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Through science to selfhood? The early generations of university women in fiction.

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Abstract: *The figure of the female student epitomized, for many German-speaking writers around 1900, the intellectual and social freedom supposedly enjoyed by the New Woman. After World War One, these freedoms were more likely to be represented by a white-collar worker or woman in public life, with university now being just one of the many possibilities beyond the domestic sphere. This comparative study of texts by women about female scientists examines how far the figure of the* Akademikerin *had lost her radical potential by the interwar era. The examples of pre-war fiction considered here (Aimée Duc's* Sind es Frauen? *and Ilse Frapan's* Arbeit*) foreshadow the politics of location as practised in the academy in the late twentieth century, by questioning hierarchies, challenging women's outsider status, and carving out new space for collective endeavours. By contrast, in the two novels from the interwar era (Grete von Urbanitzky's* Eine Frau erlebt die Welt *and Vicki Baum's* Stud. chem. Helene Willfüer*), the scientific setting serves mostly to heighten the presentation of a gifted woman in the 'male domain' of science. Earlier prejudices about female students are reprised as a foil for the clever, life-affirming heroine, yet her emancipatory potential may be undermined by the ultimate emphasis on her maternal instinct.*

Keywords: *New Woman, education, feminism, fiction, turn-of-the-century, interwar years, Germany, Switzerland*

Article:

Education was at the forefront of campaigning by the activists of the first women's movement, as they sought to release women from their economic dependency on marriage. A university degree was generally required to be able to enter the professions, and this entailed a widening of intellectual and social vistas hitherto deemed unthinkable for single middle-class women, whose reputation depended upon ignorant innocence. This was irresistible subject matter for writers who saw the development as emblematic of changes in wider society: 'die Frauen dienen als Barometer der Staaten', as Louise Otto had observed as early as 1843.[1]Around the turn of the century the fiction dealing with this topic—some 20 to 30 texts published between 1890 and 1910 alone—is varied in style and function, from thoughtful literary responses by Lou Andreas-Salomé and Else Croner, to thinly disguised autobiographical novels by Ella Mensch and Käthe Schirmacher,and from

[1] Louise Otto, 'Die Theilnahme der weiblichen Welt am Staatsleben' in *Sächsische Vaterlandsblätter* (1843), 633, cited in Tanja-Carina Riedel, *Gleiches Recht für Frau und Mann. Die bürgerliche Frauenbewegung und die Entstehung des BGB* (Weimar: Böhlau, 2008), p. 8.

politicized writing such as that by Ilse Frapan and Aimée Duc discussed here to entertaining novels by Ernst von Wolzogen and Lily Braun, in which the female students add a dash of levity or even danger. Finally, there are dramas by Else Bernstein and Gerhart Hauptmann, which feature female students or doctors but more as signifiers of unrest in gender relations.[2] Whereas in the pre-1914 era, the figure of the student offered a shorthand entry into the whole thematic field of the New Woman, the new possibilities for women to take on white-collar work and careers in entertainment, sport or politics in the Weimar era offered writers a wider field to explore.[3] The figure of the student became less ubiquitous in fiction concerned with gender roles, although student novels did still appear, including Gertrud Grote's *Studentinnen* (1927), Kitty Kornitzer's *Dr. Gerda Mertens* (1928) and Josefine Widmar's *Die Kameradin* (1930), as well as the novels to be considered here by Vicki Baum (*Stud. chem. Helene Willfüer*,1928) and Grete von Urbanitzky(*Eine Frau erlebt die Welt*,1935). Another group of texts from the interwar years, which appealed to an older target readership, were the fond reminiscences of student days such as Ricarda Huch's *Frühling in der Schweiz* and Franziska Tiburtius's *Erinnerungen einer Achtzigjährigen*.[4]

The topos of the 'university woman' was apparent, then, in texts which represented widely differing viewpoints and political intentions, as well as encompassing a variety of academic subject areas. The natural sciences were considered to present the greatest challenge for female students, not only on account of assumptions about women's natural aptitudes and lack of rationality, but also because of the generally unsatisfactory grounding in sciences and mathematics provided by most girls' schools. However, natural sciences—especially in their applied modes such as medicine—had the greatest emancipatory potential in terms both of women's contribution to society and their individual professional prospects. From the start, efforts to open up higher education to women in

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[2]Käthe Schirmacher, *Die Libertad* (1891); Gerhart Hauptmann, *Einsame Menschen* (1891); Else Bernstein, *Dämmerung* (1893); Theodor Fontane, *Frau Jenny Treibel* (1892);"Mathilde Möhring" (1896 / 1906); Lou Andreas-Salomé, „Fenitschka" (1898); „Ma" (1901); Elsa Asenijeff, *Aufruhr der Weiber und das dritte Geschlecht* (1898); IlseFrapan, *Die Betrogenen* (1898), *Wir Frauen haben kein Vaterland. Monologe einer Fledermaus* (1899), *Arbeit* (1903); Ernst von Wolzogen, *Das Dritte Geschlecht* (1899); Aimée Duc, *Sind es Frauen? Roman über das dritte Geschlecht* (1901); Ella Mensch, *Auf Vorposten. Roman aus meiner Züricher Studentenzeit* (1903); Else Croner, *Das Tagebuch eines Fräulein Doktor* (1908); Grete Meisel-Heβ, *Die Intellektuellen* (1911); Lily Braun, *Lebenssucher* (1915).The number of texts doubles if one includes pamphlets and autobiographies. An extensive bibliography is provided in Romana Weiershausen, *Wissenschaft und Weiblichkeit. Die Studentin in der Literatur der Jahrhundertwende* (Göttingen: Wallstein, 2004),pp. 273-82.

[3] For surveys see Lynda J. King, 'Probable or Possible? The Issue of Women's Emancipation in German Literature of the 1920s', *Rocky Mountain Review of Language and Literature*, 35 (1981), 138-53; Lynda J. King, 'The Woman Question and Politics in Austrian Interwar Literature', *German Studies Review*, 6 (1983), 75-100;Sigrid Schmid-Bortenschlager, Christa Gürtler, *Erfolg und Verfolgung.Österreichische Schriftstellerinnen, 1918-1945.Fünfzehn Porträts und Texte*(Salzburg: Residenz, 2002); Kerstin Barndt, *Sentiment und Sachlichkeit. Der Roman der Neuen Frau in der Weimarer Republik* (Cologne; Weimar: Böhlau, 2003).

[4] Ricarda Huch, *Frühling in der Schweiz. Jugenderinnerungen* (Zürich: Atlantis Verlag, 1938); Franziska Tiburtius, *Erinnerungen einer Achtzigjährigen*, (Berlin: C.A. Schwetschke & Sohn, 1929). Rahel Straus's memoir *Wir lebten in Deutschland. Erinnerungen einer deutschen Jüdin, 1880-1933* (Stuttgart: Deutsche Verlagsanstalt, 1961) deals with education in the pre-World War One era and her medical career but was written after World War Two.

the German states (such as the *Hochschule für das weibliche Geschlecht* in Hamburg, 1850-1852 and the *Frauenbildungsvereine*[5]) attracted democratically minded women, and many early feminists of the 1860s had trained as teachers, since teaching seminaries were the only established form of tertiary education for women.[6] By the 1880s, there were demands for girls to be prepared for university entrance in order to study medicine, a subject which could be justified within the moderate feminist movement on the moral and altruistic grounds summed up in the term *organisierteMütterlichkeit*.[7] In fact, over half the women who went into higher education by 1908 had chosen to study medicine, since doctors could practice independently and were less hindered by the bureaucracy and professional associations of state education and the civil service.[8]

More radical egalitarian feminists in the 'Reform' associations aimed to achieve women's entry to all university courses and all graduate professions.[12] Driving this debate forward and increasingly linking education to wider political and social change via the acquisition of female suffrage were second-generation feminists (whose activism was part of the radical wave of the 1890s and early 1900s) such as Anita Augspurg and Helene Stöcker who had been to university in Switzerland. The University of Zürich allowed (individual) women to matriculate in the medical faculty from 1864[13] and by 1894 there were 128 women studying there, 117 of them from abroad.[14] The opportunity to study in Switzerland put pressure on the German universities to reconsider their admissions policies, since in Germany women were sometimes accepted as auditorsbut were not allowed to take qualifying exams, and their admission to the lecture theatre was entirely at the

[5] *Frauenbildungsvereine* were established in Leipzig (1865), Vienna (1866), Salzburg (1875) and Graz (1876).

[6] Claudia Huerkamp, *Bildungsbürgerinnen. Frauen im Studium und in akademischen Berufen* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1996); Edith Glaser, 'Emancipation or Marginalisation: New Research on Women Students in the German-Speaking World', *Oxford Review of Education*, 23 (1997), 169-84; Harriet Pass Friedenreich, *Female Jewish and Educated: The Lives of Central European University Women* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2002); Patricia Mazón, *Gender and the Modern Research University: The Admission of Women to German Higher Education, 1865-1914*(Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2003); Katharina Rowold, *The Educated Woman: Minds, Bodies and Women's Higher Education in Britain, Germany and Spain, 1865-1914* (London: Routledge, 2010);Ulrike Auga, Claudia Bruns, LevkeHarders, Gabriele Jähnert (eds.), *Das Geschlecht der Wissenschaften. Zur Geschichte von Akademikerinnen im 19. und 20. Jahrhundert* (Frankfurt a.M.: Campus, 2010); Trude Maurer, *Der Weg an die Universität. Höhere Frauenstudien vom Mittelalter bis zum 20. Jahrhundert* (Göttingen: Wallstein, 2010).

[7]On moderate feminist views about women's public role see, for example, Irene Stoehr, ''OrganisierteMütterlichkeit'. Zur Politik der deutschen Frauenbewegung um 1900' in *Frauen suchen ihre Geschichte*, ed. by Karin Hausen (Munich: Beck, 1983), pp. 221-249 and Angelika Schaser, *Helene Lange und Gertrud Bäumer. Eine politische Lebensgemeinschaft*, (Weimar: Böhlau, 2000).

[8] See Marion A. Kaplan, 'Jewish Women Confront Academia' in Kaplan, *The Making of the Jewish Middle Class: Women, Family and Identity in Imperial Germany*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1991); pp. 145-46.

[12] These associations were the *Deutsche Frauenverein Reform* and *VereinFrauenbildungsreform.*Mazón, *Gender and the ModernResearchUniversity*, p. 69.

[13] Initially, progress was slow: the first woman was admitted to the legal faculty in Zürich almost twnentyyears after medicine had allowed one to matriculate. See Christa Kraft-Schwenk, *Ilse Frapan. Eine Schriftstellerin zwischen Anpassung und Emanzipation* (Würzburg: Königshausen & Neumann, 1985), p. 55.

[14] Arthur Kirchhoff, 'Zahl der immatrikulierten Studenten in der Schweiz', in *Die akademische Frau. Gutachten hervorragender Universitätsprofessoren, Frauenlehrer und Schriftsteller über die Befähigung der Frau zum wissenschaftlichen Studium und Berufe* (Berlin: Steinitz, 1897), p. 369.

discretion of the relevant professor.[16] The heated public debate is exemplified by the interventions of Theodor Bischoff (1872), Heinrich von Treitschke (1894) and Paul Möbius (1900),[17] although a surprising diversity of views is represented in Arthur Kirchhoff's 1897 survey *Die akademische Frau.*[18]

The diligent campaigning to raise the level of girls' secondary education so that they could be prepared for university was paying off despite the opposition of many male professors in the pre-war years. This is an area in which the efforts of the 1860s feminists were taken up with success by radicals whose activism started in the 1880s and 1890s. The trend for women to seek access to higher education only strengthened during and after the war, with the number of students rising from 10.3% in 1923 to 13.5% in 1927, peaking at 18.9% in 1931.[20] This increase and the reach of female graduates into public life was reflected in the formation of the *Deutscher Akademikerinnenbund* in 1926, a new umbrella group which incorporated the *Verband der Studentinnenvereine*, which had existed since 1906.[21] Elizabeth Harvey has pointed out however, that unlike the pioneering women of the pre-war generation, a large proportion of interwar students resisted clear feminist identification, as those involved in the *Bündische Jugendbewegung*, for example, perceived the women's movement as anti-men, while students aligned with the political parties found feminist political neutrality suspect. Others pointed out that solidarity and the expectation to engage with associational work on a voluntary basis were unrealistic given the fierce competition for jobs amongst all graduates. Even those who were happier to refer to themselves as the 'third generation' of feminists found the formal meetings of the *Bund deutscher Frauenvereine* failed to meet their need for open debate and the expression of community.[22]

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[16] Women were accepted as auditors in Heidelberg (1869) and Leipzig (1870);Astrid Franzke, ‚Von den Anfängen: Frauenbewegung, Frauenbildung und Frauenstudium in Leipzig' in *100 Jahre Frauenstudium an der Alma Mater Lipsiensis. Reden und Vorträge zur Konferenz am 9. Mai 2006 an der Universität Leipzig* ed. by Ilse Nagelschmidt (Leipzig: Leipziger Universitätsverlag, 2007), pp. 73-92 (p. 83).

[17] Historian von Treitschke sent women auditors out of his Berlin lectures in 1894. Embryologist Theodor Bischoff (1807-82) asserted in *Das Studium und die Ausübung der Medicin durch Frauen* (1872) that women's brains were less evolved than those of men. Neurologist Paul Möbius (1853-1907) claimed in *Über den physiologischen Schwachsinn des Weibes* (1900) that women were mentally inferior because their primary function was reproductive. See Rowold, *The Educated Woman*, pp.79 and 103.

[18] Kirchhoff, *Die akademische Frau.* Details as above.

[20] These figures are based on the *Statistische Jahrbücher* for 1923, 1928, and 1931, as cited in Jill Stephenson, 'Girls' Higher Education in Germany in the 1930s', *Journal of Contemporary History*,10 (1975), 41-69 (p. 43).

[21] Elizabeth Harvey, 'The Failure of Feminism? Young Women and the Bourgeois Feminist Movement in Weimar Germany, 1918-33', *Central European History*, 28 (1995), 1-28 (p. 11).

[22] See Harvey, 'The Failure of Feminism?', pp. 11, 13, 14, and 16-17, and Claudia Bruns, 'Vertreibt der weibliche Zugang zum Logos den Eros? Zu einer erstaunlich aktuellen Debatte unter Studentinnen der 1920er Jahre', in *Das Geschlecht der Wissenschaften.* ed. by Auga, Bruns, Harders, and Jähnert, pp. 43-74.

I

There are several good historical studies of women's entry into German higher education,[23] but relatively little attention has been paid to how this development was reflected, promoted, and contested in contemporary literature, with the notable exception of Romana Weiershausen's excellent study, *Wissenschaft und Weiblichkeit* (2004) and some articles on individual authors from the *Jahrhundertwende*.[24] To facilitate a meaningful comparison of fiction from the 1900s and 1920s here, it is necessary to focus primarily on those texts which foreground the academic experience and to consider the implications of this experience for feminist politics. With these criteria in mind, I have selected two texts from the turn of the century (Aimée Duc's *Sind es Frauen?* and Ilse Frapan's *Arbeit*) and two interwar texts (Grete von Urbanitzky's *Eine Frau erlebt die Welt* and Vicki Baum's *Stud. chem. Helene Willfüer*) which all deal with female students of science and medicine.

Fiction is a site in which cultural and social discourses are not only reflected but also formed and driven forwards. My reading of the texts is determined to some extent by the notion that they can be seen as an early example of 'minority' literature, since these female authors were articulating the position of excluded others in the academic context, despite being part of a privileged social group in the wider context. A useful approach is to view these texts as expressing a politics of location, mapping 'the historical, geographical, cultural, and imaginative boundaries' of the new territory women were entering. These are boundaries which also provided them with 'a basis for self-definition and sometimes political definition'.[25] These are key terms from the intersectionality debates of the 1990s, when feminist politics, especially within the academy, was trying to find a way of naming different types of oppression and encompassing plurality without shedding solidarity.[26] Indeed, the cosmopolitan, multi-ethnic and energetically experimental atmosphere of women's sociability in some university cities around 1900 foreshadowed the academy as a major site for contesting feminist ideologies towards the end of the twentieth century. However, any comparison of generations within the development of feminism should be undertaken

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[23] See note 6.

[24] In addition to Weiershausen, *Wissenschaft und Weiblichkeit* (see note 2)see Chris Weedon, *Gender, Feminism and the Fiction in Germany, 1840-1914* (New York: Peter Lang, 2006), pp. 43-66; Godela Weiss-Sussex, 'Else Croner und die "moderneJüdin"' in *'Not an Essence but a Positioning': German-Jewish Women Writers, 1900-1938* ed. by Andrea Hammel and GodelaWeiss-Sussex (Munich: Martin Meidenbauer, 2009), pp. 55-74; Charlotte Woodford, *Women, Emancipation and the German Novel 1871-1910. Protest Fiction in its Cultural Context* (London: Legenda, 2014), pp. 143-52.

[25] Chandra Talpade Mohanty, 'Feminist Encounters: Locating the Politics of Experience', in *Feminism and politics*, ed. by Anne Phillips (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998), pp. 254-72.

[26] See Kimberlé Crenshaw, 'Mapping the Margins: Intersectionality, Identity Politics, and Violence against Women of Colour' in *Critical Race Theory: The Key Writings that formed the Movement* ed. by K. Crenshaw, N. Gotanda, G. Peller and K. Thomas (New York: The New Press, 1995), pp. 357-383; Patricia Hill Collins, *Black Feminist Thought: Knowledge, Consciousness and the Politics of Empowerment* (Boston: Unwin Hyman, 1990); Margaret L. Andersen and Patricia Hill Collins, *Race, Class and Gender: An Anthology* (Boston: Wadsworth, 1992).

with caution. Belonging to a generation which benefited from the struggle of earlier women to enter into former male preserves does not imply that one is equally engaged in efforts for the good of women in the future. To differentiate between varying levels of engagement between generations and among members of a particular generation, the following concepts suggested by Karl Mannheim are useful: *Generationslagerung* (generational location – essentially determined by birth date)*, Generationszusammenhang* ('generation as actuality' – denoting participation in experience characteristic of a particular generation)and *Generationseinheit* (a generational unit which responds to or opposes contemporary events and conditions).[28] For example, the women who went to Switzerland to study, campaigning for women's entry to academic courses and the professions, would be considered as a *Generationseinheit* because of their active participation in shaping change, whereas female students of the 1920s, who were engaging in opportunities characteristic for emancipated women of their generation but without trying to shape these further by identifying as or campaigning with feminists, may be considered part of the *Generationszusammenhang.* In the *fin-de-siècle* texts of Duc and Frapan the intellectual liberation and new sense of community offered by higher education compensates for the economic hardship and everyday sexism faced by female students. In the Weimar–era texts by Urbanitzky and Baum, there is a reduced emphasis on the emancipatory potential of higher education and a scientific career, even as career progression itself appears less problematic. It is possible to perceive, even in this small sample of fiction, both continuity of progress in terms of individual achievement and also rupture in terms of wider feminist goals. Fiction allows writers and readers to experiment with identities and in these texts we see steps towards a new personal or collective self-definition: firstly by establishing the critique of the status quo and then by developing a new vision which makes women the agents of change.[29]

The standard male-female, public-private categories prevalent in nineteenth-century gender politics had solidified and even naturalized a gendered hierarchy of difference, with scientific research being called upon to 'prove' the biological foundation of male superiority. In the texts under consideration here, we can see a further set of binary oppositions layered on top of the public-male / private-female paradigm: the national is countered by the cosmopolitan; the privileged by the underprivileged; the subversive by the compliant; the hetero- by the homosexual. The focus

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[28] Karl Mannheim, 'Das Problem der Generationen' in *Kölner Vierteljahrshefte für Soziologie* 7 (1928), 157-185 and 309-330, esp. 309ff. See also Christine Thon, *Frauenbewegung im Wandel der Generationen* (Bielefeld: transcript, 2008) pp. 76ff. The English translations follow those used by Jane Pilcher, ‚Mannheim's Sociology of Generations: an Undervalued Legacy' in *The British Journal of Sociology,* 45/3 (1994) 481-495.

[29] See Cresside Heyes, 'Identity Politics', *Stanford Encylopedia of Philosophy* (Winter 2014 Edition), ed. by Edward N. Zalta <http://plato.stanford.edu/archives/win2014/entries/identity-politics/> [accessed 15 March 2015].

of the analysis will therefore be to examine the articulation of boundaries: how far do the texts present and challenge women's outsider position within the academic community? Do the texts show awareness that women are not only subject to, but also implicated in, power relations and systems of academic patronage? To what extent can we also see in these texts an attempt to envisage or even to build a new sense of community amongst university women?

II

Aimée Duc's[30] short story *Sind es Frauen? Roman über das dritte Geschlecht* (1901)[31] focuses on the issue of the gender identification and life choices of the lesbian protagonists. As has been noted by scholars Claudia Breger and Marti Lybeck, it is unusually positive in its representation of lesbian lives and ends happily.[32] Minotschka Fernandoff and Marta Kinzey are studying in Geneva when Marta is called away to deal with family affairs in Poland. While separated from Minotschka, Marta agrees to a platonic marriage with a dying fellow musician, which keeps the pair apart for two years until a chance meeting in Paris, just as Minotschka is about to leave Europe for a teaching post in Australia. Marta's husband has passed away and the pair are free to plan a future together. This plot is, however, merely a device to hold together the lengthy dialogue scenes which take place on nights out and *Budenabende* in Geneva and Munich.

Sind es Frauen? is a rare early example of fiction in which the majority of the characters featured are lesbians, so that their sexuality effectively becomes the norm for the duration of the text.[33] This narrative perspective introduces the notion of socially enforced heterosexuality, and, by reversing the prevailing conventions, the text presents the straight characters as comic aberrations with bizarre views about women and femininity being defined purely in relation to men. The central figures reveal an awareness that they lead a privileged existence, yet both emotional references to their sense of community and the restless motion of the itinerant students and graduates

[30] Aimée Duc was a pseudonym for the writer, journalist, and editor Minna Wettstein-Adelt (1869- ?), who wrote two other novels—*Ich will* (1902) and *Des Pastors Liebe. Ein Modernes Sittenbild* (1904)—as well as articles on feminism, clothing reform and women's cycling, and the undercover reportage *3 1/2 Monate Fabrikarbeiterin* (Berlin: Leiser, 1893). Irmgard Weyrather, *Die Frau am Fliessband. Das Bild der Fabrikarbeiterin in der Sozialforschung, 1870-1985* (Frankfurt a.M.: Campus, 2003), pp. 47-49; Claudia Breger, 'Feminine Masculinities: Scientific and Literary Representations of "Female Inversion" at the Turn of the Twentieth Century', *Journal of the History of Sexuality*, 14 (2005), 76-106 (pp. 77 and 84).

[31] First edition: Aimée Duc, *Sind es Frauen? Roman über das dritte Geschlecht*, Ecksteins Moderne Bibliothek (Berlin: Eckstein, 1901); reprinted by Amazonen Frauenverlag (Berlin) in 1976. Quotation references are to the 1976 edition and will be noted in the text as *SeF.*

[32] Breger, 'Feminine Masculinities'; Marti M. Lybeck, *Desiring Emancipation. New Women and Homosexuality in Germany, 1890–1933*(Albany: SUNY Press, 2014).

[33] On lesbian fiction in this era see James W. Jones, *'We of the Third Sex': Literary Representations of Homosexuality in Wilhelmine Germany* (New York: Peter Lang, 1990); Claudia Breger, 'Feminine Masculinities'; Christoph Lorey, 'Frauen-Zimmerwelten. Die räumliche Einbindung weiblicher Sexualität in den Romanen *Sind es Frauen* von Aimée Duc und *Das Mädchen Manuela* von Christa Winsloe', in *Forum Homosexualität und Literatur*, 39 (2001), 27–44.

throughout the text underline that their freedom and happiness are precarious and constantly threatened. The university attracts a cosmopolitan range of students, including the French-Russian main protagonist and her Polish lover alongside Austrians, Czechs, Germans, French and Russians. Moving between Geneva, Munich, and Paris, the wide international perspective of the novel provides an opportunity for strong criticism of women's education in Germany: 'Wir müssen uns wundern, dass [die deutschen Frauen] nicht zu Idioten und geistigen Cretins geworden sind, bei der geistigen Hungerkur, der man sie unterwirft. In diesem Falle ist das Weib trotz scheinbarem Zurückbleiben dem Manne weit voraus […]'(*SeF,* 68-69).

Although some minor characters within the lesbian groupings in *Sind es Frauen?* have non-academic careers as artists or actresses, the majority of the figures who feature prominently are either students of medicine or are already qualified as doctors. Minotschka herself has abandoned medicine because of the profession's refusal to acknowledge lesbian women 'weil die Ehe, der Geschlechtsverkehr zwischen Mann und Weib die Grundlage des medizinischen Erwerbes bilden' (*SeF,* 16). While she has recognized and resists joining a power structure which fails lesbian women, she tries to persuade friends who are about to qualify that they should write a dissertation on the topic, although most agree that the proof would have to be psychiatric rather than physiological (*SeF,* 17-18). In another key scene, a man's assertion that 'die geistige Arbeit, die angestrengte höhere Thätigkeit die Nerven des Weibes ruinieren' is calmly refuted by (Frau) Dr Kassberg: 'Sie urteilen nur als Laie! [...] Da will ich Ihnen als Aerztin hiermit sagen […] Kräftigung des Willens und Schulung des Geistes sind die sichersten prophylaktischen Mittel zur Vorbeugung der Hysterie' (*SeF,* 53). To emphasize the authority of such opinions, the text engages closely with the sexological discourse of the day, mentioning Cesare Lombroso and Richard von Krafft-Ebing by name. However, the women's insistence on the notion of a Third Sex, whose homosexuality is innate, clearly reflects the ideas of Magnus Hirschfeld, whose ideas on women and sexuality were more affirmative than those of Lombroso and Krafft-Ebing. The relationship with medical science is uneasy: on the one hand, the women adopt some of the terminology, such as Krafft-Ebing's 'perverse Menschen', perhaps as an acknowledgement of their existence which was ignored by most people, but on the other they obviously resent being recognised only as psychiatric cases and revalue these terms with positive connotations.

The text suggests a causal link between intellect and sexuality and, for the main protagonists, the privilege of belonging to a lesbian intellectual elite brings with it a responsibility to do something to improve the situation of all lesbian women (*SeF,* 20). However, the women depicted also maintain that compulsory heterosexuality is masking the true number of lesbians in

society, so the large number of academics featured in the text suggests that intellect gives some women access to a more self-determined lifestyle, allowing them the space to explore alternative forms of sexuality.

In terms of feminist politics, the views expressed by the main characters are unmistakeably egalitarian and therefore at the radical edge of the bourgeois women's movement: '[…] in erster Linie sind wir doch alle Menschen, dann erst Gattungswesen'(*SeF,*34). Within that feminist territory, a clear group identity for lesbians is established, underlined by the exclusion of women who marry from the 'Verein'(*SeF,* 12-13). There is much discussion about how best to represent the lesbian cause in public, whether by means of a scientific publication, or consciousness-raising with women, or the provision of better education and preparation for employment, so that women have an informed and realistic choice about whether they should marry or remain as free individuals (*SeF*, 37). The group may be diverse in terms of nationality, academic interests, and temperament, but members share features such as drinking habits, dress, and freedom of movement between cities, hiking, cycling, and on nights out (offering a clear parallel to the fraternities). Most importantly, they acknowledge a shared desire and intention to assert their identity as lesbians and to identify particularly as those who value the life of the mind over physical love(although there are hints at physical intimacy). This text is striking for its awareness of power dynamics: between men and women, between single and married women, and between the medical profession and 'lay people'. It is also noteworthy for the insistence on a sense of community among lesbian university women and the responsibility they feel towards sisters outside academia.

III

Women's capacity to intervene in medicine is also the subject of Ilse Frapan's *Arbeit* (1903),[34]a novel which has attracted attention from scholars of women's writing in recent years for its powerful treatment not only of the debate around the female student, but also the role of women in medicine, the compatibility of work and family life, and the reversal of conventional gender roles within marriage. Frapan addresses all these themes via one figure as her story is based on the unusual premise of a married mother of four, Josefine Geyer, deciding to earn a living for her family by studying and then practising medicine. Her husband, a doctor himself, has been struck off and

[34] Ilse Frapan is a pseudonym for Elise Therese Ilse Lévien (1848-1908) who was herself a student of botany and zoology in Zürich in the 1890s. Christa Kraft-Schwenk, *Ilse Frapan,* p. 54 ff. The edition used here is Ilse Frapan, *Arbeit,* (Berlin: Gebr. Paetel, 1903). Quotation references are to the online version of this edition, available from <www.zeno.org>, and will be noted in the text as *A.* Other key texts by Frapan dealing with female academics are *Wir Frauen haben kein Vaterland. Monologe einer Fledermaus* (1899) and *Die Betrogenen* (1898), but as Weiershausen points out, Frapan continued to write about this theme after the controversy surrounding *Arbeit;* Weiershausen, *Wissenschaft und Weiblichkeit*, p. 99.

jailed for an unspecified crime, but with help from her father and income from student lodgers Josefine is able to stay in Zürich and study medicine. By the time Georges Geyer is released after five years in prison, Josefine is close to submitting her dissertation and qualifying; she is indisputably the head of the household and soon to be its main breadwinner. Despite family conflicts due to role reversal and ill health caused by overwork, Josefine establishes herself as a doctor and gives public lectures on child protection alongside her medical duties.

By locating the novel in Zürich, where women had long been accepted onto university courses, the German writer Frapan reduces the implausibility of a woman deciding to support her family with a medical career, and there are several references by non-Swiss figures in the text to women's freedom in Switzerland, especially in comparison to Germany (*A*, 210 f.). Yet even given this setting, there is a clear sense that female students were only just tolerated. When Josefine speaks out about disrespectful behaviour in the dissection room, her female neighbour comments darkly: 'Das hätten Sie sich sparen können, der bringt's in die Bierzeitung, passen Sie nur auf. Man muß diese Dinge nicht so ernsthaft nehmen. Der Lausbub kommt vom Frühschoppen. Das macht nur böses Blut gegen uns Weibliche. Tun Sie das, bitte nicht wieder' (*A*, 67). Female students were only too aware that their male colleagues were ready to mock, a readiness only heightened by the difference in age between younger males and older female students. Prior to 1900, the dearth of courses which prepared girls for university straight from school in the German-speaking world meant that many women had to complete teaching seminary courses and work for a few years before they could afford (and were considered ready for) university entrance. Criticism of student drinking customs is also apparent here and, indeed, temperance is a recurrent theme in the novel, as Josefine's lodgers are engaged in starting a temperance movement for grammar school pupils, and Josefine later worries about her son's drinking. However, there is no sense of female separatism in this novel: Josefine is supported by her father and her male student lodgers as 'Kameraden, die sie bereitwillig und mit großer Stetigkeit vorwärts schoben' (*A*, 76) and loves the Armenian student Hovannessian, who becomes her inspiration and model of compassion under difficult circumstances.

The text confounds the expectations about women's dependency on every level: the opening premise is that Josefine takes on the profession and with it the familial role of her jailed husband; within her wider family she refuses the offer of financial help from her brothers-in-law to provide for her and her children; as a student she resists the display of power by fellow male students in the dissecting room and the doctors in the lecturing theatre when they treat the patients (or their remains) as mere visual aids; in her home she treats her servants with respect and earns their loyalty. Finally, after qualifying as a doctor, her life's work revolves around saving abused

children in an age when children's rights were barely recognised. In her *Armenpraxis*, where she deals in compassion rather than precisely calculated fees, she wins the trust of working women but is unlikely to achieve wealth. In this way she atones for the treatment of the poor as a free resource in the teaching hospitals of the city.[35] It is the critique of male-dominated science and the profession of medicine from within which makes this book so powerful (and caused such outrage at the time of its publication[36]). The reader's pre-conceived notion of medicine as an altruistic occupation is undermined from the start with the premise of a criminal doctor, further damaged by the behaviour of students and professors in the teaching hospitals, and Josefine notes that even she is in danger of being sucked into the all-pervading sense of ambition so that she might lose sight of the power relations inherent in medicine, as her fellow female students have (*A*,142).

The price of acquiring the skill and authority of a doctor is apparent in her relations with her own family. She houses Georges, who is mentally and physically fragile after his imprisonment, in an unused room upstairs, provides him with a turning lathe for occupation and medicates him from time to time when he becomes upset. As Weiershausen indicates, many features of Georges' life resemble those of the unfulfilled, constricted,and 'hysterical' bourgeois woman of the era, not least in Josefine's exertion of authority over him. One could even posit a gender reversal of the 'madwoman in the attic' motif, underlined by the association of Georges with violence and sexual desire, via his unnamed 'Exzesse', the violent hallucinations which call forth 'Lust und Grausen' (*A*, 303), and the emphasis on his 'fatale Unterlippe ohne alle Form und Zeichnung' (*A*, 28), a feature said to indicate a strong and compulsive libido in the pseudoscience of physiognomy which was resurgent at the time Frapan was writing. Josefine reflects that Georges's frustration and misogyny (*A*, 339-40) are the result of her failure to love him. She is also quick to take the blame for the death of her youngest child, Nina(*A*,97), the insecurity of the older daughter, Rösli, and the drunken sexual exploits of her older son, Hermann. *Arbeit* is a compelling depiction of a mother and professional woman demonstrating agency and using her skill to help others both in her medical practice and her work with abused children. By helping herself, Josefine finds a way to help others, notably working-class women and children, but the process has been fraught with difficulty and has come at a high price for her own family.

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[35]On the class element in medical training and socialist implications of the text, see Weedon, *Gender, Feminism and Fiction*, pp. 60-61 and Woodford, *Women, Emancipation and the German Novel*, pp. 150-51.

[36] Kraft-Schwenk, *Ilse Frapan*, pp. 78-83; Weiershausen, *Wissenschaft und Weiblichkeit*, pp. 119-24; Woodford, *Women, Emancipation and the German Novel*, pp. 151-52.

IV

Like Frapan, Grete von Urbanitzky (1891-1974) had studied in Zürich and was already established as a writer before she turned her attention to the subject of the academic woman, but the similarities between the two novelists end there. *Eine Frau erlebt die Welt* (written 1928-31, published 1934)[37] is a female *Bildungsroman* combined with the ambitious scope of the *Zeitroman*, which uses the settings of the protagonist's adventures to offer a portrait of many different aspects of contemporary life and culture. It is a lengthy novel with an increasingly improbable plot: the orphaned protagonist, Mara, studies mathematics and the organ in Zürich at the expense of a mysterious English benefactor, works as a research assistant to an eminent professor of astrophysics, and dallies with (non-academic) lovers to relax. After the abduction of her baby son from his foster-home, Mara leaves academia for marriage, and a career as a concert organist. In an unlikely denouement, she falls in love with a young man, who in the final pages is revealed to be her own son, brought up in England on the instructions of the same benefactor who had intervened earlier in Mara's life. She flees from this relationship upon learning the truth, in an escape which could also be a suicide attempt.

The novel is of interest here since a lengthy section concerns Mara's student days in Zürich, allowing the author scope to consider how a talented female mind might develop if economically independent and unfettered by familial pressure to adhere to social convention. Thus Urbanitzky can explore women's sexual liberation, as Mara has casual relationships and asserts that some women also view sex as just a physical need (*FeW*, 89-90), an attitude which sits oddly with her strong religious beliefs but is partly accounted for by her southern (Dalmatian) origins and 'heißes Blut' (*FeW*, 161). Many of the sexual prejudices around women in academia are examined in her interactions with other students, including the idea that female students are frigid, or sexually voracious but directing their energies into study, or using academic life as a cover for a libertine lifestyle: as Litschew, a male acquaintance who thinks himself an expert on women, says, 'ich weiß, daß alles, was Sie tun, den Mann will. Immer nur den Mann. Es gibt kein Weib, das sich an eine Idee verschenkt. Wie alle Frauen, sind Sie im Grunde nur darauf aus, durch unsere Begierde bejaht zu werden' (*FeW*, 151). Mara herself enjoys sexual freedom, but any emancipatory aspects are ultimately revoked in the text, as one sexually-active character, Christa, appears to slip towards prostitution (*FeW*, 193) and then commits suicide, while Mara herself becomes ashamed of her earlier behaviour after having her child: 'Bin ich nicht immer zerschlagen von Ekel und

[37]The edition used here is Grete von Urbanitzky, *Eine Frau erlebt die Welt*(Berlin; Vienna:Zsolnay, 1935). Quotation references will be noted in the text as *FeW.*

Selbtserniedrigung heimgekehrt? Befreit, ja. Aber um welchen Preis? Mein Körper wußte besser als ich, daß es Sünde war' (*FeW*, 155).The association of sex and sin, together with the near escape from incest in the denouement reinstate the norms of chastity and maternal sacrifice which Mara has flouted.

There is little sense of comradeship with other female students, let alone a self-directed community of women as in Duc's text; Mara's mentors and sponsors are all male. The interventions of the mysterious benefactor mean that Mara does not have to face financial difficulty or juggle motherhood and scholarship. By excelling at astrophysics and the organ, Mara may have exceeded expectations of female scholarship and musicianship, but this potential is contained by the frequent indications that she is an exceptional individual.[41] In Mara's eyes, both activities are justified only once the talented individual subsumes her achievement to the discipline or worship of some greater force, such as the laws of the universe or God, a conviction which, by the end of the text, has led Mara to become an admirer of Italian Fascism.[42] Likewise, the representation of her involvement as a woman in science has no feminist or even humanitarian implications (such as those in Frapan's text), but rather leads her to an interest in the older 'science' of astrology, which was experiencing a revival in the 1930s due to the influence of anthroposophy and a search for meaning after the catastrophes of the 1910s and 1920s.[44]

V

Vicki Baum's *Stud.Chem. Helene Willfüer*[45] was created more obviously for a mass market, with its fast-paced plot expedited towards a happy ending by a series of striking contrasts in settings, characters, and activities. The penniless student Helene manages to complete her doctorate in chemistry despite an unplanned pregnancy and the suicide of her boyfriend. After struggling to find a position, she is taken on by the ultimately successfully bio-chemistry team who are searching for an antidote to ageing. At the close of the novel, she has negotiated a highly-paid position with the

[41]Gürtler and Schmid-Bortenschlager point out that in a publication from 1913, *Wenn die Weiber Menschen werden ... Gedanken einer Einsamen*, Urbanitzky had built upon Otto Weininger's typography of women as whores or mothers by positing a third 'type', the female artist who must remain single and childless. Mara's failed relationships and separation from her son fit with this type. Gürtler and Schmid-Bortenschlager, *Erfolg und Verfolgung*, p. 137.

[42]Fascism is equated by Mara with 'die Aufrechterhaltung der Freiheit und Ordnung' as well as freedom from party politics(*FeW*, p. 549).Earlier in the text Mara becomes involved briefly with a group of Slavs who want to create 'das große südslawische Reich' (*FeW*, p. 258 ff.).Ursula Huber dismisses Mara summarily as 'eine Urmutter mit Sympathien für den italienischen Fachismus': Ursula Huber, 'Grete von Urbanitzky', in *Oberösterreichische Literaturgeschichte im Stifter Haus* consulted online at <www.stifter-haus.at/lib/publication_read.php?articleID+59> [accessed 28 June 2015].

[44]Stars are a unifying theme, setting the tone of each of the six long chapters in *Eine Frau erlebt die Welt* ('Der Stern von Gruda', 'Der Meister der Sterne', 'Der Mondruft', 'Uranus im Haus des Todes', 'Saturn bedroht Venus', and 'Gestirnstunde'): benevolent at first but later as threatening influences which control her destiny.

[45] Vicki Baum, *Stud. Chem. Helene Willfüer* (Berlin: Ullstein, 1928). Quotation references will be noted in the text as *HW.*

pharmaceutical company which will manufacture this antidote and accepts a proposal of marriage from her former academic supervisor.

In Baum's novel, the focus is on female postgraduates (implying the presence of female undergraduates) in archaeology, modern languages and chemistry. At an early stage, there is a striking feminization of the activity called forth by the university in Heidelberg, contrasted with the outdated (but still extant) *Burschenherrlichkeit* of the fraternity houses and fencing pistes: 'Eine zuckende, fiebernde, friedlose Werkstatt des Geistes, ein Organismus, in dem in jeder Stunde sich unter Schmerzen Neues gebiert: Lernen, Forschen, Erkennen, Wissen …' (*HW*, 20). Nonetheless, the long-standing stereotypes about female students have an airing: glamorous May Kolding is writing a dissertation on Balzac but only when she feels like it, whilst Helene's roommate, Gudula Rapp, is an archaeologist bluestocking with red, overworked eyes behind horn-rimmed spectacles, who is learned and hard-working but ultimately unproductive. Lynne Frame links the nickname 'das Gulrapp' (the neuter article is always included) to a reference to her 'abseitige und kranke Neigung, dieses bittere Geheimnis' (*HW*, 168) as an indication that Gudula is a lesbian intellectual, in a very different presentation to that of the self-identifying women in *Sind es Frauen?*[46]

Helene cuts a positive figure between these two extremes as a rational, attractive woman who lives for her science but also takes pleasure in the world around her. Initially, she is presented as being on equal terms with the male students, as they study, eat, and relax together, with any misogynistic grumblings being mere peripheral disturbances (*HW*, 32). Her pregnancy draws attention to Helene's gender and to her sexuality as a single woman: Helene describes the atmosphere around her as 'eisig und spottvoll und voll Stacheln',and a student who drank in the mornings 'hat sich Roheiten so beleidigender Art gegen mich erlaubt, wie ich es nie für möglich gehalten hätte' (*HW*, 221). Indeed, it is Helene's unplanned pregnancy, and her attempts to terminate it, which made the novel so controversial at the time of its publication. A detailed discussion of how Baum's text fits into the contemporary abortion debate is provided by Kerstin Barndt, who also investigates Helene's mediating position between life and death, vitality and intellect, and feeling and rationality in the context of the early twentieth-century cultural discourse of *Lebensideologie*.[48]

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[46] Lynne Frame, 'Gretchen, Girl, Garçonne? Weimar Science and Popular Culture in Search of the Ideal New Woman', in *Women in the Metropolis: Gender and Modernity in Weimar Culture*, ed. by Katharina von Ankum (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1997), pp. 12-40 (here p. 26).See also Barndt, *Sentiment und Sachlichkeit*, p. 100. On Baum's writing more generally, see Nicole Nottelmann, *Strategien des Erfolgs. Narratologische Analysen exemplarischer Romane Vicki Baums* (Würzburg: Königshausen & Neumann, 2002).

[48]Barndt, *Sentiment und Sachlichkeit*, pp. 86-99.

Helene's innate nurturing characteristics are established in the first pages of the novel (*HW*, 7) and culminate in her becoming an adored and fulfilled mother despite her career (*HW*, 253-54). Although at first she insists it will be impossible for her to have a child and continue to work (*HW*, 126), once she feels the baby move she gains courage for both of their lives (*HW*, 199-200). The attempt to procure an abortion is thus packaged as a mistake, and the happy ending of a prospective marriage suggests reincorporation of the powerful creative and maternal figure into the safety of the nuclear family. Baum nonetheless gives a disturbing account of Helene's odyssey through the illegal abortion provision of the 1920s, which is fraught with expense and personal danger. Only in this part of the novel does Helene feel a sense of community with other women, but it is, significantly, a community of suffering and of the powerless, for which Helene's vitality is too strong: ultimately she rejects both abortion and suicide, has a healthy child, and goes on to achieve individual success (a secure position with her own research laboratory and assistants, a decent salary) through hard work, patience, and determined negotiation. Helene's great discovery is an artificial hormone with a rejuvenating effect ('Vitalin'), which will benefit humanity as a whole and, if the logic of the novel is to be followed, men in particular, who are threatened by illness, rage, and suicidal tendencies. Unlike Urbanitzky, who abandons realism altogether in the closing part of her novel, Baum keeps her text in the realms of the near-possible.[50] Although the scientific breakthrough fulfils Helene's early promise and recalls the opening depiction of the university as the birthplace of possibility, Helene's challenge to existing academic hierarchies is contained by her exceptional status and the location of her professional achievement in a privately-funded laboratory and the commercial world.

VI

The four texts considered here provoke reflections on the changing fictional presentation of the university woman in a period when she moved from being a rarity to a commonplace feature in the higher education landscape. Duc and Frapan were writing in the 1890s and 1900s when the female student appeared to be the epitome of feminist striving, whether of a radical hue, demanding equality with men, or an adherent of the complementary model who justified her desire for higher education with the contribution she would make to society as a result. These early texts communicate the excitement of a new era: women's view of learning, science, and the university as a place of radical possibility rather than stifling tradition is heightened by their perspective from the margins and their breaching of boundaries.

[50] See Barndt on both the abortion debate and the science of rejuvenation : *Sentiment und Sachlichkeit*, pp. 74 and 96-99.

Duc's *Sind es Frauen?* explores the further reaches of radicalism with her depiction of lesbian networks in university cities. The figures in Frapan's *Arbeit* belong to a far less privileged class and are forced to focus on work and financial survival more than higher education as a root to individualisation. *Arbeit* has been classed by Charlotte Woodford as 'protest fiction',[52] that is to say, a serious contribution to literary naturalism which also made a strong case for social reform. Frapan (born 1848) was much older than Duc (born 1869), but her politics were nonetheless clearly aligned with the more radical 'second generation' feminists, many of whom were born in the 1860s. In this way Frapan is comparable to Hedwig Dohm (1831-1919) whose radicalism grew with the feminist movement and outstripped that of her own, but also of younger generations of feminists. These two women may be seen as part of the *Generationseinheit* who shaped radical feminism in the decades either side of 1900. Frapan is also notable in that she not only straddles generations, but also political camps as she portrays middle-class students but also reveals strong socialist sympathies. Her focus on the way in which the medical establishment use the local working class as training aids (*A*, p. 123) is sharper than the vague sympathy with the plight of Russian peasants and fascination with the revolutionaries-in-exile which are a feature of so many student novels. Both Frapan and Duc explore a differentiated politics of location: while reasons of gender solidarity are prime motivations for the characters in both texts, the cohesion of a sisterly vision determined by sexuality or class politics is constantly under threat. In *Sind es Frauen,* the temptations of a more conventional lifestyle appear as soon as women retreat from their lesbian association. In *Arbeit* academic and professional competition occasionally obscure the altruistic motivation for studying medicine. In both cases, however, the conclusion of the text points to a renewed sense of lesbian or socialist belonging within a broader feminist identity.

Baum and Urbanitzky wrote about university women who were still in a minority but no longer an outrage. The female student in these novels is now the same age as her male colleagues and more likely to find herself the object of everyday sexism rather than of protest in student newspapers. These women are intended to interest readers not as students *per se,* but because they combine high levels of achievement in male fields with a more or less scandalous erotic life and finally manage to vindicate themselves as models of maternal love. Indeed, there is a strong emphasis on the femininity of both Urbanitzky's *femme fatale* Mara and Baum's healthy 'girl-next-door' Helene, with a romanticization of the maternal instinct in both figures as they show unwavering devotion to their illegitimate sons. Helene is still presented as the ideal mother, despite the lack of time for her child when working on the composition of 'Vitalin', unlike Frapan's Josefine,

[52] See Woodford, *Women, Emancipation and the German Novel*, especially p. 14 and pp. 166-67.

who is frequently depicted as looking exhausted, who has problematic children, and who battles with guilt as she struggles to fit in her family around her work. Thus in the Weimar-era novels female intelligence and ambition are carefully compensated by femininity, beauty, and motherliness. The protagonists' individualism and lack of political engagement reflects the findings of Elizabeth Harvey that collective causes espoused by feminists in the early 1900 had lost their urgency for many young women after educational reforms and the vote had been granted.[54] There is no indication that the 1920s students in the novels reflected upon themselves as beneficiaries of the trailblazers depicted by Duc and Frapan or that they were trying to inspire or help the next cohort of female academics.

Urbanitzky's novel reveals contemporary preoccupations with youth, a desire to serve a great leader or idea, and the notion that we are not in control of our own destinies but rather at the mercy of larger cosmic forces. Such concepts are inimical to the serious pursuit of science, realistic political activism or the sense of feminist community. Furthermore, the novel's implausible premise and the futuristic fantasy outlined in the final chapter lessen the impact of any social criticism the text might contain. The rupture here with earlier ideas of women's education leading to a better world for all is absolute. However, there is a case to be made for defending Baum against the negative judgement of some feminist critics in the 1980s: Heide Soltau uses *Helene Willfüer*, with its female stereotypes and happy ending as an example of Weimar-era women's writing which discouraged readers from putting up a fight when the National Socialists sent women back to the kitchen.[55] I would suggest that, although the independence of the professional woman appears to be contained by the concluding offer of marriage, there are still some feminist messages in Baum's novel. For example, Helene fights her cause tenaciously when faced with medical and legal professionals and negotiates a high salary and excellent conditions when she goes into industry. Furthermore, the glorification of motherhood notwithstanding, between the lines a strong case is made for legalizing abortion by showing that criminalization makes women vulnerable to indecent assault, physical danger, and profiteering.[56]

Insofar as it is possible to draw conclusions from the small sample of novels discussed here, a major difference between the novels of the 1900s and the 1920s is the retreat from the notion that individual goals could benefit the collective good. One possible explanation for this change in emphasis is that it results from a 'normalization' process, so that once the female student is

[54] Harvey, 'The Failure of Feminism?', p. 26.
[55] Heide Soltau, 'Die Anstrengungen des Aufbruchs. Romanautorinnen und ihre Heldinnen in der Weimarer Zeit', in *Deutsche Literatur von Frauen. Zweiter Band – 19. und 20. Jahrhundert,* ed. by Gisela Brinker-Gabler (Munich: Beck, 1988), pp. 220-34, here p. 229.
[56] Baum, *Stud. chem. Helene Willfüer,* pp. 95-97, 103-07, 125-45.

commonplace, she no longer has to stand in for all of her sex and the novelist can focus on her as an individual without considering the burden of collective expectation placed upon her. Another is the extent to which the authors were concerned with commercial and critical success. From the subject matter and publication history of Duc and Frapan it is clear that book sales were not a primary concern.[57] For Baum commercial success was an important consideration, so for the most part she was happy to meet middle-brow reader expectations with readily available stereotypes and striking contrasts.[58] Urbanitzky seems to have been targeting critical acclaim, since the length and verbosity of the text, as well as the esoteric interests of the heroine would deter readers of light fiction. An overt alignment with feminism, as with any other sort of *Tendenzliteratur,* was not a safe route to commercial or critical success. However, a combination of these factors with the generation of the authors themselves may also play a role here. Unlike the *Generationseinheit* shared by Duc and Frapan, Baum (born 1888) and Urbanitzky (born 1891) may be seen as part of a *Generationszusammenhang* of women who benefited themselves from the educational reforms brought about by their predecessors but did not identify strongly enough with feminist goals to want to push those reforms further. Unlike Duc and Frapan, Baum and Urbanitzky are therefore reflecting the discourse around academic women, rather than trying actively to shape it.

[57] Frapan wrote many novellas which were more conventionally acceptable for middle-class periodicals, such as those collected in *Zwischen Elbe und Alster. Hamburger Novellen* (Berlin: Paetel, 1890). Ironically, the scandal caused by *Arbeit* served to widen her readership and increase sales figures so it did become a commercial success. See the discussion in Kraft-Schwenk, pp. 76-83.

[58] See Lynda J. King, *Best-sellers by Design: Vicki Baum and the House of Ullstein*, (Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 1988), pp. 136ff.