



Press release

## Injustice in the State of Law - Workshop discussion about the Paragraph 175 of the German Criminal Code

Berlin, February 7<sup>th</sup> 2017

The TEDDY AWARD – the queer film award of the Berlinale and the **Humboldt Forum** invite to the **Workshop discussion** about Paragraph 175 of the German Criminal Code, which will take place on Tuesday, **February 14<sup>th</sup> 2017 at 7 PM.**

In October 2016 the Federal Minister of Justice Heiko Maas has introduced a draft proposal to rehabilitate the victims of Paragraph 175. This proposal suggests that decisions to convict according to Paragraph 175 between 1945 and 1969 are annulled and compensated for. Rehabilitation and compensation for the victims would also initiate a social debate that reviews the history of the systematic persecution of homosexuals by the state in those decades, and the history(s) and sufferings of those affected by it and, in particular, the way the convicts are portrayed In the memory of our society. The workshop discussion is a part of this debate.

This event takes place in **Musterraum** (Model Room) of the **Schlossbaustelle** (Palace building site) at the **Eingang Süd** (South Entrance), Schlossplatz, Ecke Breite Straße. The working language of the workshop is **German**.

Visitors can register for the event at [events.humboldtforum.com/event.php?vnr=47-10a](http://events.humboldtforum.com/event.php?vnr=47-10a). Upon **registration** a seat can be reserved. We ask the Press and media related persons to apply for an **accreditation** by Mirko Nowak – [m.nowak@humboldtforum.com](mailto:m.nowak@humboldtforum.com)

Until 1969 men in the Federal Republic of Germany could be prosecuted for homosexual acts. The so-called "unnatural sodomy" could lead to up to five years of imprisonment. Through the rite of the so-called "voluntary emasculation", victims were threatened with punishment. Just a few days ago, the latest findings from historians show that were castrations of homosexual men were taking place in the correctional hospital of Hohenasperg until the late 1960s. It was only in 1994 that Paragraph 175 was excluded from the German Criminal Code. Although convictions from the period of National Socialism were pardoned in 2002 and convicts were rehabilitated, prosecutions from the time of the Federal Republic remained unchanged. In October 2016, Federal Minister of Justice, Heiko Maas, presented a draft proposal on the rehabilitation of all victims of Paragraph 175, including those who were convicted between 1945 and 1969.

Rehabilitation and compensation for the victims would also initiate a social debate that reviews the history of the systematic persecution of homosexuals by the state in those decades, and the history(s) and sufferings of those affected by it and, in particular, the way the convicts are portrayed In the memory of our society.



The film *Paragraph 175* by the Oscar winners Rob Epstein and Jeffrey Friedman, the cinematic standard work on the subject, premiered at the Berlinale in 2000 and received the TEDDY AWARD of the Berlinale for the best documentary film. This film serves as the basis for a digital debate platform and is supplemented in a modular way with excerpts from other films on the subject, interviews, text contributions and documents. The workshop discussion is intended to extend these foundations through current discussions. The video clip of the workshop will be available for events, lessons and digital media for further continuation of the contemporary social debate.

The **TEDDY AWARD** is given out during the Berlin International Film Festival since 1987 and is recognised as the most visited queer film award in the world. It has a high reputation and credibility and has become an established international platform for the communication and discussion of queer topics and developments in the societies and cultures of the world over the course of its 30-year history.

Those who want to understand the world come to the **Humboldt Forum**. Until the completion of the Berlin Palace, the Humboldt Forum expands its impact with diverse programmes. As a forum for the public, the Humboldt Forum not only welcomes all topics, but it also invites everyone to exchange information. The main contributors to the Humboldt Forum are the Prussian Cultural Heritage Foundation (SPK) with the Ethnological Museum and the Museum of Asian Art, the Berlin Cultural Projects with the help of the Stadtmuseum Berlin and the Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin. Together, they present a unique concentration of everyday objects, spiritual objects and works of art combined with scientific and research facilities as well as a new presentation opportunities. The Humboldt Forum is starts now!

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**Participants:** Margit Gottstein, State Secretary for consumer protection and anti-discrimination at the Senator for justice, consumer protection and anti-discrimination,  
Prof. Dr. Martin Lücke, Professor for Didactics of History at the Friedrich-Meinecke-Institut, Free University of Berlin,  
Helmut Kress, witness,  
A statement "Archive of the Other Memories" by Dr. Daniel Baranowski of the Federal Foundation Magnus Hirschfeld

**Welcoming:** Stefan Schmidtke, Humboldt Forum

**Date** February 14, 2017

**Time** 7 PM, Entry from 6:30 PM

**Place** Musterraum of the Schlossbaustelle  
Eingang Süd, Schlossplatz, Ecke Breite Straße

**Entrance** free

**Registration** <http://events.humboldtforum.com/event.php?vnr=47-10a>

**Organiser** TEDDY AWARD – the queer award of the Berlinale

**Partner** Humboldt Forum Kultur GmbH

On behalf of the Humboldt Forum Foundation in the Berlin Palace

**Press contact** Mirko Nowak, Head of Communication in Culture

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