Lecture: Transgender Identities and the Police in Nazi Germany by Dr. Laurie Marhoefer

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Dr. Laurie Marhoefer gave a lecture at Oregon State University School of History, Philosophy, and Religion as a part of the George and Dorothy Carson History Lecture Series. Before the Nazis came to power, Germany was one of the global centers of trans activism and home to a thriving subculture of people with transgender identities. You could legally change your birth-assigned sex in some German cities even before 1900. The Nazis changed this. They brutally enforced Germany’s law against “cross-dressing.” Yet many trans people seem to have nevertheless found ways to escape the violence, especially if they were not defined as “racial enemies” of the state. This talk looks at transgender activism before 1933 and discusses what happened to trans people under the Nazi State.