

Institute for Sexual Research: “Un-German” and “Unnatural” Literature is Sorted Out (May 6–10, 1933)

Abstract

On May 6, 1933, students at the Berlin School of Physical Education [*Hochschule für Leibesübungen*] raided the Institute for Sexual Research [*Institut für Sexualwissenschaft*] in Berlin and plundered its library. The institute had been founded in 1919 by physician and sexologist Magnus Hirschfeld (1868–1935), who had devoted the better part of his career to enlightening the public about homosexuality and fighting for greater rights for homosexuals. The Institute for Sexual Research was dedicated to the exploration of a variety of sexual topics, including sexually transmitted diseases, marital problems, abortion, and homosexuality. The National Socialists were quick to target the institute for its work, and persecuted Hirschfeld for being Jewish and gay. The photograph below shows the Institute after the May 6th raid. On May 10, 1933, the Institute’s books were burned on Berlin’s Opera Square [*Opernplatz*]. The National Socialist students who participated in this book burning also threw a bust of Hirschfeld into the flames. Hirschfeld was forced into exile in France, where he died in 1935.

Source



Source: “Un-german Literature” is sorted out in advance of the book burning ceremony. Location: Berlin. Unknown photographer.

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