



Larry in his New York home – 11.08.2022 updating GW

Lawrence D. Mass, M.D., a specialist in addiction medicine, is a cofounder of Gay Men’s Health Crisis and was the first to write about AIDS for the press. He is the author of *We Must Love One Another or Die: The Life and Legacies of Larry Kramer*. He published his book *On The Future of Wagnerism*, a sequel to his memoir, *Confessions of a Jewish Wagnerite*. For additional biographical information on Lawrence D. Mass, please see: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Lawrence_D._Mass

Larry Mass on Gottfried Wagner

For Gottfried Wagner, my work on Wagner, art and addiction struck an immediate chord of recognition. I was trying to describe what Gottfried has long referred to as “Wagner intoxication.” In fact, he thought this would make a good title for my book. The subtitle he suggested was taken from the title of his Foreword to my *Confessions of a Jewish Wagnerite*: “Redemption from Wagner the redeemer: some introductory thoughts on Wagner’s antisemitism.” The meaning of this phrase, “redemption from the redeemer,” taken from Nietzsche, is discussed in the interview with Gottfried that follows these reflections. Like me, Gottfried sees the world of Wagner appreciation as deeply affected by a cultish devotion that from its inception was cradling history’s most irrational and extremist mass-psychological movement. Like other intoxications, full-blown Wagnerism involves levels of denial and rationalization that have few if any counterpart in the appreciations of other art and artists, and none at all in intensity, consequence and persistence. Just as there is no Mozartism, Verdiism and Brahmsism (notwithstanding personality cultism around Liszt, Mahler and others), no other art demands such denial of its content and import. To be sure, there is antisemitism, just as there is racism, sexism and homophobia, in the lives of other artists and artworks, but none comparable to that which marks the life and art of Richard Wagner. My connection with Gottfried was immediate and strong. In the late 1980’s, as I was completing my memoir, *Confessions of a Jewish Wagnerite*, for which he would write a Foreword, Gottfried was visiting New York. He was to meet with colleagues and speak publicly regarding the enthusiastic collusion of the Wagner family and Bayreuth with Hitler and Nazism, and how Wagner himself and his music dramas contributed significantly to the *perpetration* of the Holocaust.

**Gottfried H.Wagner's book „Thou Shalt Have no Other Gods Before me –
Adam Sacks on German Edition 2013**

Dr. Adam Sacks on March 7, 2016:

I am writing to bring to your attention an important and timely book on the man and the myth of Richard Wagner, "Thou Shalt Have no Other Gods Before Me." There has yet to be a book in English that so directly and clearly confronts the dissonance between Wagner as an icon of inhumanity unique among artists, yet who is the celebrated center of an international cult still flourishing today. This explosive book therefore portends a seismic shift in our understanding of Wagner and unmask him as the anti-Gandhi and anti-Mandela for our time. Tailored to the needs and interests of as broad as possible a reading public, this book has been produced by none other than Wagner's own great-grandson, Gottfried. Yet this is no personal exposé or family-tell-all; Gottfried already accomplished that task years ago, and to great acclaim. His first book, "Twilight of the Wagners," was an international bestseller that proved the great interest and viability of such a subject and audience in the international arena. This second book is instead not a memoir but a serious, thoroughly researched work of public history that chronicles Wagner as an epigone of all the worst ills of modernity. He has now authorized me as a trained historian to guide this project to translation and expansion for the English-speaking world. Gottfried Wagner's "Thou Shalt Have no Other Gods Before Me," has already been published to strong press and public reception by the Ullstein Verlag in 2013. This new version and translation of the German is clearly organized into pithy and powerful chapters that thoroughly pull apart each aspect of the personality, operatic works, and career of Richard Wagner and his successors. Each chapter further frames these subjects for what they were and still represent today: the antithesis of every value enshrined in the international family of nations. In our era of refugee crises, religious conflicts, challenges to gender norms, how can any society, let alone the leading circles of Germany, continue to hallow the values of such a figure as Wagner? The accomplishments of this book are especially crucial for an English-speaking/American audience that continues to support one of the most conservative and uncritical Wagner infrastructures in the world. Not coincidentally, this audience also remains largely unaware of the actual meaning and subtleties of much of Wagner's work in its original language and context. Moreover, contrary to that which is commonly assumed, Jewish artists and thinkers have been at the forefront of the Wagner cult since the very beginning, which forms a surprisingly overlooked dimension of this whole phenomenon. Our English language edition will feature an expanded concluding section to illuminate precisely this issue of Wagner and his Jewish acolytes. Finally, much more than a catalogue of iniquities about a composer well known to have inspired Hitler, Gottfried's latest book is a meditation on the sublime aesthetics of Wagner that too often conceal a program of psychological terror and prejudice. Courageous and inspired, this book ultimately expresses new insights about the relationship between art, ethics and human rights that are perfectly in tune with critical issues today, an era in which more and more societies are rethinking the place and presence of past idols. In the attached dossier, please find a sample translation of the introduction and a comprehensive précis of the chapters. Detailed resumes for Gottfried Wagner and myself as well as samples of critical acclaim for the European version of this text can be furnished upon request. Sincerely, Adam J. Sacks,
Ph.D. Adam_Sacks@Brown.edu

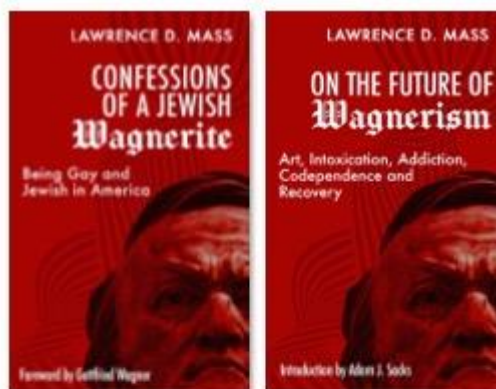
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