

Chapter 12

REPRESSIVE REHABILITATION

Crime, Morality, and Delinquency in
Berlin-Brandenburg, 1945–1958

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Wenn wir einen Bürger erziehen, so erziehen wir damit auch das sexuelle Gefühl.*

—*Anton Makarenko*

In an April 1958 memorandum, an unknown author outlined the current state of youth criminal policy in the German Democratic Republic. “Unlike in West Germany,” the author wrote, “in the GDR, delinquency is no longer the product of war and fascism as it was in the years after 1945.” Implicitly connected to the evils of capitalism, juvenile delinquency was less of a problem in East Germany due to the social character of the workers-and-farmers state. Contemporary cases of youth endangerment and criminality owed their existence not to the structure of state socialism, the author suggested, but to the unequal application of youth policy and educational methods within its borders. Indeed, socialist education programs were either unknown or “not uniformly applied by those responsible for instituting policy.” As long as this remained the case, the endangerment of GDR children and teens called into question the work of committed caseworkers who employed “socialist education methods to agitate for the betterment of East German youth.”¹

During the early days of the Cold War, the situation in Berlin and the surrounding region of Brandenburg posed unique challenges for police, court, and youth welfare workers in dealing with juvenile criminal behavior.² Even before the erection of the Berlin Wall in 1961, the proliferation of petty criminality

Notes from this chapter begin on page 319.

- youth policy. Archiv Diakonisches Werk (ADW) Gesamtverband der Berliner Inneren Mission (GVB), Nr. 14 Verschiedenes 1945–1951, “Jugendliche in Gefahr. Jugendliche Verbrechen in Berlin” (a forty-five-page report on youth homes in Berlin-Brandenburg, undated but written around 1950).
21. BArch Berlin, DO 1 7.0 Deutsche Verwaltung des Innern (DVdI), Nr. 355 Die Entwicklung der Kriminalpolizei in der SBZ von 1945–1949. Correspondence from 24.12.1947 concerning the work of the Kriminalpolizei in policing sexual crimes.
 22. The Ministry of Volksbildung oversaw children’s aid and traditional child welfare services (such as adoption and care facilities), while also coordinating penal policy and directives as they affected children and teens. For information on the SMAD Order, see Deutsche Verwaltung für Volksbildung in der SBZ, ed., *Jugendämter: Aufbau und Aufgaben* (Berlin, 1948), 31.
 23. BArch Berlin, DC 4 Amt für Jugendfragen, Nr. 1657 die Arbeit zwischen Jugendklubbhäuser und Heimen und soziale Betreuung Jugendlicher 1952–1956, Bericht über die Lage in den Jugendwerkhofen und die Perspektiven im 2. Fünfjahrplan (undated).
 24. For a detailed discussion of the process of policing homosexual youth, see Jennifer V. Evans, “*Bahnhof* Boys: Policing Male Prostitution in Post-Nazi Berlin,” *Journal of the History of Sexuality* 12 (2003), 605–636.
 25. BArch Berlin, DQ 2 Ministerium für Arbeit und Berufsausbildung, Nr. 3772 Zeitungsausschnitte zur Bekämpfung gefährdete Jugendlicher 1946–1948. The newspaper snippet dated 6.2.48 titled “Jugendhilfestelle wird ausgebaut” found in the files of the Ministry for Employment and Apprenticeship states that over ten thousand young boys and girls employed the services of the *Jugendhilfestelle*. This number included those youth removed from difficult family situations as well as criminals.
 26. For more information on the laws governing disease transmission and suspected prostitution, see Uta Falck, *VEB Bordell: Prostitution in der DDR* (Berlin, 1998), and Annette Timm, “Guarding the Health of Worker Families in the GDR: Socialist Health Care, *Bevölkerungspolitik*, and Marriage Counselling, 1945–72,” in *Arbeiter in der SBZ-DDR*, Peter Hübner and Klaus Tenfelde, eds. (Essen, 1999), 463–495.
 27. See Warren Rosenblum’s chapter in this volume.
 28. Of primary importance to police and social services was the need to convince Berlin’s youth that their job was to help the youth navigate a path through the judicial and reformatory system. Understandably, many youths remained wary of any help police sought to provide. See BArch Berlin, DO 1 7.0 Deutsche Verwaltung des Innern (DvDI), Nr. 353 Broschüren zur Verordnung zum Schutz der Jugend 1948, Merkblatt zur Bekämpfung der Jugendkriminalität, Zonenkriminalamt Referat K6, Berlin 28.7.47, no author.
 29. For examples of the treatment of young offenders, in this case young men charged with male prostitution, see the court case files from the Amtsgericht Tiergarten in 1947, which include examples of information gathered both by the *Jugendamt* and the *Jugendgerichtshilfe* before the division of municipal services in 1948. LAB B Rep 051 Amtsgericht Tiergarten.
 30. In the first few years after capitulation, property crimes in Berlin had risen 885 percent from the 1937 figures. See Richard Bessel, “Grenzen des Polizeistaates. Polizei und Gesellschaft in der SBZ und frühen DDR, 1945–1953” in *Die Grenzen der Diktatur: Staat und Gesellschaft in der DDR*, Richard Bessel and Ralph Jessen, eds. (Göttingen, 1996), 225. But violent crime also climbed in the postwar period. For statistics governing violent criminal infractions see LAB C Rep 303/9 Polizeipräsident in Berlin 1945–1948, Nr. 246 Statistiken der Kriminalpolizei 1945–1948.
 31. Hermann Glaser, *Kleine Kulturgeschichte der Bundesrepublik Deutschland* (Bonn, 1991), 72–73.
 32. LAB, B Rep 210 Bezirksamt Zehlendorf, Acc. 840, Nr. 91/3 Tätigkeitsberichte des Gesundheitsamts vom 1. Januar bis 31. Dezember 1948. Report for the period of 1 January to 31 March 1948 signed by a caseworker identified only as S.E.

33. Frau Hoffmann describes the Dircksenstrasse facility in the Diakonisches Werk report on youth services. See Archiv Diakonisches Werk, Gesamtverband der Berliner Inneren Mission (GVB), Nr. 14 Verschiedenes 1945–1951, “Jugendliche in Gefahr: Jugendliche Verbrechen in Berlin.” See also the article in *Sozialdemokrat* from 6.2.48 “Jugendhilfsstelle wird ausgebaut” regarding the desperately needed renovations to the facility.
34. LAB C Rep 120 Magistrat der Stadt Berlin, Hauptabteilung Volksbildung, Nr. 2710 Geschäftstätigkeit des Jugendwerkhöfes Struveshof 1948–1960, Paedagogisches Referent, Konferenz mit Heimleitern und Erziehern in Struveshof über Weglaufen, Schwarzurlaub, Schwarzmarkt, Heimdiefstaehle, Arbeitsverweigerung, und Strafen, am Mittwoch den 16.2.1949, 283.
35. Ernst Seelig, *Lehrbuch der Kriminologie* (Dusseldorf, 1951), 48. Selig suggests that “shirking career criminals take to a life of crime while teens, often remarking later in life that they couldn’t find work as young adults. In reformatories (homes for wayward youth or similar institutions) they aren’t cured, but instead learn from more established career criminals and refine their skills . . . once on the outside they continue to seek out established criminals and form small bands of grifters.” Interestingly, Seelig suggests that no form of state intervention will prevent these youths from re-offending. However, he notes that in a few cases marriage brings about resocialization.
36. LAB C Rep 303/9 Polizeipräsident in Berlin, Nr. 248, Tätigkeitsbuch MIII/I—Aussendienst—, 8. Mai 1948–23 April 1949.
37. See the letter from the Director of the Jugendhilfsstelle Herr Weimann to the head of the Kriminalpolizei from 28.9.48 in LAB C Rep 303/9 Polizeipräsident in Berlin 1945–1948, Nr. 259 Weibliche Kriminalpolizei 1945–1949.
38. See the weekly reports in LAB C Rep 303/9 Polizeipräsident in Berlin 1945–1948.
39. BArch Berlin, DP 1 Ministerium der Justiz, Hauptabteilung Strafvollzug II-42 Jugendstrafvollzug 1949–1952. For information concerning the East and West German debates concerning the reform of the Young Offenders Act in general and education in lieu of incarceration, see especially *Unsere Jugend* 1949, Nr. 10, 30; *Unsere Jugend* (1950), 10, *Unsere Jugend* (1949), 21. A series of warm reflections from one caseworker were published in 1961 based on his experiences at one GDR facility. Hans Joachim Mahlberg, *Man Muss Nur den Schlüssel Finden. Erzählung aus einem Jugendwerkhof.* (Rudolstadt, 1961).
40. Despite efforts to promote education instead of incarceration for teenaged youth, in special circumstances charges could be kept in custody beyond their eighteenth birthday if the situation warranted continued supervision. BArch Berlin, DC 4 Amt für Jugendfragen, Nr. 1657 die Arbeit zwischen Jugendklubbhäuser und Heimen und soziale Betreuung Jugendlicher 1952–1956, Bericht über die Lage in den Jugendwerkhöfen und die Perspektiven im 2. Fünfjahrplan (undated).
41. BArch Berlin, DP 1 Ministerium der Justiz, Hauptabteilung Strafvollzug II-42 Jugendstrafvollzug 1949–1952. Report from 30.09.50 Ministerium für Volksbildung des Landes Sachsen, Jugendhilfe, und Heimerziehung titled “Unsere kommenden Aufgaben in Jugendwerkhöfen.”
42. BArch Berlin, DP 1 Ministerium der Justiz, Hauptabteilung Strafvollzug II-42 Jugendstrafvollzug 1949–1952. Working plan for the amelioration of youth workhouses as drafted by Dr. Gentz and submitted to the Ministerium der Justiz upon receipt of the 30.09.50 report from Saxony.
43. The problems affecting East Berlin and the emerging GDR were not necessarily specific to the East. Overcrowding of youth facilities, including the mixing of simple offenders and more advanced criminals, raised the ire of many youth advocates in the West as well. See the article “Jugend protestieren” in *Juna* from 12.09.1950 regarding the deplorable conditions in the Plötzensee youth facility. In an article in *Telegraf* from 15.06.48 titled “Sommersonntag hinter Gefängnismauern: als Chorsänger im Jugendgefängnis Plötzensee—Gespräche mit Häftlingen—Kriminelle, Gefährdete, Gestrauchelte,” the author reports how the young prisoners eat

- their rations out of empty cans that have been cleaned with sand because there were no available dishes.
44. In the Treuenbrietzen facility, boys lived in small groups with a single caseworker in what were deliberately designed as family-like environments. See Horning, “Die Arbeit des Jugendwerkhofes Treuenbrietzen an straffällig gewordenen und erziehungsgefährdeten Jugendlichen,” *Neue Justiz* 3 (1949), 38–39.
 45. For an example from Saxony, see the article by an Amtsgericht judge in Aue, “Erfahrungen mit dem produktiven Arbeitseinsatz Strafgefangener,” *Neue Justiz* 4 (1950), 57–58.
 46. At Struveshof in Ludwigsfelde, boys could learn a variety of trades in the facility’s workshops including roofing, carpentry, and electrical work. Generally, youths did not enjoy agricultural work because the hours were long and the work hard. They were rarely embraced by local farmers, who often saw them as difficult city youths with poor attitudes and a lack of respect. See C Rep 120 Magistrat von Berlin, Abteilung Volksbildung, Nr. 2710 Geschäftstätigkeit des Jugendwerkhofes Struveshof, 1948–1960.
 47. LAB C Rep 120 Magistrat von Berlin, Abteilung Volksbildung, Nr. 2976 Tätigkeit der Berliner Heime und Jugendwerkhöfe. Die gegenwärtige Situation in den Berliner Jugendwerkhöfen—no date but from 1956, 194–201 (undated but ca. 1956).
 48. The persistence of traditional gender roles despite the language of equality has been emphasized in a variety of studies. For an example, see Ina Merkel, “Leitbilder und Lebensweisen von Frauen in der DDR” in *Sozialgeschichte der DDR*.
 49. See “Die Errichtung eines Fürsorge-Erziehungsheimes für gefährdete Mädchen ist im Schloss Friedrichswerth Friedrichswerth,” *Abendpost*, 16 August 1947.
 50. Brandenburgisches Landeshauptarchiv—Abteilung Bornim, Rep 212 Ministerium der Justiz Hauptabteilung Justiz, Nr. 1266 Haftlager Heidekrug für Frauen 1947–1949. Report from Gerda Konrad and Helene Wosniak from 23.06.1950. Conditions were also deplorable in the Landesmädchenheim Schenkendorf near Königs Wusterhausen. See Nr. 1366, Unterbringung weiblicher Jugendlicher im Landesmädchenheim Schenkendorf bei Königs Wusterhausen 1951.
 51. “Erziehung mit Schlagermusik: Ein Besuch im Erziehungsheim für gefährdete Mädchen,” *Neue Zeit*, 28 May 1948.
 52. Dr. Schimmelpfeng, “Die Betreuung von Kindern, Jugendlichen und Heranwachsenden in Heimen und Anstalten” in *Bekämpfung der Jugendkriminalität: Arbeitstagung im Bundeskriminalamt Wiesbaden vom 1. November bis 6. November über die Jugendlichen und Heranwachsenden* (Wiesbaden, 1955), 231.
 53. Merkblatt zur Bekämpfung der Jugendkriminalität, Zonenkriminalamt Referat K6, Berlin dated 28.5.47, author unknown. BArch Berlin, DO 1 7.0 Deutsche Verwaltung des Innern (DvdI), Nr. 353 Broschüren Materialien zur Verordnung zum Schutz der Jugend 1948.
 54. Merkblatt zur Bekämpfung der Jugendkriminalität, Zonenkriminalamt Referat K6, Berlin dated 28.5.47. BArch Berlin, DO 1 7.0 Deutsche Verwaltung des Innern (DvdI), Nr. 353 Broschüren Materialien zur Verordnung zum Schutz der Jugend 1948.
 55. For more information and statistics from the early postwar situation in Berlin see Heide Thurnwald, *Gegenwartsprobleme Berliner Familien: Eine soziologische Untersuchung an 498 Familien* (Berlin, 1948).
 56. Hans Eyferth, *Gefährdete Jugend: Erziehungshilfe bei Fehlentwicklung* (Hannover, 1950), 4.
 57. On cross-fertilization and sharing of resources: Uta Poiger points to the paradoxes provided by postwar Berlin. In the sensational court proceedings against gang member Werner Gladow held in East Berlin in 1950, the prosecution actually called for the expert testimony of a West Berlin psychiatrist. Despite the entrenched battle lines between the two states, this court case demonstrates the continued sharing of resources until the early 1950s. See Poiger’s discussion

- of the case in *Jazz, Rock and Rebels: Cold War Politics and American Culture in a Divided Germany* (Berkeley, 1999), 48–51.
58. Even as late as 1955, East Berlin health authorities continued to lament the influx of itinerant youth that lounged about in unsavory circles and frequently fell into prostitution. See LAB C Rep 118 Magistrat des Gesundheits- und Sozialwesens, Nr. 555 Beratung zur Bekämpfung der Prostitution, Dezember 1955. Meeting on 6.12.1955 in the Headquarters of the Committee to Fight the Spread of Venereal Disease. Responses to report by a representative of the district of Mitte on the importance of working together with the police and social services to combat the spread of disease in the East. According to the Director of the East Berlin Department of Health, Dr. Gross, each police precinct recorded between eight hundred and one thousand unregistered and homeless people, many of them youths. See his letter from 2.12.1954 to the representative of the mayor of Berlin, Frau Johanna Kuzia in LAB C Rep 118 Magistrat des Gesundheits- und Sozialwesens, Nr. 668 Maßnahmen zur Bekämpfung der Geschlechtskrankheiten besonders bei Jugendlichen 1954–1955.
 59. Text by law student Gerda Grube in *Zur Geschichte der Rechtspflege der DDR 1945–1949*, which was purportedly written by a collective of authors under the direction of Hilde Benjamin (Berlin, 1976), 277.
 60. See the individual cases listed in Archiv Diakonisches Werk (ADW), Gesamtverband der Berliner Inneren Mission (GVB), Nr. 14, Verschiedenes 1945–1951, “Jugendliche in Gefahr. Jugendliche Verbrechen in Berlin,” a forty-five-page report on youth homes in Berlin-Brandenburg, undated but written around 1950.
 61. See Uta Poiger, “Rock ‘n’ roll, Kalter Krieg und deutsche Identität” in *Amerikanisierung und Sowjetisierung in Deutschland 1945–1970*, edited by Konrad H. Jarausch and Hannes Siegrist (Frankfurt, 1997), 275–289; in addition to her article “A New, “Western” Hero? Reconstructing German Masculinity in the 1950s” *Signs: Journal of Women in Culture and Society* 24 (1998), 147–162.
 62. See the letter from the head of the East Berlin department of health dated 3.5.1955. LAB C Rep 118 Magistrat des Gesundheits- und Sozialwesens, Nr. 668 Maßnahmen zur Bekämpfung der Geschlechtskrankheiten besonders bei Jugendlichen 1954–1955.
 63. See the psychological assessment and case file of the underage Erhard S. charged with homosexual prostitution in 1958 in LAB B Rep 069, Jugendstrafanstalt Plötzensee, Acc. 4202, Nr. 1032.
 64. See the article “Jugend protestiert” in *Juna* from 12.09.1950.
 65. This argument was made in reference to West Germany in Robert Moeller, *Protecting Motherhood: Women and the Family in the Politics of Postwar Germany* (Berkeley, 1993).
 66. Makarenko was highly regarded among pedagogues and his writings were frequently cited in the documents. He represents the Soviet state’s efforts to deal with the growing problem of homeless children and juvenile crime after 1917. For one of his key contributions to juvenile delinquency, see A. S. Makarenko, *Problems of Soviet School Education* (Moscow, 1965). Makarenko was especially lauded for his work with the *besprizornyi* or delinquents of the early post revolutionary era. Wendy Goldman suggests that in Soviet Russia by 1924, the state viewed young criminals as a distinct subculture that was “stubbornly entrenched and inimical to the ideals of the state.” To deal with the problem posed by young offenders, the state sought new ways to channel their energy towards respect for the family and key social institutions. See Wendy Z. Goldman, *Women, the State, and Revolution: Soviet Family Policy and Social Life, 1917–36* (Cambridge, 1993), 89. For additional information on the problem of child welfare and juvenile delinquency in post-1917 Soviet Russia, see Alan M. Ball, *And Now My Soul Is Hardened: Abandoned Children in Soviet Russia, 1918–1930* (Berkeley, 1994); Laurie Bernstein, “Fostering the Next Generation of Socialists: *Patronirovanie* in the Fledgling Soviet

- State,” *Journal of Family History* 26 (2001), 66–89; Margaret K. Stolee, “Homeless Children in the USSR, 1917–1957,” *Soviet Studies* 40 (1988); and Jennie A. Stevens, “Children of the Revolution: Soviet Russia’s Homeless Children (Besprizorniki) in the 1920s,” *Russian History/Histoire Russe* 9 (1982), 250–252.
67. Presse- und Informationsstelle Berlin, Bundesministerium für gesamtdeutsche Fragen, *Der V. Parteitag der SED (10.—16.7. 1958): Eine Analyse* (Berlin, 1958); also printed in *Neues Deutschland*, 18.7.1958.
 68. Elizabeth Heineman includes a short description of the use of workhouses for the work-shy, prostitutes, and asocials during the war. See *What Difference Does a Husband Make? Women and Marital Status in Nazi and Postwar Germany* (Berkeley, 1999), 30.
 69. See Richard F. Wetzell, *Inventing the Criminal: A History of German Criminology, 1880–1945* (Chapel Hill, 2000), 233–294.
 70. The best analysis of the influence of American culture on postwar German youth can be found in Uta G. Poiger, *Jazz, Rock, and Rebels*.
 71. Much work has been done on the Free German Youth movement in English and in Germany. Wilkinson, *Training Socialist Citizens* examines the role of sport in East Germany’s quest to mould and shape healthy and active socialist citizens.
 72. The closed workhouse of Torgau was regarded as the most heinous juvenile facility in the GDR. For information on its history see Gerhard Jörns, 149–178, and especially Norbert Haase, Brigitte Oleschinski, eds., *Das Torgau-Tabu: Wehrmachtsstrafsystem, NKWD-Speziallager, DDR-Strafvollzug* (Leipzig, 1993).
 73. Annette Timm argues that the ongoing importance of population politics in Berlin health policy suggests that the family occupied a primary role in shaping socialist citizenship. See “Guarding the Health of Worker Families in the GDR: Socialist Health Care, *Bevölkerungspolitik*, and Marriage Counselling, 1945–72.”
 74. BArch Berlin, DC 4 Amt für Jugendfragen, Nr. 1401, Bekämpfung der Jugendkriminalität, Thesen für die Bezirksbeauftragten zur Zentralen Arbeitsgemeinschaft für Jugendschutz zur Vorbereitung und Durchführung der Konferenzen über die Fragen des Jugendschutzes in den Bezirken, circa 1958.