Editor’s Note

Dear Readers,

In order to respond to University of Calgary’s merger of departments in the Faculty of Arts as well as the necessity of increasing collaboration on the student level, we created the online journal Interlingua. It is named after the international auxiliary language which strives to be easily comprehensible by the widest possible range of speakers. The e-journal Interlingua will be published twice a year, starting with this volume.

The journal aims to introduce undergraduate students to the process of academic writing and publishing. Graduate students will have the opportunity to improve their academic skills by serving on the editorial board, by providing academic feedback, and by continuing to publish their own papers. We hope that the journal will also facilitate cross-fertilization of our respective disciplines and ideas, and contribute to possible collaboration in the future.

The journal starts out as a cooperation between the German, French, Spanish and Italian subdivisions. We are welcoming other departments to participate. Topics may range from literature to linguistics to creative writing. Academic support from at least one professor of each participating division is a prerequisite for participation.

For our first issue we exclusively received submissions from the German program which might be explained by the fact that submissions were made course requirement options in that program. We would like to thank our professors who support Interlingua by promoting it on their online course sites and in their classes. We hope that the word will spread and we will receive submissions from several programs for our next issue. The deadline for the second volume is December 15, 2016. Submission requirements are posted on the last page of this volume.

If you are as intrigued as we are to learn more about wide-ranging topics such as the portrayal of animals in literature, biased gender representation in Holocaust sculptures, changing women’s roles during the Weimar era, concepts of happiness in New German cinema, or a provocative gender depiction by the Austrian author and Nobel laureate Elfriede Jelinek, and would like to share your own thoughts about these topics, please write us a line, and we will create a feedback section in the next issue.

We wish you a stimulating reading experience!

Martin Lisanik
Bernadette Raedler
Contents

NICOLE ENNS: THE DISTORTED IMAGES OF GENDER AS PORTRAYED IN HOLOCAUST MEMORIALS ........................................................................................................4

RACHEL LUST: WOMEN IN THE WEIMAR ERA ................................................................................. 14

MONIQUE METZNER: ANIMAL THEORY AND REPRESENTATION IN TWO GERMAN TEXTS: THE PURPOSE OF ANIMALS FOR THE BENEFIT OF MAN .............................................. 24

ALECIA NACHTIGAL: EXPRESSING HAPPINESS IN NEW GERMAN CINEMA: MARGARETHE VON TROTTA’S SCHWESTERN ODER DIE BALANCE DES GLÜCKS .................................................. 36

TAYLOR WHITE: FEMALE SEXUALITY: THE MONSTER OF GERMANY. THE VAMPIRE OF ELFRIEDE JELINEK’S “KRANKHEIT ODER MODERNE FRAUEN” .................................................. 47
THE DISTORTED IMAGES OF GENDER AS PORTRAYED IN HOLOCAUST MEMORIALS

Abstract:

The purpose of my paper is to examine the ways in which women are portrayed in Holocaust memorial sculptures and how these representations erase the memories of women as heroes. Furthermore, I will also examine how the absence of male figures in certain sculptures is used as a way to emasculate the Jewish man and how contrasting this male figure with the true Jewish female heroine further develops the helplessness of women. I will focus mainly on the sculptors entitled “Hunger” by Mieczyslaw Stobierski and “Never Again” by Ilana Goor, to develop an understanding of the ways women and men are portrayed in Holocaust memorials. I argue that the sculptures such as these focus on the victimization of women through filtered, “images of women’s powerlessness rather than representations of their heroism” (Jacobs, Memorializing the Holocaust: Gender, Genocide, and Collective Memory, 44). I will also concentrate on Judith Tydor Baumel’s Double Jeopardy: Gender and the Holocaust novel as well as Nechama Tec’s novel Resilience and Courage: Women, Men, and the Holocaust to contrast the true image of the women heroine to the absence of males in memorial sculptures demonstrating the helplessness and emasculation men faced during the Holocaust.

In this paper, I will examine the ways in which women are portrayed in Holocaust memorial sculptures. In particular, I will explore the ways these representations erase the memories of women as heroes and focus on their suffrage rather than on their acts of bravery. Furthermore, I will examine how the absence of male figures in certain sculptures is used as a way to emasculate the Jewish man and how contrasting this male figure with the true image of Jewish women further develops the female heroine.

To develop a clear understanding of how women are displayed in Holocaust memorials, I will first focus on examining the sculptures entitled “Hunger” by Mieczyslaw Stobierski and “Never Again” by Ilana Goor. These two sculptures focus predominantly on the most common image of Holocaust memorials, the weakened and
helpless mother. I will use the figures and representations these sculptures create to not only show how women are displayed in Holocaust memorials but also why they are shown as such. Additionally, I will develop a better understanding of the juxtaposition between Holocaust memorials and the true female image by focusing on Judith Tydor Baumel’s novel *Double Jeopardy: Gender and the Holocaust* and Nechama Tec’s novel *Resilience and Courage: Women, Men, and the Holocaust*. These novels will aid me in contrasting the true image of the female heroine, as explained by concentration camp veterans, compared to the helpless images of women portrayed in memorial sculptures. Additionally, through the use of these novels, I will develop an understanding of the helplessness and emasculation men faced during the Holocaust by focusing on the true female experiences in concentration camps compared to the absence of male figures in memorial sculptures.

To begin the argument that women are inaccurately displayed in Holocaust memorials I will focus on a striking question asked by Janet Jacobs: “To what extent do these representations contribute to gender stereotypes that only partially document the realities of women’s lives under conditions of violence and genocide? In privileging the suffering and helplessness of women, do these representations erase the memory of women’s resistance in the face of Nazi terrorism” (44)?

This question highlights a major issue revolving around how women are presented in Holocaust memorials and relays the importance of documenting not only women’s suffering but their resistance and bravery as well. Yet, despite this fact, Holocaust memorial sculptures all over the world, such as “Hunger” and “Never Again”, focus almost exclusively on the victimization of women instead of their bravery by
highlighting filtered “images of women’s powerlessness rather than representations of their heroism” (Jacobs 44). This categorizing of women’s experiences is used not only as a way to create sculptures that allow personalized and powerful “re-experiences” of past tragedies but also allows the viewer to feel a closer connection with the piece. Judith Baumel reinforces this idea when she claims, “genre codes act as a primary constraint in selecting both a general image representing the Holocaust and a particular female image with which viewers could identify” (“Representation of Women in Israeli Holocaust Memorials” 118). This comment reveals that the use of emotional appeals in artwork is a strategy used by many artists as they allow viewers to feel a closer and deeper connection with a sculpture. Yet, the fact that artists create an entirely one-sided view towards women of the Holocaust seems to be completely irrelevant in their eyes.

To support this argument, I will first focus on the sculpture entitled “Hunger” by Mieczyslaw Stobierski (Figure 1). By focusing on the weakened images of women, such as in this sculpture, I will develop an understanding of the biased ways women are portrayed in Holocaust memorial sculptures. “Hunger” is a bronze sculpture displayed at the Auschwitz-Birkenau memorial and museum. The sculpture features five women huddled together for warmth, with only hoods and shawls covering their naked, skeletal, and undernourished bodies. The head of a small child is barely visible as she lies in her mother’s arms, and an empty plate sits in front of one of the women (Jacobs 34). This image of the “helpless mothers and children at Auschwitz contributes to the construction of an empathetic-based, collective memory that facilitates an emotional connection to the horrors of the past” (Jacobs 34). To achieve this emotional connection, the artist, Stobierski, focused on images the viewer could easily connect with, such as the
deprivation that women and children faced in death camps. Therefore, it is clear that Stobierski concentrated on creating an emotional connection with the viewers, rather than focusing on a less conventional image of the past, such as the women heroes that emerged. For example, an aspect of the sculpture that clearly draws on emotional appeals is “that of the female inmate whose blanket has fallen from her shoulders to reveal an emaciated breast protruding from a skeletal rib cage” (Jacobs 34). Her nakedness and shrunken body create an image of women as being so weak and helpless that the need for self-respect is entirely irrelevant. Furthermore, Stobierski proceeds to use the innocence of the children in concentration camps to foster an even greater emotional connection from the viewers. After all, who could be more helpless than a small child? Therefore demonstrating that although Holocaust memorial sculptures are meant to preserve the truth behind past tragedies, allowing remembrance and learning, they actually many times take advantage of the sadness these images create. Holocaust memorials often generalize the past and focus predominantly on the helplessness of women rather than their heroism as a way of appealing to a greater audience – despite the fact that they are creating an inaccurate and entirely one-sided view towards the women of the Holocaust.

Figure 1 “Hunger” by Mieczyslaw Stobierski.
Additionally, I will examine the sculpture “Never Again” by Ilana Goor (Figure 2), another instance in which the common image of weakness and victimization is used once again to represent the women of the Holocaust. “Never Again” is a permanent installation displayed at the entrance to the Yad Vashem in Jerusalem, Israel. The sculpture, not surprisingly, is full of emotional appeals featuring a large faceless figure – most accurately a women holding the body of a small child in her arms. The jagged and somewhat horror-like features of the woman figure create an alarming image of powerlessness and extreme oppression towards women. Compared to the sculpture “Hunger,” the sculpture “Never Again” is clearly an expressionist piece as it allows the audience to feel more engaged and, therefore, promotes a wider range of interpretations. Yet, this sculpture equally, or even more so, uses emotional appeals to guide the viewer towards reaching an emotional connection with the piece. Goor reinforces this argument when she states, “Like most sculptors, I wanted to choose an image which would be immediately understood by my viewers. What could be better understood than a statue of a mother holding a child?” (Baumel-Schwartz, “Representation of Women in Israeli Holocaust Memorials” 118). Furthermore, Goor clarifies the importance and relevance of this piece when she explains that neither the sculpture’s “femininity nor form are important” (Baumel-Schwartz, “Representation of Women in Israeli Holocaust Memorials” 118). In fact, her image is rather supposed to represent the Holocaust in itself: “The mother-nation-victim, holding the now lost future – part of herself – in her arms” (Baumel-Schwartz, “Representation of Women in Israeli Holocaust Memorials” 118). In other words, Goor is demonstrating an entirely one-sided and biased view towards the role women played during the Holocaust. Reinforcing the argument that
Holocaust memorial sculptures focus only partially on the true experiences women faced while under Nazi oppression, using emotional appeals to gain publicity rather than focusing on the women heroes who emerged. Figure 2 “Never Again” by Ilana Goor

In contrast, I will now turn the focus to the absence of men in Holocaust memorial sculptures and how comparing the male figure with Jewish female heroines calls into question the masculinity of men. Not surprisingly, the absence of men in these sculptures was not unintended; more accurately the “repetitive images of victimized women and children” were intended to serve not only as a “powerful reminder of the vulnerability of mothers and children” but also to “provide a lens through which to recall an inferior and racialized fatherhood” (Jacobs 36). Furthermore, the graphic images of women displayed in Holocaust sculptures, such as “Hunger” and “Never Again,” further complicate the views towards men. The “over-representation of the female body in exhibits that recall atrocities and sadism of the Nazi perpetrators” (Jacobs 36) is used to
not only foster an emotional connection with viewers but to portray their helplessness and powerlessness without men. Therefore, it is evident that these sculptures foster an image of women as being incapable of protecting themselves against horrible atrocities without their male companions. This tactic reinforces men’s “inability to protect the maternal victim” as they left their apparently helpless women without anyone to save them, which in turn “calls into question the masculinity of Jewish men” (Jacobs 36). Not only do Holocaust memorial sculptures erase the image of the female heroine, but it seems that these artists strive to focus predominantly on the sadness and horrors that developed throughout concentration camps. Furthermore, when comparing these representations of weak women and men to the true images of the women, such as their bravery and heroism that flourished in the sight of oppression, it is evident that memorial sculptures demonstrate entirely one-sided images of Jewish women.

This paper will now focus on the real life experiences of women in concentration camps. To begin the discussion, I will concentrate on Judith Baumel-Schwartz, a lecturer in Modern Jewish History at Haifa University (“Representation of Women in Israeli Holocaust Memorials”). In her novel *Double Jeopardy: Gender and the Holocaust*, Baumel-Schwartz states that despite what many may think, the “the sexually homogenous environment” (*Gender and the Holocaust* 25) within the concentration camps actually created a unique and striking response from women. Not all women cowered beneath the raw powers of the Nazi Regime; in fact, for many women, this oppression fuelled a risk-taking behaviour, and their “leadership and mutual assistance grew and flourished in face of tremendum and crisis” (Baumel-Schwartz, *Gender and the*)
Holocaust 25) – a surprising statement after viewing sculptures such as “Hunger” and “Never Again.”

Furthermore, this argument is reinforced in Nechama Tec’s novel Resilience and Courage: Women, Men, and the Holocaust. Throughout the novel, Tec interviews multiple concentration camp veterans with very strong and surprising opinions involving men, which emphasize the female heroine while furthering the emasculation of the man. In one instance, Dobka Freund-Waldhorn states “women are much stronger than men” and continues to emasculate the man when she claims “a woman is ready to be satisfied with less than a man… a woman is also able to suffer more than a man” (Tec 133). While surprising to hear, this sentiment is held by many of the concentration camp veterans who were interviewed. For instance, Bracha Winger-Ghilai echoes Dobka’s comments: “A man needs to be pampered, taken care of” further demonstrating the image of the strong women (Tec 132). She claims, “I think that emotional strength is very important, and men are not as strong emotionally” (Tec 132) – reinforcing the statement that women prospered in the face of terror. Furthermore, a surprising and recurring claim from many of the women interviewed is that “more women than men survived” (Tec 133) – strengthening the memory of the brave and strong women who lived in concentration camps and illuminating that the weak representation of women in sculptures such as “Hunger” and “Never Again” demonstrate entirely prejudiced views of the women in concentration camps. Yet these statements made by concentration camp veterans are now creating distorted representations of the men in concentration camps, developing an image of weak and useless men who let their women and children perish because they were too scared. Bringing up the question that if each individual brings
forward a different and entirely one-sided reflective story of the events that transpired, will we ever really understand what true terrors individuals faced during the Holocaust? Or will the already predominant and inaccurate gender stereotypes of the Holocaust only grow and misrepresent the victims even more as each new depiction of the past is given?

In conclusion, it is evident that women are unequally displayed in Holocaust memorials. The image of their weaknesses and hardships are highlighted as a way to gain an emotional connection with the audience, while the images of their resistance and bravery are completely forgotten. Holocaust memorial sculptures such as “Hunger” and “Never Again” reiterate this statement, presenting images of saddened and helpless women rather than focusing on their acts of bravery. Artist Ilana Goor states that she used the image of a woman holding her dying or sick child because it would allow many people to connect with her piece as it is easy to understand – yet is a mother fighting for her beliefs really that hard to comprehend? Demonstrating that Goor mainly wanted viewers to feel an emotional connection with her piece, despite the fact that she may only be showing part of the true story. In contrast, the absence of men in Holocaust memorial sculptures is used as a way to further the helplessness of the women by focusing on the slaughters and sadism of the Nazi perpetrators while also calling into question the masculinity of the man – highlighting the statement that Holocaust memorial sculptures focus predominantly on the sadness and horrors that developed throughout concentration camps. Yet, it is evident that these representations are entirely one-sided, as when examining the stories of concentration camp veterans, it is clear that women’s bravery flourished in the face of terror – a matter the memorial sculptures exclude entirely from the portrayed image of Jewish women.
Works Cited


Rachel Lust

Women in the Weimar Era

Abstract:

The purpose of my paper is to investigate how the questioning and challenging of the female gender role as a result of World War 1 served to prove that the traditional female gender role actually served Germany best, especially in a post-war context. As men had to leave their jobs to fight in World War 1, the women were left working and taking care of the house. Most women were burdened with this double responsibility, as they were expected to handle both roles. Their lifestyles often reflected their ambiguous roles, as they were experimenting with new fashion trends and modern lifestyles. Unfortunately, as a result of their new lifestyles, some argued that they were neglecting their duty to repopulate Germany and to have and raise children. In the end, many found that the traditional role of women was ideal to repopulate and rebuild Germany after the war, and the new role was hindering this cause.

The purpose of this paper is to investigate how the questioning and challenging of the female gender role as a result of World War 1 served to prove that the traditional female gender role actually served Germany best, especially in a post-war context. Due to the men having to fight in war, women were forced to maintain their duties at home, but also join the workforce. As the men could no longer fulfill their traditional roles in the workforce and provide for the family, the women had to step up and enter this role, which they may have not been prepared for. However, they also had to continue taking care of their homes and families as well. Essentially, they were forced to play the roles of both parents. The lifestyle which went along with working caused the women to be less family-focused. Many of them became independent, and tried to live up to the modern trends. As a result, they began to live for pleasure and self-improvement, rather than starting and maintaining a family.
As expected, traditional Germans saw many problems with this new lifestyle and mentality. There was a general tendency for Germans who didn't live in the urban city, particularly the older ones, to hold to more traditional views. Rising promiscuity and independence among women was a cause for concern among many traditional Germans, as the focus was taken off the family, and ultimately rebuilding Germany. Many traditional Germans fought back, and because so many Germans had already passed away in the war, they believed that the main role of women should be to stay home, produce children, and raise those children. We will first look at why women joined the workforce, and how this led to most of them having a double role. Next, we will look at how this double role, particularly working outside the home, affected their lifestyle in ways which many viewed as negative. Some Germans believed that expanding the German population after all the losses in WWI needed to be the primary focus of German women. They felt that the women who were pursuing personal goals instead were deterring them from this. We will explore this progression starting with women replacing men in the workforce, thereby taking on double roles. Then we will examine how this affected their lifestyle and led to the loss of stability and reproduction-focused roles of modern women at a time when they needed to be reproducing. In the end, we will be able to see that at this particular time in German history, the traditional gender roles would have been most beneficial for Germany as a whole.

While the German men were on the battlefront during WWI, the women had to take their place in the workforce. As a result, these working women realized their potential as more than just domestic housekeepers, so when the men came back from war, the women questioned traditional gender roles. As if to reinforce this questioning,
the returning men proved to be less physically and psychologically capable of working than the women, as a result of war trauma. To understand this even further, we must note that “the crisis of male identity [that] can only be understood in light of Weimar trauma.” (Hales "Projecting Trauma" 225) In the words of Barbara Kosta, "the German population is “shell-shocked” after WWI." (Kosta "City Girls: Berlin's Modern Women of the Weimar Republic" Tucson 10 Apr. 2016 Lecture.) This accurately attests to the trauma which created a power vacuum that the women eagerly filled. The war, as well as the circumstances upon the men's return from war, caused a crisis of masculinity, which left room for the reinvention of the female gender role. Political proof that the role of women was leaving the domestic sphere was the fact that they gained suffrage in 1919. As Kosta stated shortly thereafter, “women made up 52% of the electorate, and 10% of the delegates of the National Assembly.”

Traditional Germans were not used to women in the workforce or politics, and it caused extreme controversy. A problem which came about because of this was that women still had to fulfill their domestic roles as well. Therefore, most women were burdened with double responsibility, because they were expected to handle two roles. Kosta describes how, as Berlin’s population skyrocketed to 4 million during the 1920’s, “new excitement and opportunities for women came into existence, and as a result nearly everything about them changed.” For example, Kosta notes that “as women were previously expected to stay home, they were now walking the streets, which symbolized their new freedom and independence.” Kosta additionally states that “feminization of the public sphere resulted”, as well as “sexualization of the street.” This displacement of women was very disorienting for the Germans, because they were used to tame,
Wilhelmina femininity. To attest to this radical change, German men were approaching regular women on the streets, because they thought they were prostitutes. As Kosta explains, "being on the streets was equated with being accessible." She further points out that “in 1925, 11-12 million women were employed in Germany, which was higher than all other European countries at the time." However, modern women were still expected to fulfill their traditional, domestic duties as well. Due to the impact being in the workforce had on their lifestyle, many members of German society opposed women having a double role.

The lifestyle, which typically accompanied a working woman usually included driving, motor biking, smoking, dancing, being sexually promiscuous, and being preoccupied with fashion. The most obvious change was her new appearance, which reflected her attitude and lifestyle. It typically included wearing a short dress with nylon stockings. A new ideal body type arose which was strikingly masculine due to its bend towards athleticism. Whereas the previous ideal female body was seen as being larger and more feminine, now small breasts, narrow hips, and thinness were idealized. Kosta explains that “short hair and short hemlines also became trendy because they “suited women who were on the go with aspirations,” and she additionally notes that “women were categorized into three types.” The Gretchen, as the authentic German name hints at, was the only wholesome, traditional, German. The garçon and the girl were foreign, as the titles themselves allude to, and they typically participated in activities seen as contrary to what was viewed as true German femininity.

As previously mentioned, a preoccupation with glamour and beauty went along with these new activities. For the first time, women were showing off their legs. There
were many beauty contests, and images in magazines comparing women’s legs. Marlene Dietrich was an icon of this. Kosta introduces the idea that "the fetishization of women’s legs may have been a response to many amputated men’s legs as a result of war." Franz Hessel states the keywords, which describe the typical modern woman in a Vogue magazine in 1922. He says, “work, dance, athletic body, metropolis, cosmetics, legs, coolness- these are the accessories of the new modern woman.” (Hessel, quoted after Kosta) The new attitude which modern women typically had towards relationships and marriage was reflected in the fact that they started having sex promiscuously, and as previously mentioned, started to see marriage as negative. “Women were deserting their children, their homes, and their morality, challenging men’s authority by asserting their independence and by flooding the labor market to such an extent that honest Familienväter found themselves without work or bread.” (Bridenthal 148)

New freedom signified new eroticism, which was limited only because of fear of venereal disease and unwanted pregnancy. Hales refers to a popular Weimar movie as she notes that “the popular reception of Lulu’s monstrous sexuality reveals a widespread trend in Weimar Germany to stamp the sexual woman as a criminal.” ("Women as Sexual Criminal" 101) Funkenstein explains the connection between the woman as a criminal, and the notion that her lifestyle threatened Germany's stability and identity, by noting that "the centrality of dance and women within a growing Weimar cultural discourse... both meshed and conflicted with prevalent notions of Germany identity, heritage, and crisis following WWI.” (21-22) As we have reflected on the various ways the typical lifestyle of modern women played out, we have seen the problems which
came with this. In the next section, we will examine the ramifications of this, and why many Germans did not support the trends which many modern women were following.

German women who went along with these modern trends were seen as a threat to society, the German population, national stability, and reproduction. In order to preserve the nation, Germans needed to be having more children than they were having. Kosta notes that "at the time, birth rates were down, and the divorce rate was incredibly high." The divorce rate being high went hand in hand with the new attitude many young people had towards marriage at the time. Traditionally, commitment and making it work for the sake of the marriage or family was expected, but due to the new mentality that personal happiness was the most important factor, divorce was a realistic and sought-after option for many people. As expected, the fact that personal fulfillment became more important than commitment caused fewer children to be born between spouses. Due to the growing independence, lack of family focus, and promiscuity which came along with being a modern woman, Kosta points out that “modern women were seen as an “affront to national needs.” The lifestyle which went along with her double role was very controversial, as her focus on working was taking away from her time, energy, and ability to support and fulfill the traditional role as a mother and housewife.

Traditionally, German women were expected to commit to one man and raise a stable family with him by staying home and taking care of the children. In contrast to this, many modern women enjoyed the freedom which being able to sleep with multiple men, commitment free, offered them. Rather than being burdened with the responsibility of having to stay with one man and raise his children, many women in Weimar preferred to be independent, non-committal, and free from the responsibilities of raising and
having children. In relation to this, Doane notes that “the femme fatale or woman capable of destroying man through her sexual lure is a symptom of male fears about the powerful woman at a time of historical crisis.” (2) Essentially, this quote shows that as women were becoming more sexual, men were realizing that they were ultimately becoming more powerful and independent. This was intimidating to men, especially as there was a growing insecurity of masculinity among many men after the war. To further explore this point, Hales points out that “the Weimar construction of the sexual woman served as a mirror of fears and anxieties brought on by historical developments.” (“Dancer in the Dark” 534) As a result of this, Kosta notes that "the idea of balancing household duties with work was hotly debated." The result of the increasing power and independence of women caused many to question whether modern female lifestyles and trends were ultimately good for Germany.

The term double-burden was introduced in Germany in the 1920’s, and in Kosta’s view, “as if reflecting how the roles of working women were viewed by those with a more conservative view.” Conservative thinkers in Germany had valid reasons to oppose these new trends, especially in a post World War 1 context. However, as Kosta points out, many Weimar women, particularly the younger ones, began to view marriage as "oppressive, degrading, and old-fashioned." Modern women began to value freedom and strength. In stark contrast, those who focused on national needs were, as Kosta notes, "concerned that women were losing sight of their obligation to propagate the race." As a result, Kosta informs us that they "loudly opposed the idea and role of the new, modern woman," because they needed to replace the numbers lost during WWI.
Younger women were looking at their mothers and grandmothers, and feeling as though the traditional female gender role resembled a jail cell. This mentality was due to the contrasting, typical lifestyle of many of their peers, which allowed freedom, fun, and independence. As Hales notes, “Weimar women realized significant economic and political advances, but they also faced backlash from traditional factions threatened by the perception of the modern woman as femme fatale.” (”Dancer in the Dark” 534) Here we come into contact with two opposing views held by some Germans, where one view supported the revolution, and the other tried to obliterate it. To reinforce the reasoning of the traditional Germans, Hales notes that “female eroticism is perceived as threatening the social order.” (“Dancer in the Dark” 534) Because of the national needs of Germany after WWI, conservative Germans saw that German women needed to stay true to their traditional roles in order to rebuild Germany, and keep it stable. Embracing an independent, somewhat selfish lifestyle was actually in opposition to the needs of Germany as a whole. The loss of so many Germans after WWI created a huge need for new births in order to rebuild the country. Women needed to be focused on being mothers, as Germans who had conservative views thought, and this was in accordance with their traditional roles anyways.

German women who stayed within the bounds of their traditional gender roles actually served Germany better than those who went along with the modern trends of working and being independent, especially in a post-war context. Many traditional Germans who weren't as influenced by the modern lifestyle and mentality, perhaps because they lived in the country, were opposed to women being in the workforce. By following the trends and lifestyle which went along with being in the workforce, modern
women were not replenishing the German population the way they needed to be after WWI. Many of the women were more concerned with their individual careers, looks, and leisure time than taking on the responsibility of having a family. Especially because many of the women who followed these modern trends were younger, they were not necessarily focused on the needs of Germany as a whole, but rather their own wants. As Kosta notes, “it was more typical of younger women than older women, although some older women followed the modern trends as well.” The main concern of traditional Germans was that these young women, who had the ability and responsibility to repopulate Germany, were moving away from this focus.

The number of casualties during the war caused Germans with traditional values to realize that the typical promiscuous, driven, independent modern woman was serving herself rather than her country. As this was occurring during a time when women needed to be focusing on the needs of Germany as a whole, they were rightfully concerned. It was realized by many of these Germans that if the women focused on building healthy marriages and families, rather than getting the most stylish fashion, working hard at their jobs, and sleeping with men they didn't intend to have a family with,

Germany would be able to replenish itself more quickly. Especially because of all of the casualties from the war, many Germans during the Weimar era realized that the traditional female role existed for a good reason. In the end, it served the purpose of protecting, nurturing, and rebuilding the country, which especially after a war where so many people were lost, was of utmost importance.
Works Cited

Primary Sources

Secondary Sources


MONIQUE METZNER

ANIMAL THEORY AND REPRESENTATION IN TWO GERMAN TEXTS: THE PURPOSE OF ANIMALS FOR THE BENEFIT OF MAN

Abstract

Through both the works of Rainer Maria Rilke’s *Der Panther* and Leander Haußmann’s *Herr Lehmann*, this paper is able to offer insight into the representations and uses of animals in German literature and film, for the benefit of humans. Animals are vital in today’s age, being used, within society, in a multitude of operations. These operations involve ‘stealing’ their properties; such as their fur, and their meat, and the imposition of our needs upon them: such as their companionship, entertainment, and safety, all of which may improve the human situation but may be detrimental to their well-being. Animals are constantly being used in literature to contribute to the development of the human counterpart or character; rarely do we see them existing in their natural habitat within literature, while still making a meaningful contribution to that literature. This paper will analyse two examples of an animal in German literature, including a panther and a dog, and will break down their roles to provide a reflection of their usefulness to man.

Animal theory is a relatively new field that looks into the representation of animals, and in this paper, it can be applied to cultural texts to analyze the function and contribution of the animal. Animals have been objectified to provide a multitude of uses to us, but in most cases, this has involved exploitation, not their best interests. This paper will look at the malleability and manipulation of animals in literature for the modern day benefit of humans - morphing a wild creature through anthropomorphization by the vulnerability of their suppression of protest. As Donovan states, there is a bias reflected that is “distorting the desires and interests of the animals so as to have them unrealistically and improbably conform to the interests of the human” (203). Through literature we can see how the animal is generally unfortunately represented and treated, within the different uses the animal provides for our purposes, as well as occasions
where it is represented in a different light. This paper will examine two examples of the depiction of animals in German cultural texts. Rainer Maria Rilke’s *Der Panther* helps to illustrate how we instrumentalize animals, as a conspiracy of human interest and satisfaction. The novel and movie *Herr Lehmann* provides a less common example of an animal presence which speaks to the variability of animal representation in texts, while still incorporating their use to further the human protagonist’s own agenda, character development, or a combination of both.

Animal theory has stemmed, in part, from a concept known as speciesism, “which holds that in terms of their moral worth and ontological status animals are inferior and subservient to humans.” (Donovan 203). It is the concept that just being human merits greater moral rights than animals. It is with this idea that we see the various exploitations of animals extensively in society. The line by Herr Lehmann of Sven Regener’s novel, „Der Mensch ist dem Tier überlegen,“ (Regener 15), illustrates the preconceived notion by most everyone that this concept is accurate. The exploitation of animals would not be this far progressed without the generally accepted hierarchy being imposed today, in which animals are much lower ranked than humans. Speciesism, in a sense, took two species that were potentially once weighted the same, and shot down animals a few ranks so humans could come out on top, which serves as a prime example of the selfish assumptions we have imposed with benefit to our kind, and destructive repercussions on essentially all other species. Another aspect of animal theory is the Animal Liberation Movement, which defends animal rights on their behalf, and seeks to protect them from abuse as well as misuse. It looks to lift the assumption of animals as property, and recognize and protect their individual interests. It can either be taken up as
a defense for the moral and legal rights on behalf of the animals, or as a defense with respect to the fact that animals have the ability to suffer. Furthermore, Donovan points out that “. . . humans simply ignore what they know animals are telling them because speciesist ideology legitimizes denial of the animals’ standpoint.” (210), which is becoming a more important issue as the growth of society and its respective consumption continues to increase. Because of the fact that animals do not have a voice to defend themselves, there is an overwhelming amount of corruption over the lives and treatment of animals for our own purposes. Not only is this a reality, the manipulation of animals has been extended into literature, using them in various different yet subtle ways to contribute to the human counterpart within the text, as epitomized by Herr Lehmann. It has been recognized that there’s a “. . . category of animals that express hidden, repressed, or forbidden emotions or desires . . .” (Faris 110), which suggests that animals function on the benefit of humanity in literature, and often is seen through the presence of pets. Pets, and in the case of Herr Lehmann, what we assume is a stray animal, are depicted to contribute to the scenes and situations, in that their characters complement the human entity, which is naturally the more important character. Hardly have we ever seen examples of human characters featured in literature to contribute to the dynamic entity of the animal character. Due to the fact that animals physically cannot protest their rights and safety, there is not enough of a voice to stand in for them, so they are silently abiding to the roles set out for them by whoever is in charge, which is never them. At this point of progression in society with respect to the possession of animals, you would have to go out of your way to find examples of animals in the wild, and even then, have they really not yet been affected by humans through some influence or another? There
are copious variances of degrees to which animals can be utilized, and perhaps even the ones who don’t think they are, are still within the controlling grasp of the consumer population. In relating this to the literary texts, Rilke’s Der Panther represents a wild animal within the inescapable human grasp. Regener’s Herr Lehmann represents a stray dog, living in the human world. An understanding of animal theory which addresses what animals are to humans, as well as speciesism and the Animal Rights Movement establishes how animals are represented in society, and therefore also in literature and film.

Both the German film and novel „Herr Lehmann“ demonstrate the subtle but meaningful use of the character of a dog to exhibit a parallel of the main character, and offers an interesting portrayal of this animal in the literature, in which biases seem to be transformed, both over the course of the scene in the movie, and the chapter in the book. In fact, in Sven Regener’s Herr Lehmann, Herr Lehmann goes from feelings of fear and frustration towards this unexpected dog, to feelings of sympathy, as he says to the dog: „Ich verstehe dich ja. . . du hast es auch nicht leicht“ (Regener 10), and mentions as well that it „. . . tat ihm ein bisschen leid.“ (Regener 16), expressing feelings of pity and feeling sorry. This is a clear demonstration of what is known as anthropomorphization; to assign human attributes to living things that are not human. This example of anthropomorphization, emerges gradually. First, the wild animal poses as a threat, as he fears that „. . . ein völlig fremder Hund sein Leben bedrohte.“ (Regener 8), before he develops sympathy. This example shows how animals can be portrayed as subjects, and not objects, in literature, which is not a common occurrence. Often animals are represented as objects, and are assumed not to have a backstory or meaningful presence,
other than the function they are serving in the scene. Later, this scene exhibits the hierarchical rules we have adopted, as Herr Lehmann says to the dog „Es werden Leute kommen und mir helfen. Und dich wird man einsperren.“ (Regener 15). Even though animals do not have the capacity to consciously make potentially harmful or dangerous decisions within society, and humans absolutely do, animals are the assumed property to seize. Any actions by part of an animal are only executed for their best interest, as they are still animals, and they look out for their own survival, which is unarguably no fault of their own. Regardless, the man, (the entity capable of deception, abuse, or murder), gets the help over the dog, known as none other than man’s best friend. It is fair to consider the fact that animals, dogs specifically in this case, are capable of hurting people, but the important point is that they act out of interest to their personal survival. Humans can hurt people, but most often that is a cognitive decision; they have made an executive decision to go out of their way and do someone harm. Theoretically, a dog would only hurt someone if they feared their life was in danger, therefore not a cognitive decision based out of spite, hatred, frustration, or any other combinations of, simply, human emotions. The dog in Herr Lehmann is a good example of this, as he started out being feared, and was later met with sympathies once the human character realized he was not a threat. This inevitably leads to the pondering of who decided which animals ‘made the cut’, anthropomorphically speaking, within our highly humanistic world, and why. What makes pets pet-like, is it based on a question of compatibility or practicality? With an analysis into this query, it is proven that these values do not support these sets of logic. Cows are subjected to endless different abuses, due to them having the ability to provide milk, meat, leather, etc. to us, whereas horses are kept as pets, treated with love and care,
when they are bigger than cows. Again, chickens suffer some of the harshest situations for their multiple different provisions from eggs to feathers to meat, but cats and dogs are accepted as parts of the family, though they require more work on our part to host them as pets. This can only infer a selfish perspective, as it seems we use the ones that are handy to us, and choose to love some of the ones that are not. This is met by an example of the panther in Rilke’s poem, as he was enduring those conditions because he was useful to the consumer market, as an exotic animal. A sequence analysis of the opening scene of Leander Haußmann’s film Herr Lehmann provides some unusual incorporations of the dog as an equal character of that of the man. Both the dog and Herr Lehmann are introduced into the specific setting at the same time and in the same way, thus represented evenly. The dog starts out with more power, through physical threat, but over the course of the scene, they both leave on equal status, which speaks to the shift in impression of each other. As well, the casting of both characters is a reflection of each other; disheveled, a bit dirty, kinds of outcasts. This is further extended onto the setting of the scene, a run-down but artistic neighbourhood with its share of street art and discards. Certain film aspects add to the impression of the scene, such as the duplicated effects of the camera angles for both characters, as well as the point-of-view shots provided for both Herr Lehmann and the dog. This is significant because it is not often, in literature, that we are offered the animals’ viewpoint, as this is so often overlooked altogether.

Rainer Maria Rilke’s Der Panther is a short poem that describes and simultaneously comments on a panther trapped in a cage. There are mentions of its state, which leads the reader to the conviction that it is not a good place for its mental health.
The poem refers to a lack of world outside of its cage, „... hinter tausend Stäben keine / Welt“ (Rilke 4), which is an understandable assumption on the animals part. If all the panther knows is that it is entrapped behind the bars of its cage, it has no cognitive capacity to assume that it will be freed or not, making its natural depressed outlook more comprehensible. Often times we assume a degree of anthropomorphization on many daily situations, and do not make the effort to consciously divide ourselves and our accompanied human capacities for the intensity of the feelings we experience, in order to consider a world without such possible feelings and without a general comprehensibility of the way the world works. This way, we get a sample of the life of an animal; one without explanations, logic, or reasoning. The poem also touches on a lack of inner will, as it says „... in der betäubt ein großer Wille / steht“ (Rilke 8), which goes hand in hand with the living arrangements the panther is subjected to. Already being forced into feelings of captivity, hopelessness and even exile, there is starting to exist a form of internal shut-down on the part of this animal, who has asked for none of these inflictions. Lastly, the poem reflects on the stillness of its beating heart, „... und hört im Herzen auf zu sein“ (Rilke 12), which reflects the ultimate lack of inspiration within the panther, inflicted by its captors; humans. In his paper, Frank makes notice of the use of anthropomorphization, as he comments that the panther is equated with us, by “... crediting him with humanlike emotions” (Frank 32), thus providing an example of the use of animals in literature to relate them to humans. He comments as well on how the themes of the poem trigger responses from the reader, as an example, “...the concept of lost power and control hits home to us” (Frank 32), making us instinctively relate to this panther. Phelan, in his book, discusses Rilke’s poem, and mentions the reciprocating
outcome of the conditions on the panther, as he states “. . . the guiding force of will at the centre of the dance is numbed” (45). What does this say, if the only natural instinct within this big cat is to fight for its survival, yet it has an overall sense of numbness, of lack of motivation for the one thing that should be important over all else? Another example is clarified when he reflects on the fact that “. . . the image of a world beyond the bars simply ceases to be when it reaches the panther’s heart” (Phelan 45), which invokes a level of heartbreak on our behalf, as we empathize with this undeserving animal. It is widely recognizable that this panther is not being subjected to fair treatment, and furthermore is subjected to treatment it did not deserve, so the audience as a whole practically has no choice but to automatically empathize as it is undeniable that this is unfair. Lastly, Calhoon brings attention to the lack of presence within the panther, as he remarks that the panther’s eye is “. . . a lens that opens to receive an image it ultimately does not see . . .“ (152). To an exotic animal that has no comprehension of its situation, it is not even-handed that the kind of internal shutdown it must be experiencing in order to not see, in this sense, is inflicted by humans. Interestingly, he comments that the cat turns “. . . in controlled circles of implied power . . .” (Calhoon 146), incorporating the use of the implication as the panther does not possess the true power, it only represents what should be. These examples support the demonstration that the panther is without the inspiration to live, which is an animal’s most fundamental priority. This in turn demonstrates how the human animal robs the other animals of their instinctive need for assurance of survival. The choice of absent features in the panther makes a point in itself, as the poem refers to a lack of will from the innermost animal, a lack of activity in the
animal’s heart, and a lack of reception within its visual world, all expressing fundamental components of possessing life from within.

This poem can also be read as a metaphor for human suffering, which is not far projected from the obvious animalistic suffering it represents. It is highly applicable to most any being, in which the suffering is an all-encompassing theme within the small cage. Though this poem utilizes the panther to demonstrate the emotions and results of this kind of circumstance, it is nearly replicable to the human form, as though these entities can often be quite different from each other, there are certain fundamental similarities that go beyond the less significant variances. It can be interpreted, mostly, as a reflection of a resignation of inner will, applicable to both animals and humans. The panther paces around in circles smaller than the size that his cage could allow, which could speak to the lack of freedom a person can feel from all corners of society; business aspects, social & home aspects, health aspects and so on. So often will a person associate such anxieties with the phenomenon of feeling enclosed in a cage that is too small to support their potential, thus enticing the lowest denominator that is the lack of space, room and freedom in any given area. The demonstration of using less than the maximum amount of room also speaks to so many various aspects of mental health (such as stress and anxiety) within the human society, and not to mention mental health aspects within the animal world, to which we have only the minimum amount of understanding and awareness. An argument could be made that these kinds of physical limitations could be more detrimental to an animal than to a human, as humans have all the necessary cognitive abilities to be able to understand any situation, and therefore aids them in getting through the dilemma. Animals, on the other hand, have no such capabilities, and
are left to exist in the predicaments they are exposed to, without a single rational train of thought to justify their situations. In short, they are unable to understand their situations, whereas a sentient human being, having that ability, is able to not only understand, but to think into the future, which could assist in allaying the probability of it happening. This is easily an area for debate, as so often humans assume, or anthropomorphize, certain aspects of physical and mental capabilities that animals are not developed enough to possess. In essence, the poem is able to speak for any living being with a conscience that would be affected by the limits of the barred cage, so as to say any animal or human. The idea that both can stand in as the comparable entity heightens the simple fact that these kinds of physical limitations are easily able to deprecate all forms of well-being; emotional, physical, and mental.

Animals often play a part in literature, but usually without a representation of them in their natural states, in some way or another. It has not been until recently that there is a rise of defense on behalf of animals, providing objections for the disregard shown towards them in mostly every capacity. As if this is not enough, our decisions and actions as humans are putting certain species into critical states, even as far as extinction, which is such a baffling fact; that humans have the ability to terminate the existence of an entire species permanently. Through animal theory we are able to examine the roles they have and the functions they play, both naturally (wild) and unnaturally (instrumentalized). Since the moment we were able to grasp their potential, animals have been utilized in various ways, from real life situations to their representations in literature, made possible by the lack of protest they are able to assert. Based on examples from Rilke’s *Der Panther* and the novel *Herr Lehmann*, animals have been manipulated
and morphed into uses for the benefit of humans, from providing entertainment to contributing to character development, respectively. Animals have been assumed as an extension of man in most areas, for as long as they have proved useful to our intentions. Literature reflects the assumptions we hold of animals and therefore justifies how we actually do treat them. This provides a historical exemplification of the power difference between man and animal. Following in the footsteps of the Animal Liberation Movement, we should look to see animals come back as natural contributors and not as objects of use for man in future works and beyond the scale of literature as well.
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Abstract

This paper argues the expression of happiness in Margarethe von Trotta’s 1979 film Schwestern oder die Balance des Glücks is a representation of the three traditional theories of happiness: Hedonism (the pleasant life), Desire Satisfactionism (the good life) and Eudaemonism (the meaningful life) (Seligman). Through tragic events and character development this dark and thought-provoking film assures the importance of a balance between all three, as defined by the theory of Authentic Happiness and the full life. The title of the film Schwestern oder Die Balance des Glücks is the first suggestion of a need for harmony of some elements of happiness and—as proposed in this paper—the three traditional theories. This contribution suggests that the three strong female roles, those of Maria, Anna and Miriam, each represent a traditional theory. By the means of the methods from the New German Cinema movement in which this film was viewed as a masterpiece, this article also implies that the film is a critique on social and political structures in regards to the depictions of happiness.

Happiness is incredibly subjective. Synonyms for happiness include a range of definitions from contentment and satisfaction to joy, peace of mind and delight to bliss, elation and euphoria (Mulnix and Mulnix 4). The three traditional theories of happiness explore these states of feeling and attempt to categorize and explain them. Hedonism, described as the theory of the pleasant life, focuses on entertaining pleasure centres may they be emotional and or physical. Hedonist theorists describe happiness as pleasure over pain and the more pleasure in a single moment or experience, the more happiness is felt. Desire Satisfactionism and that of the good life, is another traditional theory of happiness. This theory describes happiness as a desire being satisfied whether or not pleasure is involved (Mulnix and Mulnix 5). The final traditional theory is less subjective than the first two. This theory is labeled as Eudaemonism or the Objective-List theory.
and suggests morality and happiness are parallel. A fourth, more modern theory of happiness has also been proposed. This theory is identified as the Authentic Happiness theory and explores the full life: a combination of the three traditional theories. Margarethe von Trotta’s 1979 film *Schwestern oder Die Balance des Glücks* explores the three traditional theories of happiness, that of the pleasant life, the good life and the meaningful life and assures the importance of a balance between all three, as defined by the theory of authentic happiness and the full life and critiques standing political and social structures in the pursuit of happiness. This argument will be conducted through an analysis of the three main characters Maria, Anna and Miriam and how they each represent a traditional theory. As a result of character evolution, each woman questions and rejects their designated theory and explores the theory of Authentic Happiness. This article will also comment on the elements of New German Cinema in which von Trotta uses to criticize social and political structures linked to the pursuit of happiness.

In *Schwestern oder die Balance des Glücks* Jutta Lampe’s character Maria, the committed and overbearing older sister, represents the Eudaemonism or Objective-List theory of happiness. Right from the opening scene of the dark and eerie forest to the filming of the young girls reading in bed, Maria’s self-assured and reassuring narration depicts her as the protector. In comparison to her seemingly helpless, introverted and pitiful younger sister, Maria is strong and thinks objectively. This power differential is constantly reiterated as the sisters grow up. Maria’s occupation is set in a modern office and she works as a well-off secretary for a wealthy man in order to pay for her life and afford her sister’s education (Kuhn 80). Maria is painted to be cold and stark with her plain clothes and mostly expressionless face. These elements of her essence illustrate her
as a piece of something bigger rather than as an individual. Maria “takes dictation from her boss, types Maurice’s dissertation, and helps her friend Miriam practice her vocabulary words; she tells Maurice Anna’s story but not her own; she transcribes Fritz’s dreams but does not dream herself” (Mouton 40). Again she is portrayed as an individual serving others and the greater good which are characteristics of the Objective-List theory. These characteristics reveal Maria’s sole belief in the meaningful life. Through this dedication to a list of objective things one must cross off to achieve contentment and happiness, she pushes herself and her younger sister to the point of tragedy. Until she evolves as a character and discovers the need for a balance of happiness, Eudaemonism is her identity.

Anna, played by Gudrun Gabriel, is the younger of the two sisters and characterizes Desire Satisfactionism. She wants nothing else but to be absorbed by her studies in biology and to leave a mark on, as well as have a backwards control over her older sister Maria. This twisted control is depicted through her apparent helplessness. However, in Anna’s interactions with Maria “powerlessness becomes power” (Kuhn 81). Anna begins to deteriorate when she questions her education and comes into conflict with Maria who is no longer all-consuming by serving Anna’s every need, since she has began a relationship with her boss’s son Maurice. By virtue of Anna’s intense battle with depression and her possession of a brilliant and ever-questioning mind, she begins to challenge the meaning behind her research. As she questions everything, and all that was once a fervent obsession begins to slip through her fingers, she turns inwards. Unlike the other two women in the film, as Anna doubts her obsession with satisfying desires—or the theory of Desire Satisfactionism—she anxiously and recklessly attempts to hold on to
her identity. Although her desires are collapsing around her, this is the point wherein Anna is at the peak of her relationship with her theory. Her turn inward, obsessive journal writing and frequent self-portrait taking displays her narcissism and her steadfast pursuit of Desire Satisfactionism. Anna believes the only way she can again have control over Maria is to commit suicide and blame Maria. Anna’s suicide is her “final, violent power play” (Kuhn 81) against her older sister and an attempt to make one final, everlasting impression on Maria. This obsession and desire for certain outcomes perfectly depicts the traditional theory of Desire Satisfactionism. Her studies and her desire to have control over Maria are her identity.

The traditional theory of Hedonism is represented by Miriam played by Jessica Frueh. Miriam is portrayed as sexy, independent and self-centred. She is often caught by Maria neglecting her work duties and self-obsessedly applying and reapplying lipstick in the work bathroom mirror. She always has a sly smile, a sexy walk and bedroom eyes. This overtly sexualized character emphasizes the Hedonism theory and the obsessive pursuit of pleasure. Not only is Miriam a traditional, objectified and sexualized object of desire she also acts in ways solely focused on doing things that feel good and satisfy pleasure centres such as flirting with men and partying. Although Miriam shifts in her views on what brings happiness, at the beginning of the film, Hedonism is her identity.

The theory of Authentic Happiness (Seligman), and the study of the full life is a combination of the three traditional theories of happiness. In the film, there are three points wherein the three main characters question their standing theory and attempt to shift to create a balance of happiness. The first instance of this is with Anna. As her obsession with her studies and her attempt to have a twisted control over her older sister
get the best of her, she begins to lose her sense of self. This realization of her desires failing to be satisfied is depicted as she takes three photos of her reflection in quick succession. When she looks at the photos she finds nothing satisfactory. The progressive fading of the photos reaffirms her loss of self. Depression has taken away her desire to study which completely robbed her of a significant part of her identity. Her sister is not as interested in serving her every need and Anna feels completely lost. In this moment she realizes her desires have not only not been met, but have failed. This is what motivates Anna’s suicide in the name of Maria: a rash attempt to save her sense of self and her distorted control over her sister.

There is a turning point in Miriam’s story wherein she creates more balance in her pursuit of happiness. Miriam is first depicted as vain and pleasure chasing, however she turns more externally and takes into consideration the happiness of others. This is first seen when she realizes the budding relationship between Maria and Maurice. Previously, Miriam had been pursuing Maurice. However, when presented with the information of Maria and Maurice’s intimate development, she without much hesitation says reassuringly “Die Hauptsache ist, dass er in ein von uns verliebt ist” (von Trotta). This reassurance marks a shift in Miriam’s character. She discovers that chasing pleasure is not the only way of life and other elements can also bring feelings of happiness.

The final character development and shift in traditional theory is towards the end of the film and is represented in the form of Maria. As Miriam rejects Maria’s controlling command over her life, Maria begins to turn inward. Her statement of “ich will Maria und Anna sein” releases Maria from Anna’s attempted control over her sister’s life. With “the closing shot of Maria opening Anna’s diary, about to embark on
the process of getting in touch with herself”(Kuhn 84) Maria no longer attempts to find her definition of happiness objectively. Anna, Miriam and Maria’s discoveries bring to light the theory of authentic happiness and a need for a balance between the three traditional theories.

Margarethe Von Trotta often produces bold statements regarding feminist values in her films and Schwestern oder Die Balance des Glücks is no exception. Von Trotta challenges the patriarchal structure of both film and society by simply creating a story about two complicated, very real sisters. Most films created before, during and after this film was produced focus mainly on heterosexual, male relationships. Father/son, brother and friendship related relationships are given plenty of filmic attention. However, the relationship between sisters, “some of the most intense, entangling, and intimate of relationships, have remained virtually untouched as cinematic subjects” (Mouton 35). Von Trotta brings these relationships between sisterly figures to the forefront, yet she does not disregard men all together. Men are depicted as fathers, bosses, friends and lovers. However, the film brings women from the “desired and passive object” to the “desiring, creative subject” (Mouton 36). This switches the roles between how men and women are often depicted in films of this time. Men no longer hold the role of narration, but become peripheral characters. Von Trotta’s criticism of social structures and the societal pressures afflicted on women in regards to happiness is displayed through the few flashbacks of Maria and Anna’s childhood—particularly the scene of the young girls happily playing in the mirror. As the girls playfully apply lipstick in the mirror, there is apparent make-believe and dreaming taking place. The young girls are able to easily escape to this place and find true happiness. This scene is the “most joyous and vital
scene in the entire film” (Mouton 37), considering this cheerful moment is captured before female expectations and social structures are impeded upon the girls. The development of the void of happiness between the sisters was created as Maria began to abide by the laws of females within society and the traditional theory of Eudaemonism. By internalizing the structure of values women must adhere to, she embodies the notion of “the socially acceptable role” as the “one to be desired and enacted” (Mouton 39). Maria enacts this approach as “not playing and not dreaming, but simply pursuing a goal” (Mouton 39-40). Maria’s resolution to serve those around her as a cog in the machine of society is the beginning of Maria’s identity with Eudaemonism and the distancing between her and her sister. Von Trotta challenges this internalized value system by creating the character evolution of Maria into a less objective and more subjective individual.

As human beings, we strive to belong and be a part of something larger. When meaningful and authentic relations are made, feelings of happiness are satisfied. An accepted and rather universal notion is that one function of social institutions is to satisfy and increase the happiness of other individuals (Mulnix and Mulnix 8). This so called individualistic happiness is often evaluated on a global scale in the form of annual releases of global happiness indexes taking into consideration factors such as “healthy life-expectancy, corruption levels and social freedoms” (Wright). This is where social and political criticisms regarding the pursuit and measurement of happiness come to the surface. Again, definitions of happiness are unmeasurably subjective. So, how can a political or social structure attempt to measure happiness? Schwestern oder Die Balance des Glücks attempts to quietly criticize these standing structures. Margarethe von Trotta
was incredibly influential during the movement of the New German Cinema in the 1960s in Germany and is considered to be the “leading woman film-maker of contemporary German film” (Kuhn 77). Von Trotta, like other Auteurs in this movement of film, focused on social and political criticisms. Although Schwestern does not express outward objection to social structures on the surface, internally the film examines a deeper political aim (Kuhn 78). Schwestern comments on the relationship of individual well-being and the way social structures impede this basic human right. As again is suggested in the title, a balance is crucial for the supposed well-being of Maria and Anna’s relationship. At the beginning of the film, the power differential and the roles of protector and protected are quickly established. As children, the sisters are seen in bed reading an eerie story and Maria is confidently narrating to a frightened Anna. As the girls grow up, these roles are not upset. Maria becomes a successful secretary and provides room and tuition to her dependent younger sister. After Anna’s suicide, when Miriam moves in, Maria again offers to house Miriam free of charge and pay for her schooling. This seemingly selfless and goodnatured offer is a comment on the capitalist structure and the Objective-list theory. Maria’s relationship to the women, power over them and allegiance are bought (Kuhn 83). This film poses “a critique of culture” as well as Eudaemonism by presenting the “outwardly successful” as “those who have stifled their own subjectivity and who attempt to stifle it in others as well” (Kuhn 83).

Margarethe von Trotta’s 1979 film Schwestern oder Die Balance des Glücks is a humanization of the three traditional theories of happiness: Hedonism, Desire Satisfactionism and Eudaemonism. Each theory is characterized by one of the main female roles. Maria signifies Eudaemonism, Anna Desire Satisfactionism and Miriam
Hedonism. Through each character’s evolution, a question of these traditional theories is posed. Each woman realizes that dedication to one pursuit of happiness is not enough and even harmful and each woman proves this in their own way whether their conclusion ends in tragedy or not. Von Trotta also comments on standing political and social structures in regards to theories of happiness, such as the depiction of traditional gender roles in film as well as capitalistic values through methods of New German Cinema. This film chillingly brings to light questions of obsession, love, standing social structures and the importance of balance in all realms of life.
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ELFRIEDE JELINEK’S ‘KRANKHEIT ODER MODERNE FRAUEN’.

Abstract

Elfriede Jelinek’s ‘Krankheit oder Moderne Frauen’ is a play that was published in 1984 and first performed in 1987. It outlines a narrative in which two women form a relationship through the process of using vampirism as a means to connect the two women. This play contains many themes that could be discussed: the first concept is that of the ‘Other’, popularized by Simone de Beauvoir; in which anything that is not a man is to be classified and treated as an ‘other’. Next there are the ideas of Lesbian vampirism (Weinstock) that describe common ideas around sexuality, womanhood and independence. Vampires are linked to sexuality and power, specifically when this idea is applied to women in fiction; it is the idea that a woman gains power in her sexuality and independence. The idea of the vampire is used as a way to showcase the power in women’s sexuality. Women’s sexuality in most cases is something to be feared, a sexually liberated woman is an independent one and that is not something that was desired in German society at the time of this play. Next in looking to the lesbian aspect of the play the idea of disease becomes apparent. When it comes to vampires they are known to be infectious, quite like a disease, in that when applied to sexuality, it brings up the fear that homosexuality is somehow infectious. This paper shows how deviating from set gender roles and norms is seen as both monstrous and worthy of the derision.
and power, specifically when this idea is applied to women in fiction; it is the idea that a woman gains power in her sexuality and independence. The idea of the vampire is used as a way to showcase the power in women’s sexuality. *Carmilla* is a short story by Sheridan le Fanu that we will use here to build a comparative to the representations of female sexuality in *Krankheit oder Modene Frauen*. Carmilla is a highly sexual being; in death she becomes the Lesbian Vampire. In life Carmilla was what one might describe as normal, death is the agent for gaining power and thus the Lesbian Vampire is inhuman and worth less. This idea of the Lesbian Vampire gives power to women’s sexuality. Women’s sexuality in most cases is something to be feared: a sexually liberated woman is an independent one and is not something that was desired in German society at the time of this play. This play was created at the time of the Cold War and before German reunification; this was a time in which the roles of women in society were changing and yet women faced opposition to their efforts to shift roles and power relations in the private sphere. Next, in looking to the lesbian aspect of the play the idea of disease becomes apparent. When it comes to vampires they are known to be infectious, and thus they are used as a means to spread the disease of sexuality, the disease of women asserting power, the disease of homosexuality. This paper shows how deviating from set gender roles and norms is seen as both monstrous and worthy of the derision. By utilizing feminist and gender theory, this paper will deconstruct the gendered issues within *Krankheit oder Moderne Frauen*.

Simone de Beauvoir was the one to introduce the idea of the ‘Other’ to mainstream feminist thought, this idea can be defined as anything not a man is thus an ‘Other’. This idea articulates to the polarization of ‘Us vs. Them’; the Us being from the
male perspective, and the Them is representative of all other perspectives. Even in terms of language, we see how other perspectives are pushed aside, anything masculine in language is taken at its root as a neutral. For example: “Mankind” tries to encapsulate all other perspectives under the one title of man. It is in this general assumption that man is the foundation on which society flourishes that we encounter this idea of ‘Other-ing’.

We are shown woman solicited by two kinds of alienations; it is very clear that to play at being a man will be a recipe for failure; but to play at being a woman is also a trap: being a woman would mean being an object, the Other; and at the heart of its abdication, the Other remains a subject. (Beauvoir 60)

The problem lies in that in when we take the masculine as the ‘Natural’, the feminine therefore becomes the ‘Unnatural’. This can be seen as a dehumanizing force.

When applied to Krankheit oder Moderne Frauen this concept of ‘Other-ing’ is rather apparent. When introduced to dentist and gynaecologist; Heidkliff, the fiancé of Emily, he begins in monologue about himself, then turns to Emily, his fiancé, who is both nurse and vampire, and begins to highlight and debate the inherent differences between them. He discusses himself in contrast to Emily. He is a representation of a hegemonic, God-loving, heterosexual man, whereas Emily is shown to be in direct contrast as a woman who favours other women, and is ‘against God’ in the words of Heidkliff. It is also in this conversation that Emily is revealed to be a vampire, which dehumanizes her further. The ‘Other-ing’ of women within this play is an attempt to show how one could dehumanize women and in turn create monsters that deviate from standard societal norms. Non-compliance with these roles results in the rejection of
humanity within these women of the play. “The two men arm themselves, follow and shoot the two women, who have become a kind of double-creature” (Babka 244). At the end of the play the women are further dehumanized into an amalgamate of monstrosity. The righteous men go out to kill the monster and restore the balance of power. The ‘Other’ gained power through sexuality and blood, and the men took it back, in fear of the ‘Other’ overthrowing them. The ‘Other’ is a monster needing to be put down and kept down in the eyes of men. “…she is completely outside of him and upset of him” (Babka 245). Emily is the ‘Other’ to Heidkliff. She represents everything he is not and that is an affront to everything he is. The monster lies in the ‘Other’, the fear lies in the ‘Other’, and thus is worthless to everything that man seeks to accomplish. He is separate from woman and in his eyes, then superior. “…gender relations in this author’s œuvre are constructed as repressive and coercive, with power repressing, blocking, concealing, and with the male subjects dominating and oppressing female subjects” (Szalay 238). Domination of the ‘Other’ is a part of the socialization of different genders. Thus when the ‘Other’ rises up it is to be pushed back down by the subject; in most cases the subject is the man. The ‘Other’ is a monster needing to be put down and kept down for fear of female empowerment.

Vampires are linked to the idea of sexuality. “In fact, vampirism is a blatanty sexual motif,” (Cavendish 2708). The vampirism as a representation of sexuality within Krankheit oder Moderne Frauen is displayed as with most vampire stories by the drinking of blood. Blood and the colour red have long been associated with sexuality. The blood of menstruation, the blood that comes from women, is sexualized. A bite is then seen as a kind of kiss. Blood is linked very closely with sexuality and in this case is
blatant within the text of this play. “The two women suck dry the other children and attack their husbands, discovering that they are beings without blood. The two women have to flee” (Babka 244). Later on the women attack, and the men are found to be bloodless. Without the connection to blood the men are immune to the women’s power, and thus are not subject to the new relationship the women have to their sexualities. This sexuality is a threat and is contained through the death of the Lesbian Vampire.

The instant Carmilla (the mother who died in childbirth) is brought back as a vampire she becomes a sexual being. Since Mothers can be perceived as inherently non-sexual persons in nature, this is a drastic shift. Later in the 2nd Act, we get to see this newfound power in sexuality showcased. “Heidkliff: Emily! Ich schäme mich für dich.”(2.3.6) This loosely translates to “I am ashamed of you and for you.” This was said in discovery of Emily and Carmilla drinking from Carmilla’s children. This scene depicts the monstrous ways of the vampire and how as women this deviation is a shame upon them, as they reject the obvious role of the mother. All deviations are in this way rejected, debased.

Carmilla of Krankheit shares both a name and more than a few character traits with the Carmilla of Carmilla by Sheridan le Fanu. It is a short story about the vampire Carmilla and her lesbian encounters with a young woman. “Lesbian vampirism can be regarded as a figuration in 20th century exploitation film, rooted in Joseph Sheridan le Fanu’s Carmilla (1872) about the predatory love of a female vampire for a young woman.” (Babka 245). The romanticization of the vampire has been a part of literature since the 15th century (Cavendish 2702) when the Dracula myth came about. In the case of lesbian vampires they pose the most threat when it comes to the security of men’s
power. Women who have liberated their sexuality from men’s control are women to be feared.

At first, Carmilla acts as a sort of good mother figure as she tries to console Laura, until her teeth penetrate the little girl’s yet undeveloped chest. Brock notes that Le Fanu’s victim embodies the possibility of becoming a ‘good English mother’ and that she is ‘the site at which the British feel most vulnerable’. In this moment, it would appear that Carmilla is the antithesis of this good mother. The sexual desire in this scene is monstrous because it calls the myth of the ‘good English mother’ into question. (Haefele-Thomas, Location 2124)

In this description of le Fanu’s Carmilla we can see the comparison to Jelinek’s Carmilla in that both reflect the rejection of motherhood and traditional womanhood. Strength is found in death and the re-sexualisation of women. The good mother is the traditional woman and the vampire rejects all traditional values and gives rise to the modern woman to give power to the sexual being. It is this power that men seek to control and crush, because these deviations in control are seen as worthy of derision.

“The vampire embodies repressed sexual wishes and guilt…”(Cavendish 2708). This idea of sexual guilt can be likened to the idea of homosexuality and the shame linked to it by heterosexuals. Homosexual identity is perceived as driven by the sexual and thus as a metaphor for this, a vampire is a perfect representation of non-hetero-normative sexuality. The inherent sexual nature of differing sexualities is used to dismiss them as either barbaric or immoral. In Krankheit Emily watches over Carmilla in rapture
at the beginning of the 4th scene in Act 1: as Carmilla becomes vampiric, it is through the text described as an affectionate and desiring gaze. This desire is met with disgust by the men of the play and would be a suited mirror for the anxieties of German society of the time.

The traditional female vampire in works by male authors figures as the return of oppressed sexuality …

…When Carmilla is staked to end her vampire life in Sheridan le Fanu’s ‘Carmilla’ (1872), what is actually at stake here is her same-sex desire for Laura that the imagination of this time must exorcise. (Berka 373)

This vampiric Lesbian sexuality is seen as a great deviation to heteronormative practices and so this desire must be extinguished. It is in this representation in Carmilla that we can see how deviant sexual behaviour was viewed in past times. While this play was created in the 19th century, many of the same ideas and views of deviancy still hold true in the 20th century and even into the 21st century.

During Carmilla’s return engagement, Laura senses an immediate attraction to the guest or ghost — but she is at the same time repelled. Every time she is drawn to Carmilla, there is also an element of repulsion. (Rickels 164)

Laura is not yet undead and thus has not had her sexual awakening as is commonly found with the death of a woman, in this trope of the Lesbian Vampire as found within both Carmilla and even within the classic Dracula as this theme of death creating sexuality is found alongside other Vampire stories. There is also something to
be said about a male author writing about a woman’s desires. This may explain the
element of repulsion found within Laura, as it is his misgivings being given life in his
work. This also encapsulates the fear of sexual realization and thus the hesitancy in the
written work on what can be labelled desire.

… Henriette Fürth, Johanna Elbesarkinchen, Ruth Bré and Grete Meisel-Hess, who, critical of the double standard of sexual
morality for men and women, explicitly engaged with scientific ideas in order to demand women’s sexual emancipation and assert
women’s right of sexual self-determination. (Leng 133)

*Krankheit* is a representation of how the fear of feminine sexual emancipation works against gender rights and gay rights. Female sexuality in itself has been viewed as an abnormality in the fact that its existence has been seen as in question. Female sexuality and desire is akin to myth, and when female sexuality is seen to exist, it creates a reaction; usually the reaction to female sexuality is to extinguish and stomp down any trace of it, because when something has been seen as a myth for so long, any truth will only create a slow change in perception and not the drastic one needed. The Lesbian Vampire as a representation of female sexuality is then a monster to the normative practices that are revered in society.

Vampires and their mythos are linked to the ideas of infectivity, the spreading of disease or *Krankheit*. This infectivity being connected to homosexuality expresses a specific view of deviancy and how it affects society and its wellbeing. Lesbianism in relation to vampirism and its monstrosity is shown blatantly within the play. Infectivity of both female sexuality and of lesbianism and vampirism is used within the play to
showcase how this ‘disease’ of modernity was something to be feared. This idea of infectivity plays upon the notion that both homosexuality, power, and vampirism can be spread akin to that of a virus. It increases the threat to male power as it both liberates female sexuality and increases the control the ‘Other’ has on society. “…feminine subjectivity as ‘ill’ or ‘diseased’…” (Szalay 238). Before becoming a vampire Carmilla was housewife to Benno, a tax consultant, and mother to his children, the Mother being a desexualized being. After becoming undead she is re-sexualized and has an entire shift in her sexuality. Her feelings for Emily grow and grow and both her and Emily become a force that Heidkliff and Benno can no longer ignore. They become strong and the men, then forced out of fear for what may occur, kill both of the women.

The modern woman can be melded with the disease of the Vampire in order to show how modernity and female power is treated. Treated as an illness.

‘The Birth of the Clinic’ is about seeing and naming the human disease in the eighteenth century—and, if modern woman is, metaphorically speaking or symbolically, ill or disease(d), … whether this applies to sexed bodies or to sick bodies—appears as ‘the given.’ By making sense of the ‘Ich bin krank, daher bin ich’ –utterance by Carmilla… (Szalay 238)

The infectivity of the Lesbian Vampire transfers over to the modern woman, giving power and increased sexuality. Ich bin krank, daher bin ich, roughly translates to ‘I am sick therefore I am.’ The disease of the vampire and of the lesbian, were transferred through to Carmilla, she was reborn a modern woman, sexually emancipated and fully in control of herself and of her life as it was separated from the influence of
man. The spread of this power, the rise of the Lesbian Vampire is in total, deviant from social norms and thus worthy of derision by society.

The vampiric Lesbian represents power and a liberated sexuality. She is to be feared by men and women as one who could change the entirety of societies set social norms and standards. She is a deviation as an ‘Other’, a deviation as a modern woman, a deviation as a lesbian, she is the downfall of rigid hegemonic, hetero-normative social conventions. She is a threat to ‘normal’ life and thus is the monster in most eyes. The threat of deviation is one that the idea of the Vampire leads to ideas of infectivity; the infectivity of the modern woman, the infectivity of a sexual power, the idea that homosexuality is infectious; all these ideas revolve around the concept that power and control can be ripped from the hands of men to be used against them, the Lesbian Vampire is thus in their eyes the monster to doom them all. The modern woman therefore becomes a sickness on the health and wellbeing of society.
Works cited


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Issue No. I

2016