48 See http://www.gazeta.ru/politics/2013/01/25_a_4940585.shtml (accessed August 13, 2015).

49 See http://www.gazeta.ru/politics/news/2013/06/07/n_2959549.shtml (accessed August 13, 2015).

50 For an example of her attribution of the power of the “ pedophilia lobby” to the lack of progress on a bill to refine child pornography law, see <http://www.vesti.ru/doc.html?id=975240>; and note commentary on the non-existence of such a lobby by her peers and experts, <http://www.aif.ru/politics/russia/40239> (accessed August 13, 2015).

51 See “ Kontsepsiia gosudarstvennoi semeinoi politiki Rossiiskoi Federatsii na period do 2025 goda,” <http://www.komitet2-6.km.duma.gov.ru/site.xp/050049124053056052.html> (accessed August 14, 2015).

52 “Kontseptsia gosudarstvennoi semeinoi politiki Rossiiskoi Federatsii na period do 2025 goda,” 4-5, 14. The 25-page document uses the words “tradition/ traditional” 33 times. The “concept” was greatly modified before its adoption as official state policy in 2014; for a thorough analysis, see Marianna Murav’eva, “Traditional Values and Modern Families: Legal Understanding of Tradition and Modernity in Contemporary Russia,” *Journal of Social Policy Studies* 12, no. 4 (2014): 625-38.

53 Andrey Makarychev and Sergei Medvedev, “Biopolitics and Power in Putin’s Russia,” *Problems of Post-Communism* 62, no. 1 (2015): 48.

54 See http://www.bbc.com/russian/russia/2013/06/130611_duma_gay_propaganda.shtml?print=1 (accessed August 13, 2015).

55 See <http://russian.rt.com/article/12821>, <http://www.segodnia.ru/content/125604>, and <http://www.interfax-religion.com/?act=news&div=10639> (accessed August 18, 2015).

56 For a summary of the first year’s impact, see http://www.slate.com/blogs/outward/2014/10/09/russian_lgbt_activists_on_the_effects_of_gay_propaganda_law.html (accessed August 18, 2015).

57 See <http://www.deti-404.com/>; <https://www.hrw.org/news/2015/04/02/russiacourt-hearing-against-lgbt-group>; <http://www.pinknews.co.uk/2015/07/29/russia-fines-owner-of-lgbt-teen-support-network-for-gay-propaganda/>; (accessed August 18, 2015). NOTES 219

58 See <http://www.newrepublic.com/article/17896/vladimir-medinsky-russiasculture-minister-putin-toady> (accessed August 19, 2014); Alexander Poznansky, *Tchaikovsky: The Quest for the Inner Man* (New York: Schirmer

Books, 1991). On the problems of writing queer life histories in Russia today, see Chapter 8.

59 See <http://www.gay.ru/news/rainbow/2013/10/11-27253.htm> (accessed August 19, 2015).

60 See http://www.nytimes.com/reuters/2014/11/03/technology/03reuters-russiagay-apple.html?ref=reuters&_r=0; and <https://meduza.io/en/lion/2015/08/12/this-bus-stop-might-be-too-gay-for-russia> (both accessed August 19, 2015). The anti-Apple gesture came as the Ukrainian crisis yielded economic sanctions, and melded homophobia with anti-Americanism.

61 See e.g. <http://www.themoscowtimes.com/news/article/anti-gay-vigilante-groups-face-backlash/484774.html>, <http://www.ft.com/cms/s/0/71eaa49e-0580-11e3-8ed5-00144feab7de.html#axzz2pLypgrfO> (accessed January 3, 2014).

62 See e.g. the U K 's Channel 4 documentary: <http://www.channel4.com/news/gay-russian-sochi-hunting-season-we-are-the-hunted> (broadcast February 5, 2014); Australia Broadcasting Corporation's Foreign Correspondent, <http://www.abc.net.au/foreign/content/2013/s3879592.htm> (broadcast October 10, 2013) .

63 Reports of LG B T victims of violence: 2011 = 3; 2012 = 12; 2013 = 25; 2014 = 8; 2015 (to 1 August) = 2. See the Sova Centre's database http://www.sovacenter.ru/database/violence/?tip1=301&tip2=303&date_start=01%2F01%2F2011&date_end=01%2F10%2F2015&phenotype=658&xfield=phenotype&yfield=y&victims—in&show =l (accessed August 18, 2015).

64 For examples of the new fear and self-concealment, see Masha Gessen, Joseph Huff-Hannon, Bela Shaevich, Andrei Borodin, Dmitri Karelsky, and

Svetlana Solodovnik, *Gay Propaganda: Russian Love Stories* (New York: O R Books, 2014) .

65 See <http://rt.com/news/church-same-sex-unions-404> (accessed August 18, 2015) . On allegations of ex-KGB links, see e.g. <http://www.thetimes.co.uk/tto/faith/article2100100.ece>; on his taste in wristwatches, see e.g. <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-17622820> (both accessed August 18, 2015).

66 Note e.g. Chapter XII section 9, “Problems of bioethics,” in the Church’s 2005 “Fundamentals of the Social Conception of the Russian Orthodox Church,” <http://www.patriarchia.ru/db/text/141422.html> (accessed August 4, 2015).

67 The program had first been aired in April 2013, but when repeated in August it caught the attention of bloggers, who raised unsuccessful complaints against Kiselev with the Procuracy; see http://tvrain.ru/teleshov/novosti_sajta/blogosfera_vozmutilas_prizyvom_dmitrija_kiseleva_szhigat_serdtsa_geev-349742; and <http://top.rbc.ru/society/04/04/2014/915620.shtml> (both accessed August 20, 2015).

68 See <http://www.theguardian.com/world/2013/dec/09/putin-appointshomophobic-presenter-kiselyov-head-news-agency-homosexuals>; on Russian media’s new tendentiousness, see e.g. Ivan Tsetkov, “ Russian Whataboutism vs American Moralism,” <http://www.russia-direct.org/opinion/russianwhataboutism-vs-american-moralism> (accessed August 20, 2015). 220 NOTES

69 The anniversary year was marred by “ violations” of diplomatic immunity with a sexual undertone, in October, with Dutch authorities detaining a Russian embassy official on suspicion of child abuse, and a few days later the mysterious break-in at a Dutch official’s residence in Moscow where attackers drew a pink heart and the Russian letters LG BT on a mirror; on the arrest in The Hague, see <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-24448147>; on the Moscow attack, see <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-24547823> (both accessed August 19, 2015). This “ exchange” of insults took place after a month of tensions over Russia’s detention of the “Arctic Sunrise,” a Dutch-registered Greenpeace ship, with its crew.

70 See <http://www.kremlin.ru/transcripts/17850> (accessed January 6, 2014).

71 On the decriminalization of male homosexuality under Lenin in 1918-22, see Healey, *Homosexual Desire in Revolutionary Russia*, 100-25. On Khrushchev’s policies, see Chapter 1.

72 The highly controversial Dutch pedophile advocacy association “ Martijn” did indeed exist at the time Putin spoke; it has lost recent appeals against legal orders to shut down: see <http://www.nltimes.nl/2015/02/03/pro-pedophileassociation-loses-eu-court-bid> (accessed August 20, 2015). Putin’s reference to a party rejecting women as politicians is presumably to the ultra-Calvinist Reformed Political Party (SGP) which elected its first female deputy in 2014, after losing battles with the European Court over sex inequality policies: <http://nos.nl/artikel/625641-sgp-vrouw-komt-in-raad-vlissingen.html> (accessed August 20, 2015).

73 See <http://ria.ru/politics/20130904/960605375.html> (accessed January 6, 2014) .

74 On these myths see Dan Healey, “ ‘Untraditional Sex’ and the ‘Simple Russian’: Nostalgia for Soviet Innocence in the Polemics of Dilia Enikeeva,” in *What is Soviet Now? Identities, Legacies, Memories*, eds Thomas Lahusen and Peter H. Solomon Jr. (Berlin: Lit Verlag, 2008).

75 See <http://en.kremlin.ru/events/president/news/19243> (accessed August 20, 2015) .

76 The argument that Russia stood as the last defender of Western Christian values, with implications for its homophobic and anti-migration demographic policies was commonly circulated by Russian TV commentators in 2013; see Tolz, and Harding, “From ‘Compatriots’ to ‘Aliens’” , 462-3.

77 Source: <http://eng.kremlin.ru/transcripts/6402> (accessed January 6, 2014).

78 Quoted in Helen Jefferson Lenskyj, *Sexual Diversity and the Sochi 2014 Olympics: No More Rainbows* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Pivot, 2014), 71-2. See also Richard Arnold and Andrew Foxall, “ Lord of the (Five) Rings,” *Problems of Post-Communism* 61, no. 1 (2014): 3-12.

79 The “ Olympic Industry” is Lenskyj’s characterization; on the impact of new social media, see Lenskyj, *Sexual Diversity and the Sochi 2014 Olympics*, 77, 79, 86.

80 Swedish track and field athletes deliberately staged a “ silent protest” by painting their nails; see <http://sverigesradio.se/sida/artikel.aspx?programid=2054&artikel=5617678> (accessed August 20, 2015). NOTES 221

81 See e.g. <http://stadium.ru/news/19-08-2013-vnimanie-fotografov-privlekpotselui-ksenii-rizhovoi-i-tatyani-firovoi>; and <http://www.thenation.com/article/was-kiss-j-ust-kiss-medal-stand-smooch-heard-round-world> (both accessed August 20, 2015).

82 See <http://america.aljazeera.com/articles/2013/11/20/putin-warns-against-homophobia-as-sochi-olympics-approach.html> (accessed August 20, 2015); Lenskyj, *Sexual Diversity and the Sochi 2014 Olympics*, 76.

83 Patrick B. Miller, "The Nazi Olympics, Berlin 1936: Exhibition at the U.S. Holocaust Memorial Museum, Washington D.C. [Review essay]," *Olympika V* (1996): 134; cited in Lenskyj, *Sexual Diversity and the Sochi 2014 Olympics*, 68.

84 The others were the enormous cost and linked corruption, and security problems relating to conflicts in the region; see Arnold and Foxall, "Lord of the (Five) Rings" ; Karen Dawisha, *Putin's Kleptocracy: Who Owns Russia?* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 2014), 314.

85 The interview took place in Sochi with BBC journalist Andrew Marr, ABC's George Stephanopoulos, and leading Russian broadcasters Sergei Brilev and Irada Zeinalova; see <http://kremlin.ru/events/president/news/20080> (accessed August 20, 2015).

86 He emphatically and repeatedly said the law's title was "On the banning of propaganda for pedophilia and homosexuality" ; it is in fact "On the introduction of changes to Article 5 of the Federal Law 'On the protection of children from information harmful to their health and development' and specific legislative acts of the Russian Federation in order to protect children from information propagandizing the denial of traditional family values." At no time during its passage through parliament did the bill contain the word "pedophilia."

87 See <http://www.rt.com/politics/russian-adoption-same-sex-couples-854> (accessed August 27, 2015).

88 On Parnok see Diana Lewis Bürgin, *Sophia Parnok: The Life and Work of Russia's Sappho* (New York & London: New York University Press, 1994).

89 Francesca Stella, *Lesbian Lives in Soviet and Post-Soviet Russia: Post/socialism and Gendered Sexualities* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2015), 16-21, 45-66.

90 For a study of selfhood in 403 Ukrainian bisexual men that suggests their different- and same-sex relations are asymmetrical and marked by significant internalized homophobia, see Maksim Kasianchuk, "Internal'naia gomofobiia biseksual'nykh muzhehin," in *N a Pereput'e: metodologiya, teoriya i praktika L G B T i kvir-issledovaniy*, ed. Aleksandr Kondakov (St. Petersburg: Tsentr nezavisimyykh sotsiologicheskikh issledovaniy, 2014). For Western bisexuality theory's critique of "monosexuality" and the role of "bi" as a "portal" that queers rigid binarisms, see Serena Anderlini-D'Onofrio and Jonathan Alexander, "Introduction to the Special Issue: Bisexuality and Queer Theory: Intersections, Diversions, and Connections," *Journal of Bisexuality* 9, no. 3-4 (2009): 197-212.

91 Stella, *Lesbian Lives in Soviet and Post-Soviet Russia*, 106. 222 NOTES

92 Healey, *Homosexual Desire in Revolutionary Russia*, 12, 63-4; 162-71.

93 See e.g. Dmitrii Isaev, "Konstruirovaniye gomoseksual'noi i transgendernoi identichnosti," in *L G B T issledovaniya: aktuVnye problem y i perspektivy. Materialy mezhdunarodnoi mezhditstsiplinarnoi nauchnoprakticheskoi konferentsii posviashchennoi pamiati 1. S. Kona. Sankt Peterburg, 27 - 9 oktiabria 2011 g .*, ed. Valerii Sozaev (St. Petersburg: L G B T Organizatsiia Vykход, 2011); Dmitrii Isaev and F. A. Kuznetsov, *Mify i fakty o transseksualakh* (St. Petersburg: L G B T Organizatsiia Vykход, 2012); Tat'iana Zborovskaia, "Spetsifika formirovaniia kartiny mira transgenderov v zavisimosti ot sotsiokul'turnykh realii: issledovaniye assotsiativnykh norm na primere russkogo i angliisskogo iazykov," in *N a P er e p u f e: metodologiya, teoriya i praktika L G B T i kvir-issledovaniy*, ed. Aleksandr Kondakov (St. Petersburg: Tsentr nezavisimyykh sotsiologicheskikh issledovaniy, 2014)