Sunday, 2 March 2014

5:00 – 7:00 pm • UNC Chapel Hill • Institute for Arts and Humanities • Hyde Hall

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Negotiating Gay Rights, Youth Protection and Combat Readiness: The West German Bundeswehr and the Reform of the Criminal Code

Between 1969 and 1973, the § 175 of the West German Criminal Code, which penalized male homosexuality, was liberalized. This reform was greatly influenced by political considerations about how it would affect the West German armed forces—the Bundeswehr. Jurists, politicians and military brass intensively discussed the possible effects of a liberalization of the §175 on the relation between younger soldiers and older officers. The main point of contention was the question whether the decriminalization of male homosexuality or the “protection” of young soldiers and the military’s combat readiness should take precedence.

FRIEDERIKE BRÜHÖFENER is a doctoral candidate in European History in the Department of History at UNC-Chapel Hill. She is currently finishing her dissertation thesis titled “Defining the West German Soldier: Military, Society and Masculinity in West Germany, 1945-1989.”

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