

Media review published in *Library Journal*, May 1, 2002, 127(8): 146.

*Paragraph 175*, color & b/w. 81 min. Rob Epstein & Jeffrey Friedman, Reflective Image, dist.by New Yorker Films, 2001.

Like their films *Common Threads* and *The Times of Harvey Milk*, Epstein and Friedman's *Paragraph 175* is a powerful yet intimate production. The film's title refers to Germany's 1871 antisodomy law, largely ignored in post-World War I Berlin. Gay culture thrived there, including the first gay rights movement. After the Night of Long Knives, when Hitler rid himself of the SA and the SS was born, *Paragraph 175* broadened the definition of homosexuality to include gossip and innuendo. Gays who thought their German nationality would save them from Nazi persecution were quickly proven wrong. Those who were lucky were "only" sent to prison; between 10,000 and 15,000 gays were sent to concentration camps. Of the fewer than ten who now survive, five were interviewed for this film. Their stories are compelling: sometimes sweet, other times horrific. Sixty years later, their pain is palpable. Of those interned, only the homosexuals remained prisoners after World War II; the antisodomy law was enforced until 1969. This document of the Nazi persecution of homosexuals is highly recommended for all collections.

By Gerald Notaro, University of South Florida St. Petersburg