

**Different to the Others: Discourses of Queer Femininity and Female Desire in Amsterdam and Berlin (1918-1939)**

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# Abstract

This thesis explores the construction of queer feminine identities and desires in Amsterdam and Berlin in the two decades after 1918. Centralising textual narratives that focused on queer feminine women, this thesis attempts to redress the dearth of research on female-bodied femininities within queer historical narratives and shed new light on experiences that have traditionally been elided from discussions about the queer past. Framed by the thinking of queer philosophers and historians such as Michel Foucault, Eve Sedgwick, and Laura Doan, this thesis employs queer historical methods to adjust the gendered lens of analysis across multiple discursive sites.

Given the intensified interest in labelling desires at the end of the nineteenth century, the first section of this thesis plots the ways in which queer feminine women became available as objects of study in sexological writing about female same-sex desires. The chief focus of my analysis concerns the ways in which women in Berlin and Amsterdam became “present as subjects” through textual productions published for and about queer citizens in the German periodicals *Die Freundin* (1924-1933) and *Frauenliebe* (1926-1932) and the Dutch periodicals *Wij* (1932) and *Levensrecht* (1940-1947).

The second part of this analysis will concern the dialogues that existed between medico-social discourses and queer literature. Looking first at the feminine “object” in Eva Raedt-de Canter’s *Internaat* (1930) and Christa Winsloe’s *Das Mädchen Manuela* (1933), this comparison will focus on the role of “mother-love” as well as protagonists’ own constructions of identity and desire. The final comparison will consider the ways in which maternalism is positioned as a specifically erotic concept to explore love between women in Anna Elisabet Weirauch’s trilogy *Der Skorpion* (1919-1931) and Josine Reuling’s *Terug naar het eiland* (1937). Examining the ways that the feminine woman is positioned as desiring subject *and* desired object in their novels, this thesis suggests that these narratives carve a space for queer “non-lesbian” subjects.

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# 

# Abbreviations and Translations

The full name of an organisation will be provided on first reference in each chapter. Later references will appear abbreviated as indicated below.

*Bund für Menschenrecht* BfM

*Deutscher Freundschaftsverband* DFV

*Gemeinschaft der Eigenen* GdE

*Nederlandsch Wetenschappelijk Humanitair Komitee*  NWHK

*Wissenschaftlich-humanitäres Komitee* WhK

Unless stated otherwise, all translations provided in this thesis are my own.

# Part One: Medico-Social Discourses

## Introduction

‘A class of women […] in which homosexuality while fairly distinct, is only slightly marked, is formed by the women to whom the actively inverted woman is most attracted. […] On the whole, they are women who are not very robust and well-developed, physically or nervously, and who are not well adopted for child-bearing, but who still possess many excellent qualities, and they are always womanly. One may perhaps say that they are the pick of the women whom the average man would pass by. No doubt this is often the reason why they are open to homosexual advances […]’

(Havelock Ellis, *Studies in the Psychology of Sex: Sexual Inversion*, 1908)

‘Femininity! A patriarchal hype if there ever was one—a phony ideal created by men, not by Lesbians—an ideal that almost all heterosexual women embody to please men’

(Linda Strega, ‘The Big Sell-Out, Lesbian Femininity’, 1985)

When compared with the sustained scholarly engagement with male masculinities, male femininities, and female-bodied masculinities, it is fair to say that the figure of the queer feminine woman has remained a rather neglected site of academic interest. Even a cursory glance at the fields of gender and sexuality studies reveals a dearth in research on the subject of queer female femininities, while anthologies of (queer) masculinities continue to flourish.[[1]](#footnote-1) Existing historical research on the nature of same-sex love between women, as Sarah Cefai observes, has traditionally consolidated its narratives ‘around the image of the butch’ with queer feminine women visible only at the margins, and through the gender non-conformity of their masculine partners.[[2]](#footnote-2) Considered ultimately less transgressive than the masculinities expressed by female subjects, female-bodied femininities have historically been undervalued and their potential as points of departure for a critical engagement with the subject of gendered performance has been overlooked. With this thesis, I want to redress this balance by contextualising historically the socio-cultural, sexological, and literary discourses about queer female femininities across two national contexts.

When I first began this project, I had recently finished researching depictions of the chimeric “New Woman” in Weimar fiction and how they could be said to compare to those which coloured the experiences of queer subjects in literary depictions of lesbian love. I concluded that the “lost boys” of Weimar fiction were heterogeneous figures, brought to life in literary form through prevailing ideas about the meanings of masculinity following the First World War and the growing significance of sexological signifiers in society. In an attempt to weave together a richer tapestry of historical gendered enactments by queer women, I proposed a comparative project that took Germany and the Netherlands as the central sites for this investigation. A curious letter from a self-defined Dutch transvestite that I had uncovered in the German lesbian magazine *Die Freundin* (1924-1933), the romantic relationship between Dada artist Hannah Höch and Dutch author Til Brugman, and the decision of German author Christa Winsloe to publish her novel *Das Mädchen Manuela* (1933) in Amsterdam after the National Socialists assumed power, led me to conclude that there must have been a productive exchange between queer communities across these national borders. Furthermore, I contended that the countries’ decidedly different experiences of the First World War could shed new light on the diverse ways in which masculinity had figured in women’s relationships with other women at a specific historical moment. Soon enough, however, I found myself frustrated by the apparent evasiveness of the Dutch dyke. Despite seductive signs of Sapphism lurking behind historical documents depicting cigar-smoking, gin-swigging women in the Netherlands, there was little tangible evidence of the virile masculinity that had come to dominate German-speaking studies on queer desire. The figure of the boyish and coquettish “New Woman” that had become symbolic of the “modernity and decay” of the Weimar Republic also appeared to have failed to capture the Dutch cultural imagination during this period.

Conspicuously absent from *fin de siècle* sexological discussions in the Netherlands and rendered invisible in the writings of queer male activists rallying against the law that restricted same-sex desires, evidence of the ways in which queer women organised their lives and loves before the 1950s appeared only intermittently and fragmentarily in Dutch archives. It is for good reason that historian Judith Schuyf’s monograph on lesbian love in the Netherlands is called *A Silent Conspiracy*.[[3]](#footnote-3) Reading through an earlier contribution by Schuyf in a collection concerning gay life in Dutch society, however, I was struck by her comparison of the ways in which German and Dutch women engaged with categories of sexual preference and desire:

In Germany, lesbian women were conscious of an identity *as a lesbian*, and the form this identity took was the trademark of the German gay rights movement, Hirschfeld’s Wissenschaftlich Humanitäres Kommittee [sic] (WhK), the “Third Sex”. […] In The Netherlands lesbian women were, primarily, *women*. Thus, in the feminist magazines the discussion was about femininity’.[[4]](#footnote-4)

Taken in light of some of the most recent contributions to the development of queer historiographical practices, I realised my initial point of departure had been motivated primarily ‘by the desire for the recognition of the present in the past’.[[5]](#footnote-5) The catalyst for Laura Doan’s (re-)assessment of queer historical methods in her recent *Disturbing Practices* (2013) had also been a realisation that, at least until the late 1920s, British women had ‘little sense of sexual selfhood or subjectivity’ and did not ‘think to attach to themselves sexual labels or names’.[[6]](#footnote-6) Resonating with the documents I had access to about the experiences of women in the Netherlands from the same period, I began to question my assumption that “labelling” sexual desires had been an axiomatic process for Dutch women in the interwar era and whether femininity might not have played a much more significant role in relationships between women than I had initially imagined.[[7]](#footnote-7) Indeed, by embarking with the goal of finding evidence of the virile invert in the archive, much like the historians Halberstam accused of this practice in *Female Masculinity* (1998), I had sought only to find what I thought I already knew about queer life in Dutch and German society. By decentralising the masculine woman in this study of queer desire in Amsterdam and Berlin, therefore, I aim to follow Doan’s encouragement to her fellow scholars and ‘pose questions rather than provide answers about sexual identities we already know’.[[8]](#footnote-8) Before I set out my intentions for the wider aims and objectives of this project, the contention that “Dutch women were not labelling their desires” in the interwar era requires a more detailed explanation.

**The Dutch Case: A Silent Conspiracy**

In what has since become the most frequently proclaimed genesis of sexual identities, Foucault suggests that the advent of a *scientia sexualis* in the late nineteenth century marks the critical moment at which the premodern “sodomite” emerged as a member of a modern homosexual “species”.[[9]](#footnote-9) Citing Carl Otto Westphal’s article on ‘contrary sexual feeling’ in 1869 as the date of birth of the modern category of “thehomosexual”, Foucault’s writing identified a paradigmatic shift in the late nineteenth century from the pre-modern to the modern social understanding of sexuality, one in which sexual subjects considered their sexual desires to be a constituent part of their social identities.[[10]](#footnote-10) Even a brief examination of some of the publications that emerged about queer desire in the Netherlands during this time, however, highlights that even as late as 1939, same-sex desiring subjects did not necessarily organise their desires around a specific category or name.

Following the introduction of Article 248bis to the Dutch penal code in 1911, a law that restricted same-sex acts between adults and those under the age of twenty-one, the first organisation to demand equal treatment for those who desired their own sex was established. The *Nederlandsch Wetenschappelijk Humanitair Komitee* (Dutch Scientific Humanitarian Committee, NWHK), founded by lawyer and activist Jacob Schorer (1866-1957) in 1912, aimed to educate the general public about the nature of the same-sex desire and to lobby to abolish Article 248bis. As a subgroup of the German *Wissenschaftlich-humanitäres Komitee* (WhK), which had been established in Germany in 1897, Schorer and the NWHK borrowed heavily from the earlier publications of the WhK as they attempted to spread their message about the congenital nature of queer desire. The first pamphlet produced by the committee, *What Everybody Should Know about Uranism* (Wat iedereen behoort te weten omtrent Uranisme, 1912), was largely a copy of the earlier German publication *Was muss das Volk vom dritten Geschlecht wissen?* (1901). Aside from the obvious distinction between the titles, the Dutch publication makes several departures from the original document to support the argument that sexual desires did not widely constitute a sexual identity in the Netherlands in this period. In the earlier pamphlet distributed by the WhK, the terms “Uranism”, which described a “psychic” inversion of the soul, and “drittes Geschlecht”, a term implying a psychic and somatic inversion of gender traits, were considered recognisable enough as descriptors of homosexual desire to go “untranslated” in the text. In the later Dutch copy, however, such terminology is considered inaccessible for the average lay reader, for whom such terms were not considered assumed knowledge. Glossing their introduction – and title page – with a clarification of the terms upon which the publication is based, the authors state: ‘Our goal is to inform the general public more accurately about the true nature of Uranism (= homosexuality = love for members of the same sex)’.[[11]](#footnote-11) With explanations of “Uranism” throughout the pamphlet, it is clear that such terms and labels were unfamiliar to the Dutch reading public for whom this first publication was intended.

Three years after the appearance of the NWHK’s ‘What everybody should know’, queer activist and author Joannes Henri François (1884-1948) published the anonymous *Open Letter to Those Who are Different, From One of Them* (Open brief aan hen die anders zijn dan de anderen, door een hunner, 1915). Under the auspices of the NWHK, over 40,000 copies of the pamphlet were sent to leading figures in the Dutch government, as well as to medical practitioners and editors of several major Dutch newspapers.[[12]](#footnote-12) François’ letter, which offered words of support to “like-minded individuals” across the country, was preceded by an introduction from Felix Ortt (1866-1959), a prominent theorist of the Dutch Christian anarchist movement. In his introduction, Ortt warns the ‘normal reader’ that the content of the publication would be ‘intimate’ as ‘the writer – homosexual – is speaking to his fellow-homosexuals’.[[13]](#footnote-13) Although Ortt is quick to identify François as “homosexual” in his introduction, in the letter that follows François clearly does not define his desires in such terms. Although he acknowledges a perceptible “difference” between those who experienced homosexual feelings and those who did not, his letter certainly does not indicate that he identified himself as “homosexual”. The letter is not directed at a “homosexual” collective but rather, with a striking lack of specificity, at those who are ‘different to others’ (*anders dan de anderen*).[[14]](#footnote-14) Writing primarily about the male ‘non-normal’, François directs his attention in the final pages of his letter to female ‘comrades in feeling’ (*gevoels-genoten*). Despite asserting that same-sex desire occurs in women just as frequently as it does in men, François concedes – in a manner that had become typical of the way in which men broached the subject of female sexuality – that he knew little about the circumstances of ‘women constituted that way’ (*zoo-aangelegde vrouwen*) because their existence had been so poorly documented. The “problem” at the root of this lack of evidence, François suggests, was that the ‘woman like that’ (*zoo-vrouw*) could express her feelings publically with ‘much less difficulty’ than her male counterpart, given that ‘intimate contact between two women is given far less attention than that between two men’.[[15]](#footnote-15)

The intimacy between women that François alludes to in his letter evokes the image of homosocial networks that existed earlier in the nineteenth century, which have been most comprehensively outlined in Carroll Smith-Rosenberg’s article ‘The Female World of Love and Ritual’ (1975) and Lillian Faderman’s *Surpassing the Love of Men* (1981). Focusing on romantic female friendships, Smith-Rosenberg suggests that prior to the medicalisation of same-sex desires, there existed a diverse range of social structures and norms that actively encouraged the development of exclusively homosocial environments. These passionate and loving female friendships, Smith-Rosenberg writes, existed at a time in which romanticism and desire were organised and structured in ways that were independent of the twentieth century ‘sex-pleasure ethic’.[[16]](#footnote-16) François’ assertion that public life was much easier for queer women, then, indicates that similar homosocial structures still existed in the Netherlands in the early twentieth century and presented many women with the freedom to articulate desires for the same sex without arousing suspicion within society.[[17]](#footnote-17) In addition to this, although the category “homosexual” had clearly gained traction among experts the Netherlands by this time – evidenced by the fact that there is no longer a glossing of terms in Ortt’s introduction – there is no indication in François’ writing that such a category was used by individuals harbouring desires for the same sex to refer to themselves or to a wider queer community.

Reflecting on this discussion of early queer female desires, one of the first attempts to document the history of love between women in the Netherlands presents further evidence to support the suggestion that women did not see their “non-normative” desires as constituent parts of a social identity during the early twentieth century. In the interviews that appear in Anja van Kooten Niekerk’s and Sacha Wijmer’s sociological study *Verkeerde vriendschap* (Wrong Friendships, 1985), several women who had engaged in same-sex relationships during the first half of the twentieth century distanced themselves from the term “lesbian” as it was deployed in the 1980s when the study was written. In the two interviews with women born between 1905 and 1915, for example, the subjects claim that they would not have described themselves as “lesbian” in the past and did not describe themselves as “lesbian” at the time of the interview. While some of the interviewees struggle to unite traditional markers of femininity (such as maternal desires) with the term “lesbian”, others appear uncertain about who had the authority to determine who *is* lesbian and who *is no*t. Melanie Wansink, born in 1912, for example, believed her desire to have children precluded her from defining her sexual preferences under the label “lesbian”: ‘I’m very much on the border, you know. I’m not really 100% lesbian. […] I wanted children awfully much, so I’m a very dubious case’.[[18]](#footnote-18) Catherine Groenendaal, born in 1913, also renounced the label “lesbian” because she had been married: ‘I’m not lesbian, even though a real lesbian friend of mine says that I am. But I was married for seven years, so I don’t know, you [van Kooten Niekerk and Wijmer C.S] should decide’.[[19]](#footnote-19) Summing up the differences between lesbian life in the 1980s and love between women in the 1920s, Maria Verhoeven, born in 1905, suggests more ambiguously: ‘It is all a lot freer now, but I found it more sociable, more intimate, in the old days […] I don’t think that you have the same warm and pleasant life that we had. Our life was freer in a way’.[[20]](#footnote-20) That contemporary sexual categorisations were rejected by many of the interviewees to account for their sexual desires in the past (and at the time of the study) suggests a need to pay closer attention to the discords and inconsistencies in the history of female same-sex desire, rather than projecting backwards an image that one believes ought to have existed in the past. Quite how can one make sense of such historical inconsistencies and discords, however, has been a historiographical project of intense debate.

**Queer Historiographical Methods**

In the thirty years since the publication of Van Kooten Niekerk and Wijmer’s socio-historical study, approaches to writing histories of same-sex desire have undergone radical reconceptualisations, catalysed primarily by the critical interventions of queer theorists and scholars. Typical of the early “ancestral” histories that endeavoured to uncover desires that had been “hidden” from mainstream historical accounts, Van Kooten Niekerk and Wijmer’s study is characterised by an effort to make visible homosexuals of the past. Prior to the publication of *Verkeerde vriendschap*, literary scholars and historians such as Lillian Faderman and Brigitte Erikson presented depictions of the diverse forms of love between women that had existed from the ‘Renaissance to the present’, contributing masterful historical narratives to what later became dubbed the homosexual “recovery agenda”.[[21]](#footnote-21) While certainly not unproblematic, these early approaches were crucial for the admission of same-sex desiring subjects into the master historical narratives from which they had been elided and, as Doan has argued, were instrumental ‘in sustaining political identities and communities’ at a time when discourses of historical legitimisation were vital for LGBT visibility and emancipation.[[22]](#footnote-22)

Offering an initial window into the historical organisation of sex and desire, the efforts of early historians to project a universal image of lesbian experience across historical eras received considerable criticism, not least for the deployment of the past to achieve political ends, which traditionalists argued ‘jeopardizes the historian’s scholarly integrity’.[[23]](#footnote-23) Not only was the scholarly “integrity” of recovery histories subject to criticism but so, too, were the methodological frameworks that underpin such approaches. While some opponents of minority histories have challenged the presumed existence of a universal lesbian narrative that passes over markers of race, gender, and class, others have suggested that the ahistorical deployment of the category “lesbian” neglects to account for the changing social and political implications of such classifications within specific historical moments.[[24]](#footnote-24) Furthermore, the ‘ideal of telos’ that is presented in such histories through the construction of what Eve Sedgwick terms ‘narratives of supersession’, as Valerie Traub observes, too easily ‘conscripts past sexual arrangements to modern categories’.[[25]](#footnote-25) By constructing a history in which one ‘model of same-sex relations is superseded by another, which may again be superseded by another’, historians risk, as Sedgwick identifies, ‘reinforcing a dangerous consensus of knowingness about the genuinely *un*known’.[[26]](#footnote-26)

One of the fundamental distinctions between queer historical approaches and “ancestral” approaches, as Halberstam writes, is that queer methods seek an ‘application of what we do not know in the present to what we cannot know about the past’.[[27]](#footnote-27) Based on what Sedgwick calls a ‘denaturalisation of the present’, Halberstam’s own practice of “perverse presentism” applies both a ‘denaturalisation of the present but also an application of what we do not know in the present to what we cannot know about the past’.[[28]](#footnote-28) To put this in more concrete terms, and in terms of Halberstam’s own study, Halberstam suggests that as the relationship between masculinity and lesbianism is not fully understood today, we cannot claim to *know* that masculine presenting women in fin-de-siècle Europe marked a type of “proto-lesbian”. Instead, Halberstam suggests that by viewing subjects in the past through a lens of “perverse presentism” historians could not only ‘[avoid] the trap of simply projecting contemporary understandings back in time’ but also ‘apply insights from the present to conundrums of the past’.[[29]](#footnote-29) As an analytical tool and point of theoretical departure, then, “queer” as historical method attempts to account for what Sedgwick describes as ‘the open mesh of possibilities, gaps, overlaps, dissonances and resonances, lapses and excesses of meaning when the constituent elements of anyone’s gender, of anyone’s sexuality aren’t made (or *can’t be* made) to signify monolithically’.[[30]](#footnote-30)Madhavi Menon’s practice of “unhistoricism”, or “homohistory”, attempts to avoid exactly the struggle Sedgwick recognises in the exploration of the ‘lapses and excesses of meaning’ by insisting that ‘neither past nor present is capable of a full and mutually exclusive definition’.[[31]](#footnote-31) Rejecting what she terms ‘the valorization of heterotemporality’, which takes as its point of origin a known and stable “present” in order to look back at the differences of the past, Menon instead favours the ‘nonhetero, with all its connotations of sameness, similarity, proximity and anachronism’.[[32]](#footnote-32)

As can be seen from Menon’s “homohistory” and Halberstam’s “perverse presentism”, despite the methodological distinctions between queer and “ancestral” historiographical practices, the approaches I have outlined above cannot be so easily separated into two discrete camps. Neither should the above survey of historical methods be considered an attempt to dismiss the valuable research that historians have undertaken under the banner of a “recovery history” in favour of a newer and “better” way of narrating the past. As Lisa Duggan powerfully asserted in ‘The Discipline Problem’ (1995), it is important that queer historians recognise and ‘acknowledge their debt’ to earlier historiographical methods, which have made queer historical practices possible.[[33]](#footnote-33) Indeed, as the fields outlined above have developed and diversified, many scholars have taken up the call for a more hybrid approach to historical research on sexual subjects. In one attempt to build bridges between various methods of narrating sexual history, Carolyn Dinshaw’s *Getting Medieval* (1999) points to a coalition between pre-modern and post-modern texts by exploring how seemingly disparate ‘entities past and present’ can “touch” across time.[[34]](#footnote-34) The notion of “touches”, “vibrations”, and “coalitions” that develop between documents of the past and present, can be a useful way not only of conceptualising historical shifts but also for ‘using ideas of the past, creating relations with the past, touching in this way the past in […] efforts to build selves and communities now and into the future’.[[35]](#footnote-35)

Traub’s chapter ‘The Present Future of Lesbian Historiography’ tackles most forcefully, perhaps, what Sedgwick termed “narratives of supersession”, advocating instead a ‘history that is attentive to the cyclical nature of certain recurrent sexual configurations’.[[36]](#footnote-36) Although sceptical of the idea that one historical form of organising desires is displaced by another, Traub’s “cycles of salience” nonetheless remain open to ‘recurring patterns of identification, social statuses, behaviour, and meanings of women who erotically desired other women across large spans of time’.[[37]](#footnote-37) Turning away altogether from the centralisation of locating identitarian practices in the exploration of historical desires, Laura Doan most recently proposed a model of “queer critical history”. As discussed in the opening pages of this introduction, Doan’s study highlights the ineffectiveness of seeking out sexual subjects of the past with the identitarian frameworks of the present. Drawing both on an “ancestral” impulse to chart the experiences of same-sex love between women as well as a Sedgwickian practice of “denaturalising the present”, Doan’s model ultimately questions the efficacy of situating sexual identity as the premise for historical research into the sexual past. Suggesting instead that we employ a practice of “queerness-as-method” over the continual search for “queerness-as-being”, Doan’s methodological framework does not deny the importance of the historical impulse to explore sexual desires of the past, yet it promotes, nonetheless, a distancing from our contemporary sexual categories and a questioning of their efficiency to describe what we cannot know.

In terms of my thesis, my earlier contention that queer desires of Dutch women in the early twentieth century were ‘veiled and hidden’ suggests, in many ways, that this project is part of a recovery agenda. Indeed, my endeavour to make visible stories that have been elided from mainstream narratives shares many mutual aims and objectives with earlier “ancestral” histories of same-sex desire. Furthermore, as my study is motivated by what I consider to be the elision and devaluing of the feminine from the historical past, I must also acknowledge that, in many ways, this thesis could also be considered, what Carla Freccero terms, ‘a political project for the present’.[[38]](#footnote-38) Yet, although I acknowledge my debts to “ancestral” approaches to narrating sexual history, my methodological framework remains unequivocally queer. By presenting historical surveys and archival research alongside close literary readings and textual criticisms, my research provides multiple points of entry from which to examine historical desires that I consider to be situational, fluid and, at times, incoherent. Furthermore, by reading for the silences and omissions that have become characteristic of female same-sex desire my thesis remains open to ‘the gaps, overlaps, dissonances and resonances’ in meaning that may have informed the ways in which feminine women organised their desires for other women in the past.[[39]](#footnote-39)

**Setting the Parameters for Historical Research**

Sexuality, as David Halperin has suggested, is ‘a distinctly modern production’.[[40]](#footnote-40) Exactly what marks the supposed caesura between the emergence of “sexual modernity” and the “premodern” sexual world, however, has found little scholarly consensus. For some historians, such as Rictor Norton and Randolph Trumbach, the establishment of a network of molly houses in the eighteenth century can already be classed as evidence of the origins of a modern (homo)sexual subculture. For others, such as Faderman and Smith-Rosenberg, early nineteenth-century romantic friendships must still be considered “premodern” sexual formations, given the distinctly “modern” impulse to categorise sexual desires that took place in the final decades of the nineteenth century. Others still have argued that one must return to the “lesbian-like” medieval women-women relationships visible in Judith Bennett’s research to identify what Noreen Giffney, Michelle Sauer, and Diane Watt term the “lesbian premodern”.[[41]](#footnote-41)

Foucault’s oft-cited contention that sexuality came to be considered as the ‘truth of our being’ at the end of the nineteenth century has been taken up widely by scholars of sexuality and continues to impact the way in which we conceive of our sexual lives. The centrality of German-language sexological discourses to this project of sexual codification has been noted in several recent studies, including Robert Deam Tobin’s *Peripheral Desires* (2015), which charts the emergence of new vocabulary and science of human sexuality within German-speaking Central Europe, and Robert Beachy’s *Gay Berlin* (2014), which situates the German capital more specifically as the ‘birthplace of a modern identity’.[[42]](#footnote-42) Yet, although numerous scholars have agreed with Foucault’s assertion, many have also proposed revisions to the “birthdate” of modern sexuality in his work and contested the power Foucault accorded to discourses of sexual science. George Chauncey, for example, has cautioned scholars against assuming historical subjects uncritically internalised the discourses of sexual science, observing that those who do so give ‘inordinate power to ideology as an autonomous social force; […] oversimplify the complex dialectic between social conditions, ideology, and consciousness which produced gay identities, and […] belie the evidence of preexisting subcultures and identities’.[[43]](#footnote-43)

In another recent reassessment of Foucault’s work, Susan L. Lanser examines “modernity” through the lens of the Sapphic in her study *The Sexuality of History* (2014). Conceiving of modernity as ‘the instantiation of the Sapphic within a logic of possibility’, Lanser foregrounds female same-sex desire within the historiographic endeavour to document experiences of modernity.[[44]](#footnote-44) Although Lanser’s study of Sapphic modernity spans the *longue durée* of the late sixteenth until the mid-nineteenth century, her inversion of Foucault’s historical framework is nonetheless a useful way to engage with the emergence of female sexual identities and desires across cultural borders in the early twentieth century. For this current thesis, in other words, what Lanser terms a ‘sapphic episteme’, can arguably be subdivided into “available as object” and “present as sexual subject”.[[45]](#footnote-45) By examining various textual discourses, it has been possible to chart which “knowledges” enabled a logic of ‘woman+woman’ to emerge in a given social context in the form of a self-defining sexual subject. The fact that sexuality ‘only exists through its social forms and social organization’ means, too, that discourses that facilitated the emergence of knowledges about queer desire ‘for good and for ill’ in Germany would be likely to have been received differently, and employed to different ends, in the Netherlands and requires, therefore, a closer cultural contextualisation. [[46]](#footnote-46)

It should be stated, however, that this project is not concerned with pinpointing *when* the logic “woman+woman” became available in German and Dutch contexts. Rather, the underlying assumption throughout this thesis will be that such a logic might *not* have been available to women and, therefore, it will be important to question how (feminine) women may have understood their desires outside the realms of such “modern” sexual categories. Given the intensified interest in labelling desires at the end of the nineteenth century in Germany, the first section of this thesis will be concerned with plotting the ways in which queer feminine woman became available as objects of study. The chief focus of my analysis, however, will be how queer individuals became “present as subjects” through textual productions published for and about queer citizens. In terms of the periodisation for this thesis, the implications of the Nazi regime on the organisation of female same-sex desires must be considered beyond the remit of this study. Instead, my analysis will consider texts published before the Nazis assumed power; between 1918 and 1933 in the German context and 1918 and 1939 in the Netherlands.

**Female Femininities in Existing Histories of Sexuality**

In drawing up my periodisation for this analysis, I encountered striking differences in the traditions and preoccupations of German and Dutch historical scholarship. Since the early 1970s, German historians have focused extensively on the construction of sexualities during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, with specific attention paid to the *fin de siècle*, interwar, and Nazi eras. Scholars such as Manfred Herzer, Ralph Dose, James Steakley, Harry Oosterhuis, Claudia Schoppmann, Ilse Kokula, Heike Schader, Christiane Leidinger, and Marti Lybeck, among others, have each contributed influential narratives and international perspectives to the historical discussion of same-sex desire in German contexts both in the German and English language. While many early German histories of same-sex desire appear to have been committed to the agenda of the “recovery project”, there has also developed an impressive collection of publications that have engaged with queer methodological practices.[[47]](#footnote-47) Dutch scholars, however, have not taken up queer methods quite so proactively and the analysis of historical female same-sex experiences from a queer analytical perspective has remained untouched as the subject of comprehensive research in Dutch studies. Indeed, Van Kooten Niekerk and Wijmer’s *Verkeerde vriendschap* (1985) and Schuyf’s *Een stilzwijgende samenzwering* (1994) are the only two comprehensive publications to exist about female same-sex desire in the Netherlands with a focus on the early twentieth century. While histories of sexuality in German contexts have focused intensively on the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, providing ample secondary source material to aid research on these periods, Dutch historical studies of same-sex desire have been concerned primarily with the period between the High Middle Ages and the eighteenth century.[[48]](#footnote-48) Furthermore, although several significant articles and chapters have been published on queer female desires in Dutch-language collections and journals, very few have been translated into English or made available to non-Dutch speakers. This thesis, therefore, is the first attempt to present a comprehensive account of historical Dutch discourses of queer female desire to an English audience, as well as being the first study on queer female desire in the early twentieth century since Schuyf’s publication.

Looking for the queer feminine woman in existing studies, Van Kooten Niekerk and Wijmer contextualise their study with sexological and psychoanalytical discourses that focus specifically on the image of the *manwijf* (mannish woman). Throughout their study, Van Kooten Niekerk and Wijmer reinforce the idea that female same-sex relationships often conformed to the traditional masculine-feminine dichotomy of the era, with women taking “butch” and “femme” roles. The fluidity of women’s sexual and gendered encounters presented through their interviews, however, suggests that relationships between women were not attempts to replicate heteronormative configurations. Interviewee Hillie Seegers, who was “on the scene” during the early 1930s, for example, explains that women were known to alter their gendered “role” depending on the presentation of their desired partner. If a woman attempted to attract a “masculine” partner she would likely adopt a “feminine” appearance. Although this appears to conform to traditional binary constellations, Seegers’ remarks suggest that this dyad was far more fluid in terms of presentation and desires; the feminine presenting woman could legitimately act as the sexual initiator, taking on the traditionally “masculine” role, while the “masculine” presenting woman could just as well be the “passive” partner in a relationship. Despite this fluidity of women’s relationships to gender and desire, however, Van Kooten Niekerk and Wijmer do not engage with the gendered aspects of their subjects’ desires and neither is there a specific engagement with the feminine woman in their work. Building on this earlier sociological study, Schuyf’s *A Silent Conspiracy: Lesbian Women in the Netherlands 1920-1970* (Een stilzwijgende samenzwering: lesbische vrouwen in Nederland 1920-1970, 1994), delves deeper into the cultural and historical contexts that shaped women’s social lives in the Netherlands. In an attempt to close the gap between the “known” and the “unknown”, Schuyf uses historical data about unmarried female subjects to build a more nuanced narrative about what life may have been like for queer women in the Netherlands. Throughout the study, however, there remains little reflection on the fact that the devaluing of the “feminine” within historiographical practices might be *why* there is so little historical data about queer women during this period and, in examining the construction of a sexual self-image, Schuyf returns to the preconceived notion of a “lesbian telos” in which the identity category “lesbian” is situated as the uncontested culmination point of a woman’s acknowledgment of her non-normative desires.[[49]](#footnote-49)

In terms of German historical studies of female same-sex desire, the figure of the masculine woman has come to dominate the field. This is, perhaps, largely unsurprising given the unprecedented social anxiety around the “masculinisation” of women during the interwar era, demonstrated most comprehensively in Katie Sutton’s *The Masculine Woman in Weimar Germany* (2012). Furthermore, the preoccupation of German-speaking psycho-medical discourses with the masculine “invert” has resulted in an extensive collection of cultural and social documents that are easily available to be analysed and investigated. In terms of specific attention to the queer feminine woman, Heike Schader’s *Virile, Vamps und wilde Veilchen* (2004) provides a wealth of information on the queer magazines printed for women in the Weimar era. Outlining the various masculine and feminine “types” depicted in these periodicals, Schader’s study sheds light on the ways in which queer women gave new meaning to gender categories and blurred the lines between strict binaries. In terms of the production and content of the magazines, however, Schader pays little attention to the types of discourses that are presented and how these may have been considered “gendered” genres. It is Marti Lybeck’s recent exploration of the emergence of homosexual identities in *Desiring Emancipation* (2014) that has given most attention to the struggles of negotiating between femininity, sexual subjectivity, and queer desire in Germany during the interwar era. Focusing specifically on the experiences of bourgeois women from the *fin de siècle* to the Nazi assumption of power, Lybeck addresses queer femininity at a time when the desiring feminine subject was considered ‘immoral, selfish, uncontrolled, fickle, vain, degenerate, and possibly evil’.[[50]](#footnote-50) Considering the ways in which bourgeois women transgressed the boundary between class and sexual desire, Lybeck’s study offers new insights into the construction of class-bound gender expressions. By shifting the focus to the emergent white-collar class, whose desires were depicted in magazines such as *Die Freundin* and *Frauenliebe*, my research aims tocontribute to this discussion by providing a more nuanced discussion of the relationship between femininity, sexuality, and class.

**Issues of Terminology: Discourses of Queer Femininity**

Having situated my research in terms of wider studies of female same-sex desire, it is necessary to query more closely the terms I will be employing in my analysis, as well as to explain how this thesis will be structured. Throughout this study, I have chosen to employ the term “queer” to describe the desires of women for their own sex as an adjective that is ‘unaligned with any specific identity category’.[[51]](#footnote-51) Employed in this way, “queer” can be a useful descriptor because, as David Halperin writes, it ‘does not designate a class of already objectified pathologies or perversions […] it describes a horizon of possibility whose precise extent and heterogenous scope cannot in principle be delimited in advance’.[[52]](#footnote-52) Furthermore, employing “queer” as an overarching label enables me to avoid the projection of anachronistic categories of identity onto subjects who, as I have already indicated, may not have identified with such terms. While deploying the term “queer” could itself be considered anachronistic, I do not use the term in this thesis to define and categorise historical “identities” but rather as an umbrella term to refer to the diverse manifestations of love between women without pinning these enactments down to a specific set of acts, expressions, or identities. Although I acknowledge the value of Adrienne Rich’s “lesbian continuum”and Judith Roof’s category “lesbian-like”, which have been employed to define a wide range of historical woman-woman relationships, I consider these terms to be incongruous with the wider aims of this study, since they are still too closely linked to our contemporary understanding “lesbian”.[[53]](#footnote-53)

The “discourses” of desire referred to in my title have been separated in this thesis roughly between the rubrics “medico-social”, “community”, and “fictional” discourses. As the remit of this research project does not allow for the inclusion of visual discourses of the era, the historical documents I examined here are all textual, although I recognise the important role that visual culture played in the creation of a queer aesthetic during this period.[[54]](#footnote-54) Furthermore, despite the divisions suggested above, I acknowledge that these are not discrete discourses but that they overlap and intersect, and it is precisely these imbrications which are of interest to this project. Throughout this thesis, I apply the term “discourse” in a Foucauldian sense. That is, I consider discourse to be a way of constituting knowledge about a specific subject – knowledge about sexual pleasures and sexual subjectivities – and a process that is invariably linked to notions of power and “truth”. Exploring more concretely the relationship between power/knowledge/truth through the practice of confession, Foucault examines in *The History of Sexuality* (1976) how individuals are incited by a religious power to confess knowledge, which, in turn, becomes the “truth” of the confessing subject. The systems of meaning that are created through certain productions of knowledge in turn gain the currency of “truth” in society and govern the ways in which our social worlds and social selves are organised (and controlled). As many scholars have suggested, however, the sexual “subject” was not only constituted by the production of sexological knowledges. Rather, medical discourses were sites wherein social norms and conventions could also be contested and revised through exchanges between the “producer” of knowledge and the discursive subject. Indeed, as Foucault suggests: ‘Discourse transmits and produces power; it reinforces it, but also undermines and exposes it, renders it fragile and makes it possible to thwart’.[[55]](#footnote-55)

In terms of the central theme of this thesis, that is femininity, I consider there to have existed multiple feminine identities during the interwar era that were coloured not only by sexual preference but also by other markers such as class and religion. While the fictional narratives I consider depict exclusively bourgeois feminine identities, the periodicals under consideration also include the voices and desires of the emerging white-collar classes. Thus, while this thesis does not claim to offer a full representation of every existing femininity in the interwar period, it strives to present a window into what Charlotte Brunsdon has most eloquently outlined as ‘the (historical) understanding of femininity, feminine cultures and gender identity, and the articulation of these identities and cultures with ideas of power’.[[56]](#footnote-56) In considering queer femininities to be sites of resistance to normalising processes, I view gender in the most Butlerian sense as a performative construct that becomes visible through a ‘sequence of acts’.[[57]](#footnote-57) The category femininity, therefore, is only ever deployed in this thesis as shorthand for a more complex assemblage of gendered performances, which themselves are ‘situated in a web of multiple oppressions and identities’.[[58]](#footnote-58) Despite the pitfalls that come with deploying such terms and categories, as I have outlined above, I contend, much like Gayle Rubin, that ‘Our categories are important. We cannot organize a social life, political movement, or our individual identities and desires without them. The fact that categories […] never contain all the relevant “existing things” does not render them useless, only limited’.[[59]](#footnote-59)

**The (Historical) Denigration of Femininity**

Within many feminist, lesbian, and queer circles, “femininity” remains a highly contentious issue. Considered by some to be a sign of the subordination of women to patriarchal ideals, the practice of femininity by women-who-desire-women has often forced them to the margins of lesbian communities and resulted in their sexual desires being criticised and devalued. Ever since the publication of Betty Friedan’s groundbreaking study *The Feminine Mystique* in 1963, the practice of femininity by women has been read as a capitulation to the subordination of patriarchal regimes and a practice that is fundamental to women’s oppression.[[60]](#footnote-60) Queer women who present as “feminine” have been considered, therefore, to be complicit in the multiple modes of oppression forced upon the female sex, even if they themselves do not submit willingly to what Kate Millet terms ‘internal colonisation’.[[61]](#footnote-61) Following Friedan’s foundational criticism of women’s return to the domestic sphere in the post-war era, a specific lesbian-feminist analysis of gender roles began to develop in the 1960s and 1970s during which femininity was subjected to new waves of scrutiny.

Under the configuration of the “woman-identified-woman”, the once valued butch-femme identities that had structured many lesbian subcultures after the Second World War were forcefully rejected in favour of more androgynously gendered configurations that resisted heterosexual models of sex and desire. Lesbian separatists rejected the roles that they considered had been allocated to them within a male-identified system, as Biddy Martin observes, and engaged with the notion of ‘“false consciousness” […] to eradicate any hint of femininity “played straight”, finding male identification in virtually any expression of gendered style whether femme or butch’.[[62]](#footnote-62) Within this logic not only was ‘thinking, acting, or looking like a man’ considered to ‘contradict lesbian feminism’s first principle’ but so, too, was a presenting in a feminine manner, which supposedly supported a system that upheld masculine privilege and power. Although femininity slowly became an accepted value for many lesbians once again during the 1980s, primarily through the writings of pro-sex “fem” activist Joan Nestle, fierce debates on the sexual subordination of women within patriarchal regimes and the damaging effects of pornography on society, meant that several leading lesbian-feminist voices denounced femininity as a fundamental ‘part of the weakening of lesbian politics’.[[63]](#footnote-63) More radical contributors to the debate, including self-defined “fem” Linda Strega, rejected femininity outright as a ‘Self-Betrayal’, claiming that adopting ‘het values and het identification’ was to align oneself with the enemy; the greatest act of deception one could commit against the lesbian community and the visible butch women within it.[[64]](#footnote-64)

In a cyclical pattern, evocative of Traub’s “cycles of salience”, the 1990s saw the dawning of a renewed appreciation for queer femininity with the era of “designer dykes” and “lipstick lesbians”.[[65]](#footnote-65) At a time when queer femininity had become “trendy”, media representations of feminine lesbian desires began to flourish. Following a decade of commercialised queerness, the arrival of Showtime’s successful series *The L Word* (2004-2009) suggested that the queer feminine woman had become a permanent fixture in the media landscape. Abounding with glamorous, wealthy, middle-class (and mainly white) women, *The L Word* was beyond doubt a powerful display of queer femininity. With storylines concerning lesbian motherhood, promiscuity, and bisexuality, the series openly and honestly tackled issues that had, as I will discuss throughout this thesis, plagued the discussion of queer feminine women for over a century. The centrality of the “femme” in the series and the notable absence of traditionally “butch” characters, however, led many in the queer community to question the authenticity of the show’s representations of lesbian sexuality and to suggest that it was pandering to the male gaze:

Even as its characters wrestle with real-world lesbian issues, they do so garbed, coiffed, and made-up in the guise of feminine, heterosexual women – thereby not only defusing any potential threat or disruption of the heterosexual status quo, but also reifying the representation of all women as existing under the purview of the scopophilic male gaze.[[66]](#footnote-66)

The suggestion that feminine-presenting queer women are ‘made-up in the guise of feminine, heterosexual women’ highlights the continued contentions this gendered signifier arouses within minority communities. It is telling, for example, that little attention has been paid to the nuances of feminine gendered expression in the series. The distinctions between Tina’s embodiment of maternal femininity, Bette’s assertive *Powerfrau* aesthetic, and Helena’s high class “hyper-femininity”, for example, have been ignored in favour of widespread rejection of what has been considered a monolithic “femininity” that purportedly served to make female same-sex desire palatable for a non-queer audience. Furthermore, the objection that butch lesbians were missing from the series, as well as the accusation that the show was attempting to satisfy the male gaze, reflects what Biddy Martin has suggested is the perpetual masculine lesbian ‘anxiety that the femme *lesbians* are indistinguishable from straight women’.[[67]](#footnote-67) Not only have queer feminine women been considered indistinguishable from straight women, but the ‘femme’s adaptation of what has been historically defined as a “feminine” sexual style’, as Lisa Walker observes, is also ‘tacitly constructed as evidence of her desire to pass for straight and not of her desire for other women’.[[68]](#footnote-68)

The (mis)recognition of queer female femininities as “equivalent” to patriarchally imposed femininities and, indeed, the suggestion that queer femininity is a performance to attract men, Jennifer Burke has argued, has historically denied the signifier “femme” any semblance of sexual agency and continues to preclude a discussion of the radical and critical potential of queer femininities.[[69]](#footnote-69) Plagued by what Clare Hemmings has termed ‘a specter of straightness’, the alterity of feminine identities has been rendered invisible by the “privilege” of queer feminine women to “pass” as heterosexual.[[70]](#footnote-70) Such privileges might include the queer feminine woman’s unrestricted license to traditional women’s spaces, her ability to choose whether to disclose her sexual identity, and her embodiment of a gender and sexuality that is read and accepted as “normal”. Marked by a disconnect between sex and gender presentation, the “butch” lesbian enjoys no such privileges. The perceived inequity between the ways in which the “butch” and “femme” are valued in society has often led to the denigration of the latter within the queer community as having an “easier ride”, despite the sexual objectification and social pressures that come with enacting “normative” femininity. The positioning of femininity within queer communities and theories, as Cefai notes, ‘problematically re-privileges masculinity as *less* invested in heteropatriarchy, as a more liberated mode of desire and identity’.[[71]](#footnote-71) The view that femininity is less subversive and more accepting of gender norms that are detrimental to women, is one that has not only circumscribed the lives of women in the past but also colours the ways in which historians narrate the past. Indeed, queer feminine women, as Nestle concludes in her seminal text *The Persistent Desire* (1993), have historically been ‘the victims of a double dismissal, […] they did not appear culturally different enough from heterosexual women to be seen as breaking gender taboos, and […] they do not appear feminist enough, even in their historical context, to merit attention or respect for being ground-breaking women’.[[72]](#footnote-72)

As has been suggested throughout this introduction, there has been a systemic devaluing of femininity in history and society, which has led to a dearth of theoretical and historical engagements with queer femininities and the specificities of queer feminine experience across cultures and time.[[73]](#footnote-73) Furthermore, while the Foucauldian notion of a ‘Great Paradigm Shift’ may be an appropriate point of departure for the emergence of “modern” sexual categories in Germany, an understanding that sexual desires were part of a social identity appears to have been far less established in the Netherlands before the First World War. In the recent collection *After the History of Sexuality: German Genealogies with and Beyond Foucault*, Scott Spector states that it is not the aim of his collection ‘to make a case for the German example as a unique example’ as a site of sexual liberation and progress.[[74]](#footnote-74) Yet, throughout this thesis I will claim that we must certainly take Germany, and Berlin specifically, as exceptional in terms of the flourishing sexual subcultures for queer women that emerged there during the interwar period.

In order to tackle the issues that I have outlined above, I have structured my thesis into three main sections: medico-social discourses; community discourses; and fictional discourses. Each section will contain an extended introduction that will contextualise the historical discourses I have chosen to analyse within the socio-cultural contexts of their time. Given that sexuality, as Jeffrey Weeks suggests, is a ‘fictional unity’ that is ‘a product of social and historical forces’, Chapter One will plot the development of Amsterdam and Berlin from seemingly provincial cities into modern capitals and will chart the ‘existential possibilities’ that were available to women in this period ‘beyond the roles of wife and mother’. [[75]](#footnote-75) To do this, I will offer an analysis of the queer subcultures that existed in Amsterdam and Berlin as well as a textual mapping of the sexual “topographies” that existed in each context. In Chapter Two, I will complement my outline of socio-cultural discourses of desire with a summary of the emergence of a *scientia sexualis* and the role that sexual science played in the discursive construction of knowledge about queer feminine desires. Looking more closely at the conflicting “regimes of truth” that were produced in sexological documents, this discussion will lay the groundwork for the second section of my thesis, which narrows its focus to an examination of the socio-cultural and medico-legal discourses visible in queer periodicals.

Examining more closely at what I have termed “community discourses”, I will focus on the degree to which the social norms and sexological narratives I discuss in Section One were contested and revised by those who actively partook in existing sexual communities in Amsterdam and Berlin. By examining the ways in which queer femininities were depicted across “community” publications, Section Two will contribute to a strand of queer scholarship that, as Joanne Hollows suggests, challenges ‘the idea that the ‘feminine’ is inherently worthless, trivial, and politically conservative’.[[76]](#footnote-76) Looking at the magazines *Die Freundin* (1924-1933) and *Frauenliebe* (1926-1932) in Chapter Three, I will examine the role the feminine woman played in sexological articles, literary contributions, and social commentaries, as well as the role that femininity played in the politics and the fissures that divided Berlin’s Sapphic subculture. Given the absence of queer periodicals for women in Dutch contexts, Chapter Four will focus on two magazines produced by queer men that emerged during the interwar era: *Wij* (We, 1932) and *Levensrecht* (The Right to Live, 1940-1947). Looking at the links between magazines and organisations that valued masculine principles and ideals, I will be able to make further suggestions about what the absence of women from these community discourses might tell us about the construction of queer female desire in this period.

In the final section of this thesis, I will examine the ways in which queer femininity became visible in fictional writing by German and Dutch women authors. Considering the queer feminine woman in both the position of “object” and “subject” in fictional discourses, I will explore the ways in which authors challenged contemporary discourses about love between women and presented their own conceptualisations and imaginings of queer femininity. Chapter Five will engage, therefore, in an analysis of the role of the feminine object in Eva Raedt-de Canter’s *Internaat* (Boarding School, 1930) and Christa Winsloe’s *Das Mädchen Manuela* (1933) and will discern more specifically the significance of maternal feminine figures in stories of adolescent queer female desires. As a “counterpoint” to the previous chapter’s engagement with tomboy desires, Chapter Six will offer an insight into novels that placed the feminine woman at the centre of the narrative framework. Focusing on the importance of creating hierarchies of “acceptable” desire in these novels, this final chapter will investigate the queer feminine woman as, what Julian Carter terms, a “nonlesbian” subject. Drawing to my final conclusions, I will look more broadly at what the shifts taking place across the literary texts examined in this final section might tell us about the changing conceptions of queer feminine desires in Germany and the Netherlands and how the overlaps and distinctions between the discourses I examine stress the need to adopt new historical approaches to explore the experiences of sexual subjects of the past.

## Chapter One: Sex and the City: Mapping Queer Female Desire

Jeder einmal in Berlin! Auch im nächtlichen. […] Aber man kommt hier nicht ohne Führer aus. Hier vielleicht am allerwenigsten. Niemals hätte Theseus sich ohne Ariadnes Faden in das Labyrinth gewagt. Und was war das Labyrinth gegen das nächtliche Berlin, gegen die in ihrem Licht und in ihrem Dunkel gleicherweise verwirrende Metropole des Vergnügens?!

(Curt Moreck, *Führer durch das lasterhafte Berlin*, 1931)

We are back in 1913. […] People are immensely respectable. No sign of crisis or war. […] Towns too big of course, Amsterdam a swollen stone monster […] Not a beggar, not a slum. Even solid wealth. […] A feeling that Holland is a perfectly self respecting rather hard featured but individual middle aged woman. Conventions of 1913. No women smoking or driving cars. Only one man smokes a pipe in the streets.

(Virginia Woolf, *The Diary of Virginia Woolf*, 1935)

During the roaring twenties, Berlin was widely considered the ‘Metropole des Vergnügens’.[[77]](#footnote-77) Offering an exhausting array of dance halls, cabarets, cinemas, and cafés, the alluring underbelly of the city’s raucous nightlife catered seemingly to every taste and predilection. Topless dance halls and erotic massage parlours were order of the day and thousands of curious tourists flocked to the German capital to enjoy the erotic potential on offer to them. Just across the Dutch border, Amsterdam appeared comparatively backward in its bourgeois provinciality. The growing number of entertainment venues that titillated tourists in the German metropolis was not mirrored along Amsterdam’s carefully constructed canal systems. Instead, as Jet Bussemaker writes, the Netherlands was structured after the Great War by an ‘increasingly severe sexual morality’, which placed the family firmly at the heart of Dutch social life and forcefully rejected any “anti-social” elements.[[78]](#footnote-78)

By the mid-1920s, the cleft between the two cities as sexual sites was growing increasingly apparent. Berlin had established an estimated fifty bars and clubs for women-loving-women, as well as six magazines, two weekly newspapers and twelve social clubs.[[79]](#footnote-79) In the Netherlands in this period, same-sex desiring individuals lamented the lack of established queer networks in their cities and contemporaries envied their German friends whose lives, as one contributor to the queer magazine *Wij* (We) conteded, ran ‘so much more freely and smoothly […] than ours in our bleak country’.[[80]](#footnote-80) Same-sex desire after the First World War, or at least the suggestion of it, as Heike Schader has observed, quickly became a fashionable accessory of the “modern woman” in Berlin and contemporaries spoke of a ‘lesbische Welle’ that was rolling over the city.[[81]](#footnote-81) The capital’s Sapphic subculture was the cause of such a stir, in fact, that writer Ruth Margarete Roellig (1878-1969) published a guidebook to the city entitled *Berlins lesbische Frauen* (1928), detailing where the most popular clubs and organisations for queer women could be found. Berlin’s period of ‘sexual anarchy’, however, as Elaine Showalter terms it, was not replicated in the Dutch capital. [[82]](#footnote-82) Indeed, it was only after the turmoil and devastation of the Second World War, and the reluctant ebbing of the religious conservatism that characterised the post-war era, that the sexual revolution of the 1960s transformed the face of Amsterdam and sexuality moved from the private sphere into the public domain.[[83]](#footnote-83)

The establishment of Germany’s first democratic republic, as Detlev Peukert has most famously formulated, was a ‘crisis of classical modernity’ that was characterised, as Eberhard Kolb describes, by ‘the sharp contrast between the gloomy political and economic conditions […] and the unique wealth of artistic and intellectual achievement’ and bracketed by ‘two differently definable but extraordinarily dramatic epochs’.[[84]](#footnote-84) As a concentrated microcosm of the disastrous and painful loss of the First World War, Berlin bore witness to some of the worst effects of the political and economic instability that remained long after troops had left the battlefield. Arguably as reaction to the trauma of the war, the city quickly became a central hub of artistic and intellectual production as well as an experimental site for sexual exploration. Following the war, Amsterdam, too, was characterised by social and political paradoxes. The capital of a recently established democracy with a long history of liberal leadership, Amsterdam appeared set to lead the Netherlands forward into an outward looking and international future. A conservative political shift in the first decades of the twentieth century, however, as well an increasingly entrenched system of vertical pluralism that segmented Dutch society, meant that the city instead became more inward looking and conservative despite the seemingly progressive developments that had taken place prior to the outbreak of the Great War.

Quite why these fledgling democracies developed such different sexual topographies has not yet received the scholarly attention it deserves. As they currently vie for the title of “queer capital” of Europe, it seems curious that less than a century ago Amsterdam and Berlin offered diametrically opposing experiences as “sexual” cities. While I will not be providing a history of urban development in Amsterdam and Berlin in this chapter, which has been covered in more detail and more comprehensively elsewhere, I will provide a brief delineation of the emergence of Berlin and Amsterdam as sexual sites within Europe.[[85]](#footnote-85) Looking first, more broadly, at how the cities compared as political, social, and economic spaces, I will then focus more specifically on women’s positions within these two modern municipalities, plotting the boundaries of women’s gendered and sexual experiences of urban life. By subsequently mapping the sexual topographies of Amsterdam and Berlin, I will further examine the queer sites that were of specific importance to women in the two cities and, specifically, how these sites were gendered and what role femininity played in women’s access, or lack thereof, to these sexual spaces. Finally, I will compare the methods employed by German and Dutch authorities to police and control queer desires within the city, looking at the emancipation movements that rallied against these regulations, and the role of queer women within these movements.

# The Emergence of ‘Die Metropole des Vergnügens’

Little more than a decade before Carl Moreck extolled the vices and virtues of Berlin’s decadent sexual underworld in his guidebook *Führer durch das “lasterhafte” Berlin* (1931), the German capital was experiencing the trauma of an unexpected military defeat and was blighted by street violence, political assassinations, and economic turmoil.[[86]](#footnote-86) This turbulent socio-political backdrop was the birthplace of Germany’s first representational and democratic government: ‘a child of war, revolution and democracy’.[[87]](#footnote-87) Prior to the establishment of the Weimar Republic, Berlin had been forced to grow quickly into its role as the heart of a recently unified German Empire. Announced in 1871 as the capital of a new German nation-state, Berlin experienced the onset of rapid economic and industrial growth, with workers from rural areas flocking to the capital in the search for a more secure economic existence. This influx of workers, in conjunction with the earlier incorporation of the districts of Wedding, Gesundbrunnen, and Moabit into the city boundaries, saw Berlin swiftly grow to become a *Millionenstadt* with more citizens than ever before navigating its newly bustling streets.

Better working conditions and standards of living were supported in the late nineteenth century by the introduction of progressive welfare reforms such as social insurances, unemployment relief, and pension schemes. Parallel to the progressive policies and the economic growth that made Berlin such an attractive city to workers, however, was a more regressive political backlash against minority groups. The *Kulturkampf* against the Catholics in the 1870s and the later legislation against socialists, who were considered anathema to an increasingly (centre-right) nationalist state, for example, were compounded further by political hostility towards women and Jews at the turn of the century. Intensified by Kaiser Wilhelm II’s desire to acquire “a place in the sun” for Germany through his dogmatic *Weltpolitik*, political anxiety dominated German domestic and foreign policy before the First World War. These internal political tensions were to continue after the Armistice of 1918. The signing of the Treaty of Versailles in 1919, it appeared, would only conclude the battle of arms. The political upheaval that followed the peace treaty paved the way for more than a decade of social and economic turbulence across Europe.

The demographic shifts that had been wrought by the political, social, and economic turmoil of the Great War led to seemingly irreversible changes within the urban landscapes of belligerent countries. The notion of what constituted women’s work and the female role in Berlin, for example, had transformed beyond recognition after women entered the workforce *en masse* to take over from the increasing numbers of men who had been drafted to the front lines. The growth of sexual violence depicted in the haunting images of Otto Dix (1891-1969) and the dark cinematic endeavours of Fritz Lang (1890-1976) were reminders, however, that gendered spaces were contested territories in the Weimar era and the physical threat to women entering the public arena was never far away.[[88]](#footnote-88) The reparations Germany had agreed to pay in the controversial Treaty of Versailles also led to economic tensions building within the city and increasing pressure was put on German industry and its workers. When French and Belgian troops occupied the most productive industrial area of the Ruhr in 1923 after Germany defaulted on a payment, workers reacted with a passive resistance, resulting in a period of devastating hyperinflation. With the government pumping a seemingly endless supply of money into the market, costs rose astronomically and the savings of many German citizens suddenly became worthless.

Following the Dawes plan in 1924, which reduced annual reparation repayments and removed French and Belgian troops from the Ruhr, the German economy appeared revitalised as the period of hyperinflation came to an end with the introduction of a new currency. Aided by American financial streams, the Republic entered an era of relative political relief and economic prosperity. During this time, technological advances saw mechanisation implemented across almost every sector of commerce. From assembly lines to office equipment, new life was sparked into German industry during the Weimar “Golden Age” through the processes of mass production. Indeed, during the mid-1920s everything about Weimar life in Berlin rang with a degree of rationality, right down to the functionalist style that became emblematic of Walter Gropius’ (1883-1969) *Bauhaus* movement. The resulting consumer culture that emerged from this period of industrial mechanisation and mass production effectively created what Kerstin Barndt, Kathleen Canning, and Kristin McGuire see as ‘a new mode of partitioning and measuring time’.[[89]](#footnote-89) Leisure culture was augmented by the construction of cinemas, dance halls, and jazz bars as well as the cabarets, cafes, and transvestite parties that attracted sexual tourists to the city. Much like the workplace, the growing entertainment industry also appeared machine-like in its arrangements, suggesting not only that the new liberal sexual climate was the product of a life governed by rational processes rather than Christian moral beliefs but also that workers, whose lives were dominated by production lines, needed an escape into alternative pleasures.

Redolent of a Foucauldian bio-politics, Weimar Berlin, in times of both work and pleasure, was ‘imbued with the mechanics of life’, the partitioning of work and pleasure, as well as the temporal regulation and subordination of the (worker’s) body.[[90]](#footnote-90) The famous Tiller Girls dance troupe, for example, appeared as a physical embodiment of the influence of mechanisation and mass production.[[91]](#footnote-91) Although the Weimar Republic may have been an era of energetic technological innovation and sexual liberation, then, the bleaker side of the “Roaring Twenties” was visible in the lives of traumatised returning soldiers, increased sexual violence, political unrest, and the remnants of a ruinous inflationary period.[[92]](#footnote-92) The glitter of new technical innovation and the bright lights of the modern metropolis could not counteract the gloomy vestiges of the First World War. Thus, while the Berlin of the 1920s was certainly a site of urban innovation, it was equally one of violence, pessimism and perpetual social anxiety, with women fixed at the core of these cultural concerns.

# A Reluctant and “Conservative” Modernity

In the first half of the nineteenth century, Amsterdam was unrecognisable as the city it would become less than a century later. Indeed, as popular historical writer Geert Mak observes, ‘if one were to be catapulted back into the Amsterdam of the middle of the nineteenth century, one would probably notice, first and foremost, a new experience of sound and silence’.[[93]](#footnote-93) The silence that Mak refers to as being characteristic of the port-city in the mid-nineteenth century can be accounted for primarily by the late onset of industrialisation in the Dutch capital. It was only during the second half of the nineteenth century, as Mak claims, that Amsterdammers were ‘reluctantly seized by the scruff of their necks by an inescapable mechanism’.[[94]](#footnote-94) Between 1860 and 1870, the population of the city had doubled, reaching almost half a million citizens. The increase in birth rates and the influx of people to the city due to rapid industrialisation meant that Amsterdam’s infrastructure required serious modernisation to cope with a growing population. Canal systems and harbours were expanded and improved, and the development of the Central Station in 1889 suggests that Amsterdam had become an increasingly desirable travel destination. The first electric tram trundled through the capital in 1890, further easing mobility within the city’s borders.[[95]](#footnote-95)

At the end of the nineteenth century, Amsterdam experienced something of a second Golden Age; new museums, railway lines, art galleries, and concert halls were developed in the city centre, and its suburbs had become the ‘bastion of bohemians’.[[96]](#footnote-96) Following the establishment of new waterways in Amsterdam, the economy surged at the turn of the century and a consumer culture began slowly to emerge within the city. Although the Dutch capital was experiencing economic prosperity, however, social mobility was limited and the gap between rich and poor was increasing rapidly.[[97]](#footnote-97) Much like in Berlin, as the need for more workers in the city grew, so did the requirement for cheap housing. New homes were built on the outskirts for workers and their families who had relocated to the city. The standard of living in these quarters was exceptionally poor. Several working-class families would frequently live together in cramped cellar rooms and food shortages regularly led to riots. When food was rationed during the First World War, a potato shortage caused looting and social unrest in the city for several days. The levels of disenfranchisement in the Netherlands echoed those in Germany where, before the Revolution of 1918, the *Junker* class had dominated political life leaving most citizens unable to vote. Despite the difficulties being faced by the working classes, therefore, more than two thirds of the adult population were disenfranchised and there was little opportunity to lobby for social reforms or workers’ rights.[[98]](#footnote-98)

After several constitutional changes were enacted in 1917, discussed in more detail shortly, universal suffrage was granted to men, and later to women in 1919. The parliamentary structure was overhauled and a new system of proportional representation was established, which led to the introduction of political coalitions. Even with the positive effects of industry on the economy in the city, and the dual development of a democratic voting system and universal suffrage, the revolutionary fervour that was blazing through Russia after the First World War, and later Germany, did not pass the Netherlands by. In October 1918, a mutiny broke out among defensively mobilised Dutch soldiers in Amsterdam and, one month later, revolutionaries joined them on the Sarphatistraat in the hope of inciting a socialist revolution.[[99]](#footnote-99) Around three thousand men, women, and children joined the demonstrations in what later became known as the “Red Week” (*de rode week*) and violent clashes between demonstrators and police led to several civilian deaths. The revolutionary mood soon petered out, however, due largely to the 1918 elections which resulted, as Joop M. Roebroek writes, in ‘a major political landslide and ended the pre-First World War social and political stalemate’. [[100]](#footnote-100) The newly established system of proportional representation turned the Liberal stronghold on its head. As the Liberal Union(*Liberale Unie*) fell out of favour, the Confessionals and the Social Democrats vied for the most powerful political positions, ultimately working together in fractious coalitions coloured by the conservative agenda; a vision of Dutch politics that changed little until the late 1960s.[[101]](#footnote-101)

Unlike Berlin, the interwar era did not mark a surge in mechanisation, consumerism, or cultural export in Amsterdam, even with the expansion of the southern area of Amsterdam pioneered by architect Hendrik Petrus Berlage (1856-1934) in 1917 and the later expansion of West Amsterdam in 1925 by Cornelis van Eesteren (1897-1988). Yet, as much as one should not overestimate the effect of modernity on the Dutch capital during the interwar era, it should also be recognised that the city was becoming increasingly modernised and internationally oriented. The seemingly paradoxical position of a Dutch conservative modernity that emerged in this period was no doubt a result of the peculiar process of pillarisation(*verzuiling*). As will become clear, it is essential to examine this process of vertical pluralism to understand to any degree the differences between the development of Amsterdam and Berlin as sexual sites. Furthermore, as the process of pillarisation had specific gendered implications, as Mineke Bosch observes, it is almost impossible to speak ‘of a specifically Dutch trajectory of women’s emancipation’ or, indeed, any aspect of women’s experience in the Netherlands in this period without reference to the Dutch process of social segmentation.[[102]](#footnote-102)

Living Together Apart?

Historian Ivo Schöffer claims that in the Netherlands during the first half of the twentieth century one ‘only had to speak with someone for a minute before one knew whether the other was a Christian, Catholic, Liberal or Socialist’.[[103]](#footnote-103) As Schöffer’s statement suggests, there were two primary social clefts in the Netherlands by the *fin de siècle*, easily divisible, according to political scientist Arend Lijphart, into the categories of class and religion. In terms of class, Dutch society was largely divided into upper middle, lower middle, and lower class boundaries. With respect to their religious differences, Dutch citizens could roughly be split into Roman Catholic communities, that lived commonly in southern provinces such as Limburg and North Brabant, and the Dutch Reformed and Orthodox Reformed communities, that lived principally in the northern provinces.[[104]](#footnote-104) One of the longest domestic conflicts in Dutch history was fought between these two social groups and caused the schisms that were largely responsible for the pillarisation of Dutch society. The “school struggle” (*Schoolstrijd*), as well as what Lijphart terms ‘the franchise issue and the question of collective bargaining and the rights of labour’, fundamentally divided Dutch citizens and, in turn, created the modern political party system of the Netherlands.[[105]](#footnote-105)

At the heart of the *Schoolstrijd* was the distribution of state funding for education. While funding for state schools that did not subscribe to one religious denomination was provided by the government, in line with the constitutional act of freedom of education established in 1848, private religious schools received no state support and had to rely on financing from fees and donations. The persistent refusal of confessional parties to grant universal suffrage sparked a backlash from socialists and liberals who declined to give their support to the state funding of private schools, creating the “political stalemate” that was alluded to earlier in this chapter. During the so-called “Pacification” of 1917, the existing political parties eventually reached an agreement in which state funding was provided for religious schools and universal suffrage was granted to men and later to women in 1919.[[106]](#footnote-106) By this time, however, a politically and religiously subdivided society had already become an inescapable feature of the Dutch socio-cultural fabric. Indeed, the phenomenon of pillarisation, as Bosch suggests, can be considered the single ‘most conspicuous factor of Dutch politics and society in the twentieth century’.[[107]](#footnote-107)

By the early 1920s, Catholic, Protestant, Socialist and Liberal communities had each developed their own “pillar” – or *zuil* – which enabled them to live an existence almost entirely independent from other social and religious groups. Although at a parliamentary level, political parties engaged in a complex practice of compromise, consultation, and coalition, the lived experiences of individuals rarely involved such inter-pillar exchanges. During what Inge Bleijenbergh and Jet Bussemaker describe as a period of ‘institutionalized pillarization’, religious and political segregation was established at every level of social existence; from schools to trade unions, sports clubs to radio stations, medical care to the purchase of food.[[108]](#footnote-108) The extent to which the subdivision of society shaped the lived reality of the individual can be seen best, perhaps, in historian D. J. van der Veen’s depiction of his experiences of pillarisation:

I am Protestant by birth and when I talk to my Catholic peers it seems to us that we are from different countries […] When I was born my mother was helped by a Protestant midwife and my birth was announced by a Protestant newspaper. The announcements (and papers) were printed by a Protestant printer […] I went to a Protestant school […] we went to Protestant summer camps […] and followed only the Protestant radio and newspapers.[[109]](#footnote-109)

As discussed earlier in this section, Protestant and Catholic communities were structured primarily by a geographical divide between the northern and southern Dutch provinces. Given the demographic diversity of Amsterdam by the twentieth century, however, the four-pillar system was not as rooted in the capital as it was in rural areas and the pillars lived in much closer proximity to one another here than elsewhere. Instead, in the early twentieth century, the notion of “district life” was a much more prevalent part of city living. Large Jewish communities could be found from the Jodenbreestraat to the Oude Schans, while Danish, Norwegian, and Frisian sailors frequently lodged near the ports and fairground communities resided intermittently by the Duvelshoek and the Kalverstraat. By the early 1920s, Mak calculates that around 80,000 of the estimated 700,000 inhabitants living in Amsterdam were Jewish and that over half of all citizens of the city could be considered “non-natives”.[[110]](#footnote-110) Despite the distinctive features of district communities, however, pillarisation was still a palpable part of Amsterdam life. Not only was a worker’s trade union distinguished along the lines of one’s pillar, for example, but schools, doctors, butchers, banks, football teams, and radio stations in the city were all structured in this way.

The specifically gendered ways in which this social segmentation played out in the Netherlands, as Bussemaker keenly observes, should not be underestimated.[[111]](#footnote-111) Although men’s lives were shaped by pillarisation, as can be seen in Van der Veen’s above recollection, women’s lives were much more insular and parochial than those of Dutch men. Writing about the news sources available to young women in the interbellum, for example, Van Kooten Niekerk and Wijmer comment on the fact that almost every source of information that entered the home (the domain of the Dutch woman) was filtered through the political or religious mouthpieces of one’s pillar: ‘the Catholic educated girls were only allowed to tune into the KRO [Catholic Radio Broadcasting C.S], while the Protestant girls were only allowed to listen to the NCRV [Dutch Christian Radio Association C.S]’.[[112]](#footnote-112) That each pillar determined a woman’s role in accordance with their own political and religious orthodoxies meant that the female position in Dutch society was contingent upon a complex matrix of social and cultural factors. After marrying a Catholic man, for example, a Catholic woman was expected to fulfil her role as a mother and homemaker, attending only Catholic social events and gatherings.[[113]](#footnote-113) For a woman in socialist or liberal pillars, class was the key marker of her existence and the limits placed on her freedoms were often economic as opposed to religious. None of this is to say, of course, that the pillars represented entirely homogenous entities. The marker of class was a distinguishing factor of women’s experiences across all pillars; a differentiation that became particularly apparent within confessional communities. Furthermore, despite a seemingly irreparable rift between confessionals and liberals, the socialist and liberal pillars were often more open to the idea of political collaboration and inter-pillar organisation. Generally, however, the subdivision of Dutch society meant that attempts made by women to organise (either socially or politically) were limited to the confines and offerings of their pillar. The Catholic Women’s Club(*Katholiek Vrouwen Dispuut*), the Dutch Organisation of Housewives (*Nederlandse Vereniging van Huisvrouwen*), the Dutch Organisation of Female Farmers (*Nederlandse Bond voor Boerinnen*) and the Dutch Catholic Organisation of Female Farmers (*de Nederlandse Katholieke Boerinnenbond*) are just a limited selection of a surprisingly diverse range of organisations that existed for women in accordance with their class backgrounds, political beliefs, and religious faiths.[[114]](#footnote-114)

The pillars also diverged markedly in their approaches to queer desire, meaning that the experiences of women-who-loved-women were shaped fundamentally by the opinions of their pillar. Unsurprisingly, the Catholics, as Pieter Koenders writes, were the most vocal in their denunciation of homosexual acts.[[115]](#footnote-115) Rejecting the medical theories of biological and congenital homosexuality that had emerged at the end of the nineteenth century, the stance of the Catholic communities was not only that homosexual desire was a sin but also an immoral behaviour that any man could fall prey to.[[116]](#footnote-116) As sexological literature became more widely available to the public, the responses of the Catholic and Protestant pillars in the Netherlands became increasingly reactionary. Organisations such as the League for Large Families (*Bond voor Grote Gezinnen*) and the Catholic Action for God (*Actie voor God*) were established in a bid to protect traditional family values, and in 1937 the Catholic Father L. Bender produced the pamphlet Pernicious Propaganda (*Verderfelijke Propaganda*) in which he openly attacked the activities of the first Dutch homosexual emancipation movement, the Dutch Scientific Humanitarian Committee (*Nederlandsch Wetenschappelijk Humanitair Komitee*).

While the views of pluralistic Protestants communities varied across denominations, same-sex desire in Catholic communities was resolutely rejected, with some of the most vitriolic diatribes against queer people to be found in Ernest Michel’s pamphlet ‘Anti-homo, a document against the molluscs of our society’ (*Anti-homo, een geschrift tegen de weekdieren onzer samenleving*, 1927):

You, Uranian rats; you, barren wreckers of marital unions; you, homosexual dogs; you, lesbian wretches; you, rotting innards of society, who flirt with Christ with such pleasure, but whom you have degraded to an Indian queer, to a sissy boy, to a personification of your own ghastly pleasures.[[117]](#footnote-117)

Although Michel’s venomous attack was one of the most radical and conservative Catholic comments on same-sex desire, his views did not differ greatly, as Koenders indicates, from other prominent Catholic figures.[[118]](#footnote-118) In terms of the Socialist and Liberal pillars, the sexual domain had long been considered a private issue that should not be controlled by the state and they were considerably more tolerant. In practice, however, this tolerance did not amount to much in terms of social recognition or emancipation. The exclusion and dismissal of homosexual desire within Socialist and Liberal pillars, as Tielman notes, was ‘rather the rule than the exception’.[[119]](#footnote-119) Bearing in mind the various elements that might impact on the lived experiences of queer women within a pillarised Dutch society outlined above, I will now turn to examine the broader socio-economic positions of women living in Berlin and Amsterdam during the interwar era.

# The (Not So) Frivolous Flapper

Berlin

Following the war, Germany experienced a dramatic and visible gendered shift in the urban landscape. Not only had the new Weimar constitution granted men and women equal ‘civil rights and obligations’, the tragic loss of life during the war meant that women also far outnumbered men in many urban spaces. According to figures published in 1924, almost two and a half million Germans had been killed during the First World War and, of the men who died in action, over half were under the age of twenty-five.[[120]](#footnote-120) When combined with an estimated 600,000 war widows, as Richard Bessel notes, figures indicated the existence of a staggering “surplus” of women of all ages and across all sectors of German society.[[121]](#footnote-121) The inner-city office environment was the domain in which these demographic shifts arguably became most visible as more women entering into the public arena after Germany’s constitutional changes. In his study *Die Angestellten* (1930), Siegfried Kracauer notes that by the end of the 1920s approximately 3,500,000 salaried employees were engaged in work across Germany and 1,200,000 of these were women.[[122]](#footnote-122) Suggesting that ‘women [had] flooded into salaried jobs’ after the war, Kracauer claimed that changes in the conception of women’s work and the ‘need of the new generation of women for economic independence’ had also played a significant role in the gendered shifts.[[123]](#footnote-123) The figures Kracauer cited for female employees, however, as Ute Frevert rightly points out, only included the numbers of women entering *gainful* employment. Women had historically worked inside the home or unpaid in family business for decades and working-class women had, of course, always worked. Instead, the most interesting changes, Frevert contends, can be seen in the sectors to which women had been relocated during the war, such as engineering, chemical work, and steel manufacturing.[[124]](#footnote-124)

When the war came to an end, women had been largely expected to leave the trade that they had entered and in November 1918 guidelines were issued to employers advising them on how best to deal with the dismissal of women workers during the demobilisation process.[[125]](#footnote-125) Although it was accepted that some women would have to remain in work, many argued that they should remain only in functions that were suited to their “nature”. Due to the continued shortage of male labour, as both Bessel and Frevert identify, the departure of women from the workplace during demobilisation marked ‘only a short-term downward trend’.[[126]](#footnote-126) By the time the 1925 census was conducted it had been calculated that 1,700,000 more women were in full-time employment than had been in 1907. The level of male employment across this period, however, as Renate Bridenthal and Claudia Koonz have demonstrated, shows similar increasesto that of female employment and the growth in female workers denotes a more general upward trend in terms of employment figures rather than a specific gendered development. Furthermore, white-collar work, which Kracauer suggested had seen floods of female employees, had in fact the lowest total increase in female employees, despite being the fastest growing industry across any sector, which had arguably led to the much-trumpeted image of an “influx” of female office workers.[[127]](#footnote-127)

None of this is to downplay the entrance of women into the workplace in the cities, however. According to the census in 1925 there were three times as many female stenographers, secretaries, clerks, and typists as there had been in 1907 and white-collar workers made up thirty percent of the Berlin’s total female workforce.[[128]](#footnote-128) The young, unmarried woman from a lower-middle class background was considered the standard profile for an office worker, with youth and beauty commonly considered essential characteristics for female success. It was expected that women would be well-presented in the office and on the shop floors which meant, as Moreck noted in his guidebook, that women’s entrance into office work coincided with make-up and cosmetic enhancement quickly becoming ‘ein kosmetisches Uniformstück des weiblichen Geschlechts’.[[129]](#footnote-129) The much-vaunted image in literature and film of the successful and chic office worker was belied by the harsh realities of sexual harassment tied up in hierarchies of the workplace. Indeed, instances of sexual harassment, as Katharina von Ankum has observed, increased exponentially as women entered into office work during the Weimar Era, a theme that was picked up in several novels and short stories by female authors during this time.[[130]](#footnote-130) Furthermore, the pressures placed on women’s physical appearance by employers created a new feminine ideal and particularly impacted older female workers who ‘were expected to dress more fashionably and appear more youthful’ or risk losing their jobs.[[131]](#footnote-131)

The image of the fashionable young urbanite who flaunted the freedoms of a more liberal cultural climate with short skirts and an even shorter haircut was taken up enthusiastically by the media; the image of the “New Woman” soon became a popular, if problematic, symbol of the modern German metropolis. Employed as shorthand for a wide range of female types, the signifier “New Woman”, as Katie Sutton writes, could be used to denote ‘anything from rationalised worker to housewife, “new” mother to consumer, Olympic athlete to female *flâneur*’.[[132]](#footnote-132) The term referenced not only the feminised Americanised “Girl” and the seductive “Vamp” but also the lean and muscular “Sportswoman” and the cosmopolitan and boyish “Garçonne”. As an emblem of modernity, the “New Woman”, Sutton maintains, cannot be considered ‘a single or homogenous “type”’.[[133]](#footnote-133) As the boundaries of femininity were being challenged by women’s entrance into the workplace, the “New Woman”, as Vibeke Rützou Petersen asserts, ‘became the arena of an intricate play across the borders of both gender and class’, presenting alternative models of female experience.[[134]](#footnote-134) As the limits of traditional femininity were tested through the emergence of types such as the “Femme Fatale” and the “Vamp”, the androgyny of figures such as the “Girl” and the “Sportswoman” led to fervent and critical cultural debates about the perceived masculinisation of women.[[135]](#footnote-135)

The image of the carefree flapper, however, as Boak writes, does not fully capture the precarious nature of women’s financial and social existence. Despite equality being enshrined in law, women were earning on average ten per cent less than their male colleagues in the same positions and their monthly incomes were ‘often below the subsistence minimum’.[[136]](#footnote-136) Women also received less formal training and had fewer opportunities to gain relevant experience in their field, which resulted in being paid less for their labour. As well as working long hours in the office, young women who lived with their parents were generally expected to contribute to the family finances and assist with household responsibilities, which left little time or money to enjoy the new leisure pursuits on offer in the city. As the low salaries of office work were rarely enough to secure a woman’s economic independence, Boack concludes that having a job should not be considered a wholly emancipatory act for women, instead ‘only when it provides them with the means to live independently of any other financial support can it be deemed emancipatory’.[[137]](#footnote-137) Although the potential of office work to liberate women and the politics of gender discrimination in the Weimar workplace cannot be addressed in further detail here, the fragile nature of the modern woman’s economic existence shaped, to a large extent, the topography of sexual sites for queer women, which will be discussed shortly. Hidden behind the media image of the frivolous flapper, then, was a much more complex tapestry of economic and domestic burdens that could be said to have limited the “New Woman’s” social and sexual experiences.

Caregivers and Breadwinners

In terms of women’s experiences in the Netherlands, as Bleijenbergh and Bussemaker suggest, their German counterparts appeared in a much better position both economically and socially to take advantage of a more liberal era by the time they had gained suffrage in 1919.[[138]](#footnote-138) That women’s right to vote in the Netherlands had been an ancillary issue within a broader political pact between confessional and secular parties meant that the zeal of the Dutch women’s emancipation groups largely dissolved after the “Pacification” of 1917. Dutch women’s movements were assimilated into the communities and organisations of their respective pillars, which effectively put a halt to any level of mass organisation among women. Although this was not an entirely negative phenomenon, as women who had been politically engaged at a broader level were able to ‘actively help build new social and political communities within their own pillar’, it nonetheless served to limit women’s social networks.[[139]](#footnote-139) At the same time, the growing influence of the confessional parties in Dutch politics, who sought to resolve what they saw as the “moral evil” caused by a slowly modernising Dutch society, meant that the relatively liberal era of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries had come to an end.

After the First World War, Dutch gender relations were systematised, as Bussemaker contends, around the fundamental structures of ‘breadwinners and care-givers’.[[140]](#footnote-140) Not only had Dutch women historically been ‘depicted as being very good housewives’ but the increased conservatism of family politics during the 1920s put further pressures on women to conform to social norms and expectations of idealised (bourgeois) femininity.[[141]](#footnote-141) In comparison to other European countries, the figure of the married working woman was an exceptionally rare image in the Netherlands. Indeed, in the first decade of the twentieth century only ten per cent of married women were in gainful employment.[[142]](#footnote-142) By the 1920s, however, the number of young unmarried women in the workplace had begun to rise and Amsterdam formed the central hub of opportunity for female office workers. The number of white-collar female clerks in Amsterdam, as Francisca de Haan observes, increased from four hundred in 1899 to around 37,000 by 1920.[[143]](#footnote-143) The Schroevers Institute opened in the capital in 1913 and quickly became ‘synonymous with the secretary’, awarding diplomas that helped women prove their eligibility for clerical positions.[[144]](#footnote-144) Around this time, as Marjan Schwegman notes, echoes of the gendered changes taking place across the German border could be seen in the emergence of a “new femininity” in Dutch society. Not only were young women entering the previously male-dominated workplace but women’s fashion was also turning away from the prim bourgeois styles of the pre-war era towards the iconic image of Americanised “Girl”. Indeed, after 1918, Schwegman suggests, ‘the modest, lady-like woman [had changed] into a casual, boy-ish, somewhat forward personality’.[[145]](#footnote-145) The image of the modern female office worker also become increasingly popular in Dutch print media, demonstrated by publications such as as Josine Reuling’s novel *Intermezzo met Ernst* (1934), which depicted the life of a modern office worker and her struggle to find love while maintaining her career.

The issue at the heart of Reuling’s novel was not a trivial one. In fact, refusing to marry, as Reuling’s protagonist does, was often the only way women could remain in work. A labour law enacted in 1919 was effectively used to make women workers appear less attractive to employers than men.[[146]](#footnote-146) The law not only limited the working day to eight hours for both sexes but also included a clause that women were prohibited from working on Sundays. By 1921 the Dutch Post Office had already announced it was making cuts to its female workforce. Following this, a more direct gendered attack was made against women workers with the 1924 Royal Decree that enabled employers to dismiss female office workers under the age of forty-five if they were married. A year later, some city councils were authorised to dismiss female teachers below the age of forty-five if it was likely they were to become married.[[147]](#footnote-147) Against the backdrop of growing unemployment during the Great Depression, the Dutch Rail Service was aggressively cutting back on its female staff by the end of the 1920s, stating that the organisation had ‘*little* inclination to engage female staff, *no* inclination to allow female staff into higher ranks, but had not yet decided on the question of whether it would positively refuse all female employees’.[[148]](#footnote-148) Following a prolonged period of recession and unemployment in the early 1930s, it became general practice that women who were not in traditionally “female” positions would be replaced by male workers. Thus, for the first half of the twentieth century, male breadwinnership, as De Haan asserts, was quite literally ‘integrated into the salary scale’ with women asked to resign from their positions after marriage.[[149]](#footnote-149)

Following the political landslide of 1918, the conservative shift in politics meant that the social agenda was dominated by the traditional ideas of confessional parties. Within this new social framework, Bussemaker observes, motherhood was a woman’s ultimate purpose and role. Socialist and liberal pillars rarely challenged this notion.[[150]](#footnote-150) The culturally established distinction between “breadwinner” and “homemaker” can be seen most explicitly, perhaps, in a memorandum to Catholic politician Carl Romme’s (1896-1980) draft bill against married women’s labour in 1937:

According to the natural order, man should be the breadwinner for the family and the woman’s task is the care of the family. In general, it would be an evil thing if the woman were to evade this task and search out a different work terrain. The family is such a valuable element in society that, where possible, action should be taken against unhealthy family relations.[[151]](#footnote-151)

As well as the political pressure and governmental regulations that enforced women’s compliance to their “natural” gendered roles and to maintain the “health” of family relations, there was social pressure on women to be modest in all aspects of their lives. Most working women, therefore, lived at home with their family until they were married to avoid raising concerns about their decency. Only after marriage would women leave the family home, and their salaried position, to begin their own family or to work for their husbands. Living alone was an unusual for choice a woman in Amsterdam during the interwar era; not only because of a paltry pay packet but also because of the social stigma that was associated with living as an independent woman. Thus, although women had gained the right to vote in 1919 and were entering the world of work in much higher numbers, much was done in the Netherlands at an institutional level to prevent images of the modern woman and her economic independence from appearing desirable or achievable.

# Queer Topographies

Die Filialen von Lesbos

In conjunction with various sexological developments that will be discussed in the next chapter, Berlin’s bar culture had established the German capital as a mecca for same-sex loving individuals by the mid-twenties. Alongside a growing social interest in queer desire within the city, there also emerged a commercial one and ‘Berlin’s homosexual scene after 1918 [became] itself the critical context for the growth of sex tourism’.[[152]](#footnote-152) With the establishment of more relaxed censorship laws, queer press and print media thrived and could advertise events at the growing number of entertainment venues. Tourists with ‘hard currency’ could ‘live like royalty’ during the years of hyperinflation paying out little for the excitement of frivolous erotic adventures.[[153]](#footnote-153) By the end of the 1930s, Robert Beachy estimates that of Berlin’s almost four million inhabitants there was a steady figure of approximately 280,000 tourists.[[154]](#footnote-154) As the link between the rise of capitalism and the development of urban (homo)sexual subcultures has already been documented extensively elsewhere, I shall not go into detail on the matter here.[[155]](#footnote-155) Suffice to say, it was during the most stable and affluent periods of the Weimar Republic that its urban sexual subcultures could truly flourish. After the years of unforgiving hyperinflation and revolutionary fervour, the relative economic and political stability saw an increase in sex tourism. Same-sex desires suddenly carried with them a certain cachet that encouraged many establishments to attempt to turn the pull of a queer cultural capital into hard financial gain.

As will be discussed more comprehensively in Chapter Three, Berlin’s queer scene was comprised of various networks, each with its own social, political, and sexual agendas. While smaller societies would frequent specific bars, larger locales were affiliated with umbrella organisations that campaigned against Paragraph 175, the law against homosexual acts between men. Members of the *Damenklub Monbijou*, for example, would frequent the club *Die* *Zauberflöte* and belonged to the broader organisation of the *Deutscher Freundschaftsverband*. Those women who belonged to the *Violetta-Klub*, could instead be found at the club *Violetta*, which later functioned under the auspices of the *Bund für Menschenrecht*. As well as clubs affiliated with broader organisations, the *Klub Monbijou des Westens* – not to be confused with the *Damenklub Monbijou* – was located at the quiet intersection of the Wormser und Luther streets and had over six hundred members that formed part of a ‘streng geschlossene Gesellschaft’ with a door policy that was practiced ‘mit polyphemischem Argwohn’.[[156]](#footnote-156) The *Dorian Gray* on the Bülowstraße was one of the ‘ältesten und bekanntesten Lokale der Frauenwelt’ and held a regular ‘Damen-Elitetag’ on Friday evenings.[[157]](#footnote-157) Not the only bar or club to be associated with a queer literary figure, the *Taverne* was the clubhouse of the *Damenklub Skorpion*, an organisation that was said to have been named after the trilogy written by Anna Elisabet Weirauch, discussed in Chapter Five. In her guidebook to Berlin’s Sapphic subcultures, Roellig remained undecided about the origins of the organisation’s name, however, and claimed that ‘Skorpion’ could just as well refer to a specific subcultural type: ‘Denn Menschen, die unter diesem Himmelszeichen geboren sind, gelten als unermüdliche Sucher nach sinnlichen Genüssen, und fühlen sich nur glücklich wenn sie sich in ihrem Liebesdrange voll ausleben können, wie es ihre Natur verlangt’.[[158]](#footnote-158)

Heike Schader’s research on Berlin’s queer press builds on Roellig’s casual allusion to subcultural “types” and documents the emergence of figures such as the “Ben Hur” and “Don Juan” as well as the “Gigolo” and “Gentleman” in Berlin’s Sapphic circuit.[[159]](#footnote-159) The “Vamp” and “exotische Frau” were also common characters in Berlin’s queer bars and highlights the imbrications and fluidity that existed between categories denoting “New Womanhood” and those signalling queer modernity. These established subcultural identities, Schader contends, appear to have shaped many of the social engagements in queer entertainment venues and specific *Spielregeln* were used to indicate that certain behavioural and sartorial standards were expected from a venue’s patrons. *Die* *Zauberflöte*, for example, employed the strict separation of women into “virile” and “feminine” roles as an obligatory part of the programme: ‘Als Besonderheit des Klubs gilt die ganz offizielle Unterscheidung von “Bubis” den maskulinen und “Mädis” den femininen Frauen’.[[160]](#footnote-160) The “Mädis” were given dance cards on arrival and the “Bubis” were expected to dutifully, and respectfully, place their names upon them. There were also clubs that attracted groups of specific subcultural types. Behind the locked doors of the *Taverne*, the favoured establishment of the *Damenklub Skorpion*, for example, Roellig described how one was greeted with a ‘dumpfe Bierluft und Rauchschwaden […] und eine grelle Jazzmusik’.[[161]](#footnote-161) As another ‘geschlossene Gesellschaft’, the *Taverne* welcomed women in tuxedos and a masculine ‘Atmosphäre von Derbheit und Urwüchsigkeit’ was said to permeate the bar, often leading to displays of macho posturing: ‘plötzlich, wie von ungefähr bricht ein Zank aus, Stimmen kreischen, Worte fliegen […] – und es ist durchaus keine Seltenheit, daß der Streit bis zur Prügelei ausartet’.[[162]](#footnote-162) Other bars, such as the *Klub Monbijou*, were instead coloured by the glamour of the feminine and provided a space in which ‘die Elite der intellektuellen Welt der lesbischen Frauen, Filmstars, Sängerinnen, [und] Schauspielerinnen’ could meet, dance, and enjoy cocktails.[[163]](#footnote-163)

As well as clubs with closed-door policies and the expectation of certain subcultural standards, there were various “unaffiliated” venues that were open to “outsiders” and offered an insight into queer life for any paying customer. *Eldorado* und *Toppkeller*, for instance, were known among the queer community as ‘Schaulokalen’; establishments in which curious heterosexuals would come to indulge their voyeuristic yearnings.[[164]](#footnote-164) In his guidebook, Moreck reports that even women who were ‘durch und durch normal und nur mit dem Gedanken an einen Ausflug ins Anormale gelegentlich kokettieren’ would frequent these bars on account of the ‘fremde und darum so reizvolle Atmosphäre’ that they found there.[[165]](#footnote-165) Moreck’s suggestive observation that “normal” women could also consider ‘einen Ausflug ins Anormale’, draws on the notion of the “lesbian wave” that was supposedly washing over the city. Furthermore, the suggestion that the “normal” feminine woman was more likely to engage flippantly in same-sex acts was an idea grounded in sexological theory, which, as will be discussed in the following chapters, shaped greatly the experiences of feminine women within subcultural spheres. Less strict in terms of their behavioural policy, clubs such as *Toppkeller* and *Eldorado* were home to much racier events than bars that were affiliated with larger queer organisations. At these establishments, queer feminine women were treated largely as spectacles and regular prizes were distributed for titles such as the ‘schönsten Damenwaden und Damenbusen’.[[166]](#footnote-166) Interestingly, Moreck suggests that queer women did not spurn the stares of inquisitive guests at these bars but instead flirted proudly with the voyeuristic tendencies of salacious “Sehleute”: ‘Man trägt seine Abnormität wie eine picante Nuance. Man exhibitioniert mit der vibrierenden Lust am Perversen’.[[167]](#footnote-167) As the object of male (and presumably female) voyeuristic pleasure, the queer feminine woman in such bars was positioned either as a Sapphic spectacle or as a curious “normal” woman in search of a fleeting frisson of queer pleasure.

Unsurpisingly, perhaps, Moreck’s assertion that queer women enjoyed the objectification of their sexual desires was refuted in the magazines that existed for women-loving-women. The economic realities of Sapphic subcultural life, however, could often not be avoided and the financial burden of catering only to women often proved too great for many clubs, which were forced to open their doors to a more diverse clientele. Roellig’s pithy remark that ‘Frauen sind selten Trinkerinnen großen Stils – und der Wirt muß auch leben’ further echoes the earlier discussion in this chapter about the financial difficulties that many women were facing at this time.[[168]](#footnote-168) With poorly paid jobs and financial responsibilities to their families, most women could not afford the luxury of attending regular events.[[169]](#footnote-169) The gendered discrepancies reflected in the queer scene are noted by both Roellig and Moreck in their guidebooks. While Moreck comments on the aesthetic difference between locales for queer men and women, suggesting that spaces for queer women were ‘einfacher und bürgerlicher, mehr zur Behaglichkeit und Traulichkeit als zu Eleganz und Luxus und Pomp tendierend’, Roellig saw the imparity as a reflection of the social position of women: ‘trotz aller Toleranz gerade in sexuellen Dingen, ist vorläufig eine Frau [...] gesellschaftlich noch ebenso geächtet wie ehemals’.[[170]](#footnote-170) It is impossible to conceive of the clubs and bars that existed for female “outsiders of love” as forming any kind of unitary sexual subculture. Instead, Berlin’s Sapphic subcultures consisted of a diverse spectrum of queer women who established a multitude of fractious factions and nebulous networks.

Owls and Baskets

Before the 1950s, there were few established meeting places in Amsterdam for queer citizens. In *Die Homosexualität des Mannes und des Weibes* (1914), Magnus Hirschfeld (1868-1935) alludes to the existence of various “hotspots” where the male prostitutes could be found on the Kalverstraat, as well as in urinals around the city, which functioned as spaces for short-lived erotic encounters between queer men.[[171]](#footnote-171) M.J.J Exler, the author of the queer novel *Levensleed* (Struggles of Life, 1911), also described several rooms that were owned by men that could be rented out for private use. In terms of the “fixed” locations to exist within the city, bars frequented by same-sex desiring people were by no means exclusively queer establishments. During the interwar era, public houses were subject to a range of stringent requirements and limitations, which made opening a space exclusively for queer people an almost impossible development. Not only did the owner of a bar need a licence to play music or to allow dancing – much like in Berlin – but other permissions were needed to employ female staff or to supply alcoholic drinks. Further permits were required for the sale of spirits or to extend opening hours until midnight.[[172]](#footnote-172) During the emergence of a clandestine club and café culture in the 1920s, a range of signs and signals was developed to warn queer clients of potentially risky situations. Many sympathetic bars had closed-door policies to check whether those entering the establishment were “known” to the community. In others, after the term “owls” (*uilen*) became a common way of referring to the vice squad, a small statue of an owl would be placed in the window to warn queer visitors entering the bar that they could not be open about their desires.[[173]](#footnote-173)

Before a café culture began to emerge for women in Amsterdam during the fifties, socialising in bars was mainly a male activity. As mentioned earlier, women had far less economic freedom than men and were expected to live at home with their families, who would be suspicious of evening excursions. The strict social expectations of a woman’s behaviour and the segregation of social groups through the phenomenon of pillarisation meant, therefore, that women had less social scope than men to meet like-minded individuals. Even by the late thirties, when a more diverse range of locales had developed into queer meeting points, such as the *Hirschgebouw* (Hirsch Building) on the Leidseplein, the *Suisse* on Kalverstraat, and the *Rode Leeuw* (Red Lion) on the Damrak, women rarely frequented these establishments.[[174]](#footnote-174) An exception to the rule, the *Empire* bar, the oldest and most famous queer establishment in Amsterdam, was run by ex-sex worker Hermine Sophia Lauffer-van Exter, better known as Mie Lauffer, until 1932. Little more is known about Mie, as Gert Hekma notes, ‘than that she smoked cigars’.[[175]](#footnote-175) As an established queer venue with a woman at the helm, however, this bar appears to have been more welcoming of a female clientele. Following a tip off to the Amsterdam vice squad in 1932, the *Empire* was raided and no less than fifty-two customers and staff arrested, interrogated, and registered on a police file for transgressing moral laws. As well as Johan Ellenberger, one of the key figures of the queer magazine *Wij* (We), which will be discussed in Chapter Four, eighteen women and numerous men were also arrested. According to the *Nieuwsblad van het Noorden* (Newspaper of the North), the individuals arrested had originally been taken for questioning under suspicion of contravening the drinking law but, following further investigations, other indiscretions had come to light ‘which were contrary to public morals’.[[176]](#footnote-176)

Alongside Mie Lauffer, another remarkable exception on the queer scene was Bet van Beeren (1902-1967): the ‘Queen of the Zeedijk’.[[177]](#footnote-177) Owner of the bar *‘t Mandje* (The Little Basket), which opened in 1927, Van Beeren was an openly queer and entirely unconventional Dutch woman. She rode a motorcycle, wore trousers and shirts, smoked cigarettes and drank gin with a passion. Host to a colourful crowd that included sailors, travellers, and prostitutes, as well as those seeking same-sex pleasures, *‘t Mandje* was an utterly singular establishment in Amsterdam in the interwar era. During the public celebration of the Queen’s Birthday, Van Beeren is said to have thrown parties where the usual rules of social etiquette were thrown aside. Dutch actor and writer Albert Mol (1917-2004) said of the yearly event: ‘it was a good party, where people, no matter what their gender, were allowed to dance together, which was quite a phenomenon in those days because that wasn’t ever allowed, not anywhere […] at Bet’s bar it was allowed, it was possible and nobody thought it strange’.[[178]](#footnote-178)

It has widely been suggested that queer relationships were cultivated not only in bars such as *‘t Mandje* and the *Empire* bar, but were also commonplace among female sex workers in brothels.[[179]](#footnote-179) As the lives of sex workers often leave little trace, however, other than through encounters with state regulations, it has not been possible to examine these sexual sites within the remit of this project. Working women in a much broader sense, however, offer an insight into how important employment networks and working life were to queer women who would otherwise have been confined to the domestic sphere, familial networks, or the organisations of their pillar. As some working roles required travel or that the employee lived away from home, something that was unfeasible for many Dutch women during this time, a job could grant women a degree of social freedom that was not available by other means. Although women could not be open about their desires within their working life, some spheres – particularly those which operated within homosocial environments – offered queer women the chance to meet others who felt as they did. Within the field of nursing and care work, for example, young student nurses often lived together on hospital grounds and, once qualified, shared apartments or houses with other female hospital staff. This close-knit homosocial working environment was, as an ex-nurse in Van Kooten Niekerk and Wijmer’s study states, a “paradise” for queer women who supposedly ‘had enormous choice’ in such circles.[[180]](#footnote-180) During and after the Second World War, the army formed another work environment in which queer relationships between women could thrive.

# Policing Same-sex Desires

As can be seen from the outline of queer urban sites above, there was a clear distinction between the visibility and permissibility of same-sex love in Amsterdam and Berlin. While Berlin formed the European epicentre of erotic freedom with its burgeoning bar scene and sexual tourism, Dutch women seeking same-sex connections had few established points in the city where they could meet and those that did exist were male dominated and frequently subject to police raids. This should not suggest, however, that the German *Sittenpolizei* was less active in Berlin than the *zedenpolitie* in Amsterdam but rather that the institutions took different approaches to regulating queer desires in the city. The police force in Berlin, for example, exercised an exceptional degree of tolerance for queer bars and venues from the late nineteenth century onwards, employing strategies to monitor establishments rather than to close them down.[[181]](#footnote-181) As Berlin’s nightlife grew ever more notorious, Beachy writes, the police adopted a policy of “qualified toleration” and ‘instead of aggressively interdicting *potentially* illegal sexual activity – which would drive it underground and out of view – the new approach was to tolerate homosexual fraternization within certain limits’.[[182]](#footnote-182) The “vice squad” in Amsterdam, however, demonstrated little such tolerance. Introduced in the capital in 1926, the *zedenpolitie* kept records about queer individuals who transgressed Article 248bis, the law against homosexuality, and other potential moral offenders, including prostitutes and petty criminals.[[183]](#footnote-183) Following an increased governmental drive to guard the population against what was perceived to be a growing social “immorality” the vice squad focused their attentions on public toilets, parks, bars, and cafes as well as the private lives of individual transgressors.[[184]](#footnote-184) The greatest divergence between the two cities in the context of this study, however, was the official regulation of female same-sex desire. In terms of the sizes of the cities and the number of bars, policing same-sex desire was an easier task for the Amsterdam vice squad than for officers in Berlin, who were confronted with an ever growing number of bars and entertainment venues. Furthermore, while the German Paragraph 175 did not regulate same-sex acts between women, Dutch Article 248bis regulated same-sex acts of both men *and* women.

Paragraph 175

Following the Unification of 1871, Paragraph 143 of the Prussian penal code was integrated into German law as Paragraph 175. Under this newly established edict, acts of “unnatural fornication” between men were considered a criminal offence punishable with imprisonment. As a carbon copy of the earlier Prussian law, Paragraph 175 read as follows: ‘Die widernatürliche Unzucht, welche zwischen Personen männlichen Geschlechts oder von Menschen mit Thieren verübt wird, ist mit Gefängnis von sechs Monaten bis zu vier Jahren, sowie mit zeitiger Untersagung der Ausübung der bürgerlichen Ehrenrechte zu bestrafen’.[[185]](#footnote-185) Considered commensurate to bestiality, penetrative same-sex acts between men were criminalised until 1933, when the law was redrafted to include all same-sex sexual acts between men. Although the edict did not recognise same-sex acts between women as a crime, “unnatural” activities between women had historically been punishable by death in several states across the German Empire. The cross-dressing soldier Catherina Margaretha Linck, for example, had been executed in Halberstadt in 1721 after she presented herself as male, married a young woman, and committed “sodomitical” acts with her new wife using a ‘leather instrument’.[[186]](#footnote-186) Following the introduction of Paragraph 175, however, the German penal code no longer considered sexual acts between women a criminal offence.

Although the omission of female same-sex desire in the law clearly constituted a shift in the way that same-sex acts were understood by lawmakers, this amendment should not be read as ‘an utter lack of concern with lesbianism’ but instead, as Laurie Marhoefer contends, as ‘a different sort of state response to lesbian sex’.[[187]](#footnote-187) Indeed, the central stumbling block encountered by lawmakers in their attempts to criminalise female same-sex acts appeared to be the issue of exactly *what* constituted sex between women. While ‘widernatürliche Unzucht’ and ‘beischlafsähnliche Handlungen’ between men were easily definable under categories of penetration, intercrural sex, and frottage, legislators were unable to imagine how sex between women could be considered *beischlafsähnlich* when it did not involve, as Marhoefer acutely observes, the ‘most freighted of political appendages, the penis’.[[188]](#footnote-188) Since neither digital stimulation nor the use of “leather instruments” constituted intercourse-like activities in the minds of lawmakers, sex between women ‘[remained] impervious to legal discourse’, as Tracie Matysik notes, because it did not ‘conform to existing and legitimate legal categories’ of sexual intercourse.[[189]](#footnote-189) Furthermore, as sex between women was often dismissed as a “substitute” for heterosexual relations, female same-sex desire was not thought to be a danger to the marital union and only homosexual acts between men were considered a threat to the state.[[190]](#footnote-190)

By bringing women’s attention to the act of lesbian love by criminalising it, lawmakers argued, it was possible that they would exacerbate rather than help combat the issue. Instead, the so-called *Schund- und Schmutzgesetz*, as Marhoefer identifies, was employed to prevent the dissemination of knowledge about lesbianism through various levels of press censorship, and was enforced multiple times against the queer publications that existed for women in Berlin after 1926, as will be explored in Chapter Three.[[191]](#footnote-191) A further factor that coloured the debate around female same-sex acts was that intimacy between women was generally considered an essential part of a woman’s feminine nature. Without visible signs of gendered and sexual deviance, law enforcers risked impinging upon the lives of “innocent” women, an argument that was used by various feminists in their campaigns against the inclusion of women in Paragraph 175.

The Women’s Movement and Paragraph 175

Although female same-sex acts were not criminalised when Paragraph 175 was introduced into the German penal code, this does not mean the question of whether lesbian sex should be incorporated into the law was abandoned entirely. There were repeated attempts to amend Paragraph 175 to include same-sex acts between women and, following a series of homosexual scandals in 1907, there was a renewed debate in the Reichstag in 1911 about expanding the law under a new legislative measure: Paragraph 250.[[192]](#footnote-192) Advocates for the inclusion of women under the proposed law argued that if women wanted to enjoy rights equal to those of men, they should have to accept equal punishment and responsibility for their sexual transgressions. This dismissive assessment of the campaign for women’s emancipation marked a turning point in the discussion of female homosexuality within the women’s movement. Although activist Anna Rüling had already discussed the role of the women’s movement in the homosexual question in her speech ‘Welches Interesse hat die Frauenbewegung an der Lösung des homosexuellen Problems’ in 1904, it was not until 1911 that one of the first explicit statements was made about the regulation of female homosexual acts by a key branch of the women’s movement.[[193]](#footnote-193) This forced many other leading female voices to speak out about same-sex love between women.

Arguably the best-known campaigner for women’s rights, Helene Stöcker (1869-1943) published her thoughts on the proposed Paragraph 250 in the mouthpiece for the German branch of the abolitionist federation, *Der Abolitionist*. In her article, Stöcker concluded that extending Paragraph 175 to include women would be a grave error and she dismissed the idea that an inequality would be abolished through the extension of the law, claiming only that an inequality would be doubled. After voicing her opinion on the subject, Stöcker worked extensively with sexologist Magnus Hirschfeld and his *Wissenschaftlich-Humanitäres Komitee* (WhK) towards the abolition of the law against homosexuality. In spite of her commitment to the cause, Stöcker was eager to emphasise that her radical *Bund für Mutterschutz* – the organisation that campaigned for the rights of unmarried women – represented the interests of ‘die normale Liebe, die Liebe zwischen Mann und Frau’.[[194]](#footnote-194) Supporting Stöcker’s claim, radical reformer Käthe Schirmacher (1865-1930) of the *Verband Fortschrittlicher Frauenvereine* asserted that if authorities were concerned with gender equality they should begin by tackling ‘unserer Entlastung, unseren Rechten, nicht bei unseren Knebelungen und Strafen’.[[195]](#footnote-195) Taking the subject of prostitution as a central part of her rebuttal of the proposed law, Schirmacher claimed that men had historically had access to sex outside of marriage in brothels and, therefore, those who had the opportunity for extramarital relations with women but still turned to men for pleasure should rightfully be punished. It would be sex workers, who turned to each other out of disgust of men’s immoral desires, Schirmacher contended, who would be worst hit by the proposed extension: ‘Sollen diese Leichen nun noch einmal totgeschlagen, soll auch noch der Verkehr mit Frauen unter Strafe gestellt werden? Dann hat die Prostituierte ja nicht in den eignen vier Wänden Ruhe, und das Gebiet der Willkür verschlingt ihr letztes Refugium’.[[196]](#footnote-196) Chairperson of the Abolitionist movement, Anna Pappritz (1861-1939), took umbrage at Schirmacher’s suggestion in a later issue of *Der Abolitionist*. Rejecting the idea that women-who-loved-women should be judged differently from men who engage in same-sex acts, Pappritz claimed that queer desire ‘von Frauen ausgeübt, genau so verwerflich, widerwärtig und ekelhaft, als wenn es von Männern begangen wird’.[[197]](#footnote-197) She agreed with Schirmacher and Stöcker’s contention that queer women should not be forced into marriages with men, yet it was not out of sympathy with these women but instead due to the danger they may pass on ‘ihre krankhafte Veranlagung auf ihre Nachkommenschaft’.[[198]](#footnote-198)

The desire of these activists to distance the women’s movement from queer desire as well as the scorn directed by Pappritz towards Sapphic love can be better understood, perhaps, in light of the link that had historically been established between same-sex desire and the women’s movement by psychiatrists, sex researchers, and social commentators. Otto Weininger (1880-1903), for example, had suggested in his study *Geschlecht und Charakter* (1903) that the desire for emancipation was the result of the masculine qualities of the same-sex desiring women. Feminine women, Weininger suggested, had ‘mit der “Emanzipation des Weibes” nichts zu schaffen’ and concluded that the women’s movement should largely be considered the domain of the same-sex desiring woman.[[199]](#footnote-199) Other sex researchers, such as Iwan Bloch, saw the women’s movement itself as the site of queerness, claiming that a homosocial organisation wherein women’s emancipation from men was the primary focus would lead women to consider sexual activities with their own sex.[[200]](#footnote-200) In what could be considered an attempt to combat these claims, some feminists tackled the issue of the proposed Paragraph 250 from a perspective of gender essentialism. Focusing on what Matysik terms, ‘the difficulty of distinguishing legally the *sexual* act from the *social* act’, liberal reformer Elsbeth Krukenberg (1867-1954), for example, opposed Paragraph 250 on the basis that it attacked the fundamental nature of women’s existence:[[201]](#footnote-201)

was beim Mann unnatürlich “weiblich” anmutet: auffallend herzliches, zärtliches Benehmen zwischen Mann und Mann, Liebkosungen, Schmeichelworte u. dgl., das ist bei Frauen in allen Lebensaltern etwas durchaus Natürliches. [...] Soll sich die Frau das alles, um nicht falschen Verdacht zu erregen, abgewöhnen müssen?[[202]](#footnote-202)

Krukenberg considered the proposed law to be an attack on women’s feminine nature. Evoking a similar line of argument to the earlier work on queer desires by sexual radical Johanna Elberskirchen (1864-1943), discussed in the following chapter, Krukenberg emphasises femininity as the essential nature of women and the basis from which the women’s movement had developed, claiming that intimacy between women is an entirely natural impulse.[[203]](#footnote-203) The discussion around regulating female same-sex desire continued throughout the first decades of the twentieth century. After a particularly fierce period of debate, a penal reform committee eventually voted to remove Paragraph 175 from the criminal code in 1929. This was an achievement welcomed by sex reformers but their joy was to be short-lived. Although the reform committee abolished Paragraph 175, they had approved Paragraph 297, a law that criminalised same-sex acts between men in even more elaborate terms than it had done previously, outlawing ‘sex between two men if one was under twenty-one and the other was not, if one party used a position of influence to pressure the other, or if one paid the other’.[[204]](#footnote-204) Female homosexual acts remained unpunished by law.

Article 248bis

Before the nineteenth century it was general practice in the Netherlands, as Rictor Norton notes, that trials brought against men who committed sodomitical acts were hidden from public knowledge. In the cases that concerned same-sex desire between women a similar level of secrecy kept queer acts veiled from the public. Indeed, in the separate trials of two women arrested and flogged for same-sex crimes in Leiden in the late seventeenth century, Norton describes how both parties were exiled and their cases were kept a secret.[[205]](#footnote-205) When the Criminal Code for the Kingdom of Holland was enforced in 1809, the punishments for two people of the same sex who committed ‘unnatural fornication’ remained in place but the death sentence had been removed from the law. This code existed only for two years, however, and was replaced by the French *Code Pénal* in 1811, under which same-sex intimacy was no longer criminalised.[[206]](#footnote-206) This should not suggest that same-sex desires were socially acceptable. Arrests in the Amsterdam district for committing homosexual acts continued to be made throughout the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Indeed, in the years leading up to the turn of the century, the number of arrests made in conjunction with same-sex transgressions rose from eight arrests and seven convictions between 1840 and 1849 to one hundred and eighty-seven arrests and eighty-seven convictions between 1900 and 1909.[[207]](#footnote-207) At the end of the nineteenth century, the growth in support for confessional parties saw issues of morality brought increasingly to the forefront of political debate.

By the turn of the twentieth century, intimate same-sex acts in the Netherlands had developed from a question of ‘repulsive and nameless sin’ to a ‘psychological and medico-legal problem’.[[208]](#footnote-208) As well as a growing number of medical publications appearing in the Netherlands on homosexuality in the 1890s, queer desire had become a popular subject of literary inquiry after the turn of the twentieth century. Provocative novels such as Jacob Israël de Haan’s Lines of the Pipe (*Pijpelijntjes*, 1904), Louis Couperus’ Mountain of Light (*Berg van licht*, 1905) and M.J.J Exler’s Struggles of Life (*Levensleed*, 1909), as well as the increasing number of pornographic books and journals being peddled on the black market, led to a consensus that the public must be protected from a new ‘moral evil’ (*zedelijk kwaad*). Furthermore, by the turn of the twentieth century local councils had become convinced of the idea of a ‘moral authority’, which was later given form through the *zedenpolitie*,whose role it was to counter immoral behaviour.[[209]](#footnote-209)

By the first decade of the twentieth century, several attempts had already been made to expand the laws that categorised offences against morality to include same-sex acts. The Liberal prime minister Cort van der Linden sought support to pass a “seduction law” in 1900, which he claimed would protect those under the age of twenty-one from the attempts of (female) prostitutes attempting to find trade, as well as from the promise of financial or material gain from older men. A later effort by the Catholic Minister of Justice Anton Nelissen to pass a similar law in 1909 also failed. As well as Van der Linden’s article against “seduction”, Nelissen had suggested the introduction of several other decrees against immorality, which included laws that prohibited ‘pornography, propaganda for birth control aimed at minors, coupling (by which is meant a ban on brothels), abortion and gambling’.[[210]](#footnote-210) Before Nelissen could see through his moral crusade, he fell ill and was succeeded by Edmond “Robert” Hubert Regout (1863-1913), whose fervour for the protection of youth against homosexuality resulted in Article 248bis becoming informally known as: ‘Regout’s cuckoo egg’.[[211]](#footnote-211)

Following eight days of heated debate in 1911, fifty of the eighty-seven chamber members voted to accept the proposed morality laws.[[212]](#footnote-212) What had once been an “unmentionable vice” was now explicitly outlined in the Dutch penal code. Embedded among a number of laws introduced to prevent immoral behaviour, Article 248bis stated: ‘The adult who commits fornication [*ontucht plegen*] with a minor of the same sex, whose minority status he knows or should reasonably suspect, shall be punished with a prison sentence of up to four years’.[[213]](#footnote-213) In conjunction with the laws restricting homosexuality, many local authorities also observed a cross-dressing ban (*travestieverbod*) for men and a trouser ban (*pantalonverbod*) for women which was recognised in several major Dutch districts, including Amsterdam.[[214]](#footnote-214) While originally conceived as a law to protect minors from being seduced by adults, then, Article 248bis instead became an explicit regulative measure against intimate acts between members of the same sex. Influenced by what Anna Tijsseling terms the ‘Dracula-thesis’, adolescent sexuality was considered in the Netherlands to be a formative period in which innocent youth could be corrupted by sinful adults of either sex.[[215]](#footnote-215) Not only was inequality introduced in the ages of consent for same-sex and opposite-sex acts but every same-sex desiring person over the age of twenty-one was made into a potential criminal.[[216]](#footnote-216)

The Women’s Movement and Article 248bis

In a bid to educate people about the nature of same-sex love, queer activist Jacob Anton Schorer (1866-1957), published the pamphlet ‘What Everyone Should Know About Uranisme’ (‘Wat iedereen behoort te weten omtrent uranisme’) in 1912, which included a petition for the repeal of Article 248bis. Amassing one hundred and thirty signatories, nineteen women signed the petition. Four of these women were active in the Dutch women’s movement: Estella “Stella” Hartshalt-Zeehandelaar (1874-1936), Maria Rutgers-Hoitsema (1847-1934), Annette Versluys-Poelman (1853-1914), and Titia van der Tuuk (1854-1939).[[217]](#footnote-217) Unlike German feminists, for whom the threat of the proposed Paragraph 250 acted as a catalyst to speak out against the criminalisation of queer female desire, the Dutch women’s movement did not engage in any way with the regulation of female same-sex desire in Article 248bis. Indeed, before 1940, queer female desire was not mentioned once by the Dutch women’s movement and, as such, was deemed irrelevant as a phenomenon that occurred within the movement for female emancipation.[[218]](#footnote-218) For the four feminists who signed the petition against the regulation of ‘Uranisme’, a term first employed to denote queer desire by activist Karl Heinrich Ulrichs (1825-1895), it is highly likely, that they considered the term to indicate male same-sex desire. For the Dutch feminist movement, as Myriam Everard writes, the active and uncontrollable sexual impulse was a matter relating to men and it was a woman’s moral duty to control and regulate excessive (male) desire. Within this framework, therefore, there was no space to conceive of active desire between two women. Since female reformers were campaigning against the standard of double morality, it is not surprising, as Everard claims, that so few women signed the petition or that notable figures in the women’s and sex reform movements, such as Aletta Jacobs (1854-1929) and Wilhelmina Drucker (1847-1925), are absent from the list.[[219]](#footnote-219)

As much as the women’s movement did not concern themselves with the regulation of queer female desire in Article 248bis, the interviews of Van Kooten Niekerk and Wijmer with queer women born between 1904 and 1937 highlight that women-who-desired-women did not consider the women’s emancipation movement as an organisation in which their interests would be represented. None of the women who took part in Van Kooten Niekerk and Wijmer’s study were engaged in the women’s movement during the interwar era.[[220]](#footnote-220) Indeed, of the nineteen women who signed Schorer’s petition against Article 248bis, only Marie de Boer has been considered to have signed with a vested interest in defeating the law. Hailing from Helmond in North Brabant, De Boer’s ‘masculine demeanour’, short hair, penchant for cigars, and ‘powerfully built frame’ would no doubt have stood out in the staunchly Catholic area.[[221]](#footnote-221) Aside from De Boer and the four feminists who signed the petition, the interests of the fourteen other women who signed have not yet been traced.[[222]](#footnote-222) The laws against queer desires in the Netherlands and Germany discussed above, did not remain unchallenged. The *Wissenschaftlich-humanitäres Komitee*, established in 1897 by Hirschfeld, has often been cited as the world’s first gay liberation movement. Inspired by Hirschfeld’s work, Jacob Schorer founded a sister organisation in the Netherlands in 1912, the Dutch Scientific Humanitarian Committee (*Nederlandsch Wetenschappelijk Humanitair Komitee*). These organisations not only established their own journals but they also published articles on homosexuality, producing brochures and pamphlets to enlighten the heterosexual public as to the nature of homosexuality campaigning for its acceptance as an inborn and, therefore, natural characteristic. One of the main objectives of the committees, however, was to oppose the laws enforced against homosexuality and the discrimination of homosexual subjects.

# Women and Queer Activism in the City

Wissenschaftlich-humanitäres Komitee (WhK)

Gathered with several guests in his apartment on the Berlinerstraße in May 1897, medical doctor and sexologist Magnus Hirschfeld discussed his plans to establish a scientific movement to defend the rights of homosexual citizens. Having set up his medical practice in Charlottenburg in 1886 after travelling through Africa, America, and Asia, Hirschfeld had been motivated to found an emancipation movement after he received a suicide letter from one of his queer patients, who had shot himself in the heart. Inviting to his apartment the publisher Max Spohr (1850-1905), with whom the sexologist enjoyed a fruitful commercial relationship, the police commissioner Leopold von Meerscheidt-Hüllessem (1849-1900), who had pioneered the tolerant approach to regulating queer venues discussed earlier in this chapter, and several other influential figures, this meeting marked the origins of the world’s first homosexual emancipation movement.[[223]](#footnote-223) It was not until a 1907 committee meeting, however, that members of the board discussed the possibility of establishing a *Frauengruppe*, concluding that they would contact female members to determine whether such a development would be worthwhile. Three years later, two women were elected onto the committee as ‘weibliche Obmänner’: the author Toni Schwabe (1877-1951) and the police official Gertrud Topf (1881-1918).[[224]](#footnote-224) By this time, the committee was established as an outward-looking body of scientists, sex reformers, and political activists, who sought to forge connections across national borders. Indeed, already by 1910, members of the committee could be found in Amsterdam, London, Rome, Vienna, and Tianjin in China. Hirschfeld’s commitment to international relations was cemented with the foundation of the *Weltliga für Sexualreform* in 1928, which held conferences in Britain, Norway, and Austria. Against this backdrop, the WhK can be considered ‘one of a panoply of efforts for reform which came to be known collectively as the *Lebensreformbewegung*’.[[225]](#footnote-225)

For the duration of the existence of the WhK, the committee appeared dedicated to working with women’s organisations, regularly re-assessing their needs and aims, and representing the interests of both queer and “normal” women alike.[[226]](#footnote-226) In 1912, Helene Stöcker and the *Bund für Mutterschutz* joined the board of the WhK, followed in 1914 by sexual reformer Johanna Elberskirchen. Stöcker was involved in campaigning against Paragraph 175 but was also invited to give regular speeches at the committee gatherings on topics relating to women’s rights and motherhood. Indeed, the committee frequently invited female speakers to their assemblies to give papers, present literary works, and to talk about their personal experiences. The establishment of the *Jahrbuch für sexuelle Zwischenstufen* in 1899 also gave women a space to have their research published on formation and experiences of queer desire. Although primarily concerned with the abolition of Paragraph 175 and discussions of male homosexual desires, the *Jahrbuch* equally considered female same-sex experiences and identities, as well as women’s rights, an essential part of the cultural discussion. Hirschfeld collaborated closely with Stöcker towards the abolition of the anti-abortion legislation, Paragraph 218, and Stöcker helped to inform committee members about women’s sexual health and lives.[[227]](#footnote-227)

When in 1919 Hirschfeld opened the doors of his *Institut für Sexualwissenschaft* to the public, researchers from across the world were invited to help build on the sexologist’s ever-growing repository of sexological works. Located in an impressive villa adjacent to Berlin’s Tiergarten, the institute was a luxurious central hub for queer research, offering space for public lectures, residencies for clinical trials, as well as living quarters for queer writers, researchers, and patients.[[228]](#footnote-228) As Berlin amassed a growing reputation for sexual tolerance, helped undoubtedly by the appearance of Hirschfeld’s scientific institute, physician and psychotherapist Charlotte Wolff (1887-1986) recalls that visitors came to the German capital ‘von überall auf der Welt […] um hier eine Freiheit zu genießen, die ihnen in ihren Heimatländern verwehrt wurde’.[[229]](#footnote-229) The institute, which formed the central meeting point of reformers and researchers, as Bauer observes, remained ultimately ‘a male space’.[[230]](#footnote-230) Although women were invited to present papers at the institute and Stöcker worked actively with Hirschfeld on several campaigns, no women were formally employed by the organisation.[[231]](#footnote-231) Thus, while the WhK and the *Institut für Sexualwissenschaft* theoretically placed (queer) women’s interests on their agenda, and women helped to shape the discussion on female queer desires in its publications and at its conferences, it is debateable how many queer women felt that they had a place within the organisation.

Nederlandsch Wetenschappelijk Humanitair Komitee (NWHK)

In 1903, after matriculating from a law degree and working as an interim district judge in Middelburg, Jacob Anton Schorer made his way to Berlin to study under Magnus Hirschfeld, a figure who had been of great inspiration for him.[[232]](#footnote-232) Schorer worked closely with Hirschfeld and the WhK in Berlin for several years. Following what he considered to be the ‘injustice and tyranny’ of proposed Article 248bis, however, Schorer returned to the Netherlands in 1910 determined to establish a Dutch faction of Hirschfeld’s WhK. Despite the earlier failed attempt of Lucien von Römer (1873-1965) to found a homosexual emancipation movement in the Netherlands in 1903, the introduction of Article 248bis galvanised Schorer and several other notable individuals to establish a group to advocate for the rights of “Uraniers”.[[233]](#footnote-233) With its office held at Schorer’s apartment in The Hague, the committee of the NWHK was formed by the sexologists Arnold Aletrino (1858-1916) and Lucien von Römer, as well as the author M.J.J Exler. Although Aletrino and Von Römer published avidly on queer desires, the organisation remained largely a one man show: ‘Jacob Schorer *was* the NWHK, the NWHK *was* Jacob Schorer’.[[234]](#footnote-234)

In many respects, the NWHK fulfilled similar functions as Hirschfeld’s WhK but on a smaller scale. Schorer’s organisation disseminated thousands of pro-homosexual pamphlets and brochures to eminent figures, students, and sex researchers in the hope of convincing the public of the congenital, and therefore “natural”, origin of same-sex desires. Printing annual reports and newsletters for its members, creating petitions to lobby against Article 248bis, and working closely with the WhK in the early years of the organisation, the NWHK also held committee meetings to which it invited guest speakers to deliver scientific papers. The committee was also later involved with the *Weltliga für Sexualreform* forming a large part of the Dutch faction of the league. Although the committee claimed to represent the interests of both male and female “Uranians”, there is no evidence of it allocating any functions on the committee to female members. Furthermore, women’s issues were paid little attention within the committee publications, although the NWHK did commission the first Dutch publication to explore the experiences of queer women in the Netherlands, *The Homosexuals* (*De homosexueelen*,1939). As discussed earlier, there is little evidence of a link between the existing feminist movements and the NWHK, and the movement for queer rights did not form part of any kind of cohesive movement for sexual reform like the WhK.

Although the NWHK did not actively advocate the rights of queer women, who were, theoretically, equally as affected by Article 248bis as men, the catalogue of Schorer’s archive and library demonstrates an interest in collecting information about queer female experiences. It contained studies such as P. Arduin’s *Die Frauenfrage und die sexuellen Zwischenstufen* (1900) and Edwin Bab’s *Frauenbewegung und Freundesliebe* (1901), as well as books written by women on the subject of queer desire such as Elisabeth Dauthendy’s *Die urnische Frage und die Frau* (1906) and Johanna Elberskirchen *Die Liebe des dritten Geschlechts* (1904).[[235]](#footnote-235) While the NWHK focused primarily on the persecution of male homosexuals under Article 248bis, when homosexuality is discussed in the NWHK’s publications, as Tielman notes, it concerns both men and women. Furthermore, Schorer did not exclude women from joining the committee, arguing that women should be included in the NWHK because homosexuality was visible ‘in women as well as men’.[[236]](#footnote-236)

# Conclusions

With this historical overview, I have outlined the developments of Amsterdam and Berlin as queer urban sites in the decades leading up to and beyond the First World War. It is clear that a highly developed and successful queer subculture for women could proliferate in Berlin by the mid-1920s for several significant reasons. First, despite the German capital experiencing the trauma of unexpected military defeat, social and political unrest, and economic turmoil due to hyperinflation, the economic boom after 1923 led to a growth in consumer and leisure culture in the city and, with it, a growing number of bars and establishments that catered for queer desires. With more liberal attitudes to gendered spaces and a need for women to remain in work due to the loss of male life during the war, women were present in the public sphere as never before, with a new voting power and equal rights enshrined in law. As well as queer love between women being omitted from the purview of Paragraph 175 due the perceived “definitional slipperiness” of such acts, the *Sittenpolizei* exercised a surprising tolerance for the development of queer establishments. These bars and cafes emerged alongside a growing number of queer emancipation movements for women, which each had its own printed communication channels to advertise events and bring a community of “like-minded” individuals together. The diversity of this scene enabled the growth of a sexual subculture that acknowledged queer feminine women. As several reform movements were actively engaged with the concept of women’s queer desires, including members of various women’s movements and the WhK, queer women became increasingly visible as sexual subjects with specific needs. The wider organisations that existed for men enabled them to facilitate their growing networks under the auspices of established associations. Although the media image of the frivolous flapper who frittered away her earnings on cheap entertainment and consumer goods soon became ubiquitous, it was undercut by the precarious reality of the modern woman’s economic existence and the additional familial and domestic burdens placed upon her.

In the city of Amsterdam, sexual experiences after the First World War continued to be structured by a stringent bourgeois morality. Although the Dutch had remained neutral during the conflict, the country did not remain untouched by the effects of war and saw economic and social unrest, as well as more women entering the workplace due to the mobilisation of Dutch soldiers. By the late 1920s, however, Dutch women were experiencing hostility on the job market due to the Great Depression and many were forced to leave salaried positions upon marriage. In conjunction with this, the political and religious subdivision of society, which was coloured by the conservative agenda of the confessional parties, served to maintain the roles of “breadwinner” and “caregiver”, and women’s lives became increasingly parochial and directed towards domesticity, a gendered experience that cut across pillars. The introduction of the morality laws in 1911 saw an increased vigilance toward immoral behaviours. Women were expected to be paragons of decency. The traditional norms and expectations moored to a woman’s femininity, therefore, ultimately precluded her from accessing the slowly emerging bar culture in Amsterdam. The contemporary notion that a woman’s rightful place was in the home, means that only women who attempted to escape the boundaries of gendered norms, such as Mie Lauffer and Bet van Beeren, have been documented in LGBT histories as engaging with the queer scene. It is not insignificant that both Lauffer and Van Beeren were working-class women, who have traditionally been excluded from the parameters of idealised femininity. Furthermore, although there appears to have been a theoretical engagement with the notion of the queer female experience within the NWHK, this did not develop into active involvement with women’s issues. Women’s emancipation groups did not engage at all with the notion of queer female desire and considered homosexuality to be associated with the male subject. Thus, while queer women in Berlin conceived of themselves as sexual subjects, terms such as “homosexual” and “Uranian” were not axiomatically considered in Amsterdam to comprise female desires.

# Chapter Two: Sex and Science: The Queer Feminine Mystique

On 30 May 1864, a patient entered the Charité hospital in Berlin who would shape scientific discourses on female same-sex desire long into the twentieth century. Thirty-five-year-old “Fräulein N.” was admitted to the Charité’s psychiatric ward after a prolonged series of manic episodes. Put under the care of German neurologist and psychiatrist Carl Friedrich Otto Westphal (1833-1890), Fräulein N. was said to have been driven to obsessive onanism in her teenage years and behavioural disturbances in her adult life due to the fact that she suffered ‘an einer Wuth Frauen zu lieben’.[[237]](#footnote-237) Informed by the developing fields of criminology and psychiatry, Wesphal’s article *Die conträre Sexualempfindung* (1869) was further indebted to the earlier works of lawyer and classicist Karl Heinrich Ulrichs (1825-1895). Considered the forefather of the modern homosexual rights movement, Ulrichs’ series of pamphlets, *Forschungen über das Räthsel der mannmännlichen Liebe* (1864-1879), put forth the first comprehensive and positive framework of same-sex desire in Europe. Deemed highly controversial at the time of publication, Ulrichs first work considered homosexual desire to be in many instances congenital and occurring as the result of a female “spirit” (*anima*) present within a male body. Despite the nuances of female sexuality being paid little attention in Ulrichs’ earlier studies, his proposal that same-sex desire was caused by cross-gender identification nonetheless offered Westphal a framework for his conclusions about Fräulein N.’s queer urges. Although Westphal ultimately resolved that his patient’s physiognomy and disposition had ‘nichts vom weiblichen Typus Abweichendes’, Fräulein N.’s declaration that she saw herself ‘überhaupt als Mann und möchte gern ein Mann sein’ confirmed for the neurologist the congenital nature of his patient’s condition, allowing him to conclude that her sexual desires were linked to an innate masculine sensibility.[[238]](#footnote-238)

The anchoring of queer desires to masculinity in the first scientific case study of the specificities of female homosexual experience reflects the contemporary social dichotomy that posited masculinity as the only legitimate lens through which to conceive of active sexual feelings. Women were considered the passive partners of active male desires and their sexual impulses were believed only to “awaken” in response to the initiations of their “experienced” husbands. Framed in this way, active female desire could only *ever* be the result of a masculine drive. As the burgeoning field of sexological study became a more lucrative publishing industry at the end of the nineteenth century and the motivation for sexual acts moved from what Jonathan Ned Katz has identified as the ‘procreation ethic to the modern “pleasure principle”’, medical experts and social commentators began to focus their attentions on the outliers of sexual enquiry.[[239]](#footnote-239) It was at this point that the puzzling figure of the queer feminine women began to garner more attention within scientific studies. With an increased emphasis on female sexuality at the turn of the twentieth century, thanks in part to the campaign against the double moral standard by the women’s movement and the associated concerns with levels of prostitution and venereal disease, the commonly accepted belief that women were sexually passive was being challenged across society. It was in this period that queer desires of feminine women became a site of investigation that could no longer be ignored.

The advent of a *scientia sexualis* in the nineteenth century, as Foucault has suggested, informed an essential shift in the conceptualisation of sexual practices. Sexual experiences were no longer thought to be invariably discrete acts but instead became recognised as constituent parts of a social identity. Informed by an intensified interest in the individual in the nineteenth century, gendered and sexual practices were considered a pathway to the “truth” about the human condition. Given that the study of the sexual impulse by this point concerned desire in all its various forms and ‘irrespective of its procreative potential’, it was of great social importance that sexologists classified which desires were “normal” and which could be considered “abnormal”.[[240]](#footnote-240) Indeed, the safeguarding of “normal” sexual desire against the threat of the “non-normative” had become something of a socio-scientific imperative in the early twentieth century,with women’s bodies situated at the centre of this struggle against immorality.[[241]](#footnote-241)

Informed by changing gender roles after the First World War and the increased visibility of queer desires on the urban landscape, the boundaries of what Judith Butler terms the “heterosexual matrix” appeared under siege by the mid-1920s.[[242]](#footnote-242) With the emergence of the “New Woman”, who fundamentally challenged the parameters of acceptable femininity, and increasing numbers of “normal” women visiting queer bars for evenings of erotic experimentation, the suggestion that gender-conforming women were heterosexual was no longer self-evident. Influenced by these gendered shifts, as well as increasingly liberal attitudes toward sex, physicians and educators such as Theodoor van de Velde (1873-1937) and Max Hodann (1894-1946) felt compelled to save the most valued cultural institution of the hetero-patriarchal regime: marriage. Publishing lucrative guides aimed at teaching men how to understand the bodies and desires of their wives, practitioners such as Van de Velde and Hodann brought the study of sexology down from its ivory tower and to a wider reading public. As the cultural bedrock and supposed guarantor of the moral well-being of modern society, marriage also had a role to play in the medico-social discourses developing around queer feminine desire.

As the biological theory of congenital homosexual desire with its resulting somatic inversion could not account for the experiences of the queer feminine woman, she presented physicians and sexologists, as Lisa Walker observes, ‘with the greatest difficulty in typologizing the female homosexual’.[[243]](#footnote-243) That the queer feminine woman was ‘a contradiction in terms – a deductive impossibility’, frustrated sex-gender systems based on complementarity by resisting the categorisations of existing somatic frameworks.[[244]](#footnote-244) In an attempt to circumvent the intricacy of this sex-gender anomaly, sexologists frequently concluded that the desires of feminine women for their own sex were a temporary and treatable phenomenon. The redirection of the sex impulse to an appropriate object through marriage was said to serve in many instances as a “cure”. As swiftly became clear, however, feminine women who desired the same sex could not so easily be classified under one category. Not only did the feminine prostitute and decadent degenerate engage in same-sex acts but so, too, did the bourgeois hysteric and the “innocent” adolescent. This realisation led to contradictory conclusions about the queer feminine woman in sexological research and the introduction of increasingly schematic theories about the nature of queer feminine desires.

Following a brief documentation of the emergence of sexology as a scholarly field in German and Dutch contexts, stressing the influence of the former on the development of sexological theory across Central Europe, I will narrow my focus in this chapter on the attempts of sexologists to categorise the desires of queer feminine women after the mid-nineteenth century. Having received surprisingly little scholarly attention from historians of sexology, queer femininity played a fundamental role, I argue, in frustrating and challenging medico-psychoanalytic theories of queer desire. By delineating first the boundaries of what Foucault has termed the “regulatory ideal” of sex and gender in German and Dutch contexts during the interwar era, I will also be able to examine how the construction of a narrow range of “normative” feminine desires, concomitantly served to establish a seemingly inexhaustive spectrum of behaviours that were suspicious and dangerous. It is in this overlapping space of the normative/non-normative, that it becomes possible to discern more clearly the distinctions between German and Dutch conceptions of queer female desire between the two World Wars. While German sex researchers struggled in their attempts to categorise and classify the queer feminine woman as a sexological category, in the Netherlands she remained a figure on the fringes of socio-medical discourse due to the disinterest of sexologists and activists in figures who conformed outwardly to gender norms, as well as the late engagement with sexological research in Dutch contexts. Following a chronology of the construction and emergence of the queer feminine woman in sexological literature, I will ultimately return to my broader research questions to draw comparisons between the development of discourses about queer femininities and female desires in Amsterdam and Berlin.

# The Emergence of a *Scientia Sexualis*

From masturbation to masochism, cross-dressing to fetishism, lust-murder to necrophilia, the spectrum of human sexual experience was documented in infinitesimal detail by physicians and psychologists at the turn of the twentieth century. Although hundreds of books, pamphlets, and journal articles began to appear towards the end of the nineteenth century that focused centrally on sex and desire, the body of research that emerged in this period cannot be considered a cohesive or unified field. The study of human sexuality was pursued by a range of researchers who worked across various disciplines. Indeed, the foundational frameworks of the field of what would later become known as “sexology” were formed, as Vernon Rosario notes, not only by ‘neurologists, alienists, public hygienists, medical forensics experts, and even general practitioners’ but also social activists with aims to prevent or overturn the regulation of same-sex sexual acts.[[245]](#footnote-245) By the interwar era, the term *Sexualwissenschaft*, as Joachim S. Hohmann writes, served as an umbrella concept that encompassed a range of methodological practices including the progressive reform movement of Magnus Hirschfeld and his *Wissenschaftlich-humanitäres Komitee* as well as more radical theories such as those of leftist psychoanalyst Wilhelm Reich (1897-1957), and the agendas of anti-Semitic masculinists such as Adolf Brand (1874-1945) and Hans Blüher (1888-1955).[[246]](#footnote-246) Crossing not only disciplinary boundaries but also party lines, research on human sexuality by the interwar era was a profoundly politicised field.

Frequently attributed to Iwan Bloch’s study *Das Sexualleben unserer Zeit* (1907), the term *Sexualwissenschaft* was first used to denote a “domain” of research in 1898 when Sigmund Freud (1856-1939) claimed in the *Wiener klinische Rundschau* that it was regrettable that ‘Sexualwissenschaft’ was not considered to be a serious field of study by many scholars.[[247]](#footnote-247) It was only following Bloch’s later publication, however, that collective attempts were made across psycho-medical disciplines to plot the parameters and future directions of sexological research. The launch of the *Zeitschrift für Sexualwissenschaft* by Magnus Hirschfeld in 1908, the appearance Albert Moll’s *Handbuch der Sexualwissenschaften* in 1912, and the establishment of the *Gesellschaft für Sexualwissenschaft* in Berlin in 1913 mark early attempts in the twentieth century to codify the wide-ranging research interests that were united under the appellation of sexology. By the time that Hirschfeld establishedthe *Institut für Sexualwissenschaft* in 1919, it was considered by researchers from across the world that Berlin was the centre of European sex research. Facilitated by the fact that German was the dominant language of scientific study in this period, and that many of the early developments in the study of (homo)sexuality had been pioneered by researchers in German-speaking countries, Germany was soon at the forefront of scientific research about sex and gender.[[248]](#footnote-248) Already in 1905, as James Steakley calculates, more than three hundred and twenty sexological publications ‘rolled off the presses of Germany in a single year’.[[249]](#footnote-249)

In the Netherlands, the term ‘homosexualiteit’ first appeared in 1892 in the *Nederlandsch Tijdschrift voor de Geneeskunde* (Dutch Journal of Medicine) but did not become common parlance until the late 1920s.[[250]](#footnote-250) Studies on same-sex desire in Dutch contexts appeared much later than in Germany and England.[[251]](#footnote-251) In fact, the Netherlands made little contribution to the development of sexology as a disciplinary field and did not play a role in the emergence of its theoretical or methodological frameworks.[[252]](#footnote-252) Despite a veritable explosion of scientific discourses on sexual behaviour in Central Europe at the fin de siècle, the Netherlands can only be considered a “minor player” within the field and the contemporary Dutch conversation around same-sex desire was shaped primarily by sexological works from German, French, and English speaking countries. Before the publication of Jan Rutger’s *Das Sexualleben in seiner biologischen Bedeutung* (1922) no study on sex by a Dutch author had engaged comprehensively with the nuances of female sexuality and it was not until the publication of Benno Stokvis’ *De homosexueelen* (The Homosexuals) in 1939 that female same-sex desire was the focus of an original Dutch medico-social collection.[[253]](#footnote-253) Yet, although the Netherlands did not play a central role in the emergence of the field, this should not suggest that Dutch researchers were not engaging with sexological research once it was becoming more established. At the turn of the century, physicians and psychiatrists such as Jacobus Schoondermark, Lucien von Römer, and Arnold Aletrino were all actively producing work on the subject of homosexuality, and drew heavily on the research of Karl Heinrich Ulrichs, Magnus Hirschfeld, and Richard von Krafft-Ebing, often travelling to Berlin to work with Hirschfeld and the WhK.[[254]](#footnote-254)

What might go some way to accounting for the lack of engagement with sexological theories in the Netherlands, perhaps, is the widespread rejection of somatic studies of human behaviour and sexuality by Dutch sex researchers. August Stärcke (1880-1954), Albert van Renterghem (1845-1939), Gerbrandus Jelgersma (1859-1942), and Jeanne Lampl-de Groot (1895-1987), among others, did much to familiarise Dutch scholars with psychoanalysis and particularly the ideas of Freud, whose theories found fertile ground on Dutch soil. Although the approaches of the aforementioned researchers diverged in various ways, they were united, as Ilse Bulhof notes, ‘in a shared rejection of the somatic style of medicine’ as well as the approaches of the anatomical-physiological school of sexological thought.[[255]](#footnote-255) After Van Renterghem and Frederik van Eeden (1860-1932) opened the *Instituut Liébault* (Liébault Institute) in Amsterdam in 1887, the first institution for psychotherapy in Europe, the Dutch capital was established as the centre for psychotherapy and psychoanalysis.[[256]](#footnote-256) Held in Amsterdam in 1907, the inaugural International Conference on Psychiatry, Neurology, Psychology, and the Nursing of the Mentally Unwell (*Internationaal Congres voor Psychiatrie, Neurologie, Psychologie, en Krankzinnigenverpleging*), at which Stärcke held a paper on Freud’s ideas, cemented the study of psychotherapy in the Netherlands. Against this backdrop, and with the development of an increasingly religious and conservative government, psychotherapy was soon considered by many in the Netherlands as a ‘contemporary trend to restore the soul’. [[257]](#footnote-257) Between the time Van Renterghem established the Dutch Society for Psychoanalysis (*Nederlandse Vereniging voor Psychoanalyse*) in 1917 there was already a productive exchange underway across the German and Dutch border within the field of psychotherapy. Although psychotherapy – and later psychoanalysis – was received more favourably in the Netherlands than the anatomical-physiological approaches of German-speaking sexologists, by the end of the 1930s both traditions were well-established within Dutch society.

Given the dominance of German-speaking research across Europe, however, it would be impossible to chart the emergence of Dutch psycho-sexual studies, as Van Lieshout comments, without reference to those that had already been published in Germany since the mid-nineteenth century.[[258]](#footnote-258) The foundational theories of Karl Heinrich Ulrichs (1825-1895), as Hubert Kennedy has observed, ‘anticipated Freud in his assertion of the importance of dreams for sexology’ and Freud frequently referred back to the studies of Ulrichs, Albert Moll, and Richard von Krafft-Ebing in his pioneering theories of innate bisexuality and polymorphous perversity. Indeed, as will become increasingly clear during my analyses in the subsequent chapters, while discourses around female same-sex desire in the Netherlands appear to have been shaped by traditional notions of femininity until the late 1930s and debates in Germany were structured by a Cartesian dichotomy of body and mind, the fields were not mutually exclusive and overlaps occured between the discourses. In the studies and frameworks mentioned at the beginning of this chapter, the figure of the queer woman appeared first, as Mara Taylor points out, ‘in the margins, footnotes, and afterthoughts’.[[259]](#footnote-259) Considered initially to be a mirror image of the inverted “effeminate” male, the queer woman was characterised first and foremost by an innate psychic masculinity. In such frameworks, the queer feminine woman was visible as an esoteric object of masculine female desire. As a construct queer femininity became perceptible, as Robert Deam Tobin suggests, only through the desires of queer “inverted” men.[[260]](#footnote-260) Later, when frameworks of queer female desire focused primarily on somatic markers of gendered inversion, the masculine woman remained the primary site of investigation. It is only as anxieties grew around the perceived instability of heterosexuality at the turn of the century, that the queer feminine woman emerges as a figure of sexological interest.

The remainder of this chapter will first take up the figure of the “normative” woman in German and Dutch medico-social discourses, before outlining the emergence of the queer feminine woman to trace the construction of the sexual “Other”, who remained on the margins even in studies dedicated to exploring female same-sex desires. Given the remit of this thesis, I can consider the field of sexology only in its narrowest sense. Offering a basic map of what I have already outlined as a highly complex and contested field, this chapter will not examine sexological discourses concerning prostitution, masturbation, or sexual fetishes, although I maintain that this could throw light onto the construction of “normative” and “abject” sexualities and identities in future studies. I will consider the development of a discourse around queer feminine women in four main waves. First, I will examine studies that posited queer desire as a psychic inversion of gendered characteristics that did not centralise somatic markers of difference in their studies. Following this, I will explore what studies that focused more on somatic gendered inversion as the origin of queer desire can tell us about the queer feminine woman, before moving on to those that addressed the contradictions and outliers of scientific research and, ultimately, a more nuanced image of female sexuality. Finally, I will turn back to “psychic” discourses with an examination of the queer woman’s place within the development of psychoanalysis in the early twentieth century. These somewhat inexact categorisations should not suggest that the field of sex research was so neatly defined, however. As will become clear, insofar as these shifts demonstrate developments and divergences, they should also show closely imbricated the various studies of sex and its subjects remained throughout the development of the field.

# Ideal Women, Ideal Marriages

At the turn of the twentieth century, growing concerns around the changing conceptions of gender and sexuality at the *fin de siècle*,and the increasingly liberal attitudes towards the “pleasure principles” of sex, meant that sexologists had become more committed to defining the boundaries of “normativity”. Within such studies, however, the discussion of “normal” female desire was often crudely simplified to a dichotomous Madonna/Magdalene framework. In no other work of such significance, perhaps, was this division more acute than Auguste Forel’s *Die sexuelle Frage* (1905).[[261]](#footnote-261) Positioned as ‘eine naturwissenschaftliche, psychologische, hygienische, und soziologische Studie für Gebildete’, the Swiss neurologist’s highly influential treatise was read widely in Germany and the Netherlands and concerned not only the nature of the male and female sex drive, sexual ethics, and questions of sexual hygiene, but also non-reproductive sexual urges, prostitution, and other sexual “pathologies”.[[262]](#footnote-262)

Forel’s relationship with the rights of women was decidedly complex and grounded in theories of social hygiene and eugenics. Within his *magnum opus*, however, Forel was rather simplistic in his presentation of the “normal” women. Fundamental to his theory of normative sexuality was the concept of female chasteness and his contention that sexual anaesthesia – that is, the lack of sexual feeling – was characteristic of female sexuality. It was the very libidinous woman, Forel suggested, who should be considered pathological.[[263]](#footnote-263) Indeed, in Forel’s study a woman’s only desire emerges in ‘die Sucht sich passiv zu geben, die Rolle der unterliegenden, bezwungenen, beherrschten Dulderin zu spielen’.[[264]](#footnote-264) Despite identifying these traits as negative characteristics, Forel nonetheless concluded that they are ‘ein Hauptbestandteil des normalen Sexualtriebes’. [[265]](#footnote-265) This natural passivity in sexual intercourse, Forel argues, can be explained in part by the fact that ‘voluptuous sensations’ are awaked in women only *during* the act of coitus; it is the habitual practice of intercourse that ultimately produces an increasing desire for sexual acts. Forel warns his readers, however, that even with regular “practice” it is likely that many women will still find that ‘der Begattungsakt ein unangenehmes, vielfach ekelhaftes, zum mindesten indifferentes Ereignis [ist]’.[[266]](#footnote-266) Unlike men, Forel contends, women were not driven by a yearning concentrated ‘auf die Sexualorgane oder nach Begattung’ but instead they experienced ‘ein unklares, allgemeines Empfinden, eine Sehnsucht, nach Familiengründung und Mutterglück’.[[267]](#footnote-267)

The habitual practice of sexual intercourse as a method of increasing desire in women, Forel notes, could have unwanted and grave consequences. Arguing that women normally possess a ‘Zart- und Schamgefühl’, Forel claims that this disappears after a woman has been “trained” for immorality: ‘Hier wirken das Routinenhafte, die Suggestibilität und die Willenskonsequenz der weiblichen Psychologie […] Dafür liefert die Prostitution traurige Belege’.[[268]](#footnote-268) Employing the Madonna/Magdalene dichotomy to establish the boundaries of “normal” female sexuality, Forel suggests that women are capable of both “good” and “evil”. Influenced, at least in part, by Karl Möbius’ *Über den psychologischen Schwachsinn des Weibes* (1900), Forel’s belief in the “lesser” mental faculties of women meant that a seemingly easy transformation could made from “normative” to “non-normative” desire, which tapped into contemporary fears concerning female queerness. Thus, while “normal” female sexual desire is positioned as ‘completely absent’ in Forel’s female subject, once desires had been “awakened” they were susceptible to the suggestion of external influences and needed to be controlled.

After women obtained active suffrage rights in Germany and the Netherlands in 1919, a new wave of anti-feminist writings began to emerge in resistance to what was being considered as a contravention of woman’s natural role. Although I cannot go into detail about each of these documents here, *De moderne vrouw en haar tekort* (The Modern Woman and her Failings, 1921) by Dutch author Ina Boudier-Bakker (1875-1966) develops many of the arguments deployed against the “modern women” in both Amsterdam and Berlin after the Great War. Published only two years after a watershed moment in the history of women’s emancipation for Germany and the Netherlands, Boudier-Bakker’s *De moderne vrouw* argued that office work had undermined the natural role of a woman as a wife, home-maker, and mother. Although Boudier-Bakker, as Fenoulhet suggests, had ‘no faith in the ability of men to provide renewal and leadership’ after the war, she remained convinced that the natural place of the “normal” women was in the domestic sphere.[[269]](#footnote-269)

Claiming that the modern working woman’s soul ‘[grumbles] the entire day against this unnatural existence […] while her heart and desires draw her home’, Boudier-Bakker situates the “natural” passion of a woman within the domain of the domestic.[[270]](#footnote-270) Indeed, as Forel had done earlier, Boudier-Bakker concedes that many women could be considered less capable than men because they became consumed by what impassioned them, concluding: ‘Women’s brains are generally only lucid when their *hearts* are in it’.[[271]](#footnote-271) Although Boudier-Bakker considers the home-maker to be a ‘powerful figure who is confident that domestic work is equal in social importance to work outside the home’ she also acknowledges the unlikelihood of achieving happiness as a married woman who finds passion only with her husband and in rearing her children.[[272]](#footnote-272) The image Boudier-Bakker paints of a passionless and unhappy marriage, which she suggests depicts ‘many, perhaps most cases’, had become by this point a cultural concern. Evidenced by the fact that fewer women were getting married in the Netherlands and Germany, many women had lost their husbands in the war, and increasing numbers of divorces were taking place as men came back from the frontlines, the very symbol of the patriarchal system appeared to be under threat.

In many respects, the changes in gendered norms and expectations after the First World War, as outlined in the previous chapter, were central to the attempts of sex researchers to pin down the parameters of “normalcy”, as well as the ultimate mooring of heterosexuality to this normative construction. Considering heterosexuality to be essentially ‘one particular historical arrangement of the sexes and their pleasures’, Jonathan Ned Katz’s study of the construction of heterosexual social order serves ‘to suggest the unstable, relative, and historical status of an idea and a sexuality we usually assumed carved long ago in stone’.[[273]](#footnote-273) The increased visibility of women in the public sphere, for example, along with a shift in sexual mores from a reproductive impulse to the “pleasure principle”, rattled the dichotomies that constituted active and passive roles as belonging to the domains of men and women respectively. With women supposedly breaking free of their domestic shackles and entering the public sphere in unprecedented numbers, researchers were at pains to instil a sense of stability into what was an increasingly chaotic sexed and gendered landscape. As an institution considered ‘indispensable to the Social Order’, physicians and sex reformers focused their efforts on making marriage the definitive symbol of sexual and social “normality” more appealing.[[274]](#footnote-274)

Commencing his bestselling trilogy with Balzac’s words ‘marriage is a science’, Theodoor van de Velde (1873-1937) situates his study *Het volkomen huwelijk* (Ideal Marriage, 1926) directly within the arena of sexological and literary discourses that were making the subject of sex more socially acceptable after the turn of the twentieth century.[[275]](#footnote-275) Aimed at ‘medical professionals and […] married men’, the text is one of several attempts during this time to make scientific writing more accessible to a general reading public.[[276]](#footnote-276) Informed by the modern notion of companionate marriage, in which a woman was ‘accepted […] as *an active, adult and equivalent sexual being*’, the Dutch gynaecologist’s groundbreaking guides admitted that marriage, at least within the Christian tradition, was often a failure.[[277]](#footnote-277) Although Van de Velde begins by warning readers that his study will ‘state that which would otherwise remain unsaid’, he simultaneously adopts a reassuring tone, emphasising to those reading his work that he will discuss ‘only […] such emotions and sensations as lie within the limits of *normal sexuality*’.[[278]](#footnote-278) Omitting ‘morbid deflections, twisted and abnormal desires’ from the scope of his research, Van de Velde claimed in *Het volkomen huwelijk* that he would help to keep ‘sinister portals closed’.[[279]](#footnote-279)

Despite advocating a model of companionate marriage, and indeed suggesting that the future of marriage is dependent on this construct, Van de Velde nonetheless perpetuated a traditional view of the marital union in his study. Positioning men, as Forel had done, as ‘naturally educators and initiators of their wives’, Van de Velde claimed that “normal” women were generally uninitiated in sexual matters.[[280]](#footnote-280) Despite his promising premise to teach men about women’s bodies, Van de Velde in fact spent little time exploring the nuances of “normative” female sexuality and claimed dismissively that ‘an exhaustive treatise on all aspects of adult female sexuality’ would be ‘superfluous for the medical practitioner’ and ‘too unwieldy and […] unintelligible for the layman’.[[281]](#footnote-281) Determining that society has ‘passed beyond the era in which the wife was considered *sexually* as *passive implement, receptacle and incubator*’, Van de Velde’s study reinforced women’s natural position within this role and ties it to the performance of femininity.[[282]](#footnote-282) Within this framework, as Lisa Duggan discerns, Van de Velde appeared ‘to base love and sexual love on gender differences […] interpreted within the context of male dominance’.[[283]](#footnote-283)

Femininity, and with it its constituent passivity, modesty, and submissiveness, was framed in Van de Velde’s series as the ideal and most desired accomplishment of women. In his second instalment of the series, *De bestrijding van den echtelijken afkeer* (Sex Hostility in Marriage, 1927), Van de Velde suggested that unless homosexual tendencies were at the root of a woman’s gender non-normativity, ‘even among the fanatical men-women’ there would be few who would ‘not admit that she would like to be feminine and exclusively feminine (or at one time wished to be) and would have been only too glad to have seen a “real” man enter her life’.[[284]](#footnote-284) Culturally cemented as passive, sexually immature, and dependent on the active male impulse to “awaken” desire, it is no surprise, then, that the feminine woman who desired women was little short of a mystery to many sexologists, as can be seen in the example of Van de Velde’s study outlined above. Examining more closely the diversification of the image of female same-sex desire over the decades of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, I will locate within these complex, and often contradictory, frameworks the various points of emergence of sexological discourses about the queer feminine woman.

# Psychic Inversion: Queer Female Desire at the Margins

As a vocal advocate for queer emancipation, Karl Heinrich Ulrichs’ series of twelve pamphlets on the “riddle of man-manly love” offered the first affirmative scientific framework of same-sex desire and identity. Published between 1864-1879 under the pseudonym Numa Numantius, Ulrichs’ studies were strongly influenced by the works of forensic scientist Johann Ludwig Casper (1796-1864), the first scientific expert to claim that same-sex desire could be the result of a ‘hermaphrodism of the soul’.[[285]](#footnote-285) Most concisely explained by the Latin epithet *anima muliebris virili corpore inclusa*, Ulrichs’ theory suggested that same-sex desire in men was the result of a female spirit in a male body.[[286]](#footnote-286) Using the terms *Uranismus* , and later “drittes Geschlecht”, to describe this phenomenon, Ulrichs also coined the neologisms *Urninge* and *Uranier* for men-loving-men and *Dioninge* and *Dionäer* for women-loving-men.[[287]](#footnote-287) The entire premise of Ulrichs’ framework, as Claudia Honegger observes, was aligned closely with the interests of the natural sciences more broadly at this time and focused on ‘determining more closely the connection between the bodily disposition and psychological capacity’.[[288]](#footnote-288) Borrowing also from literary and philosophical works, Ulrichs’ coinages can be traced back to Plato’s *Symposium*, in which the playwright Aristophanes presents the possibility of three sexes in a eulogy concerning the nature of love: ‘The sexes were not two as they are now but originally three in number; there was man, woman, and the union of the two’.[[289]](#footnote-289) Following Plato, Ulrichs suggested in his first publication *Vindex* (1864) that *Urninge* could be considered ‘ein eigenes Geschlecht, dem Geschlecht der Männer und dem der Weiber als drittes Geschlecht coordiniert’.[[290]](#footnote-290)

Describing the phenomenon of homosexual desire as a psychic occurrence that develops in the early stages of embryonic growth, Ulrichs’ theory challenged previous studies that had posited same-sex desire as the result of physical abnormalities or excessive onanism.[[291]](#footnote-291) Instead, with a framework of anatomical bisexuality and sexual dualism at its core, Ulrichs positioned psychic inversion as the aetiology of queer desire. Although initially dismissive of the idea of a “fourth sex” – that is, women with a male spirit – in his second publication, *Inclusa*,Ulrichs indicated his awareness of the phenomenon of ‘weiblicher Uranismus’. Consigned to a single footnote in the study, the woman-loving-woman, as Taylor observes, ‘quite literally […] enters Ulrichs’ texts in the margins’.[[292]](#footnote-292) Transposing his original framework of male same-sex desire directly onto the female sex, Ulrichs points to the possible existence of a group of women with an inborn masculine element and a desire for the feminine:

Dem dritten Geschlechte kann möglicherweise thatsächlich ein *viertes* entsprechen, ein Geschlecht weiblich gebauter Individuen mit weibweiblicher Geschlechtsliebe, d.i. mit Geschlechtsliebe männlicher Richtung. […] Derartige Weiber schienen indeß erheblich minder zahlreich vorzukommen, als Urninge. Eine wissenschaftliche Prüfung auch ihrer Natur möchte sehr wünschenswerth sein. Den Schlüssel zu dem Räthsel ihrer Liebe würde ein angeborenes männliches Element bilden.[[293]](#footnote-293)

Unlike earlier theories that posited homosexual desire as the result of genital hypertrophy/atrophy – and later studies that suggested a reversal of both somatic and psychic gender characteristics – Ulrichs’ theory of psychic inversion positions the queer woman as *psychically* “masculine” but *physically* “feminine”. Although Ulrichs suggests that a study on the nature of female same-sex desire would be ‘sehr wünschenswerth’, his conclusion that female queerness occurred considerably less frequently than male psychical inversion, the woman with masculine sexual impulses remained in this first text, as Taylor observes, a marginal concern.

By the time Ulrichs published his fourth pamphlet *Formatrix* in 1865, he had acknowledged the limits of his three-gendered system and conceded to the ‘chaos of varieties’ that existed along the human sexual spectrum.[[294]](#footnote-294) Following the success of his earlier publications, the activist had gained access to a more diverse group of *Uranians* through various personal correspondences. With more nuanced insights, Ulrichs identified at least sixteen other types of sexual variations, including the *Uranodioning* man who was attracted both to men and women, the *Dioning* male who had feminine characteristics but was attracted to women, and the *Urning* with a masculine spirit. He also amended his earlier claim that same-sex desire between women occurred less frequently than between men, explaining that he had since encountered many examples of women ‘mit männlichem Liebestrieb’ and ultimately concluded that ‘die thatsächliche Existenz des weiblichen vollkommen so verbürgt erscheint wie die des männlichen Uranismus’.[[295]](#footnote-295) Despite Ulrichs’ supposition that queer women appear just as frequently as their male “counterparts”, his lack of personal knowledge about these women, meant that love between two women remained in his work ultimately ‘unknowable’.[[296]](#footnote-296)

It was not until neurologist Carl Otto Westphal’s 1869 article on ‘Die conträre Sexualempfindung’ that the queer woman made her entrance onto sexological stage proper. Inspired by Ulrichs’ research on the inborn nature of same-sex desire, the methodological approaches Westphal adopted in his article mark a clear shift from previous studies of sexual behaviours. While Ulrichs drew on literary and philosophical texts, as well as his own experiences and personal correspondences, to inform his theories, Westphal worked directly with patients at the *Irrenabteilung* of the Charité hospital in Berlin to gather material for a collection of “case histories”. This development advanced sex research and created, as Ivan Crozier suggests, ‘a new norm for sexology: a typical case that encapsulated the features of a particular condition’.[[297]](#footnote-297) As the first of its kind, Fräulein N.’s case study was destined to become the archetypal model for research into queer female desire.

After the thirty-five-year-old Fräulein N. was spurned by a woman she loved, she fell into a deep and vengeful depression and was admitted to the Charité’s psychiatric ward after a week of manic episodes in 1864. The medical testimony Westphal received upon meeting his patient concluded that Fräulein N.’s “sickness” belonged to a class of ‘Geisteskrankheiten’ and it was recommended that the patient receive immediate treatment ‘um fernerem Unheile vorzubeugen’.[[298]](#footnote-298) Piecing together the case study of Fräulein N. through descriptions provided by the patient, the patient’s sister, and the medical testimony, Westphal recount’s Fräulein N.’s childhood in a way that would become paradigmatic for presenting evidence of congenital queer desires in women. Told that the patient preferred boy’s games and clothes as a child, the reader is further informed that Fräulein N. had never had an intimate relationship with a man nor felt the inclination to engage in one.

Aside from a small scar above her mouth, Westphal struggles to locate any other sign of physical abnormality in his patient. Even the intrusive examination of Fräulein N.’s genitals does not provide any evidence of the hypertrophy or atrophy that had previously been identified as the cause of queer desires in women. Instead, Fräulein N. is described as a ‘somewhat delicately built’ individual who suffered frequently from headaches:

Die Patientin ist ein mässig grosses, etwas zart gebautes Individuum von wenig einnehmendem, unbedeutendem Aeusseren; Physiognomie und Habitus haben nichts vom weiblichen Typus abweichendes […] Im Übrigen zeigen sich keine Deformitäten der äusseren Bildung, namentlich auch nicht an den Geschlechtstheilen. Die grossen Schamlippen klaffen etwas auseinander, so daß die kleinen in der Schamspalte sichtbar sind, die Clitoris ist von gewöhnlicher Länge [...].[[299]](#footnote-299)

In the above description, Fräulein N. fits neatly into Ulrichs’ previously proposed category of the *Urninde*; an individual who is psychically inverted yet physically “normal”. Furthermore, the dissociative states, dizziness, and amnesia that Fräulein N. claimed had accompanied her migraines were symptoms redolent of the stereotypically “female malady” neurasthenia, stressing once again the patient’s biological womanhood.[[300]](#footnote-300) Indeed, it is only Fräulein N.’s later admission that she felt ‘überhaupt als Mann und möchte gern ein Mann sein’ and her description of her active role in queer sex acts that presented Westphal with a logical framework for his patient’s sexual desires.

Despite the knowledge that Fräulein N. felt herself ‘to be a man’, the intimate acts that she detailed in the study, as Taylor observes, do not suggest the kind of penetrative sexual intercourse that was associated with male desire. Indeed, the images of Catherine Linck’s phallic “leather object”, as mentioned in the previous chapter, disappear in Westphal’s study to be replaced by descriptions of external digital pleasure. The reader is told that between the age of eighteen and twenty-three Fräulein N. was able to regularly “relieve” her desires when she shared a bed with a female cousin and ‘machte sich dabei mit der Hand an den Geschlechtstheil des anderen Mädchens zu schaffen, liess sich selbst aber niemals berühren’.[[301]](#footnote-301) To stress the sexual “untouchability” of his patient further, Westphal notes emphatically in both internal examinations documented in the study that Fräulein N.’s hymen was intact and, indeed, ‘lässt kaum die Spitze des kleinen Fingers eindringen’.[[302]](#footnote-302) That Fräulein N. never allowed herself to be touched, and certainly not penetrated, meant that she was removed from the realm of the “feminine” and her desires could be categorised as the result of a masculine sex impulse. Although Fräulein N. did not deviate from the typical female form, then, her masculine drive enabled her, nonetheless, to become visible as a queer sexual subject. Thus, while the *Urninde* was “unknowable”, as Taylor contends, Fräulein N. gave queer female desires a workable image through the lens of masculinity.

# Somatic Signifiers: Questions of Queer Legitimacy

Introducing to the scientific world terminology such as “sadism” and “masochism”, psychiatrist Richard von Krafft-Ebing’s study *Psychopathia Sexualis* (1886) marked the first attempt by a sex researcher to create a compendium of sexual pathologies.[[303]](#footnote-303) The study, which ran to twelve editions before Krafft-Ebing’s death, became the sexual sourcebook *par excellence* for late nineteenth-century researchers. Building on Westphal’s methodological innovations, Krafft-Ebing worked closely with his patients in the Feldhof mental asylum in Austria and produced fifty-one case histories in first edition of his study.[[304]](#footnote-304) Exploring a seemingly inexhaustible range of sexual behaviours, Krafft-Ebing’s publications provided knowledge about a variety of deviant sexual impulses that ranged from asexuality to *Lustmord*, bestiality to necrophilia, and fetishism to flagellantism.

Writing to Ulrichs in 1879, Krafft-Ebing cited his debt to the activist and claimed that Ulrichs’ earlier research on “man-manly” love had been the driving force behind his own explorations of same-sex desire: ‘Das Studium Ihrer Schriften über mannmännliche Liebe hat mich in hohem Masse interessiert, […] Von dem Tage an, wo Sie mir – ich glaube es war 1866 – Ihre Schriften zusandten, habe ich meine volle Aufmerksamkeit der Erscheinung zugewendet, welche mir damals ebenso rätselhaft war, als interessant’.[[305]](#footnote-305) Unlike Ulrichs, however, who was an advocate for seeing same-sex desire as a natural and congenital variant, Krafft-Ebing’s focus on the pathological, as well as distinctions between hereditary and acquired sexual impulses, presented a framework wherein same-sex desire could be considered heritable, transmissible, and ultimately a danger to society. Building on the studies mentioned earlier in this chapter, Krafft-Ebing distinguished between four stages of inborn inversion in a refinement of the riddle of taxonomies Ulrichs had begun to articulate in his research. In the first stage of congenital inversion, which Krafft-Ebing’s termed ‘psychiche Hermaphrodisie’, the sex instinct was directed towards the same sex but weaker traces of the heterosexual impulse were said to appear episodically. The second stage, ‘Homosexualität/Uranismus’, was largely synonymous with Ulrichs’ *Urning* and denoted an individual with an exclusive desire for the same sex but no signs of somatic inversion. The third stage, ‘Viraginität/Effeminatio’, described a figure whose sexual impulse is not only directed towards the same sex but, moreover, a psychic disposition was said to emerge during childhood which resulted in “spiritual” characteristics of the opposite sex. The final stage of inversion, ‘Androgynie/Gyandrie’, was employed by Krafft-Ebing to allude to individuals in whom there was not only a psychic inversion of gender traits but also a physical inversion of secondary sex characteristics.[[306]](#footnote-306)

Despite a more nuanced framework of queer desire, female inversion remained within it ‘a muted discourse’.[[307]](#footnote-307) By 1898, however, Krafft-Ebing had concluded that although scientific evidence of its existence stood ‘viel spärlicher […] zu Gebot’, love between women had existed ‘zu allen Zeiten’.[[308]](#footnote-308) In keeping with both Ulrichs’ and Westphal’s formulations, same-sex desire in women was portrayed by Krafft-Ebing as a psychic but not necessarily somatic occurrence:

das weibliebende Weib fühlt sich dem anderen gegenüber in der Rolle des Mannes. […] die Genitalien [sind] normal entwickelt, die Geschlechtsdrüsen funktioniren ganz entsprechend und der geschlechtliche Typus ist ein vollkommen differenzirter. Das Empfinden, Denken, Streben, überhaupt der Charakter entspricht jedoch in der Regel der eigenartigen Geschlechtsempfindung, nicht aber dem Geschlecht, welches das Individuum anatomisch und physiologisch repräsentiert.[[309]](#footnote-309)

Although the sensibility, thoughts, and aspirations of the female invert were typically masculine, the physiological presentation of the women-who-desired-women did not typically deviate from the female “norm”. Much like the studies discussed above, however, Krafft-Ebing does not focus much on the woman who is marked behaviourally by her femininity and when she did become visible, her passivity and modesty were the defining features of her desires.

Like those before him, Krafft-Ebing admitted that ‘die Art der Befriedigung der weiblichen Urninge wenig gekannt [ist]’.[[310]](#footnote-310) Noting a general ‘Gleichgültigkeit’towards men in all queer women, Krafft-Ebing suggested, like Westphal, that digital stimulation was the *modus operandi* in sexual situations for most women who loved women. Becoming more specific in his later research, however, Krafft-Ebing corrected himself with descriptions that suggested that masculine and feminine queer women preferred different sexual pleasures contingent upon their gender presentation. The sexual impulses of women characterised by ‘psychiche Hermaphrodisie’, for example, were often ‘beschränkt […] auf blosses Küssen und Umarmen’.[[311]](#footnote-311) The case of “Frau X.”, a twenty-six-year-old married woman with two children, presents a typical example of Krafft-Ebing’s “psychic hermaphrodite”. Suffering from neurasthenia, Frau X. felt episodically attracted to men but mostly to other women. When she acted upon her desires for other women, however, she could not imagine herself doing anything other than ‘sie zu küssen, zu umarmen, mit ihnen zu kosen’.[[312]](#footnote-312) Ultimately, she felt that her desires for women were ‘unnatürlich und krankhaft’.[[313]](#footnote-313) The impulses of the second category of queer woman, who fell under the category ‘Homosexualität/Uranismus’, were said to be relieved by adopting the active role in intercourse, and particularly in digital and oral stimulation. Fräulein X., a twenty-two-year-old urbanite with a bourgeois background, is described as a ‘Beauté’ who is ‘umschwärmt von der Herrenwelt’.[[314]](#footnote-314) In her case study, Fräulein X. claimed to feel ‘immer als Mann dem Weibe gegenüber’ and asserted that when she engaged in oral sex with her partners she only ever assumed the active role.

As well as feminine women who had congenital desires for the same-sex, as outlined above, there also existed a category of “pathological” women in Krafft-Ebing’s research. These women, he contended, constituted many of the cases of female inversion that he had encountered during his study. The distinction Krafft-Ebing made in his study between “Perversität” and “Perversion” had far-reaching consequences for future conceptualisations of the feminine woman with same-sex desires. While a perversity, according to Krafft-Ebing, was a fleeting moment of sexual deviance carried out by a “normal” individual, a perversion instead referred to a congenital impulse to carry out certain acts.[[315]](#footnote-315) In a later publication in the *Jahrbuch für sexuelle Zwischenstufen*, under the rubric ‘Neue Studien auf dem Gebiete der Homosexualität’, Krafft-Ebing outlined more explicitly the reasons same-sex desire occurred so frequently as perversity in women. While some women, Krafft-Ebing contended, were “hyper-sexed” and could not be satisfied by men alone, other women indulged in Sapphic acts *faute de mieux* in prisons, boarding schools, and convents. Wives of impotent men were prone to this kind of perversity, as were prostitutes, who Krafft-Ebing deemed particularly “sensuous”. In most cases, if the desire had not already become pathological through habitual practice, Krafft-Ebing believed that the sex act was ‘wirkungslos’ and could be corrected through the ‘natürlichen Verkehr zwischen Weib und Mann’.[[316]](#footnote-316)

Although Krafft-Ebing’s engagement with queer female desire developed markedly over the twelve editions of *Psychopathia Sexualis*, it remained nonetheless a marginal concern in his work; less visible, less well researched, and ultimately less “knowable” than queer male desires. His theories of perversity and perversion, however, fundamentally structured the studies on female same-sex desire that were to follow his own, particularly those that concerned the desires of feminine women. The temporal and passive nature that characterises the perverse woman in Krafft-Ebing’s study had other significant implications, too. Not only was the line between ‘normal and abnormal […] blurred’ in terms of female desire but there was also a distinct chance that feminine women who engaged in same-sex pleasures could be cured of their perversities.[[317]](#footnote-317)

# Intermediary Forms: Spectrums and Hierarchies of Queer Desire

Albert Moll

Largely indebted to Krafft-Ebing’sresearch, neurologist Albert Moll’s *Die konträre Sexualempfindung* (1891) took the taxonomical imperative of his predecessor’s methodological approaches and focused it exclusively on the subject of same-sex desire.[[318]](#footnote-318) Unlike Krafft-Ebing’s bifurcation of perversities and perversions, Moll’s study, as Oosterhuis notes, suggested that the ‘differentiation between the normal and abnormal appeared to be not so much qualitative and absolute but rather quantitative and gradual’.[[319]](#footnote-319) Moving away from the theory of degeneration, Moll worked instead towards a radical ‘biogenetic concept of bisexuality’, which questioned the self-evidence of the heterosexual impulse.[[320]](#footnote-320) The approaches Moll adopted to his ethnographic research further gave his work a new perspective to the studies that preceded it. Instead of collecting his data from patients in psychiatric wards or criminals in prisons, Moll worked extensively with communities of same-sex desiring subjects in Berlin, enabling him to get much closer to the topic of his study and engage with them on their terms. His close collaboration with such communities in the city is evident in the ambiguities that become visible in his work; Moll did not shy away from the anomalies that did not fit into specific paradigms but included them to broaden understandings of the nuances of human sexual expression.[[321]](#footnote-321)

In his work on queer women, Moll acknowledges that sexologists ‘wissen nur zu wenig über die Sexualität des Weibes’.[[322]](#footnote-322) Although he recognises that his research on male homosexual desire far outweighs the consideration he has given to female same-sex feelings, Moll excuses his shorter study on queer women on account a dearth of secondary sources, the fact that in Germany queer acts between women were not subject to the law, and his presumption that the construction of queer female and queer male desires were comparable. Following his extensive caveat, Moll situates the contemporary queer woman within a truncated timeline of world historical desires that skips frantically between Sappho’s gynaecium in Lesbos to the harems of the orient and further includes references to queer women in the literary works of Diderot, Zola, and Balzac. Narrowing his study to Berlin, Moll continues his description of the German capital in the same vein as his sweeping literary-historical overview in order to propose that queer desires could not only be found among sex workers, but also barmaids, bohemian artists, and bourgeois housewives.

On the dynamics of relationships between queer women, Moll claimed that same-sex couples often correspond to “Mutter” and “Vater” roles. While Moll observed that the active masculine partner is granted the freedom to “stray”, the feminine partner is expected to remain loyal: ‘ebenso wie in normaler Ehe’.[[323]](#footnote-323) In terms of sex acts between women, Moll considered the distinction between active and passive roles to be generally fundamental. According to his field research, Moll argued that many women who adopted the role of the “Mutter” found the idea of assuming an active role in sexual relationships ‘unangenehm und ekelhaft’.[[324]](#footnote-324) Echoing this dyad, women who assumed the “Vater” role claimed it would be impossible for them to find pleasure as the passive “recipient”. In the typical style of Moll’s research, however, he disputes his initial claim of complementarity by suggesting that ‘in manchen Fällen die active und passive Rolle keineswegs scharf getrennt [sind]’.[[325]](#footnote-325) Presenting a third example of a couple who engaged in a mutual exchange of roles, Moll complicates his theory of queer female desire yet further: ‘Hier würde die X von der Y, die activ war, durch Cunnilingus befriedigt; kurz darauf wurden die Rollen vertauscht, und beide lebten nun in dieser Weise weiter, sodass bald die eine, bald die andere activ bezw. passiv war’.[[326]](#footnote-326) Concluding that ‘vieles ist sonst noch dunkel auf diesem Gebiete, und die Angaben sind oft einander widersprechend’, Moll warned his contemporaries against making generalisations about queer female desire.[[327]](#footnote-327)

In terms of the physical presentation of queer women, Moll’s study initially engaged with the image of psychic inversion that had, by this point, become a familiar trope in studies of sexual behaviour. Contending that the ‘Physiognomie und sonstiges Aussehen’ of queer women is most often ‘durchaus normal’ and not to be differentiated from non-queer women, Moll concluded that in terms of a queer woman’s desires, masculinity was a defining factor.[[328]](#footnote-328) Accounting for the societal pressure to conform to gender typical roles, Moll suggested that many queer feminine women were in fact *hiding* their masculinity. Arguably pre-empting Joan Riviere’s article ‘Womanliness as a Masquerade’ (1929), Moll considered the femininity of many queer women to be artifice:

Die Bewegungen der Tribaden erscheinen übrigens nur dann so vollständig männliche, wenn sie sich gehen lassen können. Wenn sie sich beobachtet glauben, oder wenn sie überhaupt nicht unter sich sind, wo jene Gêne wegfällt, sucht sie künstlich das Weibliche mehr nachzuahmen, um sich nicht zu verrathen.[[329]](#footnote-329)

Despite femininity figuring in his work, and the paradigm of inversion being challenged through a presentation of more nuanced and ambiguous images of queer desire, masculinity was ultimately considered the primary sign of congenital inversion in Moll’s study. As a pioneer in hypnosis and suggestion therapy, Moll also explored various ways in which homosexual desires could be treated, which had yet further implications for the discussion of queer feminine desires. Arguing that frequent platonic contact with the opposite sex and abstinence from same-sex pleasures could serve as the basis for the road to “recovery”, Moll suggested that, for queer feminine women who were already married to men, the maternal instinct could temper their sexual desires:

Bei Frauen ist nämlich zu beobachten, dass sie mitunter trotz allen homosexuellen Empfindens Muttergefühle haben. Sie wünschen sich einen Sprössling, und es ist mir auch bekannt, dass in mehreren derartigen Ehen, bei denen sogar eine Scheidung drohte, es schliesslich zu einem erträglichen Zusammensein führte, wenn ein Kind geboren war.[[330]](#footnote-330)

In Moll’s account, the impulse to bear children could help women control their queer desires. Through a sublimation of sexual desire and a transference of their erotic love into the love of a mother for a child, queer women could effectively be “cured”.

Although the queer feminine body did not bear somatic markers of congenital sexual difference, then, it became implicated in Moll’s study in what Butler has termed the ‘problematic of reproduction’.[[331]](#footnote-331) Moll and other sexologists besides him concluded that the erotic drives of the queer feminine woman could be sublimated into the maternal instincts that were intrinsic to her biological nature. Complicating his image, however, Moll acknowledged that the feminine woman’s queer desires could not always be sublimated or “transferred” and mentioned a case in which a married woman was said to have impregnated her girlfriend with her husband’s semen so that she could raise a child with her female partner. For Moll, then, the queer woman remained an ambiguous figure and one for whom there was no definitive theory. Although he considered many cases of queer female desire to be congenital he remained, above all, a scientist who considered the theoretical possibility of finding a cure: ‘Für so leicht möglich halte ich die Heilung nicht, wenn ich sie auch schön aus theoretischen Gründen keineswegs für ausgeschlossen erachte’.[[332]](#footnote-332)

Magnus Hirschfeld

Adopting a similar approach to Moll’s ethnographic “fieldwork” and the appreciation for the complexities and nuances of queer desire, Magnus Hirschfeld conducted thousands of case studies of queer people that he documented in an unparalleled body of work on homosexual experience. Unlike Moll, however, Hirschfeld did not enter the queer community as an “outsider” but was a key figure in the struggle for emancipation and equal rights for queer individuals. Working initially from the premise of Ulrichs’ “third sex”, Hirschfeld is arguably most recognised for his theory of “sexual intermediaries”, which suggested the existence of more than forty-three million types of sexual and gendered variations.[[333]](#footnote-333) Positioning his theory in contention with those that had shown little understanding of the ‘Nuancen der Geschlechtsübergänge’, Hirschfeld contended that the ‘Vollmann’ and ‘Vollweib’ were in reality ‘nur imaginäre Gebilde’.[[334]](#footnote-334) Furthermore, Hirschfeld questioned the sexual dimorphism that structured society, arguing that there was ‘keine absolute Übereinstimmung zwischen Virilität und Aktivität, Passivismus und Feminismus’ suggesting that active and passive roles could be performed by both sexes.[[335]](#footnote-335) Building on Moll’s understanding of a ‘congenital human bisexuality that evolved into monosexuality’, Hirschfeld further suggested that every individual was originally *zwitterhaft* with a desire for both sexes.[[336]](#footnote-336)

Noting the inconsistencies in way that queer women had historically been labelled in *Die Homosexualität des Mannes und des Weibes* (1914), Hirschfeld identified that the terms ‘Amor lesbicus’, ‘Lesbierin’, ‘sapphischen Liebe’, and ‘Tribade’ had all been employed by previous scholars with various implications. While ‘die lesbische Liebe’ had been used as a catch-all phrase in some studies, in others it described women who engaged exclusively in oral sex with other women. The term *Lesbierinnen* had been used in some studies to allude to congenitally queer women while the term “Sapphist” defined those who engaged in same sex actsonly in homosocial environments. Furthermore, the “fricatrice” and the “tribade” had been used to refer to women who committed specific sexual acts, both terms etymologically linked to the verb ‘to rub’.[[337]](#footnote-337) In his study, Hirschfeld generally favoured the term “homosexuelle Frau” under which he defines two ‘ganz Analoge’ groups of queer women:

hier findet sich eine Abteilung von Frauen, die in Tracht, Haarschmuck, Haltung und Bewegung, in der Art zu sprechen, zu trinken und zu rauchen etwas Viriles aufweisen; viele haben auch eine rauhe, tiefe Stimme, derbe männliche Gesichtszüge, schmale Hüften, wie überhaupt einen an das “stärkere Geschlecht” erinnernden Knochenbau. Ihren Namen geben sie unter sich häufig eine virile Form. Daneben aber existiert eine nicht minder große Gruppe homosexueller Frauen, die sich äußerlich von anderen Frauen ihrer gesellschaftlichen Sphäre kaum unterscheiden; sie tragen Toilette und Frisuren nach derselben Mode wie diese, perhorreszieren weder Korsetts noch hohe Absätze, und erscheinen in ihren Gefühls-, Geschmacks- und Gedankenäußerungen so durchaus weiblich, daß sie niemand für homosexuell halten würde. Und doch sind sie es in genau so fixierter Weise, wie ihre virilen Schicksalsgenossinnen.[[338]](#footnote-338)

Although queer desire was also linked to a congenital masculine drive in Hirschfeld’s work, he nonetheless suggested that feminine women could be considered homosexual ‘in genau so fixierter Weise’ as masculine women.[[339]](#footnote-339) Yet, despite Hirschfeld’s contention that there existed a group of women who ‘niemand für homosexuell halten würde’, he ultimately concluded that although the queer feminine woman was ‘wesentlich femininer als die viril homosexuelle Frau’ she could never be as feminine ‘wie ein heterosexuelles Weib ist’.[[340]](#footnote-340) Diverging from Moll’s suggestion that a woman’s motherly instincts could ultimately transcend her homosexual desires, Hirschfeld maintained that queer married women are often ‘überaus unglücklich’, to the point of suicide, when they become pregnant because ‘es mangelt ihnen der mütterliche Instinkt’.[[341]](#footnote-341)

Implying with the above observations that it was possible to distinguish between the heterosexual and feminine homosexual woman based on the latter’s “lesser” form of femininity and her complex relationship with maternalism, Hirschfeld’s argument ultimately served to safeguard the cultural ideal of “true” femininity as a property of the “normal,” heterosexual woman and to anchor homosexual desire to a degree of gender nonconformity. Although Hirschfeld maintained that there existed an infinite number of sexual intermediary forms, he remained nonetheless bound by the dualistic notion of complementary sex-gender roles. Indeed, the more feminine a woman was, Hirschfeld argued, ‘je weniger sie von der Norm abweicht, umsomehr liebt sie Frauen, die männliches an sich haben, kräftige geistesstarke Weiber, Künstlerinnen, Schriftstellerinnen’.[[342]](#footnote-342) Thus, while femininity is positioned as a legitimate queer position for women, it emerges as such only in relation to ‘kräftige geistesstarke Weiber’. Although Hirschfeld’s theory remains within a framework that posits masculinity as the ultimate marker of “authentic” female homosexual desire, his broader framework suggests the existence of a spectrum of sexual and gendered experiences that is perpetually “becoming”. Much like Moll’s work on the contradictions of queer sexuality, the division between these two analogue groups of queer women highlights the tension inherent in Hirschfeld’s work. Yet, as much as Hirschfeld’s theories can be considered problematic for the study of queer female femininity, they were adopted by homosexual rights campaigners across the world who also found hope in the epithet: *per scientiam ad justitiam* (through science to justice).

Johanna Elberskirchen

Arguably one of the most outspoken members of the women’s movement about queer female desire, socialist feminist Johanna Elberskirchen joined Hirschfeld and the WhK in 1914. A radical sex reformer and proponent of free love as a way of liberating women from the domination of men, Elberskirchen’s views on queer female desire departed markedly from those of her contemporaries and she put femininity at the heart of her thesis. Like Moll and Hirschfeld, however, Elberskirchen was convinced by the concept of sexual intermediaries and in her pamphlet, *Die Liebe des dritten Geschlechts* (1904), she rejected the notion of an essential division between women and men:

Überall in der Natur giebt es Übergangsformen und Übergänge – bei den physikalischen und chemischen Körpern, bei den Pflanzen, den Tieren, den Individualitäten […] Und dieser Übergänge sollte zwischen Mann und Weib fehlen? Jede Verbindung, jede Brücke? Mann und Weib sollten jeder für sich alleinstehender, streng abgegrenzter Typus sein! Nein, gewiß nicht. Eine strenge Scheidung zwischen Mann und Weib ist ausgeschlossen.[[343]](#footnote-343)

Elberskirchen also supported the theory of the original bisexuality of men and women as proposed by Moll and Hirschfeld. Denying the existence of specifically gendered characteristics, Elberskirchen further claimed that there existed no “masculine” traits that could not be detected to some degree in women, and no “feminine” characteristics that were entirely absent from men. Like Hirschfeld before her, Elberskirchen proposed: ‘Es giebt keinen absoluten Mann. Es giebt kein absolutes Weib. Es giebt nur bisexuelle Varietäten’.[[344]](#footnote-344)

Taking the fundamental concepts of Hirschfeld’s theory of infinite sexual and gendered *Übergangsformen* and innate bisexuality to their logical conclusion, Elberskirchen stated:

schließlich sind wir doch Alle, genau betrachtet, Homosexuale – der eine mehr, der andere weniger, homosexual neben unserer Conträr- oder Heterosexualität. Also richtiger: Wir sind Alle Bisexuelle, Alle Zweigeschlechtliche und je nach Entwicklung fähig, zweigeschlechtlich zu empfinden und zu lieben.[[345]](#footnote-345)

Unlike her contemporaries, however, Elberskirchen’s notion of *Zweigeschlechtlichkeit* did not establish itself within the wider social construct of gender complementarity. While Moll spoke of “Mütter’ and ‘Väter’, and Hirschfeld implied with his *Zwischenstufen* theory a distinction between queer and “normal” femininities, Elberskirchen argued that a woman’s love for another woman demonstrated the *most* feminine characteristics because it gave no place for the masculine element. In *Was hat der Mann aus Weib, Kind und sich gemacht? Revolution und Erlösung des Weibes* (1904), Elberskirchen responded to the growing concerns that the women’s movement was a hotbed for queer passion. As outlined in the previous chapter, several sexologists and cultural commentators had attempted to establish a link between the women’s movement, the supposedly “masculine” impulse for emancipation, and a woman’s desires for other women. Elberskirchen dismisses this notion in her publication as illogical, however, and points out the inconsistencies that had plagued previous writings about female same-sex desire.

Stressing the role of femininity in love between women, Elberskirchen opens her argument with a definition of homosexuality: ‘Was ist das Wesen der Homosexualität, der Liebe zum eigenen Geschlecht? Natürlich die Ausschließung das konträren Geschlechts, des männlichen bezw. des weiblichen’.[[346]](#footnote-346) By “excluding” the male element from their relationships with one another, queer women, Elberskirchen contends, ultimately reject the masculine: ‘Wie kann nun die Liebe der Frau zur Frau einen Zug zum “Männlichen” haben? Das Männliche wird doch ausgeschlossen. Man könnte doch eher das Gegenteil behaupten und sagen: in der Liebe der Frau zur Frau manifestiere sich ein Zug zum Weiblichen!’.[[347]](#footnote-347) Indeed, Elberskirchen posits the woman-loving-woman as more feminine even than the “normal” opposite-sex desiring woman. Turning her attention to the theories of queer desire between women that take gender complementarity as their basis, Elberskirchen is arguably the first to point out the elephant in the room as she tackles the issue of the feminine woman who desires women:

Wenn also zwei Frauen einander lieben, so ist diese interessante Tatsache noch lange nicht dadurch erklärt, daß man sagt, die eine repräsentiert quasi den Mann, sie empfindet männliche, die andere die Frau repräsentierend, weiblich, also – normal! Empfände die eine weiblich, also normal, dann könnte sie doch nicht eine Frau lieben, also doch nicht abnorm […] Beide treibt der Instinkt zur Frau, zum eigenen Geschlecht. Beide lieben im anderen das eigene Geschlecht – das weibliche. Nicht das männliche. Sonst wäre doch ein homosexuelles Verhältnis überhaupt nicht möglich. Folglich: Es handelt sich hier um einen Zug zum Weiblichen – vom Weiblichen zum Weiblichen.[[348]](#footnote-348)

Radically, Elberskirchen moves away from the notion of gender complementarity in her theory of desire between women and, in doing so, positions femininity at the center of the discussion. The feminine woman in Elberskirchen’s writing is not so overly sensual that she is seduced by the masculine element of a manly woman and neither are her desires degenerate or excessive. Instead, the queer feminine woman is attracted to the womanliness of her partner and not to the masculine nature of the congenital invert, as had been suggested in previous studies of feminine woman’s same-sex desires.

Although distinctly subversive in its content, Elberskirchen’s contribution to the conversation surrounding female same-sex desire and the platform that she provided for the feminine woman within this discussion was not entirely unproblematic. While entirely unapologetic about love between women in her work, Elberskirchen’s theory was above all concerned with a spiritual love as opposed to a base sexual desire. Indeed, sexual passion was seen simply as a consequence of a higher romantic friendship. The queer woman in Elberskirchen’s writing is positioned as ‘der Mensch der Seelen-Liebe, der Mensch der vergeistigten Liebe, einer Liebe die Alles abstreift, die nicht aufwachen läßt, das was Gemeines an körperlicher Liebe haften kann’.[[349]](#footnote-349) Through the lens of science, as Leng suggests, Elberskirchen was able ‘to analytically and politically transcend the limitations of the man-made world, and endowed her analyses and claims with legitimacy’.[[350]](#footnote-350) Nonetheless, Elberskirchen was also caught up in a discourse that had been used systematically throughout the nineteenth century ‘to prove women’s physiological and intellectual inferiority to man, and thus to disqualify feminists’ demands for women’s greater inclusion in public life’.[[351]](#footnote-351) Furthermore, despite pointing out the inconsistencies of previous research on queer women, Elberskirchen’s own research both drew upon and rejected the theories of sexual intermediary forms by employing the “drittes Geschlecht” model in the title and rejecting the theory of inversion as model for queer women. At the time Elberskirchen was writing, other theorists were also becoming increasingly engaged with the topic of queer feminine desire and the meaning of a love and desire for the same sex that did not result from gendered inversion.

# Psychoanalysis: Female Don Juans and Curable Queers

Auguste Forel

As the director of Zürich’s Burghölzli Sanatorium, Auguste Forel gained insights for his influential study *Die sexuelle Frage* (1904), during his time at the psychiatric asylum. As discussed at the beginning of this chapter, Forel was a firm believer in sexual dimorphism; women’s bodies were ultimately controlled by their sensual impulses, while “normal” men could differentiate rationally between love and feelings of pleasure. For Forel, the “normal” woman was characterised by sexual anaesthesia until her desires were awoken during coital activities with her husband. This dualism had certain consequences for Forel’s theories of female homosexual desires, which deviate markedly from those of his contemporaries. Unlike Krafft-Ebing, Moll, and Hirschfeld, Forel did not consider male and female homosexuality to be corresponding concepts and examined them as discrete phenomena. Given the differences in the way that Forel considered the sexual impulse to manifest itself in men and women, he did not presume the self-evidence of female homosexuality based on the research he had completed on male homosexual desires. Although working initially from a framework of inversion, Forel warned against creating a dyad of congenital and acquired sexuality and suggested that in almost all cases of male homosexuality, the desire to commit homosexual acts was the result of a ‘latente oder larvierte erbliche Urningsanlage’ and, like Moll, asserted that the distinctions between hereditary and acquired sexual difference were more gradual than had hitherto been assumed.[[352]](#footnote-352)

Confronted with the definitional slipperiness that had plagued studies of female homosexual desires previously, Forel appeared far less certain about queer female desire than he did of male. Categorising the sexual act between women generally as ‘Amor lesbicus’ or ‘Sapphismus’ and the women who carried out the act of mutual masturbation ‘Tribaden’, Forel returned to the earlier assumption that although sexual inversion is not a rare occurrence in women, it appears ‘in viel geringerem Grade und weniger häufig öffentlich’ than in men.[[353]](#footnote-353) Continuing in the vein of this earlier research, Forel argued that the female invert ‘kleidet sich gerne als Mann, fühlt sich auch als Mann anderen Frauen gegenüber’ and is often ‘sexuell kolossal aufgeregt’.[[354]](#footnote-354) Alcoholism, Forel argues, further fuels the excesses of ‘den reinsten Don Juans’ whose voracious sexual appetites, he hyperbolically claims, led not infrequently to orgies where ‘ein Orgasmus folgt in manchen Fällen dem anderen, Tag und Nacht, fast ohne Unterbruch’, further highlighting that the sexual element was supposedly all-consuming in women when it became “pathological”.[[355]](#footnote-355)

The passion of the sexually uncontrollable female invert is quite a departure from previous research, particularly Elberskirchen’s, although given Forel’s theories about “non-normative” female sexuality, it is not surprising. Although Forel suggested that the “pure” female invert feels like a man, he also contended that there was an ‘ill-defined pathological phenomenon’ that was characteristic of female desire more generally. A peculiarity of what Forel identified within the female sexual impulse, as Leila Rupp describes, was a ‘genetic predisposition for responsiveness to the advances of other women’.[[356]](#footnote-356) While queer desire in men was almost always the result of an abnormal hereditary sexual disposition, Forel suggested that women experienced sexual sensations that could be directed towards almost anything that stimulated their arousal. If a congenital (masculine) female invert attempted to seduce a “normal” woman, Forel contended, it was usually quite easy for her to do so:

wenn nämlich ein urningisches Weib normale Mädchen verführen will, gelingt ihr dies gewöhnlich leicht dadurch, dass sie dieselben zu einer schwärmerischen Liebe aufreizt […] Ganz allmählig, durch geschickt herbeigeführte Steigerung bringt es oft der weibliche Urning dazu, bei seinem Opfer Wollustempfindungen durch Küssen der Brustwarzen und durch Reibung der Klitoris hervorzurufen. Das Wunderbare dabei ist aber, dass die Geliebte sich in der Regel oder wenigstens sehr oft der Abnormität der ganzen Sache nicht recht bewusst wird und sehr leicht schwärmerisch verliebt bleibt.[[357]](#footnote-357)

Unless her desires became pathological through the persistent practice of Sapphic love, the innocent feminine woman who indulged in *Amor lesbicus* was considered by Forel to be a “pseudo-homosexual”. The temporality of these feelings meant that there was a distinct possibility that feminine women could be cured of their non-normative desires. If they could be redirected to a more suitable partner through marriage, Forel believed that feminine women could fulfil their pre-destined roles as (re)productive members of society. In comparison to the fixed and immutable desires of the congenital and masculine female invert, then, the desires of feminine women were a situational and temporal phenomenon; through the practice of a healthy heterosexual partnership, normal instincts were likely to return. That Forel’s work was popular in the Netherlands, where the fear of seduction and contagion was well established, is likely, therefore, to be no coincidence. The growing popularity of psychoanalysis in the Netherlands in this period, and particularly the works of Sigmund Freud, further compounded Forel’s views on the temporality of queer desires of feminine women.

Sigmund Freud

Of the “cures” that became most established in the field of psychotherapy in the twentieth century, perhaps none was more culturally recognised than the so-called “talking cure”. Since Westphal’s first case study of Fräulein N., the ‘voices of perverts’, as Oosterhuis terms then, had been privileged in sexological studies of queer desire. In the late nineteenth century, however, the Austrian neurologist and father of psychoanalysis, Sigmund Freud, developed a model of desire that, as Birgit Lang and Katie Sutton suggest, essentially ‘“queered […] the case study genre that had formed the basis of sexological thinking on inversion up to that point’.[[358]](#footnote-358) Already developing his theories of same-sex desire in *Drei Abhandlungen zur Sexualtheorie* (1905), Freud outlined his primary position that men and women were predisposed to psychic and somatic bisexuality. Within this framework same-sex desire was a natural product of universal bisexuality and an indication of an individual’s “arrested” sexual development. Although Freud’s emphasis on developmental and environmental causes of homosexuality appears to dismiss the idea of congenital inversion, he contended that the diagnosis of innate homosexuality ‘ist nur für die erste, extremste, Klasse der Invertierten behauptet worden’.[[359]](#footnote-359) Within these earlier writings, Freud largely dismissed the theory that psychic and somatic ‘hermaphrodism’ were interrelated phenomena in queer individuals, although he conceded that in the case of female homosexuality ‘bodily and mental traits belonging to the opposite sex are apt to coincide’.[[360]](#footnote-360)

Before Freud’s article *Über die Psychogenese eines Falles von weiblicher Homosexualität* (1920), queer women remained a peripheral concern in his wider study of human sexuality.[[361]](#footnote-361) Yet, by the time he published his article on eighteen-year-old Sidonie Csillag, Freud claimed that he was able to describe with this case the phenomenon of same-sex love between women ‘fast lückenlos und mit voller Sicherheit’.[[362]](#footnote-362) According to the psychoanalyst, Csillag was a young, beautiful, and intelligent girl from a bourgeois family, who had fallen in love with an older high-class sex worker, Baroness Leonie Puttkamer. By the time the patient’s parents had brought Sidonie to Freud, she had become infatuated with Leonie despite an awareness of the latter’s “disreputable” background. Angry that his daughter’s choice of companion had brought shame on the family, Sidonie’s father attempted to dissuade her from seeking contact with the older woman, believing ‘eine rasche Verheiratung […] die natürlichen Instinkte des Mädchens wachrufen [sollte]’.[[363]](#footnote-363) Her father’s attempts ultimately failed, however, and when he caught the couple walking together arm in arm down the street, his daughter threw herself onto a train track in an attempted suicide but returned to full health after recovering from her injuries.[[364]](#footnote-364)

Claiming that he could not identify any ‘auffällige Abweichung vom körperlichen Typus des Weibes’ in his patient, Freud instead turned to the experiences of the patient’s youth to trace the origins of her queer desires.[[365]](#footnote-365) In perhaps the most interesting departure from previous studies, Freud conceived of his patient’s maternal drive as the *origin* of her queer impulses. Locating in her adolescence an incident in which the patient became attached to young boy, Freud discerns that Sidonie had been overwhelmed ‘von einem starken Wunsche selbst Mutter zu sein und ein Kind zu haben’.[[366]](#footnote-366) Accounting for the redirection of his patient’s libido from ‘Mütterlichkeit’ to a fixation on older women, Freud situates the pregnancy of the patient’s mother as the moment her queer feelings were compounded, concluding that Sidonie’s later attachment to Baroness Leonie Puttkamer was ‘ein Ersatz für die Mutter’.[[367]](#footnote-367) The patient’s maternal desire for a child, according to Freud, had developed into desire for a mother, and the desire for a “mother-replacement” had resulted in her sexual desires for older women. Further influenced by his theory of universal bisexuality, Freud noted that the Baroness’ ‘schlanke Erscheinung, […] strenge Schönheit und […] rauhe Wesen’ was redolent of Sidonie’s brother and concluded: ‘Das endlich gewählte Objekt entsprach also nicht nur ihrem Frauen-, sondern auch ihrem Männerideal, es vereinigte die Befriedigung der homosexuellen Wunschrichtung mit jener der heterosexuellen’.[[368]](#footnote-368)

In Freud’s only study dedicated to the queer woman, homosexual desire is tied inextricably to his patient’s maternal instincts, which are later transferred onto a mother-replacement. Indeed, instead of maternal instincts being employed to sublimate queer desire, maternalism was the *origin* of Sidonie’s same-sex longings. As a rule, Freud had little confidence that a queer subject could “give up” the object choice of their desire, or that it was advisable for them to do so, but suggested that with a restricted object choice normal sexual feelings might develop.[[369]](#footnote-369) Although Freud did not contest the “normalcy” of heterosexuality in his research, he did question its inherent naturalness through his theory of innate bisexuality. While Freud’s ideas, and the field of psychoanalysis more generally, had gained traction in the Netherlands, by the late 1930s somatic markers of queer desire had also begun to take their place within the field of Dutch sex research. The study of Benno Stokvis presented the first original engagement with theories of inversion in the Netherlands and marked the beginning of a cultural shift in the conception of queer female desire.

Benno Stokvis

Prior to the publication of *De homosexueelen* in 1939 by lawyer and activist Benno Stokvis, Dutch women-who-desired-women had received little attention in scientific literature in the Netherlands. Stokvis’ study, mentioned briefly in the introduction to this thesis, comprised a collection of autobiographies commissioned by the Dutch homosexual rights movement, the NWHK. Published as part of the series *Menschenleed* (Human Suffering), Stokvis includes nine female narratives among his collection of thirty-nine autobiographies. Unlike the studies I have considered so far in this chapter, there is no analysis from a scientific “expert” in Stokvis’ publication, other than an introduction in which Stokvis advocates for the rights of queer people, the autobiographies stand entirely on their own divided only between “male” and “female” contributions.[[370]](#footnote-370) Originally intended for ‘Doctors, Clergy, Judges, Lawyers [and] Police Officers’ it appears likely, as Maurice van Lieshout has claimed, that *De homosexueelen* achieved much greater success among those who saw themselves reflected in this work than among the doctors and lawyers Stokvis aimed to ‘educate’.[[371]](#footnote-371) Nonetheless, the sexological theories that colour the autobiographies collected in Stokvis’ anothology offer a rare insight into the “image-forming” of the dominant Dutch culture and shed light ‘on the mentality of the outside world’ towards the subject of lesbian desire.[[372]](#footnote-372) Stokvis’ particular attention to the female ‘homo-erotiek’ in his work, a terrain he declares in his introduction to be ‘even harder to access still than the male, and thus even more neglected’, furthermore supplies an insight into the first explicit Dutch articulations of lesbian desire by queer female subjects in the first half of the twentieth century.

Although the title of the publication suggests that those involved in the project self-reflexively defined their desires as ‘homosexual’, the way in which women engaged with their ‘non-normative’ preferences in the collection, highlights that even by the late 1930s, sexual preferences certainly did not always result in sexual identities for Dutch women. Of the nine female autobiographies, three use the term “homosexual” in their narratives and, of these, two autobiographies use the term with reference to a homosexual “collective”. In the first, this queer community appears disparate and ultimately unknown to the author, as she admits: ‘In truth, I have experienced little of true love. But enough to know and fully understand the fierce grief that is suffered among us “homosexuals”’.[[373]](#footnote-373) The second contributor to use this term to reference a group of people, mentions the effects of a lack of understanding for same-sex desire in society in order to defend the queer community against social prejudice: ‘it is no wonder, then, that so many works of darkness can be found among us “homosexuals”!’.[[374]](#footnote-374) In the remaining autobiographies, however, there are instead references to the euphemisms that were visible in François’ earlier letter, discussed in the introduction to this thesis. In autobiography XXVII, for example, the author attempts to describe the difficulty of navigating her feelings of otherness, making recourse to the concept of being “different to the others”: ‘As far back as I can remember, I always see myself as a recalcitrant and shy creature, “different to the others”, sometimes proud of this “otherness” at other times deadly afraid of it’.[[375]](#footnote-375)

While the feeling of otherness appears less often to be articulated by the women in Stokvis’ collection in terms of a homosexual identity, their narratives are nevertheless redolent of the sexological framework of inversion. In each of the nine narratives it is possible to see explicit references to author’s masculine “predisposition” or “nature” and an attempt to trace back the origins of their desires to their youth:

Whenever I try to recall when the first signs of my “otherness” revealed themselves, I must go back to my time as a child at primary school […] I was better friends with the boys; often I was allowed to participate in their wild games because I had “such strong arms” and could fight and wrestle just as well as they could.[[376]](#footnote-376)

Although some women appear to have been influenced by sexological models and demonstrate an awareness of sexological structures by the late 1930s, the continued use of euphemisms such as “anders” and “zoo” in their narratives suggests that many still did not define their desires consciously in the terms of sexual science.

The ways in which the women in the collection attempt to articulate their desires suggests that, even by the late 1930s, queer female desires were still structured along the binary lines of “normative” and “non-normative” behaviour as opposed to a conscious homosexual identity: ‘Normal - abnormal - … how often have those words gone through my head? […] Abnormal, the term that I hated most of all because of the foul taste it left in my mouth: unclean, despicable, dangerous’.[[377]](#footnote-377) Although the autobiographies in the collection had been labelled collectively as “homosexual” by the authority figure Stokvis, women had had little opportunity to develop a sense of community under such a banner, as discussed in the previous chapter. Despite the similarities between the autobiographical accounts, then, it seems unlikely that these resemblances indicate a sense of collective identity. Rather, the collection appears far more to indicate the broader agenda of the NWHK who attempted to find support for their claim that homosexuality was a congenital phenomenon that should not be restricted by Article 248bis.

Funded by the *Nederlandsch Wetenschappelijk Humanitair Komitee,* Stokvis’ *De Homosexueelen* was strongly influenced both the theory of inversion and the political aims of the organisation to present the “congenital” nature of gendered inverts as a way of lobbying for the decriminalisation of homosexual acts. Stokvis’ research was not only financially supported by the NWHK, however, but much of the material he received for his anthology came from members of the organisation. The women featured in Stokvis’ collection, therefore, cannot be classed as representative of a random sample of individuals. Rather, they were women who had connections with homosexual organisations and, probably, an awareness of existing sexological discourses. Although Stokvis’ and the NWHK’s framing of the material was carefully constructed to present a particular “type” of homosexual desire – that is, inverted, congenital, and therefore natural –it is clear that by the late 1930s sexological theories of inversion were clearly influencing some women’s understanding of their desires. While author Anna Blaman’s fictional account used in the collection positions Forel’s research as the stimulus for her protagonist’s realisation of her “anders-zijn”, others claim that literature helped them to come to terms with their desires: ‘When I was about 20 years old, I read The Well of Loneliness. With amazement, I found much of myself in Stephen Gordon. Then I knew ... And with great joy, I would even say: gratitude, I discovered that love between two women is possible’.[[378]](#footnote-378) These links and overlaps between literature and sexological framworks, discussed more comprehensively in the final section of this thesis, provided lay readers with a framework to engage with their “otherness” as well as an awareness that they were not alone.

# Conclusions

The images of the queer feminine women that emerged within sexological and psychoanalytical writing by the interwar era were often confused and conflicting. In a system in which “normal” femininity had been defined by a lack of erotic and sexual feelings, the nineteenth-century queer feminine woman was a marginal, if not inconceivable, figure, fluctuating between the borderlands of “normative” and “non-normative” desires. Emerging as the enigmatic sexual object choice of virile queer women, the feminine woman with queer desires became visible in early sex research only as the presumed “other” within a model of gender complementarity in early sexological studies. In the early studies of Ulrichs and Westphal, congenital queer desire in women was conceived only as the result of a masculine drive. Krafft-Ebing’s panoply of perversions attempted to map more nuanced configurations of sexual preference and his categorisations moved away from strict binary notions of desire. Feminine women in his studies, however, invariably fulfilled the role of the passive partner and his distinctions between “Perversität” and “Perversion” had specific consequences for the study of queer feminine women, whose desires were suddenly implicated in a theory of transitory sexual deviance that could be “cured”.

In an endeavour to build on Krafft-Ebing’s increasingly innovative sexual topographies, sexologists in the late nineteenth century questioned the existence of “true” forms of gendered and sexual expression. The fieldwork of Moll and Hirschfeld, for example, gave greater insights into the plurality of queer existence, privileging the voice of queer citizens in Berlin. For Moll, however, the queer feminine woman remained an ambiguous figure who was hiding her true masculine nature, Yet, she too could be cured through her maternal instincts. For Hirschfeld, there was no doubt that the feminine woman with fixed queer desires existed. Within his infinite spectrum of sexual and gendered configurations, however, a queer feminine woman would never be *as* feminine as a “normal” woman and remained marked, therefore, by a degree of gender deviance. For Elberskirchen, femininity was positioned at the center of queer female desire. Although she discussed same-sex love between women primarily in spiritual terms, the queer feminine woman in her theories was attracted to the womanliness of her partner, breaking down active-passive dyads and rejecting theories of congenital masculine inversion. Furthermore, unlike Hirschfeld, Elberskirchen positions the queer feminine woman as *more* feminine than heterosexual women as the queer woman excluded masculinity from her spiritual and sexual life altogether.

While the performance of femininity no longer precluded women from the discussion of same-sex desire in the early twentieth century, femininity was nonetheless often caught up in a ‘problematic of reproduction’ and the possibility of a “return” to heterosexual desires. Forel’s suggestion that women were at the mercy of their sexual impulses, for example, fed into the notion that queer feminine women were “pseudo-homosexuals” and their desires simply needed to be reoriented. In studies of “normal-desiring” women, queer desire was present as a dangerous possibility, which suggested that the desires of heterosexual feminine women, which had once been considered passive and controllable, was viewed as dangerous and potentially irrepressible. While these theories gave women with access to sexological discourses in Germany names and images with which to engage at the turn of the century, a ‘rejection of the somatic style of medicine’ in the Netherlands meant that sexological theories of female inversion did not find acceptance so quickly in Dutch contexts. In Freud’s studies, which were more popular in the Netherlands, queer female desire was bound inextricably to maternal instincts and it was not until Stokvis’ later 1939 study that somatic signifiers began to displace psychic traits of inversion in the Netherlands. The significance of sexological discourses and marginality of the queer feminine woman within them will now be explored with an analysis of community-based periodicals written and produced by queer women as well as fictional imaginings that engage with sexological tropes and queer feminine desires.

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# Part Two: Community Discourses

# Introduction

Was ist Wahrheit? Für die Menge das, was man ständig liest und hört. […] Die andre, die öffentliche des Augenblicks, auf die es in der Tatsachenwelt der Wirkungen und Erfolge allein ankommt, ist heute ein Produkt der Presse. Was sie will, ist wahr. Ihre Befehlshaber erzeugen, verwandeln, vertauschen Wahrheiten. Drei Wochen Pressearbeit, und alle Welt hat die Wahrheit erkannt.[[379]](#footnote-379)

(Oswald Spengler, *Der Untergang des Abendlandes*, 1922)

In Oswald Spengler’s chronicle of the decline of Western culture, the German philosopher and historian sketches a damning portrait of the early twentieth-century European press. Depicted in his work as a siren that seduces the masses with an ‘Öffentliche des Augenblicks’, the daily press, Spengler argued, had the potential to influence invariably the views and perceptions of the ‘tragic Faustian urbanite’.[[380]](#footnote-380) As a social and political instrument ‘die [...] in alle Häuser dringt [und] die Geister vom frühen Morgen an in ihren Bann zieht’, Spengler saw the unprecedented increase in both *Generalanzeiger* and consumer-oriented newspapers after the First World War as a fundamental threat to the critical faculties of central European citizens, claiming that a diurnal overload of news items would make it impossible for ‘die Menge’ to discern between fact and fiction.[[381]](#footnote-381)

Although Spengler’s assertion makes clear assumptions about the class and educational backgrounds of the readers of daily papers and, in effect, renders them powerless against the “truth systems” promoted by the press, his proposal that print media had the power to create accepted “knowledges” presents an interesting point of departure for examining the role of the queer press in the creation and dissemination of discourses about identity and desire. In keeping with the aims of this thesis, I will focus in the following section on the discursive construction of feminine desires and identities within queer periodicals, against the backdrop of the organisations to which the periodicals were affiliated. Although it is not possible within the remit of this study to determine the extent to which such discourses influenced sexual practices and identity formation of female readers within queer communities, the exploration of how the periodicals purchased by queer women acknowledged and resisted medico-social discourses of identity and desire offers an essential “community” counterpoint to the first two chapters and further demonstrates the diversity of sexual knowledges that existed among different groups of queer women in Berlin and Amsterdam.

In Berlin, there existed at least six magazines for homosexual women by the mid-1920s. Appearing monthly, it cannot be said that queer magazines could have exerted the same level of influence over public opinion as Spengler feared the increasingly popular daily newspapers might. Furthermore, it could be argued that these periodicals were not *meant* for the “masses” but instead to serve the needs of increasingly visible communities. The power that a regular queer press exercised over public (and private) perceptions of sexual identities and desires, however, must not be underestimated and the periodicals discussed in this section aimed to serve a general didactic purpose. Revisting Spengler’s analysis through a Foucauldian lens, it is possible to conceive of queer periodicals as “counter discourses” to medico-legal discussions about same-sex desire, which had the power to create their own “truths” and “knowledges” about queer female experience.[[382]](#footnote-382) Indeed, quite unlike the central news organs and political mouthpieces that Spengler considered to be characterised by a ‘bezeichnender Anonymität’, queer publications were often edited and written by well-known figures on the “scene” and poems and literary supplements were submitted by readers and guest authors, creating organs written by and for the queer community.[[383]](#footnote-383) Unlike daily newspapers, then, queer minority magazines were active sites of (Sapphic) self-fashioning, in which both writer and reader engaged with contemporary discourses to create community-based “truths” about their experiences. Focusing on two of the largest emancipation movements for homosexual citizens in Germany, the *Bund für* *Menschenrecht* (BfM) and the *Deutscher Freundschaftsverband* (DFV), the following section will explore the ways in which Magnus Hirschfeld’s work on “intermediate sexual states,” discussed in the previous chapter, formed the fundamental ideological difference that divided two queer movements.

Although the periodicals at the centre of this analysis appear, at times, to have remained quite firmly within the confines of the socio-medical discourses I have already discussed, at others, queer publications present a radical departure from dyadic sex-gender configurations and offer a more nuanced image of queer desires. In the melting pot of sexological, social, and political articles published in queer magazines, I will seek out the subcultural counterpoint to the socio-cultural opinions and sexological theories that I have already examined. By looking at the interplay between scientific, social, and literary discourses in these magazines, I can further contrast the veritable explosion of publications that emerged for queer women in Berlin with the dearth of such media in Amsterdam, asking what the absence of queer newspapers for queer women might suggest more broadly about queer female identities in Dutch contexts. Although I acknowledge the potential pitfalls of this approach, I maintain that a transnational evaluation of queer community-based print media can enhance our understanding of the ways in which women’s historical desires and identities have been socially and culturally shaped within queer communities across geographical borders.

On account of the absence of periodicals for queer women in Amsterdam between 1918 and 1940, I have chosen instead to focus instead on two magazines that were written and produced by men in this period: *Wij* (We) and *Levensrecht* (The Right to Live). Unlike the regular publication of queer periodicals in Berlin, the editors of *Wij* published only one issue in 1932 before the magazine was outlawed by the Dutch vice squad and the organisation responsible for its dissemination was disbanded. Comparatively, *Levensrecht* survived in print for a little longer; the editors circulated three issues before the Nazi invasion in 1940 and a further three issues were made available between 1946 and 1947 before the magazine finally ceased printing. Conscious of the limitations of drawing conclusions based on such a narrow sample of material, I will stress in the second chapter of this section that the content of these Dutch magazines can nonetheless highlight several significant points about the overtly masculine structures of homosexual organisations in the Netherlands. Comparing the approaches of these magazines to queer desire with the established sexological, literary, and social discourses of their time, it becomes possible to examine further the reasons behind the invisibility of female desire within queer communities. In addition, this analysis will begin to explore the historical moment in which queer identities came to be considered a more central part of women’s social identities in Dutch society and of what such sexual identities constituted.

Berlin

The claim of Oswald Spengler that the interwar press functioned as ‘eine Armee mit sorgfältig organisierten Waffengattungen, mit Journalisten als Offizieren, Lesern als Soldaten’, appears somewhat dramatic considering the carefully executed manipulation of print press and its critical role in Hitler’s consolidation of power after 1933.[[384]](#footnote-384) The philosopher’s portrait of the political and intellectual onslaught of an emergent mass media in the Weimar Era, however, is not entirely unfounded. As Bernhard Fulda describes in his study of Weimar media, the roaring twenties in Germany were ‘undoubtedly the decade of the press’.[[385]](#footnote-385) Indeed, by the time Spengler had published the second volume of *Der Untergang des Abendlandes* in 1922, Berlin was established as ‘the most important newspaper city of the world’.[[386]](#footnote-386) Over two thousand periodicals appeared in Berlin’s news kiosks and bookstores each month and the number of periodicals purchased in the capital annually constituted around thirty per cent of the total number of periodicals sold across the country.[[387]](#footnote-387)

In the nineteenth century, German newspapers could be predominantly characterised as ‘small, distinctively elitist, political enterprises with a limited public’.[[388]](#footnote-388) Rapid industrialisation and developments in printing at the end of the century, however, resulted in a surge in consumer-oriented and tabloid press. The emergence of the commercial *Generalanzeiger* in the 1880s, as well as the popular *Boulevardzeitungen* and *Strassenverkaufszeitungen* at the *fin de siècle*, meant that daily newspapers entered the public sphere at a rate never experienced before. With many newspapers having relied previously on monthly subscriptions, newer “tabloid” papers were sold in single copies at kiosks and by street vendors in various spots around the city. As a method of circulation initially employed by the leading publishing house *Ullstein*, at least forty companies had a stake in this new on-street approach to news distribution by the 1920s.[[389]](#footnote-389) The change in the circulation of newspapers from subscription to on-street sales gave many publications a chance at developing a larger audience. Indeed, as Gideon Reuveni notes of the change in Berlin’s press landscape in the 1920s: ‘unlike subscription-based distribution, which was generally intended for a defined public of readers, every day street sellers approached an undefined public with the goal of selling as many copies of newspapers as possible’.[[390]](#footnote-390) Yet it was not only increasingly sensational headlines that helped publications attract more readers but also a better understanding of the needs of certain audiences. To reach specific target groups, many publishers developed localised and more community-focused publications. These so-called *Bezirksblätter* were particularly popular in Berlin, with some of the largest districts in the city selling up to 27,000 copies of district papers each day.[[391]](#footnote-391)

As new target markets were being discovered, women’s hitherto marginal position as a purchaser of newspapers also shifted. During the early nineteenth century women’s periodicals had intermittently been banned for breaching laws on women’s political organisation and participation. In the 1850s a press law was introduced prohibiting female editors in Saxony and Prussia, which meant that in some regions it had been almost impossible for women to establish long-lasting publications before the 1890s.[[392]](#footnote-392) Following the sharp social and economic changes for women after the First World War, established broadsheets started to target the female reader as a specific class of consumer who was considered to play a more central role in the media market by the mid-1920s. Not only did women have a new economic power but an increased cultural emphasis on “leisure time” during the interwar era meant that editors believed women would have more time to dedicate to reading. By the end of the 1930s, as Adrian Bingham notes, changes in women’s social and economic positions meant that ‘the female audience had moved from the margins to the centre of editorial calculations’ and in Germany, as well as Britain and France, popular newspapers ‘could no longer afford to ignore or alienate female readers’.[[393]](#footnote-393) Rapid industrialisation had seen a steady increase in daily and monthly newspapers available to purchase at kiosks and from vendors across the country. Furthermore, shifting gender paradigms meant that women’s interests were being taken more seriously by newspaper publishers in Germany by the early twentieth century. Quick to pick up on consumer trends, most major daily newspapers started to include supplements and serial stories for women. Soon enough, however, fashion journals and illustrated magazines specifically for the female reader began to appear in the city. Periodicals such as *Elegante Welt* (1912-1943) and *Die Dame* (1912-1943) targeted female readers within the affluent beau monde, with money to spend and ample leisure time to spend it. Journals such as *Die Frau* (1893-1944) and *Die Frau ohne Mann* (1921-1925) offered discussions on important socio-political topics which were aimed at working-class and white-collar woman.

Alongside the unprecedented increase in periodicals aimed at women and the popularity of community-based magazines after the First World War, Berlin’s ever-expanding queer nightlife, as discussed in Chapter One, and the relaxing of censorship laws after the foundation of the Weimar Republic, provided publishers with more freedom to meet the needs of a queer readership. Although many of these early magazines were intended predominantly for male readers, several periodicals emerged in Berlin between 1924-1933 that were aimed specifically at queer women. Acknowledged by Florence Tamagne as the ‘definitive reference point for lesbians of the 1920s’,these periodicalswere the first regular publications to address exclusively the concerns and interests of queer women and were available from newspaper kiosks throughout Berlin and across Germany and Europe via subscription.[[394]](#footnote-394) With established readerships, these periodicals crucially enabled grassroots discourses to reach a wider audience and further provided a platform for positive models of same-sex desire. Despite Ruth Margarete Roellig’s dismissive claim in her city guidebook that in comparison to those for men the periodicals for queer women were ‘[nicht] ernst zu nehmen’, these weekly and monthly periodicals supported their readers in the self-reflective understanding of themselves as ‘homosexuelle Frauen’ and served an important *Bildungs*-function for “Uneingeweihte” on matters of queer female desire.[[395]](#footnote-395)

As well as providing women with a space to articulate their desires, these magazines helped facilitate networks in more rural areas across the country. Borrowing from Benedict Anderson’s analysis of nationalism in her study on the masculine woman in Weimar Germany, Katie Sutton describes how the (inter)national distribution of Berlin’s queer publications helped to develop a larger network of women and created ‘imagined communities’ across the country that fulfilled ‘an important function in breaking down a sense of rural isolation’.[[396]](#footnote-396) Despite the knowledge of an “imagined community” for women in rural areas, often this did little to eliminate the provincial fear that one might be discovered to be “anders als die Andern”. Berlin, however, helped to provide women with an increased sense of anonymity and a physical support network if it was desired. Indeed, as Hirschfeld somewhat hyperbolically suggests of the German metropolis in comparison to the provinces:

Das ist ja gerade das Anziehende und Merkwürdige einer Millionenstadt, daß das Individuum nicht der Kontrolle der Nachbarschaften unterliegt, wie in den kleinen Orten, in denen sich im engen Kreise die Sinne und der Sinn verengern. Während dort leicht verfolgt werden kann und eifrig verfolgt wird, wann, wo und mit wem der Nächste gegessen und getrunken hat, spazieren und zu Bett gegangen ist, wissen in Berlin die Leute oft im Vorderhause nicht, wer im Hinterhause wohnt, geschweige denn, was die Insassen treiben.[[397]](#footnote-397)

Purchased at kiosks from across Berlin, queer female urbanites could quite easily obtain magazines that served their interests with a relative sense of security. Unlike rural readers, it was not necessary for city-dwellers to have the periodical delivered directly to their place of residence where it might be discovered by a relative or neighbour. Instead, Berliners could travel to districts in which they were unknown to purchase their favourite magazines. The sense of anonymity afforded to women by the labyrinthine *Millionenstadt*, however, as one contemporary testimony suggests, did not entirely relieve the fear surrounding the purchase of such publications:

Ich habe [*Die Freundin*] zum erstenmal gekauft, wo ich sie gelesen habe. Dann habe ich sie mir dort gekauft, wo ich unbekannt war. Na, am Kiosk, wo mich keiner kannte. […] dann kamst du dir vor, als hättest du eine Bombe in der Tasche. Und dann habe ich sie sonstwo gelesen. Auf dem Klo! Wo dich keiner gestört hat [...] Und in die Bluse gesteckt, damit sie keiner sah.[[398]](#footnote-398)

Apprehensions about purchasing queer publications do not seem to have prevented the medium from becoming the central mode of communication between *Gleichgesinnten*. Through the promotion of weekly activities, evening events, and day trips, no other publication or media outlet in the city could keep queer women up-to-date with the latest subcultural developments quite like their own ‘kleine Zeitung’.[[399]](#footnote-399)

Berlin’s queer magazines were a visible part of the city’s media landscape until Hitler’s seizure of power in 1933. Despite their popularity, however, these periodicals did not altogether escape the purview of the law. The Lex Heinze obscenity law, which had been passed in 1900 following a high-profile murder case involving Gottfried Heinze, censored the display of “immoral” publications and artwork and stimulated a broader discussion about sexual morality, the protection of minors, and the distribution and publication of what were termed ‘unzüchtiger Schriften’.[[400]](#footnote-400) Furthermore, as discussed in Chapter One, the introduction of the law against *Schund- und Schmutzschriften* in 1926 was used specifically as a means to limit the dissemination of knowledges about queer female desires and meant that periodicals for women-who-desired-women were under constant threat of censorship. Despite these difficulties, which would no doubt have influenced certain editorial decisions and possibilities, queer media flourished in the German capital in the Weimar era.

Amsterdam

Across the Dutch border no such publications existed for queer women in Amsterdam, or indeed any other major city in the Netherlands, until well after the Second World War. Before the emergence of the magazines *Amarant* and *Diva* in the 1970s (the latter renamed *Zij aan Zij* during the mid-1990s), only two periodicals in Amsterdam dared to engage with the interests of queer citizens before 1940: *Wij* (1932) and *Levensrecht* (1940; 1946-1947). Both publications were aimed at men, however, and contain only traces of the experiences of Dutch women who desired women. Following an intervention by the vice squad and, in the case of *Levensrecht*, the German invasion of 1940, both magazines were forced to cease printing and the organisations to which the magazines were affiliated were disbanded.[[401]](#footnote-401)

The difficulties faced by queer Dutch individuals in establishing periodicals reflects, to some degree, the danger that Oswald Spengler believed to be bound up in the press’ “power” to influence the masses. The introduction of the austere Morality Bill in the Netherlands in 1911, alongside the growing presence of vice squads in many major Dutch cities, was inextricably tied to the understandings of queer desire in the Netherlands as outlined in the first section of this thesis. Framed by what Tijsseling has termed the *Draculathese*,queer desire was associated with pederasty and contagion and, following the theories of Forel and Freud, there was a fear for the safety of Dutch youth who had yet to form their sexual preferences.[[402]](#footnote-402) While Berlin enacted its surveillance of the Sapphic through the law against *Schund- und Schmutzschriften*, the Dutch *zedenpolitie* (vice squad) ensured that any organisation or publication that was perceived to be immoral was banned with immediate effect.

Despite a relatively relaxed attitude towards censorship in the Netherlands, any publication that strove to strengthen the ‘unity and […] bonds of friendship’ between queer men, would no doubt have been considered too dangerous to remain in the public domain, where it might influence young minds or encourage older “predatory” individuals to corrupt innocent youths.[[403]](#footnote-403) Of course, censorship and the presence of the vice squad are not the only reasons a queer media did not develop in Amsterdam as it did in Berlin. Logistical concerns with the production and distribution of magazines and newspapers played a crucial role in the failure to establish queer periodicals in the Netherlands.

During the early nineteenth century, newspapers in the Netherlands, much like those in Germany, were conservative in their content and available only to the privileged classes of Dutch society. The introduction of an expensive *dagbladzegel* (newspaper stamp) under the French occupation in 1812 put a tax on the printing of newspapers, which effectively ensured that they remained the preserve of a rich, male elite. The tax was added either to the price of a reader’s monthly subscription or to the price of the individual newspaper itself. Once the tax had been paid by the reader/subscriber, the newspaper would be given a stamp to demonstrate proof of proper purchase. The “taxes on knowledge” placed on the newspapers were by no means a meagre sum. Often the tax amounted to at least half the annual turnover of the publication and it was not only monthly newspapers that bore the brunt of the tax but also pamphlets, placards, and advertising posters.[[404]](#footnote-404)

With a tax on advertising posters as well as placing adverts in newspapers, the *dagbladzegel* essentially obstructed the growth of smaller journals in the Netherlands as they were unable to survive without support from advertisers. After a prolonged campaign from 1850, however, the *dagbladzegel* was overturned in 1869 and the prices of newspapers fell, finally making them more accessible to a broader reading public.[[405]](#footnote-405) With reduced costs, newspapers could publish more frequently and the press landscape soon began to diversify: ‘progressives, Christians, neutrals, socialists, it did not matter: for every citizen of every conviction around 1900 there was a newspaper’.[[406]](#footnote-406) With the system of district living established in the city by the interwar era, as well as an increased numbers of citizens, Amsterdam was soon considered the ‘newspaper capital’ for the Dutch-speaking world.[[407]](#footnote-407)

While the development of a modern “mass media” in Berlin was characterised by the distinctive appearance of newspaper kiosks and street vendors across the city, on-street newspaper sales were a rarity in Amsterdam. Rather, as Jan van de Plasse notes in his study on the development of the Dutch press: ‘almost nowhere in the world did so many newspaper readers get the daily news delivered to their homes as in the Netherlands’.[[408]](#footnote-408) With less than ten per cent of newspaper sales across the country being derived from on-street sales, ‘for which one had to leave the house’, Dutch dailies made their profits through weekly or monthly subscriptions.[[409]](#footnote-409) Indeed, as Maarten Schneider outlines in his work on the Dutch press, a curious culture of newspaper ‘rental’ existed in the Netherlands until long into the twentieth century.[[410]](#footnote-410) In his study, Schneider describes the leagues of newspaper couriers (*courantenverhuurders*) that could be seen delivering daily newspapers to primary subscribers each morning, who would pay the highest rate for their immediate access to daily news. Once the primary reader had finished with their morning paper, it would be re-collected by the courierand delivered to the next client who would pay slightly less than the first. According to Schneider, this process would be repeated throughout the day, occasionally even four or five times, at which point the final “lessee” would often have to wait until the following day for their news, when the rental process had already begun afresh.[[411]](#footnote-411) This system of “direct subscriptions” (*rechtstreekse abonnementen*) was shaped and reinforced largely by the political and social pillarisation of Dutch society, as discussed in the Chapter One. As each pillar had its own central news organs, establishing a group of readers brought communities closer together and, quite simply, made economic sense. Despite, or perhaps because of, the culture of subscription the growth of smaller “niche” newspapers after the abolition of the newspaper tax also flourished. By the mid-1930s, as Plasse suggests, ‘every association, club or group in the pillarised Netherlands appeared to have had its own newspaper’.[[412]](#footnote-412)

As in Germany with the emergence of smaller “minority” journals, women’s illustrated magazines and periodicals also begun to gain popularity. By the late 1930s, each pillar boasted a range of magazines that specifically targeted female readers. Although Amsterdam did not experience the same surge of women entering the workplace as Berlin, which meant that female readers had arguably less money to spend, women were nonetheless taken seriously as potential readers. The periodical *Wij Jonge Vrouwen* (1935-1942), for example, emerged as the most popular publication for young Protestant women during the interwar era, while *Beatrijs* (1939 –1942; 1946 – 1967) was the weekly journal for women who belonged to the Roman Catholic Church. For female readers from “better circles”, *De Amsterdamsche Dameskroniek* (1915-1942), edited by the author Carry van Bruggen (1881-1932) in its early years, was the most fashionable choice, while *De Arbeidster* (1918-1923) was the preferred publication for socialist women.[[413]](#footnote-413) The significance of these daily and weekly newspapers as a tool for building and maintaining communities in a pillarised Dutch society cannot be overemphasised. As Schneider suggests in his study, in the early twentieth century home, ‘the stove, the coffee, and the newspaper’ were the cornerstones of Dutch daily life.[[414]](#footnote-414)

Although the absence of queer media in Amsterdam could be traced back to a Spenglerian fear that the press had the power to legitimate unsavoury “knowledges” and influence young minds, as discussed earlier, the Dutch system of “direct subscription” could also be considered as an obstruction to the development of queer newspapers. Within a culture of newspaper rental, there was little need for newspaper kiosks, which would have afforded women a sense of anonymity and arguably attracted new readers to help magazines bear printing costs. At this time, it would have been exceptional for women to have access to their own monthly subscription without the means to purchase it for themselves. Although there existed many more magazines for female readers after 1930, for women with little economic independence, the reading of newspapers primarily remained the preserve of the male, best expressed perhaps by Johan Ritter’s description of media and family life in 1930: ‘the daily newspaper is primarily for the father of the family, who puts on his glasses and acts as a master of ceremonies at the solemn event’.[[415]](#footnote-415)

As well as the newspaper being considered the “preserve of the male”, and the difficulties faced by smaller periodicals in finding an audience, the fact that female homosexual desire in the Netherlands was not articulated as fundamental aspect of a woman’s social identity meant that a periodical that catered to this subsection of society would no doubt have encountered difficulties reaching its intended target audience. Even if women had engaged in romantic and sexual relationships with other women, many did not define self-reflectively as “homosexual” and even those that were open about their desires were often hesitant to partake in the contemporary queer scene. As a reader letter from a Dutch transvestite in a 1931 issue of the German magazine *Die Freundin* suggests, however, for those individuals in the Netherlands who *did* have an appetite for queer media – and an understanding of German – Berlin could provide the community, both real and “imagined”, that was lacking in Amsterdam.[[416]](#footnote-416)

In the two chapters that will follow in this section, I will outline the structure and format of the periodicals *Die Freundin* and *Frauenliebe*, *Wij* and *Levensrecht* and contextualise the magazines within the wider framework of homosexual organisations and communities that existed in Berlin and Amsterdam. In the discussion of the organisations responsible for the publications of the magazines, I will demonstrate how the wider aims of these movements shaped the discussion of gender and sexuality within their publications. Departing in many ways from dominant social narratives about same-sex desire, the queer agendas that are put forward in these publications can offer a unique insight into the position of feminine women within queer communities. Assessing the diverging ideological framings of the Berlin periodicals *Die Freundin* and *Frauenliebe*, I will build on previous scholarship of these magazines by focusing specifically on the construction of queer femininities within them and how this narrative was influenced by the ideological positions of the organisations to which they were affiliated. Focusing on two of the largest emancipation movements for homosexual citizens in Germany, the *Bund für Menschenrecht* (League for Human Rights, BfM) and the *Deutscher Freundschaftsverband* (German Friendship Association, DFV), the chapter will explore the ways in which Magnus Hirschfeld’s work on “intermediate sexual states,” as discussed in the previous chapter, formed the fundamental ideological difference that divided the two movements. Using the triptych of social, scientific, and literary discourses that has formed the broader framework of this thesis as the basis of my investigation, I will examine the different approaches adopted by the magazines in their discussions of the queer feminine woman. Finally, as both *Die Freundin* and *Frauenliebe* also included *Sonderteilen* for the (primarily male-to-female) transvestite community, I will also include an examination of the relationship of the marker “femininity” to sartorial and somatic signs, a particularly pertinent discussion point given the recent debates around transgender people, their femininities, and their place within lesbian and feminist communities. In the final chapter of this section, I will focus on what the absence of queer female desire in the periodicals *Wij* and *Levensrecht* might be able to tell us about hierarchies of desire in the Netherlands and the place of queer women within them.

# Chapter Three:

# Weimar Periodicals: Fashioning Femininities in *Die Freundin* (1924-1933) and *Frauenliebe* (1926-1932)

During the Weimar era, at least seven magazines were available for queer women in Berlin: *Die Freundin: Das ideale Freundschaftsblatt; Ledige Frauen; Frauenliebe: Freundschaft, Liebe und sexuelle Aufklärung*; *Frauen, Liebe und Leben; Liebende Frauen; Garçonne; BIF - Blätter Idealer Frauenfreundschaften*. As the remit of this study does not allow for an extensive examination of each of these publications, I will be focusing on the periodicals that were the most established and widely distributed: *Die Freundin* and *Frauenliebe*.[[417]](#footnote-417) Although the primary focus will be on these two magazines, *Ledige Frauen* replaced the original periodical *Die Freundin* when the magazine was put on the list for *Schund- und Schmutzschriften* in 1927 and, as such, it will also appear in the analysis. Similarly, when *Frauenliebe* intermittently ran into difficulties with the *Schund- und Schmutzgesetz*, the magazines *Frauen, Liebe und Leben, Liebende Frauen*,and *Garçonne* all served at different times as replacements for the original title and will, therefore, also be examined.[[418]](#footnote-418) To avoid confusion during the analysis, I will refer to these periodicals by their original titles unless the change of name is significant to the discussion. The periodical *BIF – Blätter Idealer Frauenfreundschaft* is the only magazine of the seven publications mentioned above that was not directly affiliated with a wider homosexual organisation.[[419]](#footnote-419) Available between 1924-1927, *BIF* was produced and edited by contemporary queer icon Selma “Selli” Engler (1899-1982), who stopped publishing the periodical due to financial difficulties and poor health.[[420]](#footnote-420) As a maverick magazine, *BIF* enjoyed a limited readership in comparison to either *Die Freundin* or *Frauenliebe* and, on a more practical level, Engler’s *BIF* has not been as comprehensively catalogued as the other queer publications and is not as readily available in archives. BIF will not be discussed in the following analysis since the special circumstances of its production, publication, and dissemination mean that it is not comparable to the other periodicals and warrants a separate discussion.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| ***Die Freundin***  **(1924-1933)** | ***Frauenliebe***  **(1926-1932)** | ***Blätter Idealer Frauenfreundschaften* (1924-1927)** |
| *Ledige Frauen* (1928-1929) | *Frauen, Liebe und Leben* (1928) |  |
|  | *Liebende Frauen* (?) |  |
|  | *Garçonne* (1930-1932) |  |

FIG 1. Genealogy of Weimar Periodicals

# Die Freundin: ‘Das ideale Freundschaftsblatt’

Launched on 8August 1924 under the auspices of the *Bund für Menschenrecht* (BfM), *Die Freundin* was the first magazine available for queer women in Germany. Initially produced as a supplement in the publication *Blätter für Menschenrecht*, after its first three issues *Die Freundin* was established as a monthly publication within its own right and was published first by the Orplid Verlag and later by the Carl Bergmann Verlag. Ultimately, the magazine became the responsibility of the Radszuweit Verlag, which was owned by the chairperson of the BfM, Friedrich Radszuweit (1876-1932). Although *Die Freundin* was originally intended as a monthly magazine, it was soon printed in twice monthly editions and varied between eight and sixteen pages in length and cost between twenty and thirty Pfennig. The magazine also included several images, which were mostly nudes. In April 1925, there was an attempt to sell a more copiously illustrated edition ofthe periodical for fifty Pfennig. After the magazine disappeared from print in 1926 – appearing only sporadically as part of the magazine *Das Freundschaftsblatt* – and returned in 1927 it was sold at its original sale price of twenty Pfennig.[[421]](#footnote-421) Further interruptions to *Die Freundin*’s circulation took place in 1928 when the magazine was placed on the blacklist for *Schund- und Schmutzschriften* for a year and 1929 when it was blacklisted again for several months.[[422]](#footnote-422)

The layout and structure of *Die Freundin* remained reasonably consistent in its early years with each issue comprising generally of a discussion article, a selection of reader letters, news items, short and serial stories, poems, a page of classified advertisements, and information on upcoming events. Between the years 1926 and 1933, over five hundred poems, three hundred short stories, more than thirty serial stories, as well as over two hundred social commentaries, were printed in its pages. After Martin Butzko assumed the position of lead editor for the magazine in 1929, however, the focus of the publication shifted; editorials on sexological and social developments written by men began to take precedence and there was an increased focus on “transvestite” issues.[[423]](#footnote-423) In November 1929, Martin Radszuweit, Friedrich Radszuweit’s adopted son and lover, became lead editor of the publication. Between 1930 and 1932, forty-two of the seventy-four editorials published in the magazine were written by the Friedrich Radszuweit himself. Although Radszuweit’s editorials focused chiefly on the campaign against Paragraph 175 they also tackled broader political developments taking place in Berlin and Germany, as well as detailing recent socio-political advances made by the BfM. After June 1930, the sections “Briefe, die man der Freundin schreibt”, “Was die Freundin plaudert”, and “Unsere Leserinnen haben das Wort” were also scrapped from the regular layout of the magazine and appeared only sporadically until 1933. These features, as Heike Schader describes, had facilitated a conversation between readers on several divisive topics within the queer community and the changes implemented by the new male editorial team meant that an important point of contact and exchange between readers, contributors, and editors was lost.[[424]](#footnote-424) Sustained reader debates prior to the editorial changes be tracked over several issues and concerned controversial subjects such as the *Bubikopf* hairstyle, the importance of monogamy, and bisexuality. Although reader letters did appear in the publication periodically after 1929, they were no longer a regular feature of the magazine.

Although the political aims of the magazine became increasingly prominent after Martin Radszuweit assumed his position as chief editor and more articles by men were published, *Die Freundin*’s function as a tool for education and emancipation for queer women was a clear aim of the publication from its first issue.[[425]](#footnote-425) In an article outlining the intentions of the editorial board, chief editor Aenne Weber wrote emphatically of *Die Freundin*’s decisive role in the campaign ‘für die Gleichberechtigung der Frauen im gesellschaftlichen Leben’.[[426]](#footnote-426) Although the magazine presented itself as a political organ, it was not until 1926 that a broader educative function was incorporated into its key aims.[[427]](#footnote-427) As this coincided with the introduction of the *Schund- und Schmutzgesetz*, which will be discussed in more detail shortly, it is likely that this was a tactical decision made by the editors to avoid clashes with Berlin’s *Landesjugendamt* by suggesting that the magazine had a didactic purpose.

# Frauenliebe: ‘Freundschaft, Liebe und sexuelle Aufklärung’

Two years after the first issue of *Die Freundin* had appeared, a rival publication for queer women was established by the *Deutscher Freundschaftsverband* (DFV), an organisation that ran in direct competition with Friedrich Radszuweit’s BfM. Also printed initially by the Carl Bergmann Verlag, *Frauenliebe* was the mouthpiece for women involved with DFV activities between 1926-1930 and was also sold at twenty Pfennig per issue. While there are no exact dates on the cover of *Frauenliebe*, which makes establishing a timeline for the periodical more difficult than for *Die Freundin*, it appeared as a weekly magazine with pauses in circulation due to blacklisting in 1930, after which it continued under various names: *Frauen, Liebe, und Leben* (1928), *Liebende Frauen* (no exact dates), and finally, *Garçonne* (1930-1932).[[428]](#footnote-428) Like its competitor, *Frauenliebe* ran between eight and twelve pages in length and was copiously illustrated with nude images and adverts.

With groups for female members of the DFV and readers of *Frauenliebe* located in Berlin, Leipzig, Chemnitz, Dresden, and Vienna, it would seem that the periodicalwas most popular in the east of Germany. Letters to the editors from across the country, however, attest to the publication’s widespread popularity and show that, like *Die Freundin*, readers subscribed to the magazine in rural as well as urban areas and both from within and outside of Germany. As far as it is possible to tell from the scant information provided about the editors in the magazine, the editor-in-chief of the first three issues was Margot Roma, who was then followed by “Karen”. The chief editorial team of the magazine appears to have consisted of female members throughout its existence and, as Stefan Micheler observes, there was no evidence of an editorial takeover and the content the magazine provided remained unchanged.[[429]](#footnote-429) Although many of the articles were written by female contributors, contributors to *Frauenliebe* made use of pseudonyms such as “XYZ”, “Faust”, and even “Ano Nymus”, which means it is impossible to claim with certainty that all the contributors identified as female. Furthermore, Carl Bergmann and male members of the DFV umbrella group also contributed articles to *Frauenliebe*, although they did so much less frequently than male authors contributed to *Die Freundin*.

Unlike its rival, *Frauenliebe* has rarely been conceived of as a “political” periodical in recent studies of queer publications. Although explicitly political editorials and articles do not appear as frequently or as explicitly in *Frauenliebe* as they did in *Die Freundin*, the political potential of the periodical has been largely overlooked. Heike Schader, who has compiled the most comprehensive analysis of queer magazines in the Weimar era to date, contends that ‘eine historische Auseinandersetzung mit den politischen Tendenzen’ of *Die Freundin* and *Frauenliebe* would be interesting but ultimately does not extend her study *Virile, Vamps und wilde Veilchen* (2004) to include this analysis.[[430]](#footnote-430) Florence Tamagne’s *History of Homosexuality* further concludes that contemporary readers of queer magazines would have turned to *Die Freundin* instead of *Frauenliebe* for ‘a serious analysis of the lesbian situation in Germany’.[[431]](#footnote-431) Similarly, Petra Schlierkamp notes in her article on *Garçonne*, the successor of *Frauenliebe*, that the magazine was primarily considered a ‘Unterhaltungsblatt’, in which discussions of lesbian identity and political developments ‘traten […] in den Hintergrund’.[[432]](#footnote-432)

As I will argue throughout this chapter, the political potential of *Frauenliebe* appears to have been dismissed primarily because the magazine dedicates more space to “feminine” interests such as social commentaries, literary contributions, reader debates, poems, and personal advertisements. Dismissing *Frauenliebe* as a mere *Unterhaltungsblatt*, however, denies the publication the political significance it had to many women and devalues certain genres of writing simply on account of their being considered “feminine”. Furthermore, as I will discuss later in this chapter, such a conclusion does not account for the magazine’s “separatist” ideology, which shaped many of its discussions about sexuality and gender. Indeed, contributors to *Frauenliebe* explicitly recognised the importance of the periodical as a political organ for social emancipation, even describing the publication as the ‘Kampforgan der Freundinnen’.[[433]](#footnote-433) Furthermore, like *Die Freundin*, the magazine presented itself not only as a political organ but also an educative medium through which writers could enlighten non-queer individuals about a “new” sex. As a regular contributor to the magazine, “Ikarus”, claimed in1930:

Niemand darf auch nur einen Augenblick vergessen, dass diese Zeitschrift das Organ ist, welches unseren Mitmenschen eine Stufe sein soll, eine Stufe des Begreifens. Denn alles, was man begreift, wird Erkenntnis. Diese Erkenntnis bringt den anderen Menschen das Bewußtsein eines neuen, d.h. unseren Geschlechts.[[434]](#footnote-434)

As well as promoting the magazine as an educative publication that could act as a medium between a “third sex” and “other people”, Ikarus’ employment of terms such as *Erkenntnis* and *Bewußtsein* feeds back into the *Erkenntnisgeist* of the Weimar Republic’s culture of intellectualism and suggests that the magazine should not be so quickly dismissed as an *Unterhaltungsblatt*. Placing the magazine at the centre of the struggle for queer emancipation was a recurrent theme in the periodical and contributors regularly encouraged their readers to strive to live more openly and to organise politically. ‘Nur die Masse führt zum Ziel’, as Ikarus claimed further, ‘Freiheit für die Liebe auf der ganzen Front!’.[[435]](#footnote-435)

Evading the Law against “Filth and Trash”

As *Frauenliebe* and *Die Freundin* survived until the final years of the interwar era, it can be assumed that both magazines enjoyed a loyal and faithful readership. As the official organ for female members of the BfM, *Die Freundin* had the initial advantage over *Frauenliebe* of being the first, and therefore most established, magazine for same-sex desiring women. There are no circulation figures available for *Die Freundin*, however, or indeed for any of the magazines that were produced by the Radszuweit Verlag. Nonetheless, the periodical’s affiliation with the BfM means that one can assume readership figures for the periodical were reasonably high. There are conflicting reports, however, regarding the membership figures of the organisation. While statements issued by Radszuweit in 1929 cite that the organisation had 48,000 members, a rival member of the DFV claimed that the BfM had as few as 380 members at this time and that the BfM’s chief publication, *Das Freundschaftsblatt*, circulated only 2900 copies.[[436]](#footnote-436) Comparatively, the Carl Bergmann Verlag reported sales figures for *Frauenliebe* of 10,000 copies in 1928.[[437]](#footnote-437) Although it is almost impossible to present either readership or membership figures with any degree of certainty, that both magazines survived a ruinous economic climate with relatively little interference to the frequency of their circulation or a rise in sales price indicates that they both sold in high numbers. Even recurrent interruptions to sales of both magazines after the implementation of the *Schund- und Schmutzgesetz* in 1926 do not appear to have affected the sales of the magazines significantly.

The Weimar constitution of 1919 established the fundamental freedom of the press. The absence of censorship led to the emergence of various queer magazines, which could advertise events and gatherings, cementing the beginnings of what would be a vibrant queer subculture. The *Gesetz zur Bewahrung der Jugend vor Schund- und Schmutzschriften*, which was introduced on 18 December 1926 in a bid to protect the ‘moral, intellectual [and] hygienic development’ of the German youth, however, effectively acted as a form of censorship, banning media that could be considered damaging or dangerous to young people.[[438]](#footnote-438) The nebulousness of the terms “Schund”and“Schmutz” meant, as Reuveni proposes, that the category was employed more broadly as ‘a label to mark writings of reputedly low aesthetic and ethical value in order to exclude them’.[[439]](#footnote-439) Publications that had been placed on the blacklist were banned from advertising their periodicals and news kiosks were prohibited from displaying them publically.[[440]](#footnote-440) If a periodical had been blacklisted twice in a single sales year, a further ban on the offending periodical was served that could last anywhere between three to twelve months. Once the ban had been lifted, the magazine could be sold again at kiosks so long as its content did not contravene any of the restrictions set out by the law.

Although the *Schund- und Schmutzgesetz* stated that a publication could not be blacklisted ‘wegen ihrer politischen, sozialen, religiösen, ethischen oder weltanschaulichen Tendenz’, editors of both *Die Freundin* and *Frauenliebe* asserted that their magazines had been targeted specifically because of the associations they had with queer organisations.[[441]](#footnote-441) In an article printed originally in *Das Freundschaftsblatt*, and later *Die Freundin*, Friedrich Radszuweit argues that the BfM’s magazines had been targeted as a way of impeding the broader aims of the homosexual emancipation movement:

Es ist immer wieder das altes Lied, daß die Jugendämter angeblich gegen Schund und Schmutz kämpfen, in Wirklichkeit aber kämpfen sie gegen die Homosexualität als solche. Das Mäntelchen Schund und Schmutz wird immer nur dann gebraucht, wenn man den homosexuellen Menschen eins auswischen will.[[442]](#footnote-442)

While Radszuweit suggested that the law against *Schund und Schmutzschriften* was brought to bear against homosexual magazines to “get one over” on the (male) homosexual movement, the editor of *Frauenliebe*, Karen, focuses her editorial on the ways in which the law could be used specifically to target *women’s* writing and experiences. Examining the aspects of law that might be employed to attack literary and cultural pursuits that were classified as “low” culture and gendered “feminine”, Karen reflects:

Ueberlegt man nun genauer, was wohl von dem neuen Gesetz betroffen werden könnte, so kommt man zu dem Ergebnis, daß es auffallenderweise – zumeist Frauenschriften sind. Also Blätter für Schönheit, Nacktkultur, auch Tanz, Körperpflege, Ehe, Frauenleben, und -lieben. [...] Also um die Frau dreht es sich! Nicht um die Frau als Mensch, sondern als Geschlechtswesen [...].[[443]](#footnote-443)

The divergences between the statements above characterise the primary discursive rift that existed between the two publications that I will discuss in this chapter. While the focus of *Die Freundin* was on how the law against *Schund und Schmutz* could affect the homosexual community more generally, *Frauenliebe* concentrated particularly on how the law could restrict the representation of the experiences and voices of (feminine) women.

To put these two magazines at opposing ends of a gendered ideological conflict, however, would almost certainly be too reductive. In the struggle for visibility and acceptance of homosexual rights movements, there were clearly common aims and mutual interests that should have gone some way to uniting the contributors and readers of the publications. Yet, the agendas of the organisations to which *Die Freundin* and *Frauenliebe* were affiliated, as well as broader developments in the field of sexological research, created a cleft between the publications that shaped their depictions of queer femininity and desire. At times, queer desires appear in the magazines as protean and transmutable, and authors transgress strict binary stratifications. At others, queer desires shore up gendered and sexual bifurcations, and reinforce social structures that positioned femininity as that which is heterosexual and queer femininity as temporary and transient. An understanding of the conflicts that existed between the two organisations responsible for *Die Freundin* and *Frauenliebe* is key, as I will now explain, toanyunderstanding of the decisions made about the content of the periodicals and, ultimately, the approaches taken to the construction of queer feminine identities and desires within them.

# Discursive Divisions within Berlin’s Queer Subculture

In 1919, the Karl-Schultz-Verlag published the magazine *Die Freundschaft* (1919-1933)in Berlin, a weekly publication for ‘Aufklärung und geistige Hebung der idealen Freundschaft’. The emergence of this magazine coincided with an unprecedented rise in the number of “friendship leagues”in Berlin, which supported homosexual people in the struggle against Paragraph 175. *Freundschaftsbünde* soon became popular across Germany and the central friendship league in Berlin suggested that an umbrella organisation could enable regional groups to undertake combined actions for civil rights reforms.[[444]](#footnote-444) Following this proposal, the *Deutscher Freundschaftsverband* (DFV) was formed in August 1920 with Hans Janus at the helm. Working closely with Magnus Hirschfeld’s *Wissenschaftlich-humanitäres Komitee* and Adolf Brand’s *Gemeinschaft der Eigenen* (GdE) towards the abolition of Paragraph 175, the DFV disseminated educational materials about the nature of homosexuality to politicians, the police force, and others notable figures with social and political influence.[[445]](#footnote-445)

When Friedrich Radszuweit, the chairperson of Berlin’s friendship league the *Vereinigung der Freunde und Freundinnen*, changed the name of his branch to the *Bund für Menschenrecht*, cracks began to appear within the wider organisation of the DFV and a series of disagreements led to a leadership challenge in the early 1920s. Despite being a relative newcomer to the association, having previously pursued a sales career in women’s wear, Radszuweit assumed control of the DFV in 1923 and renamed the organisation the *Bund für Menschenrecht* (BfM). With Radszuweit leading the newly-formed BfM, the organisation established several new periodicals, many of which were produced by Radszuweit’s own private publishing company.[[446]](#footnote-446) Already by 1925, however, several key members of the BfM had become unhappy with the way that Radszuweit was running his ‘personal empire’ and decided to secede in order to resume the activities of the former DFV.[[447]](#footnote-447) Max Danielsen and Hans Janus, the editors of *Die* *Freundschaft*, were elected as the group’s leaders. Soon after the split, the DFV began to publish its own periodicals for queer readers under the auspices of the Carl Bergmann Verlag, which ran in direct competition with those of the BfM.

Although on the surface the rift between the DFV and the BfM appears to have been caused by a series of superficial ‘Machtkämpfe’, the frictions between the two organisations were founded upon a much deeper ideological division concerning their approaches to homosexual emancipation, identity, and desire.[[448]](#footnote-448) While Radszuweit and his supporters forcefully rejected the ‘elitist scientific attitudes’ of Magnus Hirschfeld and his acolytes, the DFV were keen to employ Hirschfeld’s theories in their publications to further their campaign for social emancipation and change.[[449]](#footnote-449) Radszuweit accused Hirschfeld of creating a ‘Schaustellungen von Abnormitäten’ in his research and suggested the sexologist had cast the homosexual movement in a ‘schlechtes Licht’.[[450]](#footnote-450) The leader of the BfM even claimed in 1931 that Hirschfeld and the WhK’s ideological roots in biological inversion, which Radszuweit believed had perpetuated an image of the male homosexual as a psychologically impaired *Zwitter* (intersexual), were to blame for the later homophobic slander of the growing Nazi movement.[[451]](#footnote-451) Distancing the BfM from what Radszuweit perceived as a damaging image of “effeminate” homosexual desires, the organisation instead advocated for the rights of masculine and, more importantly, respectable (*anständig*) male homosexuals.

Although Radszuweit’s glorification of the masculine homosexual suggests that he may have been aligned with ‘antifeminist, antimedical, antimodernist’ masculinists, such as Adolf Brand and Benedict Friedlaender, the latter’s celebration of a ‘pederastic *Eros*’ had very little to do with Radszuweit’s desire to create a masculine and respectable homosexual orthodoxy and, what could be termed, a sense of “homonormativity”.[[452]](#footnote-452) Indeed, Radszuweit frequently discussed the protection of male youth against the blackmail of male prostitutes and rejected the idea of an extramarital, pederastic bisexuality that was proposed by Brand and his followers. Furthermore, despite the fact women did not assume a particularly significant role in the BfM, Radszuweit did not partake in the ceaseless misogynist campaigns that Brand championed and female members were welcomed to join the organisation. Rejecting the image of the “effeminate” *Zwitter*, Radszuweit venerated bourgeois forms of masculine enterprise. Relying upon what Smith-Rosenberg has termed the ‘ancient polarity of woman/body-man/mind’, Radszuweit had a clear hierarchy of queer behaviour, which positioned “bourgeois masculinity” at the summit.[[453]](#footnote-453) Indeed, Radszuweit and the BfM paid little attention to the specific needs and desires of effeminate men or feminine women in their movement or publications. It appears that only through the embodiment of the positive elements of bourgeois masculinity, as I will discuss shortly, could queer women find a place within the BfM community.

In contrast to the BfM, the leaders of the DFV strengthened their organisation’s connection with Hirschfeld and the *Institut für Sexualwissenschaft* after they split from Radszuweit (and the BfM) in 1925. Hirschfeld’s theory of intermediary sexual forms, discussed in Chapter Two, shaped many of the DFV’s publications and facilitated within them more open conversation on topics such as bisexuality, extramarital affairs, and relationships that were not configured around complementary gender roles. The growing influence of the *Lebensreformbewegung* in Berlin, a movement that promoted nudism, sexual freedom, and a simpler “back-to-nature” lifestyle, also inspired a more liberal approach to the conceptualization of gender and sexuality in the DFV’s periodicals. *Frauenliebe* regularly recommended books such as Anton Putz zu Adlersthurn’s serial novel *Die Insel der Nackten* (1927-1932) and Rudolf Quanter’s *Die freie Liebe* (1906) and promoted lectures such as ‘Wie erhalte ich mich jung und schön?’ and ‘Verjüngung des Äußeren durch kosmetische Selbstbehandlung’. Hirschfeld’s unwavering support for Austrian endocrinologist Eugen Steinach and his works on rejuvenation also appears to have influenced *Frauenliebe*’s focus on *Verjüngung*, which stands in stark contrast to *Die Freundin*’s seemingly sober focus on the male homosexual emancipation movement.[[454]](#footnote-454)

The tensions between the theoretical underpinnings of the BfM and the DFV frequently led to their associated publications being utilised as instruments to undermine the actions of the rival group. In an article published by Max Danielsen in *Frauenliebe*, for example, Radszuweit is criticised for the alleged abuse of his position and for falsifying membership and sales figures. Danielsen denounces the BfM as the ‘Demagoge für “Menschenrechte”’ and suggests that if Radszuweit did not step down from his position, the tension between the two organisations would lead to the ‘schwersten inneren Kämpfen […] die die homosexuelle Bewegung durchgemacht hat’.[[455]](#footnote-455) Although the writers of *Frauenliebe* appears to have focused more on Radszuweit as a figure of contention than writers for *Die Freundin* did on Danielsen, Bergmann, or other male members of the DFV, *Die Freundin* was not above publishing slanderous articles about its competition. In a thought piece concerning the state of play of queer women’s clubs in Berlin, Lotte Hahm, a prominent lesbian figure and leader of several women’s clubs, criticized Carl Bergmann’s role in the movement as a publisher and contributor, and claimed that it was ‘grotesk, […] daß ein heterosexueller Mann der Führer der homosexuellen Frauen sein sollte’.[[456]](#footnote-456) Relaying rumours of Bergmann’s financial problems, Hahm concludes her article in a similarly threatening tone to Danielsen’s earlier tirade: ‘Sollte Bergmann Gelüste haben, mit mir ein Hühnchen zu pflücken, so werde ich aus meinem Archiv weitere Tatsache hervorholen worüber die Damen staunen und Karl Bergmann entsetzt sein wird’.[[457]](#footnote-457)

‘Wir müssen unseren Tisch rein halten!’: The Readers of *Die Freundin*

In an article concerning the law against *Schund- und Schmutz*, editor Elsbeth Killmer (1890-1957) claimed that one could assume ‘wohl mit Bestimmtheit’ that *Die Freundin* ‘fast ausschließlich von homosexuellen Frauen gelesen [wird]’.[[458]](#footnote-458) Attempting to allay fears that the magazine could attract ‘jugendliche Mädchen, die nicht homosexuell veranlagt sind’, the editor of *Die Freundin* asserted that it was highly unlikely that readers of the magazine were heterosexual.[[459]](#footnote-459) Killmer’s claims of a monolithic readership, however, are challenged by the personal advertisements featured in the magazine, which suggest that *Die Freundin* attracted a diverse readership. Killmer clearly downplayed the broader appeal of the magazine to appease the *Landesjugendamt*, however, as the magazine published requests from heterosexual men looking for wives, women searching for husbands, and married couples looking for additional female companions ‘zwecks Geselligkeit’ in the personals section. Although the personal adverts and nude cover images appear to be at odds with the BfM’s ambitions to offer a morally resolute magazine for homosexual women, Friedrich Radszuweit’s reputation as a sales-savvy entrepreneur, as Micheler has noted, meant that he did not always appear concerned by the conflict between his role as the respectable leader of the BfM and his broader business interests.[[460]](#footnote-460)

In a bid to reach more readers, *Die Freundin* also included a supplement for transvestites, “Die Transvestiten”, later renamed “Die Welt der Transvestiten”. The transvestite supplement mirrored the content of the main magazine, with reader letters, literary texts, scientific and social discussions, and personal advertisements. When *Die Freundin* was blacklisted in 1926, ‘Die Transvestiten’ was cut from the magazine as a supplement and was replaced by ‘Die Welt der Transvestiten’. Alongside a supplement dedicated to transvestite issues, the concerns of transvestite readers were also covered in other aspects of the magazine. In 1930, under the editor Martin Radszuweit, for example, the magazinepublished a series of articles entitled ‘Transvestiten’ which ran over four issues and sparked a prolonged reader debate and there were several articles and reader letters that discussed the issue of transvestism over the course of the publication. That transvestite issues and concerns were discussed so extensively in *Die Freundin*, indicates a large transvestite readership of the magazine or, more generally, a growing interest in transvestite issues across the queer community. The BfM also established a sub-organisation in 1929, *Sondergruppe Transvestiten*,and endeavoured to create a separate transvestite publication *Die Transvestiten*, which failed to take off due to a lack of interest. A transvestite periodical, *Das 3. Geschlecht*, was eventually established by the BfMbetween 1930 and 1932.[[461]](#footnote-461)

Despite what appears to have been a broad and diverse readership, which included not only queer women but also transvestite readers, and curious heterosexual readers, the magazine’s *Veranstaltungshinweise* suggest that advertisers saw the magazine primarily as a space to disseminate information about events for queer women. Dance events and club nights for homosexual women, such as the jazz bar *Geisha* run by the masculine emcee “Teddy”, were advertised regularly in *Die Freundin* as well as ‘Unterhaltungsabende’ of a more didactic nature. Regardless of whether an advertisement was promoting a transvestite ball or a local *Stammtisch*, however, the tone of promotional features was fixed on the notion of “idealen Frauenfreundschaft”. Readers were told that conversations at the regulars’ table should be kept ‘rein’ and ‘unsaubere Elementen’ were not to be tolerated at community gatherings.[[462]](#footnote-462)

Although the term ‘unsaubere Elemente’ was generally used to refer to (male or female) prostitutes or hyper-effeminate male homosexuals, queer masculine women were also subject to certain behavioural regulations. After some readers complained about the vulgar manners of masculine women at club events, something that was further elaborated on in Roellig’s guidebook, *Die Freundin* warned virile women that they were expected to know what kind of masculinity was “appropriate” and when it was suitable for macho posturing:

Ihr Frauen, die ihr selbst in so starken Maße von eurem vermeintlichen Mannestum überzeugt sind, vergeßt nicht, daß ihr dies nur ganz unter Euch frei und offen zeigen dürft. Verzerrt nicht durch dickaufgetragene Farben das Bild Eures eigensten Innenlebens, welches ja schließlich nur Euch und Eurer Freundin gehört… Wir erkennen Euch schön an Eurer Art, an der Hemdbluse und Kostüm, Ihr braucht Euch wirklich nicht noch die schlechtesten männlichen Eigenschaften anzuzeigen.[[463]](#footnote-463)

In a bid to offer readers something other than ‘flüchtig’ flirtations, editor-in-chief Aenne Weber proposed in an evening ‘an welchen nicht getanzt wird, sondern nur geistige Interessen gepflegt werden’.[[464]](#footnote-464) Weber suggested that sustained intellectual discussions would enable women to become ‘innerlich näher’. Roellig’s description of the members of the BfM’s *Klub der Freundinnen* as a ‘geschlossene Gesellschaft’, suggests that the BfM’s attempts to create a culture of bourgeois respectability was accepted by readers and contributors to *Die Freundin* whose club activities were supposedly characterised by an unshakeable ‘Norddeutsche Steifheit’.[[465]](#footnote-465) Although, as a contributor to various lesbian magazines, Roellig may have had an agenda of her own, her testimony supports the image that Radszuweit wanted to perpetuate of readers of *Die Freundin* and members of the BfM; respectable individuals that enjoyed ‘ideale Bestrebungen’ and bourgeois pursuits.[[466]](#footnote-466)

‘Herren werden nicht sehr gerne gesehen’: Readers of *Frauenliebe*

In contrast to *Die Freundin*’s promotion of reserved friendships, the editors of the DFV’s *Frauenliebe* were much bolder in their marketing of a magazine that celebrated ‘Freundschaft, Liebe und sexuelle Aufklärung’. Printing more nudes on its cover than its rival, *Frauenliebe* capitalised on Berlin’s budding “body culture”to make visible the erotic desires of queer women in a way that could avoid the restrictions of the *Schund- und Schmutzgesetz*. Although Roellig suggests that the nude photos and attention-grabbing headlines of lesbian magazines were meant to attract audiences ‘aus jeder Sphäre’, the personal advertisements in *Frauenliebe* suggest that the magazine was read primarily by queer women.[[467]](#footnote-467) With messages from lonely married women seeking girlfriends and queer women looking for married couples ‘zwecks Gedankenaustausch’, the range of personal advertisements visible in *Frauenliebe* typically reveals a more female oriented readership than those in *Die Freundin*. These personal advertisements also more frequently seek financial assistance from other women and more regularly specify responses only from ‘gutsituierte’ women than those of its rival. Readers posting “personals” in *Frauenliebe* also appear more open to disclosing specific preferences in a partner, such as a certain hair colour or, more frequently, a substantial age gap. While this may have helped to ensure the financial status of respondents to an advert, it also suggests a readership more open to discussing the details of their sexual desires and needs. A twenty-four-year-old music student, for example, sought only the company of a ‘schöne, elegant, sehr gebildete Freundin Alter 35-45’ while a twenty-six-year-old seamstress wanted to meet an ‘ältere Freundin 30-45 zwecks Geselligkeit’.[[468]](#footnote-468)

Unlike writers of *Die Freundin*, who believed discreet friendships to be the most respectable and desirable form of partnership,contributors to *Frauenliebe* often urged readers who had been in “hiding” to be more transparent about their desires and resist integration into existing paradigms. Although Marti Lybeck suggests in her latest edition to queer and feminist history writing that both *Die Freundin* and *Frauenliebe* were aiming to achieve ‘respectable homosexuality’, it appears that in the early years of *Frauenliebe* editors and readerswere much more open about their desires, readily discussing preferences and identities that departed from ideals of bourgeois respectability.[[469]](#footnote-469) In a political call to arms against the social injustices faced by queer individuals, for example, regular contributor G. Fü paints an image of ‘droves’ (*Scharen*) of queer women who, with ‘[m]ehr Mut, mehr Kraft [und] mehr Licht’, would be able to achieve the social emancipation that they longed for:

Reißt zu Boden fremde Macht! Ja, liebe Schwestern, reißt zu Boden, was Eure Seele knechten und vernichten will. […] Warum verbergt Ihr Euch?, warum zittert Ihr so vor der Entdeckung Eurer Gefühle?, warum bewahret Ihr ängstlich, was doch hinaus geschrieen werden müßte in alle Welt? […] Wir sind da und wir wollen für unsere Rechte kämpfen, kämpfen bis zum letzten Atemzug.[[470]](#footnote-470)

Highlighting once again the overlooked political aims and agenda of the magazine, G. Fü calls to her sisters to ‘fight until the last breath’ for the rights of queer women. Unlike *Die Freundin*, contributors to *Frauenliebe* did not attempt to fit same-sex relationships into acceptable paradigms and strove for the visibility of their desires. Many contributors already conceived of themselves as “normal” and believed that “abnormality” was a label that had been foisted upon them by a hostile world: ‘Nicht wir erklären uns für anders als die andern, sondern die Welt bringt uns in dieses Licht’.[[471]](#footnote-471)

With the aim of bringing together a “sisterhood”, *Frauenliebe* was also closely connected to a number of bars and clubs that offered an extensive range of activities and educational programmes to its readers. With a decidedly different tone to that which permeated the BfM’s *Klub der Freundinnen*, *Frauenliebe*’s clubhouse was located at the Nationalhof in the Bülowstraße: the heart of queer Berlin. Aiming to provide women with ‘eine Art Heim’, the owners of *Violetta* did not tolerate ‘Schauleute’ or male customers and its patrons appear to have stemmed primarily from the new white-collar working class.[[472]](#footnote-472) Both the magazine and the women’s organisation affiliated with it were keen, however, to provide aspirational entertainment by advertising *Automobilfahrten* around the outskirts of Berlin and regular ‘Mondschein-’ and ‘Sonnenschein-Dampferfahrten’.[[473]](#footnote-473) Operating in much the same way as the magazine to which it was affiliated, *Violetta* provided a space for women both to organise *and* socialise: ‘Darum der Kampf! Und neben ihm – die Freude des Tanzes’.[[474]](#footnote-474)

As a physical marker of the discursive tension between the BfM and the DFV, the club *Violetta* was contested territory. A location that was initially loyal to female members of the DFV and readers of *Frauenliebe*, little is known about the takeover of *Violetta* by the BfM and readers of *Die Freundin*. As discussed in Chapter One, however, it is highly likely that financial difficulties after the Wall Street Crash in 1929 meant that the female-only circles of *Frauenliebe* readers were not enough to keep the club afloat. The act of opening the club’s doors to the BfM and curious ‘Sehleute’, however, immediately lost *Violetta* the patronage of the DFV and the respect of the contributors of *Frauenliebe*. Consorting with the “enemy” was considered ‘deceitful’ (*betrügerisch*) and the conflict between the male-dominated organisation of the BfM and the readers of *Frauenliebe* created an irreparable cleft between women who may otherwise have been united in their desire for emancipation and cultural change.

Like its competitor, *Frauenliebe* also included a column for (primarily male-to-female) transvestite readers that ran from 1926-1932 and included short stories, poems, reader letters, and thought pieces. Just like *Frauenliebe*, ‘Der Transvestit’ favoured literary submissions over sexological works but also included social commentaries and reader debates. Although the ‘Der Transvestit’ was a column and not a supplement, and does not appear to have attracted the same level of engagement as ‘Die Transvestiten’/ ‘Die Welt der Transvestiten’, transvestite issues were also discussed regularly in *Frauenliebe* and space was dedicated to (female-to-male) transvestites in the magazine. Like the BfM, the DFV also established a transvestite organisation, *Vereinigung D’Eon*, that offered lectures and tutorials for transvestites and organised regular social gatherings.

# Fashioning Femininities in Queer Periodicals

Sexological DiscoursesIn the inaugural issue of *Die Freundin*, chief editor Aenne Weber forcefully sets the gendered agenda for Berlin’s first publication for queer women. Weber’s article ‘Die homosexuelle Frau’ highlights a sharp distinction that she considers to exist between two discrete categories of queer women:

Es gibt zwei Arten von homosexuellen Frauen. Die virile – d.i. männliche – und die feminine – d.i. weibliche – Frau. Die Virile zeichnet sich vor allen Dingen durch ihre Selbständigkeit [...] Die feminine Frau ist ganz das Gegenteil [...] Sie ist durch und durch Frau, von zartem Wesen und anschmiegendem Charakter.[[475]](#footnote-475)

Drawing on contemporary psycho-medical theories, Weber considers the queer masculine woman to be “independent” and “forthright”, while the feminine woman, she concludes, is ‘ganz das Gegenteil’. Positioning the masculine partner in ‘die Rolle eines Beschützers’, Weber creates an idealised image of a virile woman who is distinct from the mannish ‘Frau ohne Moral’, who was supposedly predisposed to ‘zügellose Sinnlichkeit’, ‘Trunksucht’, and ‘Spielwut’.[[476]](#footnote-476) Similarly, the behaviours of the homosexual feminine “Mädel” are detached from the degenerate desires of the *femme fatale* and descriptions of her delicate, vulnerable, and sexually passive nature, embody the epitome of traditional Wilhelmine womanhood. By adhering to the traditional active-masculine and passive-feminine dichotomy, *Die Freundin* frames queer relationships in terms of a culturally constituted and accepted norm. Indeed, unlike *Frauenliebe*, for which queer visibility seems to have been of great importance, readers are advised in Weber’s article that homosexual relationships should not deviate from hegemonic norms but, instead, embody them. Although this strict adherence to gender roles does not appear particularly radical, Weber’s suggestion of “two types” of queer women nonetheless presents a conceptual space in which to imagine “authentic” queer feminine desires, albeit in the form of a submissive and “clingy” character. Furthermore, Weber’s binary coding of gendered behaviour, gives legitimacy to the figure of the queer feminine woman only as the “Gegenteil” of her masculine partner. It is not only due to traditional gender role she has been assigned that she be considered “anschmiegend” but also because the feminine woman is entirely dependent on her masculine partner to become visible as a queer woman.

Although Weber imparts a certain authenticity to the queer feminine woman in her article, the socio-medical articles, literary texts, and reader debates that follow over the years, as Schader indicates, repeatedly construct an idealised image of female queerness around the figure of the masculine woman.[[477]](#footnote-477) In an excerpt printed in the magazine from Otto Weininger’s *Geschlecht und Charakter* (1903)in 1931, for example, Weininger describes the woman-who-loves-women as ‘ein halber Mann’ and links her worldly achievements back to her masculine nature.[[478]](#footnote-478) Although, as Lybeck suggests, it is difficult to discern whether the editorial board and the magazine’s readers shared these ideas, I consider Weininger’s extract to be indicative of *Die Freundin*’s masculinist approaches to discussions of gender and sexuality. Selli Engler’s article ‘An die selbständigen homosexuellen Frauen!’ printed in April of the same year, implies that Weininger’s view of same-sex desires and gender performance was received positively by readers and that contributors to *Die Freundin* wanted to continue with this framework. Engler’s open letter to those she terms “independent women”, begins by praising the achievements of masculine ‘andersgeartete Frauen’.[[479]](#footnote-479) Like Weininger, she suggests that it is only ‘der Mann in ihr’ that drives the homosexual woman to achieve ‘sichtbaren Erfolgen’ and she further attributes the historical exceptionalism of women such as Catharine II of Russia, Queen Christina of Sweden, and Sappho to their “male” element.[[480]](#footnote-480) Unlike Weber’s article from 1924, which had suggested femininity did not preclude homosexual desire, Engler’s clear endorsement of Weininger’s theories indicates that there was a shift in *Die Freundin* over the years, likely to be associated with the change in editors and the growing male influence on the content of the magazine. Indeed, already by 1928 it appeared the queer feminine women had been relegated to a group of queer individuals ‘von denen man nicht spricht, über die kein Mensch etwas Besonderes sagen kann’.[[481]](#footnote-481)

Influenced by the theoretical frameworks of Berlin’s most famous sexologist, *Frauenliebe* frequently published excerpts from Hirschfeld’s works in the magazine his publications were reprinted and referenced in discussion pieces.[[482]](#footnote-482) Aside from Hirschfeld’s sexological theories, however, the editors of *Frauenliebe* appear to have favoured commentaries on socio-sexological developments written by their female contributors over reprints of original sexological articles and, in comparison to *Die Freundin*, the editors published fewer explicitly scientific articles on gender variance and masculinity. Herta Laser’s response to Weininger’s work, ‘Was Weininger sagt über die Frau’, for example, stands in stark contrast to *Die Freundin*’s reprint of his work, which had appeared devoid of context or critical discussion. As an immediate rebuttal of Weininger’s theory, Laser begins her article with a list of examples from history in which feminine women were acknowledged as ‘die Herrschende im Hause’.[[483]](#footnote-483) Arguing that the ‘kühnen Geist’ and ‘weitschauenden Blick’ associated with the emancipated woman should be considered traits that are characteristic of ‘der vorwärts strebenden Frau’, Laser dismisses Weininger’s theory that it is the ‘male’ element that drives women to achieve political and social greatness, claiming that bravery and gallantry are not the privilege of masculine (wo)men.[[484]](#footnote-484) Laser’s approach of broadening the parameters of acceptable feminine behaviour is one that is also taken up by other authors in later discussions.

In another article from the same year, ‘Amazonen’, it is suggested that traditionally “masculine” characteristics could also be embodied by non-masculine women. Focusing on the history of separatist female communities, Amazon women are described in the article as hunter gatherers, who can survive tough climates and wage successful wars against enemy men. Despite the traditional gendered implications of these behaviours, however, the author of the article does not at any point suggest that these women were “manly”.[[485]](#footnote-485) Instead she proposes, like Laser, a broader understanding of femininity to encompass the behaviours of these independent women; a radical argument for this period. Furthermore, in terms of the contemporary sexological frameworks that positioned the queer feminine woman’s desire for other women as a temporary phases before she returned to a male-object choice, the Amazon’s sexual encounters with men have only the aim of producing female offspring and do not preclude her from being perceived as queer:

Reisende aller Zeiten wußten von Weibern in gewissen Gegenden aller Erdteile, in Amerika, Afrika, Asien, Australien, selbst in Europa zu berichten, die ohne Männer in Gemeinschaften zusammenlebten. Sie trieben Jagd und führten gern Kriege mit den Männern benachbarter Bezirke. [...] Um aber nicht auszusterben, ließen sie zeitweilig Männer benachbarter Stämme zu, behielten jedoch nur die Mädchen bei sich; die Knaben wurden entweder an den väterlichen Stamm abgetrennt oder getötet.[[486]](#footnote-486)

The Amazon’s relationship with the maternal instinct also complicates the notion of the traditionally feminine; while she nurtures and cares for a young daughter, a son is rejected or killed. Although the masculine woman was not entirely dismissed in *Frauenliebe*, a much broader range of gender characteristics are described under the category of femininity. Indeed, as contributor Helga Karig casually proposes in her article on the supposed inferiority of the feminine woman: ‘Jeder denkende und vorurteilsfreie Mensch weiß: der absolute Mann und die absolute Frau sind nur Abstraktionen; in der Wirklichkeit gibt es Übergänge’.[[487]](#footnote-487)

“Medico-Consumerist” Discourses

Although Hirschfeld’s theory of sexual intermediaries shaped discussions on homosexual desire in *Frauenliebe*, it was the periodical’s promotion of beauty and body culture that drew most heavily on scientific theories and gave rise in the magazine to what I term “medico-consumerist” discourses. During the nineteenth century, cosmetic practices for bourgeois women had been frowned upon and the “Weichen-Weiblichen” woman in Wilhelmine Germany restricted herself to “cold creams” and subtle scents. In an era concerned with the growth of prostitution and syphilis, cosmetics were associated with “painted women” who supposedly employed them as a method of deception.[[488]](#footnote-488) In the early 1900s, however, the rise of cosmetologists such as Elizabeth Arden and Max Factor, Madeleine Marsh suggests, ‘transformed make-up from a guilty secret into an everyday handbag essential’.[[489]](#footnote-489) Furthermore, as discussed in the first chapter of this thesis, by the 1930s, a “well-presented appearance” had become an essential characteristic for women who wanted to secure white-collar employment.

Inspired by Hirschfeld and Steinach’s studies on rejuvenation, as well as the models of healthy living and beauty promoted by the *Körperkultur* movement, medico-consumerist articles in *Frauenliebe* consistently construct gendered ideals around notions of youth and beauty. This discussion of beauty products and rejuvenation also enabled contributors to merge modern scientific developments with their desire to turn over a profit. The cover story ‘Das persönliche Parfüm’, for example, was aimed specifically at typically modern feminine women: the ‘Kontoristin’, ‘Stenotypistin’, and ‘Hausfrau’. Drawing on the scientific trends of taxonomy, the article is used to promote several of the magazine’s own beauty products. Before the sales pitch, however, the feminine reader is positioned in the role of the “researcher” and “scientist”. Depicting the difficult process of finding the right perfume, the unnamed author paints the image of a young woman who researches and fuses together various scent combinations to create a “living” fragrance: ‘Man ist bemüht immer neue Parfüms ausfindig zu machen, Kombinationen zu schaffen und ein “lebendigen” Duft herzustellen’.[[490]](#footnote-490) After employing their own intricate equation to deduce the most suitable scent for a range of feminine temperaments the author concludes that ‘Zarter Veilchenduft oder diskretes Irisparfüm entspricht der Bescheidenheit, und darum passen diese beiden vornehmlich zu der äußerlich bescheiden und zurückhaltenden Frau’.[[491]](#footnote-491) Women between twenty and thirty, however, are instead advised to choose between ‘Flieder, Jasmin, Ylang-Ylang, Heliotrop und Peau d’Espange’.[[492]](#footnote-492)

*Frauenliebe*’s supplement “Femina: Blätter für somatische Veredelung und Schönheitspflege” was another forum in which a medico-consumerist framework was used to appeal to women’s increasing purchasing power. Appearing as a regular addition to the magazine after 1928, “Femina” was a feature in which beauty supplies created in the publication’s own ‘kosmetisches Laboratorium’ were discussed and appraised by contributors and readers. In a reoccurring advertorial, readers were advised to buy a range of products from the magazine, including the ‘Harlemer Tropfen’ to help maintain ‘klarer Augen und eines belebten feurigen Blickes’ and the ‘Nerana-Crème’, which should instead be used to preserve ‘die zarte Haut einer schönen Frau’.[[493]](#footnote-493) Playing into the contemporary social discourse that maintained ‘physical attractiveness as one of women’s most important assets’, *Frauenliebe* initially appears restricted in its ability to break free from prescriptive norms of femininity.[[494]](#footnote-494) In the context of the magazine’s political aims and its desire to establish a broader understanding of femininity, however, I argue that the discussion of beauty products in a queer magazine could itself be seen as a political act. By producing and promoting products for women that kept their skin soft and helped to preserve their ‘animated and fiery gaze’, *Frauenliebe* was arguably helping women to secure their position in the workplace, as well as making a profit from the widespread, if problematic, notion that female workers needed to be attractive to earn a wage. Readers, therefore, would not only have been influenced by the popular scientific tone of the advertisements but also the suggestion that with the aid of certain cosmetics, their financial futures might be secured.

Despite the magazine’s promotion of beauty products, the feminine woman is never turned into the object of visual pleasure. The reader remains an active subject who researches the best products that can suit her purposes. The engagement of *Frauenliebe*’s readers with the periodical’s beauty columns and adverts is further evidence that readers were not simply passive customers who surrendered to the magazine’s efforts to peddle beauty products. The “Auf Anfrage” section of the supplement demonstrates that readers regularly challenged the publication’s suggestions and recommendations. One reader, for example, complains curtly: ‘alle von Ihnen [Femina C.S.] genannten Cremes sind wirkungslos. Wenn sie schon nicht schaden, so helfen sie doch wenigstens auch nichts’.[[495]](#footnote-495) Another reader snubs the elaborate equations that had been presented in the magazine by offering her own modest choice of perfume to her fellow readers with the simple sentence: ‘Benutzen Sie kölnisches Wasser’.[[496]](#footnote-496) The discussions instigated by the readers of “Femina”, as well as their judgements of the products promoted by the supplement, indicate that they engaged critically with *Frauenliebe*’s creation of a modern feminine aesthetic and actively participated in the shaping of queer femininities within the magazine.

In line with my identification of “medico-consumerist discourses” Annelie Ramsbrock has demonstrated in her recent monograph on beauty politics the extent to which ‘social cosmetics’ could be considered ‘a form of social medicine’ in Weimar Berlin.[[497]](#footnote-497) Cosmetics and cosmetic surgery, Ramsbrock contends, ‘did not serve the health of the community’ but instead the social standing and economic position of an individual.[[498]](#footnote-498) Unlike everyday beauty regimens, social cosmetics and rejuvenational practices, Ramsbrock suggests, had become a new way of conceptualising feminine beauty routines ‘that corresponded to […] social-science paradigms’.[[499]](#footnote-499) Considered in this way, adverts for lectures such as ‘Wie erhalte ich mich jung und schön’ in the magazine *Frauenliebe* and its supplement “Femina” could be argued to fit into the much wider development of Berlin’s growing social trends and consumer culture.

Practical Fashions

While *Frauenliebe* attempted to engage with queer women directly as consumers, contributors and editors of *Die Freundin* did not include these kinds of beauty supplements in their publication. Eager to emphasize the scientific nature of the magazine, editors stressed that sexuality and gender were not characteristics that should be marketed or profited from but rather studied with scientific objectivity: ‘Sexualität ist keine Marktware [...] sondern eine von Natur aus in jedes Lebenswesen gelegte Notwendigkeit der Bedürfnisse, die man mit Moral allein nicht verurteilen, sondern nur durch die erworbenen Kenntnisse der Sexualpsychologie verstehen kann’.[[500]](#footnote-500) As a magazine that focused primarily on the masculine homosexual woman, it is perhaps unsurprising that articles on beauty products and cosmetic enhancement did not feature strongly in the format of *Die Freundin*.It would be unfair to suggest, however, that *Die Freundin* ignored the concept of beauty entirely. In October 1929, the club “Violetta” which by this time was the clubhouse for female members of the BfM, advertised a ‘schönheits-Wettbewerb’, in which both ‘die schönste männliche Frau’ and ‘die schönste weibliche Frau’ would be crowned. Later that year, it was announced that an ‘entirely unique’ fashion show would be taking place in which masculine women would be presented as ‘mannequins’: ‘nur selten wird uns Gelegenheit gegeben, eine Modenschau, an der auch männliche Frauen als Mannequins teilnehmen, zu sehen’.[[501]](#footnote-501) The advert continues by stating that the apparent incongruity of these concepts – that is, female masculinity, beauty, and fashion – would be disproved at the fashion show with the exhibition of the ‘elegantesten männlichen Frauen’. [[502]](#footnote-502) Perhaps in anticipation of a lukewarm reception, however, organisers clarified that they would nonetheless offer ‘ein reichhaltiges Programm’ which would include transvestite models so that ‘jeder einzelne für seinen Geschmack etwas herausfindet’.[[503]](#footnote-503) That more frequent masculine fashion shows did not occur is perhaps an indication of the success of the event and although fashion was discussed in the magazine, the celebration of masculine beauty should be considered an exception rather than the rule.

In terms of fashion and “beauty culture” in the magazine, contemporary trends were most often assessed in terms of their functionality and editors more frequently appear critical of modern standards of beauty than those in *Frauenliebe*, who arguably saw beauty and social cosmetics as a way to independence. In the social commentary about “practical fashion”, ‘Im welchen Rock geht es sich am besten’, for example, readers are presented with a broad range of suggestions for the most practical skirts to wear to work based on the results of a scientific study: ‘Am raschtesten ermüdeten die Damen in Röcken aus Leinen, Samt und anderen schweren Stoffen, während sie in Röcken aus Seide und Gabardine die geringsten Ermüdungserscheinungen aufwiesen’.[[504]](#footnote-504) After the contributor concludes that a skirt with a width of two meters and a hip measurement of forty eight Zoll (approximately forty eight inches) would afford women with most comfort in the work place, the conversation is closed and no further comment on the subject is made.[[505]](#footnote-505)

Fashion and beauty are rarely marketed as commodities in *Die Freundin*, aside from within the section for transvestite readers which will be discussed shortly, and the “social cosmetics” and “medico-consumerist” discourses that were employed by its rival do not feature strongly in the magazine. Instead, when contributors and readers of *Die Freundin* engaged with the typically “feminine” subject of fashion and style, they often resorted to biological discourses and scientific studies to engage with the theme. In the reader debate ‘Für oder gegen den Bubikopf’, which ran over several issues in 1928, readers draw repeatedly on sexological models of female inversion and physiological studies to argue their case on the appropriateness of the bobbed *Bubikopf* haircut for queer women. While one reader claims that shorter hair was ‘zu sich gehörig’ for an inverted woman, another reader deploys arguments rooted in physiognomic research to dispute her fellow reader’s claim: ‘die Kopfform einer Frau [ist] ganz anders als die eines Mannes, folglich bedingt sie eine ganz andere Haartracht’.[[506]](#footnote-506) Unlike *Frauenliebe*’s employment of medico-consumerist discourses to promote specific products, sexological and physiognomic discourses are implemented in *Die Freundin* as a way of engaging with popular trends and criticising expectations of a woman’s behaviour.

# “Transvestite” Femininities

Die Welt der Transvestiten

Social trends in fashion and beauty were discussed at great length in the regular transvestite supplements that appeared in both *Die Freundin* and *Frauenliebe*. Acting as microcosms of their main publications, *Die Freundin*’s transvestite supplement “Die Welt der Transvestiten” and *Frauenliebe*’s “Der Transvestit”include a diverse range of articles on scientific, cultural, and social issues as well as reader letters and serial stories.

The publication of Magnus Hirschfeld’s *Die Transvestiten* in 1910, which included several case studies of cross-dressers, marked the beginning of a scientific exploration on the differences between sexual inversion and the expression of a gender that did not correspond to one’s biological sex, phenomena that had previously been framed as the same “condition”. [[507]](#footnote-507) An increased social awareness of cross-dressing individuals through Hirschfeld’s work, among others, sparked the beginnings of a transvestite community that became increasingly linked to clubs and organisations for queer women.[[508]](#footnote-508) Focusing primarily on the experiences of male-to-female cross-dressers, the supplements that were provided for transvestites in *Die Freundin* and *Frauenliebe* provide an invaluable source for the examination of the ways in which femininities were fashioned in magazines for queer women by individuals whose birth sex, to varying degrees, did not correspond with their gender.

In much of a similar manner to contributors and readers of *Die Freundin*, “Die Welt der Transvestiten”, as Sutton writes, takes great pains to promote an image of transvestites as ‘respectable, upstanding citizens’, whose femininities can be carefully distinguished from the “effeminacy” of male homosexuals and male prostitutes.[[509]](#footnote-509) In an early letter from a male-to-female transvestite that was published in the supplement, the notion of that transvestites could be considered effeminate is forcefully rejected. The reader argues that their feelings of womanliness surpass even those of biologically born women: ‘Es ist mir unmöglich, mich irgendwie weibisch zu benehmen, wie es leider so viele glauben tun zu müssen. Aber trotzdem, oder gerade deshalb, glaube ich in vieler Hinsicht weiblicher zu empfinden wie manche wirkliche Frau’.[[510]](#footnote-510) Although many of the contributions published in the supplement acknowledged the link that was made between male-to-female transvestites and homosexuality, it remained clear that this was not always the case: ‘Im Allgemeinen rechnet man sie [Transvestiten C.S] zu den Homosexuellen. Doch trifft dies bei den männlichen Transvestiten nicht immer zu’.[[511]](#footnote-511)

In the transvestite community associated with the BfM, the complexities of male-to-female transvestism were generally divided into two distinct categories. There existed, on the one hand, “temporary transvestites” who cross-dressed only occasionally and, on the other, transvestites who felt that they had been born into the wrong body. Transvestites who wrote for “Die Welt der Transvestiten” and experienced a disconnect between their biological sex and true gender often attempted to prove the authenticity of their femininity by comparing themselves to biologically-born women. Those who practised discrete periods of cross-dressing, however, as Sutton writes, asserted their heterosexuality in a bid to differentiate themselves from “effeminate” male homosexuals.[[512]](#footnote-512) Indeed, the most common subject of reader letters and personal advertisements written by “temporary transvestites” is the difficulty of finding understanding female partners. Interestingly, “Die Welt der Transvestiten” also published several articles written by wives of “temporary transvestites” in a bid to encourage more female readers to attempt to be more open and sensitive to the needs of heterosexual transvestite men. These letters often explicitly suggest that the femininity of “temporary transvestites” made these men more attractive to heterosexual women. Indeed, one such wife claimed: ‘Ein Mann als solcher ist oft herb und verschlossen – sehr zum Kummer der Frau. Nun nehme man mal den Transvestiten [...] Er ist weich, liebevoll und zärtlich – ganz so, wie sich wohl manche “unverstandene” Frau den Mann wünscht’.[[513]](#footnote-513) The threat that “temporary transvestitism” posed to binary masculine-feminine partnerships generally favoured by *Die Freundin* was overlooked by “Die Welt der Transvestiten” and emphasis was given instead to the respectable heterosexuality of feminine “temporary transvestites”. In this way, as Sutton argues, *Die Freundin* could make sure that ‘notions of hegemonic masculinity continued to define hierarchies of value’ even in its transvestite supplement.[[514]](#footnote-514)

‘Der Transvestit’

*Frauenliebe*’s column “Der Transvestit”, much like the transvestite supplement of its rival, strays very little from the content and ideological interests of its main publication. Favouring literary submissions over scientific articles, “Der Transvestit” also sustained the strong focus on fashion and beauty as its chief publication. Articles such as ‘Das Wesen des Transvestitismus’ by Maria Weiß, as well as the multi-authored series ‘Kleidung und Transvestitismus’, however, highlight that both medical and social discourses played a role in *Frauenliebe*’s transvestite column. The ‘kleine Anzeigen’ that targeted the transvestite community were structured by a similar “medico-consumerist” approach as those promotions aimed at readers who had been born female. Announcing a miracle cure against beard growth, for example, one advert exclaims: ‘Transvestiten! Nach jahrelangen Experimenten fand ich endlich ein Radikalmittel gegen Bartstoppeln und andere Körperhaare mit Wurzeln!’.[[515]](#footnote-515) The advert places the hairless body as the idealised image of transvestite femininity and further suggests experimenting on the body with radical ‘cures’, much like the perfume article in the main publication, mentioned earlier in this chapter.

The focus on cosmetic enhancement and ideals of beauty could also be seen in the advertisements from the suborganization for transvestites in the DFV, the *Vereinigung D’Eon*, that advertised regular tutorials and courses on how to apply cosmetics which were held at Hirschfeld’s *Institut für Sexualwissenschaft*. While the early issues of *Frauenliebe* reject outright assimilation into hetero-patriarchal society, many of the discussions that take place in its supplement “Der Transvestit” focus particularly on “passing” and achieving the feminine beauty standard. Many of its literary contributions include lengthy stares into the mirror as protagonists try on outfits, such as the extravagant silk dress one protagonist wears to a ball or the delicate patent buckled shoes that another wistfully admires in a shop window. With a primary focus on fashion and “passing” in *Frauenliebe*’s transvestite supplement, transvestite femininity is constructed around an aspirational ideal of bourgeois beauty which is bound to somatic and sartorial simulations of the female form. Indeed, unlike *Die Freundin*’s “Die Welt der Transvestiten”, there does not appear to be a such a clear distinction made between “temporary transvestites” and those who experienced varying degrees of gender dysphoria in *Frauenliebe*’s “Der Transvestit”. Despite an arguably superficial focus on physical appearances, however, “Die Transvestit” also suggests a more sympathetic awareness of the routine issues faced by transvestites, such as the notice that provided details of a sympathetic seamstress offering a space in which transvestites could safely and discretely complete their “Umwandlung”. Another salesperson explicitly emphasized the range of female shoe and clothing sizes that they offered, catering to male-to-female transvestites who may have found difficulty finding garments in generic “female” sizes.

Although Sutton has proposed that transvestite supplements in queer magazines for women were probably a ‘concession to financial realities’, I would argue that queer women were more closely allied with the transvestite community than Sutton’s comment may suggest.[[516]](#footnote-516) Events such as *Die Freundin*’s fashion show which included transvestite models and the reviews of lectures on transvestite issues that were published in *Frauenliebe* suggest that the communities were engaged in mutual events and supported one another’s concerns. Furthermore, while there was no doubt a tension between of hegemonic masculinity that structured the ‘hierarchies of value’ upheld by heterosexual transvestites in the BfM periodical, there was clearly a desire to forge a sense of community between queer male-to-female transvestites who advertised for communal households with lesbian couples and queer women who advertised for *Freundschaftsehen* with transvestites.

# Anti-Feminine Discourses

The vitriol directed towards the “effeminate” male homosexual in *Die Freundin*’s transvestite supplement is only part of the anti-feminine discourse that can be seen to run through the publication. In one of the most controversial and longstanding discussions to appear in the magazine, the topic of “Freundschaftsehen” sparked an intense debate on monogamy, femininity, and bisexuality. Initially published by Xela Eckats in 1928, the article begins with a reflection on the changes that Eckats had perceived in Berlin’s queer community. Providing readers with a summary of her early relationships with women, which she claims had been ‘rein und schön’, Eckats muses that the increased number of young feminine women attending Berlin’s queer bars had meant that her latest relationships had ended only in ‘Enttäuschung’.[[517]](#footnote-517) After deliberating on the link between the two, Eckats concludes that the feminine partner is a lover that could, and should, not be trusted:

Es ist für den maskulinen Teil in überwiegendem Maße eine Selbstverständlichkeit, in Zeiten der Not der Freundin ganz besonders beizustehen; denn gerade dann haben wir ja Gelegenheit, unsere Liebe zu beweisen! Warum versagen in solchen Fällen fast immer die femininen Partnerinnen?[[518]](#footnote-518)

Eckats draws on traditional nineteenth century notions of masculinity and friendship to position the masculine woman as a loyal figure who would honour a bond, while the feminine woman, who ruled is by her body, is incapable of such devotion. Eckats’ implicit suggestion that a feminine woman would take a male partner in times of difficulty makes further recourse to the sexological stereotypes that had developed from the discourses discussed in Chapter Two and, in particular, those of the queer feminine woman as a fickle figure or a “pseudo-homosexual”. The betrayal of the loyal masculine invert by the “temporary” desires of feminine and/or bisexual women posed a fundamental threat to the BfM’s broader aim to present queer relationships as ‘rein’ and ‘anständig’, endangering the organisation’s attempts to weave homosexuals subtly into the heterosocial fabric. Eckats’ solution to the “problem” of the fickle feminine woman further compounds the BfM’s attempts to create a sense of “homonormativity” within its movement, as she concludes that queer couples should strive to achieve monogamous and longstanding *Freundschaftsehen*.[[519]](#footnote-519) It is only through the mimicking of heteronormative institutions that writers of *Die Freundin* considered that the homosexual community could prove themselves worthy of the respect of the heterosexual world: ‘Menschen, die in allen Lebenslagen fest und treu zusammenhalten, wird auch die normale Welt respektieren.’[[520]](#footnote-520)

Five years later, anonymous contributor XYZ picked up the Eckats’ discussion of *Freundschaftsehen* in their article ‘Freundinnen-Ehe’. As what can be considered almost an update on Eckats’ earlier commentary, XYZ states that long-lasting “marriages” had become a reality for many homosexual couples in Berlin’s queer community. Foregrounding the ‘decent’ and ‘restrained’ nature of these relationships, XYZ suggests that the ideal queer relationship is one that is imperceptible:

Ich kenne viele Frauen, sehr viele sogar, die mit einer Freundin in einer festen Bindung zusammenleben, wirken und arbeiten, und die nichts als der Tod trennen wird. Diese Freundschaften sind oft so unauffällig, so dezent und zurückhaltend, dass nur der Eingeweihte weiß, dass hier auch eine erotische Freundschaft vorliegt.[[521]](#footnote-521)

Rejecting openly erotic configurations, XYZ suggests further that loyalty is fundamental to a successful queer relationship. Yet, although this view was encouraged by many contributors to *Die Freundin*, monogamous bonds and long-term partnerships between homosexual women, some readers suggested, were in fact a rarity. The cause of the failure of these “marriages” divided the readers and contributors to *Die Freundin* and many echoed Eckats’ original contention against the feminine woman.

Although some contributors claimed that it was the fault of the virile lesbian Lothario who sought fresh sexual adventures and the renewed thrill of the chase, others asserted that the blame lay with the feminine woman. Returning to the idea of Eckats’ capricious femme fatale, one reader suggests that feminine women were often ‘gar nicht homosexuell’ but rather ‘bisexuell oder vielleicht nur neugierig’.[[522]](#footnote-522) In an echo of the models promoted by Forel, the reader claims that the feminine woman’s ‘unbeherrschte Leidenschaft’ and innate desire ‘auf alle Fälle etwas [zu] “erleben”’ was the cause of her desire to experiment sexually with other women.[[523]](#footnote-523) The tension between the masculine and feminine women in the BfM often became heated in the pages of *Die Freundin* as can be seen in this contributor’s feverish warning to queer masculine readers:

Hände weg von verheirateten, bisexuellen Frauen und solchen Ledigen, die auch noch dem Manne gehören! Hände weg von jenen Zweinaturen, die aus Lust an der Wollust beide Geschlechter genießen! – Sie treten unsere Liebe in den Schmutz![[524]](#footnote-524)

That bisexual women were seen ultimately to ‘belong to men’ was an idea common among readers of *Die Freundin*. Although some queer women attempted to make a “sport” of seducing married women, the citation above shows how contentious this issuebecame within the BfM’s queer community. As well as tirades against feminine and bisexual women, *Die Freundin* also published reader letters that defended feminine women and those who entered marriages with men: ‘Ich finde Ihre strikte Ablehnung der bisexuellen Frauen nicht recht. Sind es im Innern nicht genau so Menschen wie wir? Vielleicht fühlen dieselben sich durch ihren Zwiespalt, in dem sie leben, viel unglücklicher als es scheint’.[[525]](#footnote-525) Such demonstrations of support for bisexual – and feminine – women in *Die Freundin* were rare, however, and defences were often derailed by readers with opposing agendas:

Ihre Behauptung, bisexuelle Frauen seien uns gleich, bestreite ich, denn man kann nicht zwei Herren dienen [...] solche Art Frauen gehören nicht zu einer homosexuellen Freundin, denn die Gefühle, die sie wecken sind nicht echt und können der echten Freundin zur Katastrophe werden.[[526]](#footnote-526)

The reader further draws a comparison between the bisexual woman and the prostitute, emphasising a link between bisexuality and degeneracy as well as cementing the image of the congenital, and fixed, desires of homosexual women: ‘Der Kampf ums Dasein ist schwer; aber eine homosexuelle Frau würde sich deshalb niemals zur Dirne und zum Vergnügungsobjekt des Mannes machen lassen, denn das liegt ihrer Natur nicht’.[[527]](#footnote-527) Not only does the reader question the authenticity of queer feminine desires – homosexual desires appear in this quote only ‘echt’ if they are unidirectional and demonstrated through an inversion of sex-gender signifiers – but like many sexological case studies that conflated sexual perversion with perversity, the reader also conflates the bisexual woman and the prostitute, as well as positioning the masculine woman as the same-sex desiring figure *par excellence*.

Although the bisexual feminine woman was at the heart of many heated debates in *Die Freundin*, discussions on homosexual identity rarely focused on feminine women in their own right. In a 1926 article in *Frauenliebe*, however, editor Herta Laser expounds at length on the difficulties that face feminine women in the homosexual community. Unlike *Die Freundin*’s general position that feminine homosexuals were only ‘wissbegierig’ or whimsical, Laser contends that the ‘herrschende Mode’ had little power over a feminine woman’s queer desires.[[528]](#footnote-528) Asserting that most feminine women in the homosexual community were ‘wirkliche Homoeroten’, Laser outlines the some of the specific struggles they faced:

Hat es nicht die weibliche Frau unserer Kreise viel schwerer als eine heterogene Frau? […] Eine heterogene Frau wird in den meisten Fällen, lebt sie mit einem Manne zusammen, nicht mehr ihrem Beruf nachgehen […] Leben aber zwei Frauen zusammen, so gehen beide ihrem Beruf nach […] Der weibliche Teil muß nun nach Schluß den Dienststunden sich mit Hausarbeiten beschäftigen, soll eine gemütliche Wohnung herrichten, ein freundliches Lächeln zeigen, und soll der Freundin eine geistige Gefährtin sein.[[529]](#footnote-529)

Although Laser problematically equates the feminine homosexual woman with the heterosexual woman, implying that a queer hierarchy did indeed exist in the ideology of the DFV, there is doubtless a departurefrom *Die Freundin*’s belief that queer feminine desire was simply a temporary curiosity. Although the framework Laser employs to discuss queer female relationships remains inherently dyadic and, as such, appears to conform to more traditional sexological knowledge systems, the space dedicated specifically to issues faced by queer feminine women in a culture that dismissed or rejected the existence of feminine desire remains nonetheless a subversive position.

In a ‘Meinungsaustausch’ in the magazine from 1928, instigated by the reader and contributor Cläre, the influence of Hirschfeld’s theory of ‘Übergangsformen’ underscores the discursive rift between the two rival magazines. Asking readers for their opinions on a particularly contentious issue, Cläre posits: ‘Was würden Sie, meine Damen, tun, wenn Sie heute eine Frau kennen lernen, wüßten, sie ist verheiratet, lebt mit ihrem Manne in engster Gemeinschaft, möchte aber auch die Freundin nicht missen?’.[[530]](#footnote-530) Suggesting that this kind of situation is one ‘der heute nicht vereinzelt vorkommt’, Cläre opens up the conversation on queer desire to the idea of non-monogamous relationships and radically, for the time, suggests that bisexual women do not “lose” their identity once they enter into a heterosexual relationship. While some readers declared that they did not want to be the ‘Spielbälle verheirateter Frauen’ others took little issue with engaging in a relationship with a married woman, suggesting self-assuredly that although the husband might be a ‘herzensguter Kerl’ love between women ‘ist was ganz anderes’.[[531]](#footnote-531) When *Frauenliebe* returned after being blacklisted as *Garçonne* in 1930, more hostile descriptions of the bisexual woman as ‘Untreu’ and monogamous binary constellations begin to appear in the periodical as the norm. Yet, the earlier years of *Frauenliebe* certainly go a long way to challenge the idea that women rigidly conformed to the norms of bourgeois respectability as Lybeck, among others, has suggested was characteristic of queer magazines in this period.

# Literary Discourses of Feminine Desire

The masculine invert and the tomboy lover, as Schader has noted, were the primary protagonists in many of *Die Freundin*’s original literary contributions. Yet not all stories and poems were narrated from a masculine perspective. In a story that ran over seven issues in 1924, ‘Die Freundin der Olga Diers’ by Nils Lermann, for example, the ‘allerliebst’ stagehand Gudrun Garell is positioned as the protagonist of the story. An initially shy and passive character, Gudrun develops a romantic longing for the masculine actress, Olga Diers, as she watches her shows night after night. Although Olga is positioned as the woman who ‘fühlt sich als Mann’, as she and Gudrun grow closer, it is Olga who is shown to have a softer side after she delivers an emotional speech in which she confesses her love for the young stagehand. This surprising revelation is followed by Gudrun actively controlling their first sexual encounter: ‘Den Abend gab Gudrun der Freundin, wonach diese seit Tagen, seit ihrem ersten Kennenlernen lechzte’.[[532]](#footnote-532) Gudrun is not seduced by Olga’s aggressive lusts but it is rather she who pursues the actress and decides when their romantic affair will begin, calling into question the inherent passivity of feminine desire. Despite the reversal of the traditional active/passive binary, however, Gudrun is nonetheless depicted as a figure of conflict. In a dramatic turn of events, that also serves to confirm Xela Eckats’ earlier accusations in her article ‘Freundschaftsehen’, Gudrun is exposed as engaging in affairs with both women and men – a “failing” that is linked back to her mother’s history of sex work – and she ultimately breaks Olga’s heart. As well as imagining feminine protagonists, *Die Freundin* also produced stories that strayed away from the binary configurations that structure many of its social commentaries. ‘Das Wiedersehen’ by Dusia, for example, tells the story of Helga, a twenty-five-year-old ‘gertenschlank’ woman, who travels around Europe to enjoy skiing, horse riding, and driving motorcars and who is ultimately paired in the story with another masculine woman. As she sits at the wheel of her ‘taubenblauen Cabriolets, so sicher wie auf dem Pferderücken’, she fantasises of a woman ‘die gleich ihr eine Persönlichkeit ist, zu der sie nicht hinunterschauen muss, die ihr gewachsen ist und mehr als Geliebte sein kann’.[[533]](#footnote-533) Meeting a similar woman during the narrative arc, Dusia’s story concludes with a happy end without the feminine.

Although Dusia’s story implies a certain denigration of the feminine element, *Die Freundin* also employed a specific kind of resignification of high culture to subvert contemporary paradigms of femininity and sexuality. Reprinting popular poems by famous German authors, such as Heinrich Heine’s *Mädchen mit dem roten Mündchen* from his collection *Buch der Lieder* (1827), *Die Freundin* gives classic German publications a subversive Sapphic subtext. Reproducing relics of high culture in the magazine served not only to bolster the publication’s image as a promotor of bourgeois respectability but, placed within the confines of a queer periodical, the assumed heterosexuality of Heine’s subject is also brought into question. Traditional markers of femininity, such as the protagonist’s ‘rotes Mündchen’ and ‘weiße Hand’ are resignified as potentially queer, which challenges the meaning of dominant cultural motifs of heterosexual femininity. Building on what Clare Rogan has noted of the nude images printed on the covers of queer magazines, *Die Freundin* engages in a form of ‘bricolage’ by removing Heine’s poem from its original context and placing it within a new queer setting.[[534]](#footnote-534) Using Gayatri Spivak’s definition of the term bricolage, poems such as Heine’s can thus be seen as part of ‘a radical proto-deconstructive cultural practice’ that revises and destabilizes traditional notions of femininity, putting them in a perpetual process of “becoming” and “undoing”.[[535]](#footnote-535)

Unlike *Die Freundin*’s reprints of poets such as Heine, *Frauenliebe* rarely recycled or borrowed literary material from other sources and much of the fiction published in the periodical was written either by its own authors, queer writers on the lesbian circuit, or readers who submitted their amateur poems and prose. Although Roellig claimed in the introduction to her guidebook that the ‘literarisches Niveau’ of lesbian magazines was ‘so ziemlich unter Null’, many short stories in *Frauenliebe* appear to be poignant critiques that were crafted as a way of exploring new approaches to gender and desire.[[536]](#footnote-536) In comparison to those short stories presented in *Die Freundin*, feminine women are also more frequently positioned as protagonists, there are stories about relationships between men and women, and there are more stories narrated from the male perspective. In general, the stories in *Frauenliebe* are more playful in their criticism of gender roles. The cover story ‘Das Geschlecht von Morgen’, for example, follows a conversation between Georgia and her boyfriend Werner, which provides a humorous criticism of the social construction of gendered behaviours:

Werner gähnte gelangweilt und griff mit seiner gepflegten Hand in die Konfektschachtel. Plötzlich hüstelte er etwas gezwungen. “Georgia”, sagte er, “ich glaube Du rauchst schon wieder einen anderen Tabak. Du weißt, daß ich bei solch kratzigem Zeug, wie es der heutige ist, stets Halsaffektionen bekomme.” Sie legte erschrocken die Pfeife aus der Hand und strich ihm übers Haar. “Verzeih”, - wagte sie dann nur noch zu sagen. “Uebrigens”, fuhr er fort, und ließ dabei wieder eine Süßigkeit den Weg der anderen gehen, “finde ich, daß Du Dich in der letzten Woche fast gar nicht um mich bekümmert hast. [...] Du weißt, wie ich dann immer seelisch leide”.[[537]](#footnote-537)

In a humorous subversion of social norms, Georgia’s short narrative arc engages with the themes of career prospects, marriage proposals, and the inequalities faced by women in within society. In its criticism of gender roles and behaviours *Frauenliebe* does not avoid an engagement with the negative characteristics associated with the feminine woman. The first-person narrator in ‘Die, die von der Liebe Leben’, for example, tells the story of her encounter with a young, feminine girl. After experiencing what she feels to be an immediate connection with a young girl on a bus who cannot afford her fare, the protagonist offers to take the younger woman for lunch. The reader learns that the girl is a shop assistant and, after some polite conversation, the protagonist buys her food and wine. As they walk home, the protagonist kisses the girl who promises to meet the older woman the following day. Weeks later, after the protagonist had been stood up, she catches a glimpse of the girl with another older woman and realizes that she has been duped: ‘So eine also war sie – mit dem lachenden Leichtsinn im Blut würde sie morgen mit einer Anderen wieder hier sitzen – würde wieder mit derselben sorglosen Freude Wein trinken – wieder mit derselben harmlosen Verliebtheit ihr Gegenüber küssen’.[[538]](#footnote-538) Although the protagonist leaves the bar and, presumably, moves on with her life, the story of the young girl’s duplicitous behaviour serves as a warning against undesirable forms of femininity in the magazine.

# Conclusions

The construction of feminine identities and desires in *Die Freundin* and *Frauenliebe* appears to have been a complex process; one that was mired in inconsistency and contradiction. As publications in which literary, sexological, and social discourses converged, these magazines offer an unparalleled insight into the way in which queer women were engaging with the discourses of their time. Informed by the theoretical underpinnings of the BfM and the DFV, the tensions that existed between the organisations responsible for the magazines resulted in decidedly different images of queer femininity emerging in their respective publications. Seeking to establish a sense of bourgeois respectability in their periodical, the editors of *Die Freundin* curated content that complied with a strict sense of middle-class morality and bourgeois masculine principles. Although the feminine woman was not entirely absent from this construction, she became a figure both denigrated and desired, and ultimately only visible as the “complement” of her queer virile partner. In the reader debates featured in *Die Freundin*, the feminine woman was maligned as a fickle *femme fatale*, who would “return” to men during times of difficulty. While bisexual women were almost invariably vilified for supposedly ‘belonging to men’, it appeared that any feminine-presenting woman was considered a threat to the principles of bourgeois respectability that *Die Freundin* strove to embody. Given the theories of hypersexuality and degeneracy that were developing around queer feminine desires, as discussed in the previous chapter, it is perhaps not surprising that a magazine committed to the concept of “idealen Frauenfreundschaft”, would distance itself from the “damaging” image of queer feminine desire. The vitriol directed towards the “effeminate” transvestite and the queer feminine woman in the magazine highlights ultimately, however, the fragility of queer female masculinity. Ever fearful that their embodiment of masculinity would not be enough to hold the interests of their feminine partners, masculine women were scornful of the intrinsic failings of the feminine woman. Although *Die Freundin*’s reappropriation of high cultural artefacts served to “queer” heteronormative femininities, the feminine woman remained nonetheless the object of the (queer) masculine gaze, and typically feminine interests were sidelined by studies of science and culture written by male authors.

Rejecting the restrictive middle-class mandates adopted by its rival, *Frauenliebe* embraced a more progressive understanding of sex and sexuality and engaged with a much wider range of desires in their articles. Through what appears to have been a “separatist” ideology in its early years, *Frauenliebe* was certainly a woman-centred magazine. With a focus on social commentaries, literary contributions, and reader debates, the magazine remained a point of contact for women until it was banned in 1932. Not only were the difficulties that faced feminine women within the queer community discussed in the magazine but it also considered the experiences of bisexual and married women. Furthermore, the parameters of acceptable feminine behaviour were arguably broadened to include non-traditional feminine characteristics. Although *Frauenliebe* has been overlooked as “political” periodical, feminine women are shown in this chapter to be active politicised subjects who are not simply passive consumers. Arguably engaging with the much wider development of Berlin’s social welfare system and the pressures on women to look youthful, *Frauenliebe* and its supplement “Femina” saw beauty as a way of securing an independent social existence. The focus of the supplement “Der Transvestit” on “passing” and *Frauenliebe*’s emphasison attaining feminine beauty standards is not entirely unproblematic. Instead of challenging hegemonic and patriarchal modes of established gender norms, the articles and adverts in *Frauenliebe* arguably profit from it and, in this way, support the very systems that oppress their female readers.

As the analysis of the literary, social, and scientific features of *Frauenliebe* and *Die Freundin* in this chapterhas demonstrated, the organisations to which the magazines were affiliated played a fundamental role in the diverging approaches taken by the magazines to the construction of queer feminine identities and desires. Over the years and across multiple discursive forms, contributors and readers dealt in various ways with socially “problematic” figure of the queer feminine woman. The complexity of the contributor-reader relationship and the tensions that arose between the identitarian practices that the organisations wanted to promote on the one hand, and lived experiences on the other, highlight that queer feminine desires and identities were much more diverse than the “ideals” that were championed by either periodical. Although the approaches of the two organisations appear in many instances to have been at cross purposes, their quest for social emancipation underscores a mutual aim to connect a queer community and lobby for social change. Indeed, in both magazines it becomes clear that queer women, as Shearer West has suggested, often ‘borrowed from and broke with mainstream images of sexuality and sexual identity’ to establish their own hierarchies and orthodoxies to suit their purposes for emancipation. Turning now to the queer press in Amsterdam, I will examine what the lack of an established ‘homosexual’ media during the interwar era may suggest about the construction of queer female identities and the formation of female desires.

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# Chapter Four: ‘It’s here, finally! A magazine for US!’: Queer Women and the Dutch Periodicals *Wij* (1932) and *Levensrecht* (1940-1943)

## Wij

In 1932, lawyer Johan Ellenberger and author Joannes Henri François met with a small group at the *Empire* café on the Amsterdam Nes to prepare for the publication of the Netherlands’ first magazine dedicated to the interests of the queer community: *Wij* (We). With the aim of encouraging interest in establishing a *Nederlandsche Vereeniging voor Menschenrecht*, a Dutch branch of the Berlin-based *Bund für Menschenrecht*,Ellenberger and François printed only one issue of the magazine before it was outlawed by the Amsterdam vice squad and the embryonic organisation responsible for its dissemination was forced to disband:

We believed that with our own organ, we would be in a better position to challenge the unfair opinions that still exist about homosexuality in so very many people. We also felt that through it we could establish closer contact with other homosexuals. Indeed, in September 1932 the first (and unfortunately also the last) issue of “Wij” was established.[[539]](#footnote-539)

Prior to the emergence of *Wij* and the attempt to establish an affiliated organisation, Jacob Schorer’s NWHK had been the only Dutch organisation to campaign against Article 248bis, the law that restricted homosexual acts between adults and minors. As there is no exact publishing date on the magazine, we must rely on Ellenberger’s suggestion that it was published in September 1932. Furthermore, as there is no price on the periodical for the purchase of single copies, it can be assumed that either the magazine already had a subscriber base or, more likely, that the first issue was disseminated by hand to visitors of the *Empire*.

Apart from the statement above, which was printed in Ellenberger’s autobiographical contribution to Benno Stokvis’ anthology, little information is available about the intentions of Ellenberger and François, which makes it difficult to trace any kind of envisioned trajectory for the magazine. From the subscription form that was printed in the first issue, however, it appears that the publication was planned as a monthly periodical at a cost ofone guilder and fifty cents for a three-month subscription and five guilders and fifty cents for an annual subscription. The editors assured their readers that the magazine could be delivered ‘in a closed envelope’ to a home address or picked up from an alternative location. As there is no information about overseas subscription fees, it is unlikely that Ellenberger and François printed the publication with the grand plan of acquiring an international readership, despite clearly being influenced by homosexual organisations in Germany. Although, as a Dutch-language journal, *Wij* would have certainly had a limited appeal outside the Netherlands, the subscription form of the later *Levensrecht* suggests that an overseas audience did become more established with time.

*Wij* ran at an impressive twenty pages and many of the articles in the first issue can be read as “calls to action” by the editorial team, who were attempting to arouse interest in the publication and, furthermore, the establishment of a social and political organisation to accompany it. Alongside these open letters to the reader, *Wij*, like the journals discussed in Chapter Three, also included poems, short stories, and a translated excerpt from the novel *Dodenwacht* (Death Watch) by Ernst von Kleinenberg. In the issue that was to follow, the editors promised a serial story by Adrian Trabak, the author of the novel *De Terugweg* (The Way Back, 1921). The pool of contributors to the first issue appears to have been rather small and some names, such as the anonymous “ko operator”, appeared under several articles in the magazine. Perhaps because of this, readers were encouraged to become active in the content production by submitting their own literary contributions to the magazine’s headquarters.

What remains unclear about the production of *Wij*, however, is quite how the periodical was financed. As it is impossible to track how many issues of the magazine may have been printed and distributed, it is difficult to estimate how costly an endeavour this would have been. Furthermore, with a reliance on subscriptions as opposed to on-street newspaper kiosks, the harsh press landscape in the Netherlands would have made the initial monetary outlay for a minority publication challenging without the backing of larger organisations such the *Bund für Menschenrecht* or the *Deutscher Freundschaftsverein*. Although Ellenberger and François strove to create an organisation similar to Friedrich Radszuweit’s BfM, there is no evidence that Radszuweit or his publishing house had any connection to the production of *Wij*.

Furthermore, while the magazine was praised by the leader of the *Gemeinschaft der Eigenen* Adolf Brand, who congratulated Ellenberger and François on the periodical and wished them luck for future issues, financial support from Brand is unlikely, not least because his own periodicals were under financial strain.[[540]](#footnote-540) The monetary difficulties encountered by the publication in its teething period are noted in the opening editorial of the magazine and a grateful nod is given to ‘a few friends who sympathised with this endeavour’ and who further supported the magazine with financial donations.[[541]](#footnote-541)

That the magazine could survive financially was of paramount importance to the editors, who made it clear that the publication was critical to the creation of a network of same-sex desiring individuals in the Netherlands that could support one another through difficult times:

Let us become aware that we belong together, that our lives are better and more beautiful if we live them together […] And let us therefore ensure that this, OUR magazine, prospers! […] We must sincerely strive to make ourselves strong through solidarity. And if this monthly magazine can help us feel this sense of solidarity more and more, then perhaps it may be a great support to us in our not always easy lives.[[542]](#footnote-542)

The author, who published under the initial “L.”, was convinced that *Wij* could help to bring together individuals in a united struggle against persecution. Indeed, the magazine appears in many respects as a rallying cry from one small group of individuals. Placing considerable emphasis on the written word, and *Wij* specifically, L. claims that the periodical could help mobilise and create communities of people who felt they were ‘anders dan de anderen’; with a successful magazine, a socio-political subculture would no doubt soon follow. In a country where newspapers were considered the “cornerstone” of daily life, a journal was a vital step in the building and bringing together of individuals to form a wider community. That Ellenberger and François published *Wij* with the intention of amassing interest in creating an organisation, however, is a method that had not been tested in Germany. In Berlin, the magazine *Die Freundschaft* hadappeared as a conduit for community news from “friendship leagues” that were already established. In L.’s article, however, it soon becomes clear that the friendship leagues existing in Berlin and across Germany were little more than a distant daydream for same-sex desiring Dutch citizens. Suggesting that the gap between the experiences of queer people in Germany and the Netherlands may rise from a ‘difference in national character [volksgeest]’, L. positions the *volksgeest* as the most important precondition for the emergence of a successful queer subculture.[[543]](#footnote-543) As outlined in more detail in Chapter One, the introduction of Article 248bis and the vice squad, as well as the established religious conservatism that had become an entrenched part of the Dutch political landscape by the 1930s, meant, as L. explains, that behaviours that were ‘generally tolerated’ in Berlin were still considered to be a ‘sin’ and ‘shameful’ in Amsterdam.[[544]](#footnote-544)

## Women and *Wij*

In the comparison of queer life in the two capital cities, L. presents Radszuweit’s *Bund für Menschenrecht* as the pinnacle of the German homosexual movement, describing the importance of BfM’s various periodicals as channels for community news. Given that *Wij* was meant to mark the beginnings of a Dutch branch of the BfM, L.’s omission of the DFV and Hirschfeld’s WhK is not surprising. In considering the BfM’s reputation as a ‘Männerbund’, however, the glorification of Radszuweit’s organisation indicates that the Dutch association also hoped to follow a similar course. Further endorsed by masculinist activist Adolf Brand, *Wij* offers nothing in its content or through its support network to suggest that the organisation it looked to establish would represent the interests of women.[[545]](#footnote-545) Although the ‘conditions of entry to the organisation’ that were proposed on the agenda for the group’s first meeting placed a restriction only on the age of those attending, suggest that women were welcome to join the organisation, no attempts are made in the first issue to represent the queer woman’s social or political interests. Indeed, female homosexual desire is entirely absent from the publication, and further excluded from the frameworks of queer desire that were employed within the magazine.

As well as a primary objective to stimulate the establishment of a support network, Ellenberger and François also hoped that the journal would serve a broader educative function. In an open letter to readers that fulfils both of these objectives, contributor “C.P” writes of the universal sense of isolation that existed among those who desired their own sex in Amsterdam, who had been ostracised because of the lack of understanding about queer desire among the general public: ‘We all feel the lack of unity and strong, honest bonds of friendship among those of us who, through a lack of understanding from society, are more or less regarded as outcasts’.[[546]](#footnote-546) C.P’s assertion is taken up in another article, ‘Try to Understand! To all those who are Normal’, by Ellenberger. Directing his plea to an unidentified “you” – a figure who represents opposite-sex desiring citizens – Ellenberger describes the role that “normal” people have played in the historical oppression of queer individuals, emphasising the role the same people could also play in their emancipation. Adopting a reproachful tone, Ellenberger rebukes the “normal” reader:

Do you know, that the happiness of so many is dependent on your judgement? […] It is a fact, that you have never tried to understand! […] You have judged us because you did not understand, you will never understand because you are not like us […] What is unnatural for you is normal [*gewoon*] for us: because we are born that way. […] Try to learn a little about us and our lives, then perhaps you may allow us to live in freedom as you do. Try to understand![[547]](#footnote-547)

Although many of the articles that were included in the first issue of *Wij* were aimed at encouraging queer citizens to join the ranks of a nascent and unnamed organisation, with this appeal Ellenberger also aimed at an educative function, like those periodicals that became popular in Berlin, so that *Wij* could play a role in the enlightenment of “normal” people regarding the plight of homosexuals.

Published at a time when the sexual networks that *Wij* strove to emulate had flourished in Berlin for almost a decade, same-sex experience in the magazine remains caught between the parameters of “normalcy” and “deviance”. The identitarian terms “homo-sexueel” and “Uranier” are rarely deployed in the magazine and, instead, the primary division is drawn between those who are “normal” and those who are not. Although there is doubtless an attempt to create a sense of collective identity in Amsterdam’s first queer periodical – hence the title of the magazine *Wij* – it is initially unclear who the collective pronoun “we” refers to. Despite what would have presumably been a lack of clarity for the reader outside of the “circle” (*kring*), the contributions create a sense of shared “pariah-status”, as one contributor coins it, that trumps all other notions of difference. Interestingly, neither political orientation nor religious faith feature strongly in the periodical and it appears that the desire to create a network that promotes ‘honest, strong, and general friendships’ transcends any other formation of (male) social identity. This unifying gesture in a pillarised Dutch society was an unusual move to make. The importance of unity to achieving the goal of social acceptance, however, was clearly more important to Ellenberger and François than the moral obligation of loyalty to their pillar. Indeed, as contributor C.P reassures: ‘Who I am, writing this, does not matter… I am like you … and that gives me the right and the duty to call myself your friend’.[[548]](#footnote-548)

Mindful of the limitations of drawing conclusions based on such a restricted sample of material, the content of *Wij* nonetheless highlights some interesting points about the structure of queer groups and identities in Amsterdam during the interwar era. Promoting the “masculine” ideals of ‘friendship and freedom’, it is evident from the content of the publication that the collective pronoun *Wij* was not primarily intended to include queer women. The periodical’s attempt to emulate Friedrich Radszuweit’s *Bund für Menschenrecht* and Adolf Brand’s endorsement of the publication, furthermore, suggest that the magazine was familiar with the masculinist discourses fostered by the two German organisations. That the issues or experiences of queer women are not mentioned anywhere in the magazine, even though women were also targeted by Article 248bis, supports Everard’s claim that the term “homosexueel” was considered only to relate to men in this period. When the *Empire* café was raided by the vice squad in 1932, Ellenberger was detained, forced to cease the publication of *Wij*, and the incipient movement that had grown around the magazine was disbanded. Yet, what of eighteen women who were also arrested that evening? Had they gone to the *Empire* with the intention of joining Ellenberger and François’ faction of the *Bund für Menschenrecht*? Did *Wij* speak to them and of their experiences? Or did they, like Stella Hartshalt-Zeehandelaar, Marie Rutgers-Hoitsma, Annette Versluys-Poelman, and Titia van der Tuuk, simply support the emancipation of queer men?

Little is known about the lives of these women or their reasons for being in the *Empire* that evening. After the raid, however, Ellenberger became increasingly disillusioned with the lack of support he was receiving from queer people and reached out to Jacob Schorer and the NWHK. Despite subscribing to the magazine, Schorer predicted the downfall of *Wij* on account of ‘the mentality of “our” people’ and because he considered the Netherlands ‘too small’ for such a periodical. He was happy, however, to accept new life into the NWHK committee, so long as the goals of the organisations did not ‘overlap’.[[549]](#footnote-549) Looking to the future of the collaboration, Schorer claimed that what was needed most was for people to come forward and be visible because: ‘a battle fought by anonymi never has a chance of success’.[[550]](#footnote-550) The visibility of queer desires that Schorer considered fundamental to furthering the movement for emancipation, was not a self-evident next step for many individuals. The formation of an identity around a shared sense of difference in the magazine *Wij*, rather than an established practice of self-reflexive identitarian labelling – as can be seen in the magazines *Die Freundin* and *Frauenliebe* as early as 1924 – highlights that same-sex desire remained a *crimen nefandum* (unmentionable vice) in the Netherlands even in the 1930s, discussed in mostly moral and religious terms. In fact, a more widespread political organisation of queer (male) individuals around a “label” and identity did not emerge until the end of the 1930s.

**Levensrecht**

In the year 1940, a second queer publication emerged in Amsterdam under the name *Levensrecht* (The Right to Live).The political and social significance of a queer magazine emerging during this historical moment is highly remarkable. In the eight years that had passed since *Wij* had ceased publication, tensions within Europe had escalated to the point of war. By the mid-1930s, fascist powers had their hooks firmly in some of the most powerful countries in the continent. Even in the Netherlands, as Dietrich Orlow observes, fascism had become ‘a well-organized political force that threatened the fabric of Dutch political pluralism’.[[551]](#footnote-551) Gone were the halcyon days of Berlin’s queer subculture. After Hitler took power in 1933, *Die Freundin* and *Frauenliebe* were required to cease publication and the vibrant queer nightlife that had made Berlin so (in)famous during the Weimar Era was forced underground. The anti-homosexual rhetoric that had been bubbling under the surface during Hitler’s rise to power was legitimated and further encouraged after the assassination of the leader of the Nazi *Sturmabteilung* (SA), Ernst Röhm, who was known to have had affairs with men. When war broke out in 1939, the Netherlands declared itself to be neutral. Yet on 10 May 1940, the Wehrmacht invaded and took control of the country. Only two months prior to this invasion, a second attempt had been made to bring together queer people under the banner of justice and to fight for their “right to live”.

In many respects, *Levensrecht* can be considered the successor of the earlier publication *Wij*. Both François, who published under his pseudonym Charley van Heezen, and Jaap van Leeuwen (1892-1978), who published under the pseudonym Arendt van Santhorst, had been involved with the production of *Wij*. Dismissing Schorer’s warnings, they were determined to demonstrate the potential of an educative medium that brought a community together; *Levensrecht*, they argued, was ‘necessary enlightenment’.[[552]](#footnote-552) Although the editors had clear didactic aims for the magazine, a new route to creating a queer community was developed by combining ‘education and entertainment’.[[553]](#footnote-553) This strategy was pioneered by radical socialist and editor of *Levensrecht*, Nico Engelschman (1913-1988), who later launched the social and political group ‘Centre for Culture and Leisure’ (*Cultuur en Ontspanningscentrum*, COC) in 1946, which still remains an important part of the queer community in Amsterdam today.

Engelschman (who wrote under the pseudonym Bob Angelo), was further supported by Van Leeuwen who, as Engelschman claimed, was ‘the brain’ of the organisation, and Johan Diekman (1896-1986) who was financially responsible for the periodical.[[554]](#footnote-554) Engelschman worked closely with the Dutch *zedenpolitie* to help identify pornographic material and, in this way, was able to ensure that his publication did not meet the same premature end as *Wij*.[[555]](#footnote-555) Although Van Leeuwen had been a friend of Jacob Schorer and a member of the NWHK since 1920, *Levensrecht* was not affiliated with the Dutch scientific humanitarian committee. Following Hirschfeld’s motto *per scientiam ad justitiam*,Schorer and the NWHK were resolute in the belief that only scientific study could bring about the emancipation of queer people and they rejected endeavours to establish social and cultural groups. Although *Levensrecht* often featured a socio-scientific or sexological study on the cover of the magazine, the focus of the periodical was primarily on literary submissions, book reviews, social developments, and political organisation. Reader letters were not printed in the magazine, which means it is not possible to track the engagement of readers with the content of the magazine or to gauge their appraisal of its themes. By April 1940, however, there were one hundred and ten subscribers, which had risen by May to one hundred and ninety. The diversity of this readership was alluded to in an editorial in the third issue of the publication, which declared that *Levensrecht* had received countless ‘colourful and varied’ letters from readers ‘from different places and from many milieus’.[[556]](#footnote-556)

The three copies of *Levensrecht* to appear in 1940 were each sixteen pages in length and could be purchased in ‘single copies’ (losse nummers) for 40 cents or as part of a subscription for 4 guilders per year. Production costs for *Levensrecht*, according to Engelschman, were covered by Diekman, about whom little is known. The yearly subscription costs and voluntary donations made by financial supporters also helped the magazine stay afloat. The initials of these generous benefactors appeared on the final page of the magazine, alongside the total figure that they had donated. To make the magazine accessible to a broader spectrum of society, a quarterly subscription price of 1 guilder and 25 cents was later introduced, presumably to break up a costly subscription. The price for international subscription was 5 guilders per year, emphasising an international outlook and desire to reach readers across national borders. A report from the editorial board in the third issue of the magazine claims that international readership figures rose after a promotional article about *Levensrecht* appeared in the Swiss homosexual periodical, *Menschenrecht*.[[557]](#footnote-557)

In terms of its content, *Levensrecht* consisted mainly of literary contributions and serial stories, reprints and extracts from novels, political calls to action, and news from the editorial board. The magazine also discussed historical figures, such as Shakespeare, Michelangelo, and Walt Whitman in what can be considered an early attempt to “recover” queer figures from history, a method that was also employed by queer magazines in Germany. With articles and literary items frequently “borrowed” from other sources, the magazine appears more a form of bricolage than an original contribution to queer knowledge, despite the calls to action and news content that was provided by the editorial board. As each issue began with an editorial focused on social and scientific developments relevant to the queer emancipation movement – such as ‘The Theory of Mutation and its Significance for our Society’ and ‘On the Liberated Individual and the New Society’ – it is possible to trace the theoretical frameworks that structured *Levensrecht* and the objectives of its editorial board. [[558]](#footnote-558)

The article ‘The Theory of Mutation and its Significance for our Society’ was printed as an abridged form of a lecture presented by Prof. Dr. Th. J Stomps at the University of Amsterdam in 1935. In it, psychoanalytical theories of queer desire, such as those disseminated by Sigmund Freud and H. J. Groenewegen, are declared to be ‘totally worthless’.[[559]](#footnote-559) Stomps describes ‘the problem of homosexuality’, as a problem of ‘intersexuality’ (*intersexualiteit*), a phenomenon that is neither ‘mysterious’ (*geheimzinnig*) nor ‘shameful’ (*schandelijk*) but one with which society should have sympathy. Those who are affected by homosexual impulses, Stomps argues, must forgo the highest of social experiences which gives life its purpose: ‘the founding of a family’.[[560]](#footnote-560) Stomps refers to studies on the eye colour of banana flies to demonstrate that gene mutation can cause variations in plants, insects, and humans. Stomps’ proposal that homosexuality was ‘not acquired […] but inborn’ was a position that had already been adopted in the earlier Dutch periodical, *Wij*, when Ellenberger defiantly claimed that “normal” people could not understand the lives of queer individuals as they had not been born that way.[[561]](#footnote-561) The publication of an article that dismisses psychoanalytic theories of homosexuality is indicative of the sexological turn in the Netherlands as discussed in Chapter Two. By the late 1930s, the theory of sexual inversion and its somatic signifiers had gained much more visibility and traction.

In the article ‘An Open Response to a Secret Correspondence’ in the second issue of the publication, the editorial staff take the anonymous “N.N” to task for a letter sent to the magazine claiming that queer people were a ‘mistake of nature’.[[562]](#footnote-562) The editors place their emphasis not only on the congenital nature of same-sex desires by claiming that ‘nature does not act unnaturally’, but they also point to the natural existence of an ‘infinite series of transitions’.[[563]](#footnote-563) Although *Wij* did not discuss the theory of sex-gender inversion – further evidence that the magazine was aligned with the BfM and the *Gemeinschaft der Eigene* (GdE) who rejected the image of the “Zwitter” – the editors of *Levensrecht* draw on Hirschfeld’s theories to promote a polymorphous image of sexual identity that was congenital rather than acquired: ‘no two leaves from a tree, no two human thumbs are the same. It would be a supernatural wonder if sexuality revealed itself to be uniform in nature’.[[564]](#footnote-564) The article further acknowledges the idea of (queer male) femininity, although it chides queer men for not standing up to ‘lads’ because their innate feminine disposition: ‘homosexuals are all too inclined, on account of their timid feminine disposition, to nod rapidly “yes”, even when the biggest lot of twaddle is barked at them by some “lad”’. [[565]](#footnote-565) In general, *Levensrecht* appears to have had a much stronger focus on the ‘unsolvable riddle’ (*onoplosbaar raadsel*) of the nature and origins of homosexual behaviours than its predecessor, suggesting a progression from the frameworks of normative/non-normative behaviours to an understanding of sexual preferences that considered “heterosexuality” and “homosexuality” as established congenital categories. Much like its predecessor, however, it appears only the experiences of men are worthy of discussion.

## Women and Levensrecht

In Van Leeuwen’s review of Benno Stokvis’ anthology *De homosexueelen*, readers of the magazine are presented with an insight into the paradoxical problem faced by queer women in the Netherlands by 1940. Due to the popularity of Stokvis’ text, the growing numbers of novels published about queer desires, the press reports of the moral scandal in The Hague in 1936 and the Dutch East Indies in 1939, and the increasing number of anti-homosexual religious pamphlets, there was a heightened level of social visibility for homosexual desire in Dutch society.[[566]](#footnote-566) Stokvis’ text in particular, discussed in Chapter Two, gave visibility to the queer woman through a discussion of her perceived masculinity. Despite this, or perhaps as a direct result of this increased visibility, there developed a growing sense of isolation for the ‘zoo-vrouw’. A paradox that Van Leeuwen approaches with sympathetic consideration in his review of Stokvis’ work under his pseudonym Arendt van Sandhorst:

On the subject of the women: nothing but praise. Without exception, we read her biographies with extreme interest. That it is for them, precisely as it is ‘comme chez nous’, was a revelation to us and increased our sympathy for this group of women, for whom it will frequently be even more difficult than it is for us, because there exist far fewer connections between them.[[567]](#footnote-567)

Although he does not dwell on the subject, Van Leeuwen alludes to the increasingly organised male homosexual subculture that had developed in Amsterdam by 1940 and the lack of women engaging with that network. Illustrated by the successful existence of *Levensrecht*, a growing scientific interest in the “visible” queer invert in the Netherlands, as well as the rising number of cafés and meeting points that were being established for queer people, there was an increased social recognition of what it meant to “be” a homosexual. The new visibility of female homosexuality within wider society, however, meant that same-sex intimacies between women had suddenly been pushed outside of the “natural” homosocial order into a more pathologised and suspect sphere, where intimacy between women – particularly when combined with gender deviance – could result in negative social consequences. As intimacies between women had not generally been viewed with suspicion until this period, there was not an established subculture or support network for queer female individuals. That the biographies about the experiences of queer women were a “surprise” for Van Leeuwen also suggests that women were not part of the wider groups or organisations for queer people, even the more “visible” masculine women, who made up the contributions in Stokvis’ collection.

Until the late 1930s, the ways in which ‘the sexes and their pleasures’ were organised in the Netherlands had been little removed from the world of ‘love and ritual’ that Smith-Rosenberg has described in her pioneering article on nineteenth century female romantic friendships.[[568]](#footnote-568) Homosocial networks continued to thrive in the early twentieth century in Dutch contexts and the “private” and “public” spheres remained the traditional domains of women and men until the 1930s. The notion that intimate networks of women who did not self-reflexively define their behaviours as ‘lesbian’ or ‘homosexual’ existed during the beginning of the interwar era, implies, as I have argued in the first half of this thesis, that sexological categories of homosexual desire did not accurately reflect the vicissitudes of Dutch women’s sexual experiences before 1940, as Van Leeuwen’s comments on Stokvis’ study suggest. This changing of the tide is also reflected in the editors’ understanding of the position of queer Dutch people in a new world order. Despite the admiration for German queer advances that could be seen in the articles published in *Wij,* a dawning of tolerance and a successful movement for homosexual emancipation was, by this time, no longer visible in Berlin. Editors of *Levensrecht* were less envious of the German ‘volksgeest’ and instead they remarked on their good fortune that they lived in a land ‘where this enlightenment [*Levensrecht* C.S] is still possible’.[[569]](#footnote-569)

**Conclusions**

As significant instruments in the processes of recognition, identification, and desire, queer periodicals in Germany and the Netherlands drew on a wide range of social, literary, and scientific discourses to create continually evolving community-based knowledges and “truths” about same-sex experiences. These periodicals were used both to educate the general public about the nature of queer people and acted as testing grounds for women to explore their desires and to create identities that were meaningful and recognisable to like-minded individuals. The development of queer media in Berlin and Amsterdam highlights important differences in the processes of Sapphic self-fashioning in the two cities. The change in the circulation of newspapers in Berlin from subscription to on-street purchase, as well as the growth of *Bezirksblätter* and a burgeoning homosexual club culture, facilitated the growth of minority publications that were supported by and disseminated among established homosexual groups. The content visible in these periodicals demonstrates, however, that there existed no single or universal opinion of what it meant to be a woman-who-desired-women in this period. While the magazines produced by the BfM focused primarily on political engagement and the replication of bourgeois rituals to ensure the incorporation of homosexual people into heterosexual paradigms, those of the DFV were formed around Hirschfeld’s theory of sexual intermediaries and influenced by a growing consumer culture that had emerged in the German metropolis. The finer points of the publications highlight subtle but important differences between the process of identity building in Berlin’s lesbian subculture and stress the disconnect that sometimes took place between the aims of the publication and the experiences and desires of the reader. Nonetheless, the establishment of a queer magazines for women meant that female readers could share experiences, build communities both real and imagined, and create truths and knowledges that the whole world could acknowledge.[[570]](#footnote-570)

In the Netherlands, the legacy of the *dagbladzegel*, the process of direct subscription and the lack of newspaper kiosks Amsterdam, as well as the growing presence of the *zedenpolitie* and the widespread belief that homosexuality could be acquired, meant the establishment of a queer Dutch press was hindered from the start. As the NWHK, the only recognised organisation campaigning for the emancipation of homosexual people, believed in emancipation through science as opposed to social activities and ventures, the development of a “pink press” was further hampered by the lack of an established group that could offer events at which readers could organise and socialise. The lack of visibility of female homosexual experiences in the Netherlands meant that women were overlooked in the publication of *Wij*, which instead focused on the experiences of “non-normative” and masculine men. *Levensrecht*, however, suggests that, at a time when male homosexual organisations were becoming more established in Amsterdam, queer women had still yet to gather and organise politically around a name or label in the same way.

The suggestion that more intimate networks of women, who did not self-reflexively define their behaviours as ‘lesbian’ or ‘homosexual’, existed during the beginning of the interwar era suggests the establishment of alternative frameworks of female same-sex desire in the Netherlands during the early twentieth century. These frameworks have, to this point, remained unexplored. The shifts that resulted in the increased visibility of lesbian desire after the 1930s, however, underlines the fragility of these homosocial structures, particularly within the wider context of the increasingly conservative social and political debates on ‘onzedelijk gedrag’ in Dutch interwar society. By looking more closely at what the silences and omissions in queer women’s history might tell us, a more comprehensive understanding of the historic configurations and organisations of same-sex desire in the Netherlands might be possible in the future.

# Part Three: Fictional Discourses

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# Introduction

[…] By chance I got my hands on a book about homosexuality. With it my eyes were forced wide open. My childhood, the mystified looks with which people sometimes stared at me, my restlessness, the feeling of abandonment, I saw it all now in its full significance.[[571]](#footnote-571)

‘XXIX’ Benno Stokvis, *De homosexueelen* (1939)

From the early fragments of poetry composed by Sappho for her female lovers to the gendered ambiguity of Virginia Woolf’s novel *Orlando* (1928), representations of queer love in literature and verse offer the present-day reader a window into the myriad ways in which same-sex desire has been configured and imagined across cultures and time. Although the literary text should not be held up as a mirror of the society and culture in which it was written – or even as representative of the audience for whom it was intended – it presents nonetheless an interpretation of broader cultural sentiments, as well as a creative and critical response to specific historical moments. As demonstrated in the first two sections of this thesis, scientific developments taking place in German speaking countries prior to the *fin-de-siècle* galvanised a growing social interest in sexual behaviours and taxonomical categorisations. This public curiosity in the meaning of sexual acts encouraged many authors around the turn of the twentieth century to take up “non-normative” sex and its subjects in their literary works.[[572]](#footnote-572) Although these novels focused chiefly on the experiences of queer men, the first half of the twentieth century also saw the figure of the fricatrice begin to stir the literary imagination.

Aimée Duc’s *Sind es Frauen: Roman über das dritte Geschlecht* (1901), Maria Eichhorn’s *Fräulein Don Juan* (1903), Alfred Döblin’s *Die beiden Freundinnen und ihr Giftmord* (1924), and Erich Kästner’s *Fabian: Die Geschichte eines Moralisten* (1931) are just a flavour of the complex and conflicted images of female same-sex desire that were presented in German literature in the early decades of the twentieth century. In some of these texts, the Sapphist was employed as a marker progress and enlightenment. In others, she was used symbolically as an omen of the dangers of a modern era. Although Germany was undoubtedly one of the largest producers of literary and scientific texts about same-sex desires, over forty-five literary works were published in the Netherlands in the period between 1880 and 1940 that explored themes about queer women, of which thirty-six were written originally in Dutch.[[573]](#footnote-573) Much like authors across the German border, Dutch writers tended to set their narratives in homosocial environments – such as the boarding school or the convent – although some Netherlandish authors, also keen to explore the “darker” side of homosexual desire in their writing, published novels on prostitution, the sexual decadence of artistic circles, and women’s prisons.[[574]](#footnote-574) It is clear even from a cursory overview of these novels, however, that the images of queer female desire emerging in European fictional writing in the early twentieth century were by no means monolithic.

The appearance of sexological themes in fiction at the *fin de siècle* marked a critical moment in the growth of sexual knowledges among the lay public. Fictional texts served not only to popularise contemporary medical discourses but also to make previously obscure sexual knowledges available to a much wider audience. For many readers, fictional texts offered an unparalleled forum in which they could explore the rapidly changing formations of sexual desire and identity in an increasingly “modern” society. Within the context of this thesis, however, fictional writing presents us with an insight into the various ways in which queer desires were conceptualised by women, whose voices, as we have seen, were often drowned out by the those of the male “expert”. Although women had rarely been the subjects of sexological study within their own right, queer female writers, as Doan observes, engaged with sexological writing in order ‘to create, out of the very texts that had marginalized and even excluded them, innovative reconceptualizations of the lesbian subject’.[[575]](#footnote-575)

In the final two chapters of this thesis, therefore, I will examine the approaches of four female authors to the construction of queer feminine desires and identities in fictional texts between 1919-1939. Looking at what Anna Katherina Schaffner has termed the ‘conceptual transfer’ between ‘imaginary and scientific narratives’, I will assess the extent to which the social and sexological discourses about the queer feminine woman that I have hitherto discussed become visible in these novels as well as the ways in which my chosen authors challenge dominant discourses about queer femininity.[[576]](#footnote-576) Presenting at once a model of identification and the promise of possibility, the synthesis of contemporary sexological research with the literary imagination provided women with an essential platform upon which to explore the gendered specificity of the struggle with sexological categories and names. Bearing in mind the divergences between discourses of queer female desire in Germany and the Netherlands that I have outlined until this point, my literary analysis will redress the discursive invisibility of queer Dutch women, who were largely missing from subcultural publications and sexological writing. Furthermore, to maintain a balanced inquiry between German and Dutch literary writing during a period fraught with tremendous social and political upheaval, comparing novels by Dutch and German writers from across the interwar era will enable me not only to map the affinities that existed across territorial borders but also the differences in the norms that appear in women’s cultural productions during this turbulent time.

# Sexology and the Literary Imagination

The “conceptual exchange” taking place between sexological and literary texts at the beginning of the twentieth century was not a new phenomenon. Indeed, the sexual sciences already had an established tradition of borrowing from images found in the literary world. As discussed in Chapter Two, the sophisticated schema of sexual subcategories created by Karl Heinrich Ulrichs had been shaped largely by Aristophanes’ speech in Plato’s *Symposium*. Later, Richard von Krafft-Ebing also acknowledged his debt to literature, and particularly the novels of Marquis de Sade and Leopold von Sacher-Masoch, when he coined the terms “sadism” and “masochism”.[[577]](#footnote-577) Although Krafft-Ebing famously published the more explicit sections of his work in Latin to prevent it from being accessed by salacious lay readers, improving the accessibility of an educated (male) public to sexual knowledges had become of vital importance to many sexual scientists by the end of the nineteenth century. Given the increased popularity of – and accessibility to – pornographic writing, as well as the growing concerns around venereal disease and prostitution, it was a social imperative for sexual scientists that male readers were versed in the dangers of human sexual behaviours. To bridge the discursive gap between the scientific expert and the educated reader, literature was often employed in sexological studies, as Heike Bauer notes, as ‘a common language’ and conduit for conceptual chasms, making critical concepts in sexological theory ‘available to readers without scientific training’.[[578]](#footnote-578)

The complex imbrications between literature and sexology are demonstrated best, perhaps, by returning briefly to the collection *De homosexueelen* (1939). Compiled by lawyer and author Benno Stokvis, and concluded with an excerpt from the work of French novelist Emile Zola (1840-1902), the first Dutch anthology of homosexual experience included several “autobiographical” contributions in literary form. One of the nine female autobiographies to appear in the compilation, for example, has been identified by Myriam Everard as a text by Dutch author Anna Blaman (1905-1960). Placed alongside other “traditional” autobiographical accounts, Blaman’s auto-fictive contribution on the tragic love life of masculine protagonist “Hansi” was analysed by sexologists in much the same way as the “traditional” autobiographies in the collection, and was considered a tool to further the scientific understanding of queer female desire.

The importance of literature to women’s recognition of their queer desires also becomes clear in non-fictional contributions. Entry “XXXI”, for example, recalls her first encounter with Radclyffe Hall’s writing, noting the importance of Hall’s novel in the recognition of her own sexual difference: ‘When I was about twenty years old, I read *The Well of Loneliness.* […] and with great joy, I would even go so far as to say: gratitude, I realised that love between two women is possible’.[[579]](#footnote-579) For this woman, and two others in the collection besides her, Hall was a paragon of queer knowledge, presenting them with their first model of queer female experience as well as the understanding that there were others like them.[[580]](#footnote-580) As “discourses of desire”, then, sexology and literature have long and intertwining histories; since the early nineteenth century activists, physicians, and psychologists had drawn on literary examples to develop and disseminate theories about same-sex desires. From the *fin de siècle*,authors were also employing sexological tropes in their fictional work and were conceived of, in many respects, as dutiful “educators” of the lay reader.

In the Netherlands, where sexual desire was not considered a defining characteristic of women’s social identities until the late 1930s, the growing significance of the field of psychoanalysis informed much of the writing about queer desires; the emphasis was not placed upon physical inversion of gendered traits but a psychic inversion. Yet, as has been emphasised throughout this thesis, the stress on somatic theories of sexological inversion in German-speaking countries gave rise to the enduring figure of the virile female invert. From the publication of Westphal’s study of Fräulein N., who felt herself to be a man, masculinity became a key marker of congenital – and therefore “natural” – queer desire in women. The most famous example of fictionalised female inversion can be found in the protagonist of Hall’s ground-breaking novel: self-identified invert Stephen Gordon. Incorporating a variety of established genres, ‘including the medical case study, the romance and the *Bildungsroman*’, Hall’s novel was profoundly shaped by the case studies on female inversion recorded in Krafft-Ebing’s *Psychopathia Sexualis*.[[581]](#footnote-581) The incorporation of case studies into sexological theory following Westphal’s research on Fräulein N., marked a fundamental shift in the collection of scientific data about sex, and particularly about queer female desires. Sexologists weaved the “confessions” from their sources into contextualising descriptions of physical aberrations and familial psychiatric histories to create narratives from the dialogue between physician and patient. Through this mediated form of scientific “confession”, the voice of the patient was given authority within sexological theories and studies in a way that it had not been before.[[582]](#footnote-582)

The privileging of certain aspects of patient testimonies and the omission of others was considered a necessary measure to create a cohesive and convincing theoretical framework. In this way, as André Jolles suggests, the sexological case study can be considered to belong ‘to the very archetypes of narration’, making it no surprise that when a surge of fictional texts on queer desires began to emerge in the early twentieth century, ‘case-like narratives’ were among some of the most popular literary genres.[[583]](#footnote-583) The growing significance of the field of psychoanalysis at this time, wherein the focus was altered from what the patient *said* to the exploration of the unarticulated and “unconscious” desires of an individual, also served to stimulate the emergence of a number of psychological novels. Although some authors employed the model of the sexological case study in their writings to make visible elements of queer experience, much like Hall, there was also an increasing number of authors who considered the safeguarding of the binary that positioned female homosexual desires as “abnormal” and “masculine” to be detrimental to the wider interests of social progress and political emancipation.[[584]](#footnote-584) New methods and approaches in fictional discourses were needed, it seemed, to depict the experiences of queer feminine women in literary form, who had often been sidelined in the case study.

Exploring how these two strands of psycho-medical theory appear to have influenced the conceptualisation of queer desire in fictional discourses in German and Dutch contexts, I will compare two texts that employ the case study as their frame of reference and two texts that deviate from this form. First examining Eva Raedt-de Canter’s *Internaat* (The Boarding School, 1930) and Christa Winsloe’s *Das Mädchen Manuela* (1933), I will consider how texts that foreground the experiences of the queer “tomboy” place the queer feminine woman in the position of desired “object” and inquire how femininity might figure in the experiences of the protagonist’s themselves. Second, I will compare Josine Reuling’s *Terug naar het eiland* (Back to the Island, 1937) and Anna Elisabet Weirauch’s trilogy *Der Skorpion* (1919-1931), two novels that sought to present the experiences of queer feminine protagonists and whose narratives challenged sexological discourses by deviating from models of congenital inversion.

# A Literary Que(e)ry

The texts discussed in this section under the category “queer fiction” have long since been uncontested as works belonging to the “lesbian literary canon”.[[585]](#footnote-585) Yet while some of the texts under consideration in the final two chapters of this thesis were received as engagements with female same-sex desire directly after their publication, others were only classified as such after their “rediscovery” by feminist literary critics in the 1970s. Furthermore, although some of the fictional texts chosen for this analysis explicitly articulate same-sex desires through textual declarations of love and lust, such as Weirauch’s *Der Skorpion*, others, like Raedt-de Canter’s *Internaat*, arguably produce their queer elements through the complex interation between a reader and text. Although I will not explicitly be engaging in the process of “queering” literature in this section – that is, moving away from texts previously identified as LGB to focus on actions that resist normativity in “straight” narratives – using “queer” as a descriptor to denote a category in any sense requires a degree of explanation. Is “queer fiction” being used here to refer only to authors who self-define as LGBTQ and who write for such audiences? Can a novel be classified as “queer” only when a character’s sexual or gendered difference is central to the trajectory of the narrative? Or, do I suggest that any text that subverts hegemonic sexual or gendered norms be considered queer?

Of course, the questions I propose here are not new. Bonnie Zimmerman noted already in 1981 that gay literary criticism has been consistently ‘plagued with the problem of definition’.[[586]](#footnote-586) Arriving at the conclusion that the central tenet of “lesbian literature” places ‘love between women, including sexual passion, at the centre of its story’, Zimmerman built on Lilian Faderman’s earlier contention that the term “lesbian narrative” should be used broadly to ‘signal content about female same-sex emotional and physical relationships’.[[587]](#footnote-587) Judith Roof, however, later broke away from these interpretations to argue that lesbian literature is not only marked by the presence of love between women but also the *absence* of it, and suggested an understanding of lesbian literature that is ‘enacted by the perpetual interplay of desire and lack’.[[588]](#footnote-588) In a manner similar to Roof, Dutch literary scholar and cultural historian Maaike Meijer has proposed a practice of ‘reading as a lesbian’ (lezen als lesbo), a process that ‘consists of a knowledge of context and codes, of lesbian history and of other lesbian texts, from a willingness to allow for lesbian meanings, from a sensibility for what has been silenced’.[[589]](#footnote-589)

Concisely outlining the definitional issues that have been encountered by academics in their pursuit to define literary accounts as “lesbian”, and which could also be extended to queer, cultural critic and literary scholar Marilyn Farwell contends:

Lesbian narrative is a problematic category because it involves two contested terms: lesbian and narrative. Lesbian narrative […] has become over the last twenty-five years a complex theoretical problem dividing current literary critics and theorists, pitting anti-essentialists against essentialists, pro-narrative against anti-narrative factions and political lesbian-feminists from the 1970s and their descendants against the queer theorists of the 1990s.[[590]](#footnote-590)

As Farwell suggests, there exists a fundamental rift between scholars who conceive of the ‘lesbian narrative as a text determined by the shared experiences among identifiably lesbian authors, readers, and characters’, and those who employ queer deconstructionism to ‘treat lesbian as a fluid and unstable term and the narrative as a powerful if not closed ideological system into which lesbians enter only to be entangled in a heterosexual, male story’. [[591]](#footnote-591) While I agree with the methodological points of departure employed by Roof, Meijer, and Farwell in the studies mentioned above, and I acknowledge the important contributions that have been made to the study of same-sex desires in literature through such practices, I maintain that, much like the definitional issues surrounding the term “lesbian history”, as discussed in Part One of this thesis, “lesbian literature” presupposes a conclusion about the construction of desire within a text that closes it to other interpretations.

As the novels that I have chosen for this analysis frequently resist the progress narratives that have inspired scholars in their quest to recover lesbian pasts, the concept of queer reading “as process” appears much more in line with the aims of this project. Writing in the aftermath of the AIDS crisis of the 1980s, an endemic that had put ‘queer literary production […] under severe pressure’, Eve Sedgwick outlined a practice of queer reading that:

begins or moves toward sites of same-sex, interpersonal eroticism – but not necessarily so. […] An often quiet, but very palpable presiding image […] is the interpretive absorption of the child or adolescent whose sense of personal queerness may or may not (*yet?*) have resolved into a sexual specificity of proscribed object choice, aim, site, or identification.[[592]](#footnote-592)

Sedgwick’s recognition of the non-identification of sexual desire and her awareness of sexual experiences that have not, or do not, result in the ‘specificity of proscribed object choice […] or identification’ presents an approach to German and Dutch literature that is open to the idea that women writers were not defining their desires in terms of an identitarian practice or, indeed, were defining their desires in such ways that do not conform to our current understandings of “lesbianism”. Remaining open to the ‘mesh of possibilities, gaps, overlaps, dissonances and resonances, lapses and excesses of meaning’ that textual expressions of same-sex desire might result in, Sedgwick’s approach enables a comparison of two diverse literary, social, and sexological contexts.[[593]](#footnote-593) Thus, while I recognise that “queer literature” is not an unproblematic designation, I employ the category nonetheless in an attempt to discover what the ‘lapses and excesses of meaning’ in fictional writing might tell us about a novel that reclaiming a text as “lesbian” cannot.

# Women Writers

When we speak of women writers in the early twentieth century, it is not only descriptors such as “lesbian” or “queer” that require explanation. Within this context, the terms “literature” and “fiction” can be considered equally contestable. Although increasing numbers of female authors entered the literary sphere in Germany and the Netherlands in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries – and with novels that attained commercial success – publications produced by women writers were commonly conceived of as literature of a “lower form” and, as such, were dismissed by the literary elite. The postwar hostility to women’s growing ambitions in the cultural and social domain, as discussed in Chapter One, fed further into an already established sentiment that women were ‘not capable of matching dominant masculine artistic production’ or, as literary critic and historian Annie Romein-Verschoor concluded in the 1930s, that women writers were simply ‘not cut from the same cloth […] from which Balzacs were made’. [[594]](#footnote-594)

Disparagingly dismissed as “novelettes for ladies”, “vrouwenromanen”, or “Frauenliteratur”, fiction produced by female authors in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries focused primarily on the opportunities available to (bourgeois) women in the domestic sphere. This emphasis on the gendered domain of the home led to women’s work being criticised as “hyperfeminine”. Indeed, both Eva Raedt-de Canter and Josine Reuling were criticised by Romein-Verschoor with a damning indictment of their writings as ‘too womanly’: ‘In the last decade, there have appeared several women’s novels that […] characteristically give free reign to feminine, sometimes all too feminine, features. We include in this the works of Eva Raedt-de Canter, of Henriëtte Mooy, of Josine Reuling, and the fresh, lone contribution of Jo Zwartendijk’.[[595]](#footnote-595) Classed as a category apart from their male counterparts, who had shaped the literary canon, a tension began to develop in women’s writing between ‘the artistic tradition they aspired to enter and the fiction they wanted to create’.[[596]](#footnote-596)Women’s literature, a category that ‘trotz Stimmrecht und Gleichberechtigung, […] mit einem spöttischen Unterton ausgesprochen [wird]’, was seen as an unsuccessful mimicry of the work of male authors.[[597]](#footnote-597) Women writers supposedly employed ‘männlichen Denk- oder Ausdrucksweise’ and were incapable of the innovation needed to create works of literary greatness.[[598]](#footnote-598) The effect of this in the Netherlands, as Fenoulhet observes, was that many female authors and their works were effectively disqualified from the field of literature.

The campaign of Central European literary “gatekeepers” to keep women from entering the literary canon, as Fenoulhet notes further, must be considered largely successful in the Netherlands, given that Dutch female authors are rarely discussed in literary histories.[[599]](#footnote-599) Indeed, as Elaine Showalter has convincingly argued in *A Literature of Their Own* (1977), the ‘exclusion of women’s writing from serious critical consideration’ and the ‘hostility towards female authorship and feminine values’, essentially stigmatised women’s writing and prevented it from being perceived as significant or relevant either to the contemporary reader or the literary historian.[[600]](#footnote-600) Within the German context, however, female authors enjoyed greater acceptance in the literary world and had been publishing well-received novels since the mid-eighteenth century and enjoying relatively successful literary careers by the early twentieth century. An indication of the divergence in the ways women’s writing has been appraised in Germany and the Netherlands can be seen in the fervent attempts to uncover theprehistories and predecessors of women’s writing in the 1970s and 1980s. Pioneered by feminist publishing houses, a number of neglected women’s novels were reprinted and achieved a new following during this time.[[601]](#footnote-601) The novels of both Winsloe and Weirauch were reprinted by the Krug and Schadenberg and Askansicher publishing houses respectively. Fenoulhet’s contention that female Dutch writers have been largely ignored in literary histories – and, indeed, more broadly from the recovery agenda of feminist organisations – appears largely correct as neither Raedt-de Canter’s nor Reuling’s novels have yet been reprinted and are currently available only in antiquarian bookshops and specialist archives. In many ways, therefore, despite not attempting to present a “recovery agenda” in a traditional sense in this thesis, the following chapters will nonetheless bring to an English-speaking audience Dutch novels that have largely been ignored in queer literary histories.

In Chapter Five, I will explore the extent to which sexological theories appear to have shaped narratives of adolescent queerness and the constituent objects of their desires. Focusing on Raedt-de Canter’s *Internaat* and Winsloe’s *Das Mädchen Manuela*,I will first outline the extent to which the novels reflect the social and sexological discourses of their time, suggesting what this engagement might tell us about broader cultural discourses about identity and sexuality. Although, as I have already discussed, early twentieth century sexological research accorded the experiences of masculine women a certain cachet, a comparison between Winsloe’s and Raedt-de Canter’s novels highlight the limits of employing a “sexological lens” to identify same-sex desires in literary texts. Although Winsloe’s novel draws explicitly on the format of the sexological case study to explore the sexual development of her protagonist, Raedt-de Canter’s work gives only a nod to the nascent sexological studies emerging in the Netherlands. Despite presenting a non-traditional female protagonist who engages in same-sex acts, Raedt-de Canter’s focus on the impact of religious teachings on her protagonist opens the text up to readings that resist the conclusions of the lesbian recovery agenda. By considering the role of “confession” in the novels, I will explore the ways in which Winsloe’s and Raedt-de Canter’s protagonists are perceived as a threat to the heteronormative order of power.Following this analysis, I will look at the role of the feminine “object” in both novels, considering the extent to which queer feminine desires are made visible through the figure of the inverted tomboy and, ultimately, the role of the maternal in the conceptualisation of queer feminine desire.

Chapter Six will offer a “counterpoint” to the figure of the queer tomboy, by comparing two novels that decentre the sexological invert and take as their respective protagonists a queer feminine woman.[[602]](#footnote-602) In both Weirauch’s trilogy *Der Skorpion* and Reuling’s *Terug naar het eiland*, the reader is presented with a young feminine protagonist from a wealthy bourgeois family. Juxtaposing established sexological signifiers with subtle subcultural cyphers, *Terug naar het eiland* and *Der Skorpion* each offer a departure from binary definitions of gendered and sexual preference and, ultimately, a reconfiguration of sexological systems altogether. Looking at the rejection of the queer community in both novels, I will consider the extent to which we can argue that the femininity of Weirauch’s and Reuling’s protagonists position them in ‘“nonlesbian” subject positions’.[[603]](#footnote-603) Comparing the concepts of queer desire, its relationship to gender and class, and the sexual and gendered alternatives proposed by Weirauch and Reuling, I will describe the codification of sexual difference in novels that resist the traditional trope of gendered inversion. As I turn to my conclusion, I will compare these cultural documents more broadly, considering what the shifts between the novels indicate in terms of the discursive construction of queer feminine desires in two cultural contexts, and during a time ‘where women began to work on their own subjectivity through the act of writing’.[[604]](#footnote-604)

## Chapter Five: A Mother’s Love: Eva Raedt-de Canter’s *Internaat* (1930) and Christa Winsloe’s *Das Mädchen Manuela* (1933)

The wild-spirited tomboy was a site of fervent social contention in the early twentieth century. Long established as a symbol of resistance and nonconformity, the tomboy divided social commentators and medical authorities. While some conceived of tomboyism as a ‘positive and beneficial phenomenon’ for young women, which promoted healthier and more active lifestyles for girls, others detected in the tomboy’s scraped knees, unruly curls and scowling face the early signs of sexual dissidence.[[605]](#footnote-605) At a time when the aetiology of homosexual desire was one of the greatest preoccupations of the sexological world, it is perhaps unsurprising that the gender non-conforming tomboy had become a figure of social suspicion and sexological interest. Driven by a desire to experience the social mobilities accorded to her male counterparts, the tomboy was a wilful and headstrong individual, who rejected activities specific to her sex and transgressed the strict boundaries established by the social conventions of the female role. For those sexologists and physicians who subscribed to the theory of sexual inversion, the tomboy – and her male equivalent, the “sissy” – was a crucial confirmation of their central thesis, which was contingent upon evidence of childhood gender non-conformity. Indeed, in later editions of *Psychopathia Sexualis*, for example, Krafft-Ebing speaks unceremoniously about the existence of ‘Urningsmädchen’ and ‘Urningsjungen’, presenting tomboyism as the primary sign of latent homosexual desire in women:

Der Lieblingsaufenthalt des weiblichen Urnings ist der Tummelplatz der Knaben. In deren Spielen sucht er mit ihnen zu rivalisieren. Von Puppen will das Urningsmädchen nichts wissen, seine Passion ist das Steckenpferd, das Soldaten- und Räuberspiel. [...] Schmerzliche Reflexionen ruft das Bewusstsein hervor, als Weib geboren zu sein [...] Gross ist der Drang, auch Haar und Zuschnitt der Kleidung männlich zu tragen, unter günstigen Umständen sogar in der Kleidung des Mannes aufzutreten und als solcher zu imponieren.[[606]](#footnote-606)

It is not only the rejection of traditional feminine pastimes in Krafft-Ebing’s account that points to congenital homosexuality, however, but also the compulsion (*Drang*) tocross-dress and adopt “male” behaviours to remedy the painful awareness of the limits of one’s biological sex. In the later article ‘Das urnische Kind’ (1903), Hirschfeld builds on Krafft-Ebing’s theory that it was possible to “diagnose” homosexuality in pre-pubescent children, claiming that he had frequently been able to make ‘die Diagnose Uranismus’ in children between the ages of ten and fourteen.[[607]](#footnote-607) Armed with an extensive collection of data from a selection of his longitudinal case studies, Hirschfeld returned to one of his early subjects, a sensitive and emotional thirteen-year-old boy who suffered from migraines, to highlight the natural progression from the boy’s inborn *Mädchenhaftigkeit* to his later desire for the male sex: ‘Aus dem urnischen Kinde war ein homosexueller Mann geworden mit derselben Naturnotwendigkeit mit der sich aus dem Normalkinde ein heterosexueller Mensch entwickelt’.[[608]](#footnote-608)

Although the images outlined above appear to present the gender-nonconforming child as a homogenous figure who defies the gender-specific standards of any given society, exactly how one defines a ‘transgression into boys’ territory’, as Lynne Yamaguchi and Karen Barber have noted, differs in every socio-cultural context and for each individual.[[609]](#footnote-609) Accounting for the significance of class, location, and historical specificity in relation to how we define a gender “transgression”, Michelle Abate writes:

wearing bloomers may have been the epitome of tomboyish daring during the nineteenth century, but that is no longer the case today. Similarly, working outside the home is often seen as the apogee of tomboyish independence for wealthy women, but it is a basic fact of life for their working-class counterparts. Finally, plowing the fields, baling hay or herding livestock might seem acutely tomboyish for many urban girls, but it constitutes a common chore for those who live on a farm or ranch.[[610]](#footnote-610)

Further to the rural/urban divide that Abate outlines above, racial and religious markers of identity – as well as broader geo-political frameworks – play a crucial role in how gender non-conforming behaviours are constructed and policed. Exactly what constitutes gender dissidence within a specific cultural context, and what such gender deviant behaviours may – or may not – signify, further shapes the comparison of the tomboy protagonists in Dutch author Eva Raedt-Canter’s *Internaat* (1930) and German writer Christa Winsloe’s novel *Das Mädchen Manuela* (1933).

As discussed in the first section of this thesis, sexological writing on inversion had fixed the figure of the virile homosexual woman firmly in the German cultural imagination. In fact, ‘die Vermännlichung der Frau’ was an idea so pervasive in the German media, as Sutton suggests, that the image of the masculine woman had ‘burned itself well into the national psyche’ by the early 1920s.[[611]](#footnote-611) Prior to the publication of Stokvis’ *De homosexueelen* in 1939*,* however, such sexological signifiers had been slow to gain traction in Dutch circles and the relationship between gender deviance and homosexual desire was not considered axiomatic. Through my reading of the act of confession in Raedt-de Canter’s *Internaat* and Christa Winsloe’s *Das Mädchen Manuela*, novels that both feature tomboy protagonists and scenes of same-sex desire, I hope to demonstrate the limits of employing the sexological lens of inversion across cultural borders to read “lesbianism” into literary texts. As Karen Lovaas observes, fiction that explores themes of sexual difference is often ‘read and re-read as having always contained the [protagonist’s] “true self”’.[[612]](#footnote-612) Yet, while Raedt-de Canter’s novel depicts the experiences of a queer tomboy, identitarian politics of the “Self” and “Other” do not manifest themselves in the narrative as one might expect. Instead, it is a religious framework that informs the discussion of desire in terms of “acts” as opposed to “identities”. In Christa Winsloe’s novel, a narrative that engages explicitly with the framework of the sexological case study, queer desires emerge through discourses of sickness and pathology. In both novels, however, it is the figure of the mother and the eroticisation of the maternal that informs the sexual object choices of the protagonists.

After establishing the extent to which sexological frameworks appear to shape the narratives, I will examine the act of “confession” in the two novels, reading scenes of revelation as Foucauldian “technologies of the self’’ and concluding what such processes tell us – or do not tell us – about how the protagonists come to “know” themselves as sexual subjects. Second, by shifting the focus to the object of the queer tomboy’s desire, I will explore the role of the maternal object in emerging discourses of queer feminine desire. As Raedt-de Canter’s novel is virtually unknown outside queer Dutch circles, however, and Winsloe’s novel makes several important departures from the plot of her film *Mädchen in Uniform* (1931), I will preface my analysis with a brief biographical sketch of the two authors and a summary of their texts.

## Eva Raedt-de Canter (1900-1975)

Born in Breda in 1900, little is known about the personal life of Eva Raedt-de Canter, the pseudonym adopted by Dutch author Anna Elisabeth Johanna de Mooy. Secretary of the literary journal *Groot Nederland* (Great Netherlands), Raedt-de Canter published several successful psychological novels in the 1930s that explored the experiences of women, children, and family life. Working as a translator, Raedt-de Canter was thoroughly proficient in at least German, Czech, and English, and produced the Dutch translations for Heinrich Hauser’s *Het laatste zeilschip* (The Last Sailing Ships, 1931), Karel Čapek’s *Het jaar van den tuinman* (The Gardener’s Year, 1932), and Humphrey Cobb’s *Kogels en kruisen* (Paths of Glory, 1947), among others. During her literary career, Raedt-de Canter was a familiar face in artistic and bohemian circles. Yet, despite the themes of gender, identity, and sexuality that emerge across several of her works, she is not known to have had any specific connections to the queer circuits in Amsterdam or Berlin that have been described in earlier sections of this thesis. Married initially to the Dutch sculptor Jacobus “Jaap” Kaas, with whom she had one daughter, Raedt-de Canter later married ceramicist and sculptor Willem Hendrik de Vries.[[613]](#footnote-613)

Described as an author of ‘undeniable talent’ in the social democratic *Utrechts volksblad* in 1938, Raedt-de Canter was a popular writer in the Netherlands prior to the Nazi invasion.[[614]](#footnote-614) Her most successful works of this era explored the effects of enforced homosocial environments on women, such as her debut *Internaat* (Boarding School, 1930) and her later novel *Vrouwengevangenis* (Women’s Prison, 1935). The innovative style that she employed in her debut, a strategy that fundamentally incorporates the reader into the diegesis through a frenetic second-person non-linear narrative, led to critical acclaim and comparisons were drawn between her writings and those of pioneering feminist author Carry van Bruggen (1881-1932).[[615]](#footnote-615) The experimental style employed by Raedt-de Canter in *Internaat* garnered a generous critical reception. Published originally in 1930 by Querido, and once again in a new edition in 1934 as part of the publishing house’s “Salamander” collection – a compendium of the ‘best original Dutch and translated novels’ – *Internaat* was celebrated by critics for being as ‘fresh as the spring wind’.[[616]](#footnote-616) Critic Roel Houwink (1899-1987) even concluded in the literary journal *Den Gulden Winckel* (The Golden Shop) that to enjoy Raedt-de Canter’s novel ‘one simply had to open it’.[[617]](#footnote-617) Reviews of *Internaat* from socialist and liberal newspapers further praised the text for its depiction of ‘the narrow-minded bigotry of the unworldly nuns’, with critics carousing in its criticism of ‘the foolish, rotten, heartlessness of the petty pedagogues’.[[618]](#footnote-618) Given the general hostility towards women writers by most literary critics, however, as discussed in the introduction to this section, attitudes towards Raedt-de Canter’s work soon soured after the initial success of her novels. Although she published ‘book after book’ before 1940, Raedt-de Canter and her contributions to Dutch literature faded into relative obscurity following the end of the Second World War, and she published little before her death in Edam in 1975.[[619]](#footnote-619)

## Christa Winsloe (1888-1944)

Born twelve years before Raedt-de Canter in the provincial town of Darmstadt in 1888, Christa Winsloe was sent to a boarding school in Potsdam following the death of her mother and brother. Leaving the *Kaiserin-Augusta-Stift* in 1905, Winsloe studied in Munich and travelled widely around Germany and Italy establishing herself as an animal sculptor. In 1913, after marrying the Hungarian Baron Lajos Hatvany (1880-1961), Winsloe moved to live in the Hatvan Castle in Hungary, travelling between Budapest, Berlin, and Vienna for her work. After her divorce from Hatvany in 1922, an event that she claimed ‘hurt her very much’, Winsloe relocated to Berlin, where she began publishing articles in the *Berliner Tageblatt*, *Querschnitt*, and *Tempo*, before making her breakthrough with the play *Ritter Nérestan* in 1930, a play about the schoolgirl Manuela.[[620]](#footnote-620)

Critics at the debut performance in Leipzig were surprised by the strength of a piece consisting solely of female characters and impressed with the skill with which Winsloe’s script had been brought to the stage. The following year, the play was performed in Berlin under the direction of Leontine Sagan (1889-1974), bearing the new title: *Gestern und Heute*.[[621]](#footnote-621) The success of both productions saw Winsloe engaged alongside Friedrich Dammann (1901-1969) as a screenwriter for the film adaptation *Mädchen in Uniform* (1931). Directed again by Sagan, the movie made cinematic history as the first feature film to consist of an almost entirely female ensemble. Yet, while the casting and crew remained virtually unchanged, there was a notable departure from the original plot of the play. While Sagan had directed the play in Berlin as ‘purely lesbian’, the notion of queer desire in the film was muted and Manuela ultimately survives her experience at the austere Prussian boarding school.[[622]](#footnote-622) Despite the alterations that had been made to the plot and dénouement of Winsloe’s original story, however, the film was deemed ‘ein großer Erfolg’ and Winsloe became ‘weltberühmt – wenn auch nur für kurze Zeit’.[[623]](#footnote-623)

Following the release of the film, Winsloe met the influential American journalist Dorothy Thompson (1893-1961), with whom she had had brief interactions during her marriage to Hatvany and they began a passionate affair.[[624]](#footnote-624) When Hitler assumed power in 1933, they relocated to the United States, where Winsloe worked as a journalist and published the novel *Das Mädchen Manuela* in Amsterdam with exile publishers Allert de Lange.[[625]](#footnote-625) Ultimately, however, Winsloe moved back to Europe in 1938, leaving Thompson behind in America, and travelled around the French Riviera where she met the French-Swiss pianist and novelist Simone Gentet (1898-1944). The pair embarked on a turbulent romantic relationship and travelled together through France after the outbreak of the Second World War. Shortly after they arrived in Burgundy, they were shot dead on 10 June 1944 by a criminal who claimed to be working for the French resistance and believed that the couple were German spies.[[626]](#footnote-626)

## *Internaat* (1930)

A subscript on the original cover of Eva Raedt-de Canter’s debut novel recommends that *Internaat* be read as ‘a complaint [...] that pictures the perilous, anxious, joyless, and cruelly damaged life of a child’.[[627]](#footnote-627) Written in a second-person form, the novel tells the story of a young student, Eva, who finds herself trapped in the ‘world of horror’ of a religious boarding school.[[628]](#footnote-628) The intersubjectivity generated by the reader-protagonist-author relationship encourages a heightened sense of empathy with the protagonist as the reader partakes in her joys and pains and shares in the sense of guilt for the “sins” that she commits. Commencing with the words, ‘at five o’clock the bell rings like a distant horror in your dreams’, the novel spans the events of an academic year at a French boarding school and explores the ‘suffocating shadow’ of Catholicism, embodied by the severe and cruel Soeur Alphonse.[[629]](#footnote-629)

Divided into five chapters, the reader is made privy to the physical and mental punishments that the protagonist undergoes for her perceived rebellion against religious and moral value systems. During the first half of the text, which is restricted to the confines of the school, the protagonist is made to copy the Nicene Creed forty times from memory for refusing to bow to Soeur Alphonse and is forced to sit outside in winter without a jacket for speaking out of turn. Later, the protagonist is banished to a room filled with disturbing stuffed animals for smearing polish onto her classmate as they clean their shoes. After her punishments, which are depicted at an almost feverish pace in the non-linear narrative, the protagonist is sent to confess to her sins; an instrumental and formalised act that involves the protagonist’s engagement in a self-regulatory and reflective process of examination. Following the protagonist’s confession, she is forced to pay penance, an act that is curiously omitted from the text. Despite the drudgery of school life, however, the story is nonetheless peppered with compassionate characters, most notably the motherly nurse Veronica, the older student Fenna, and an unknown girl who kisses the protagonist each evening before bed.

In the second half of the text, the reader is gradually introduced to life outside of the school grounds. Seeing two boys from a nearby institute walking past the school with bags of sweets, the protagonist and a fellow student become tempted by the idea of freedom – and confectionary – and decide to run away. When the reality of their flight sets in, however, they become frightened and seek refuge at a nearby house they discover in the woods. When they are returned to the school by the kindly owners of the house the students, somewhat implausibly, are welcomed back by a benevolent rector, who presents them with chocolate rather than punishment. The final chapter sees the protagonist return home for the summer. Here, she resentfully notes the change in the way that her male friends treat her. No longer is she able to wrestle with them as an equal and she is affronted by their sense of superiority. Later, she begins to court her friend’s brother, Pierre, who presents her with a portrait photo to take back to school with her. When the protagonist returns for a new semester, another student is reprimanded and expelled after shamefully being found in possession of a similar image. Returning to the photo of Pierre, the protagonist holds her thumb over the boy’s face, managing to distort the image, which she keeps in her catechism as a silent symbol of rebellion.

## *Das Mädchen Manuela* (1933)

The oppressive boarding school environment that features in *Internaat* also provides the setting for Christa Winsloe’s text *Das Mädchen Manuela*, published three years after Raedt-de Canter’s debut. Although the tools of oppression employed in the French convent school in Raedt-de Canter’s writing and the school for daughters of military families documented in Christa Winsloe’s novel are operated by different loci of power, the protagonists’ struggles against authority, their social isolation, and the shaping of their adolescent identities and desires are, nonetheless, strikingly similar. As discussed above, the story of *Das Mädchen Manuela* has a complex history. First conceived as the play *Ritter* *Nérestan*, which was also performed as *Gestern und Heute*, the story was later adapted into the film *Mädchen in Uniform*. Two years after its release, Winsloe published the novel *Das Mädchen Manuela: Der Roman zum Film Mädchen in Uniform* with publisher Allert de Lange in Amsterdam, while she was living with Dorothy Thompson in the United States. Making no secret of the novel’s connection to its cinematic predecessor, Winsloe returned to the original plot of her play and re-emphasised the erotic aspects of the story that had been muted onscreen. Refusing to retain the “Happy-End” of Sagan’s cinematic endeavour, Winsloe ultimately produced what Christa Reinig has called ‘ein Buch gegen den Film’.[[630]](#footnote-630)

While the play and the film focus exclusively on the boarding school environment,Winsloe begins her novel with the birth of Manuela von Meinhardis, narrating in detail the tragic events of the protagonist’s childhood. Following the death of her brother and mother, Manuela’s governess fears that the child’s behaviour has become too ‘wild’ and urges the widowed Major von Meinhardis to send his daughter to boarding school, which he reluctantly agrees is for the best. Upon her arrival at the school, Manuela is presented with a second-hand uniform and an initialled red cockade. Identifying the letters E.v.B on the rosette, Manuela is told that the previous owner of the uniform must have had ‘was übrig’ for the teacher Elisabeth von Bernburg.[[631]](#footnote-631) Although initially confused, Manuela is told that she is fortunate to be under the supervision of the admired teacher and quickly begins to understand the feelings of the previous owner of the uniform. Following a ceremonial goodnight kiss from Fräulein von Bernburg as she puts the students to bed, and a candid conversation about the death of Manuela’s mother, the protagonist becomes increasingly infatuated with her teacher. When Manuela is given the lead role in the school production of Voltaire’s *Zaïre*, she enacts her love for Fräulein von Bernburg onstage under the guise of the *Hosenrolle* and is praised by both staff and students for her authentic portrayal of the young knight.[[632]](#footnote-632) After her triumphant thespian debut, and emboldened by too much punch, Manuela confesses the nature of her feelings for Fräulein von Bernburg to her classmates. The confession, overheard by the fearsome Frau Oberin, has dramatic consequences for Manuela and she is isolated from her classmates and, most painfully, Fräulein von Bernburg. Seeing no way to live without her beloved teacher, Manuela jumps from the stairwell and ends her life.

The themes of punishment, rebellion, and confession that shape the novels of Raedt-de Canter and Winsloe position the texts at a cross-section of literary genres. Although both authors drew heavily from elements in their own experiences at boarding schools, the texts themselves are not autobiographical.[[633]](#footnote-633) Indeed, as Winsloe explained in the programme to the debut performance of *Ritter Nérestan* in Leipzig:

Viele Jahre meiner Kindheit brachte ich in dem Milieu zu, das in “Ritter Nérestan” geschildert ist. Der Fall Manuela ist authentisch, wenn auch nicht dokumentarisch in der hier gegebenen Form. Die einzelnen Personen meines Kindheitserlebnisses sind natürlich verarbeitet und umgeformt, während alles, was Milieu und Details anbelangt, treue Schilderung der Zustände ist.[[634]](#footnote-634)

Secondary literature on Winsloe’s writing suggests that the novel could be interpreted as a form of “diagnosis narrative”, a genre defined by Taylor as ‘a specifically German narrative of sexual identity that can be located in multiple discourses from 1900 onward’.[[635]](#footnote-635) Much like the “case study”, discussed in in Chapter Two, the “diagnosis narrative”, Taylor notes, was often framed with descriptive fragments about the mental and physical state of the protagonist’s parents, the protagonist’s childhood experiences and, most importantly, details of the protagonist’s first erotic encounter. Like the case study, too, the diagnosis narrative acts as a form of mediated discourse, facilitated and re-formulated by the author. That the author acts a “mediator” and the text is autobiographical is fundamental to the genre because, as Taylor asserts, ‘the primary mode of coming to awareness of one’s sexuality in turn-of-the-century and early twentieth-century Germany was experienced as a diagnosis from outside’.[[636]](#footnote-636)

Although diagnosis does not form part of Raedt-de Canter’s novel, the author blurs the lines between herself and the protagonist through her insertion of what Paul de Man terms an authorial “surrogate” into her novel – a young female protagonist named Eva de Canter – which has led some scholars to claim that the work belongs to the genre of “confessional literature”.[[637]](#footnote-637) Although the novel includes the possibility of self-revelation – one must accept that Raedt-de Canter’s recorded experiences do indeed bear some element of “truth” – the second person narrative employed by the author fundamentally tests the traditional parameters of the genre; the narrator, author, and protagonist are *not* the same figure. Making use of a second-person narrative, Raedt-de Canter’s “you-form” renders *the reader* culpable for the textual transgressions that take place throughout the novel, placing them in the role of transgressor and confessor, not the author. When the protagonist, Eva, is punished for speaking out of turn, for example, it is the reader who feels reprimanded: ‘think about the burden you are for us. […] your soul stinks of corruption’.[[638]](#footnote-638)

Reflecting the social and cultural climates in which they were written, the act of confession, I suggest, highlights most explicitly the conceptual distinctions between the framing of same-sex desire in Germany and the Netherlands during this time. By comparing the authorial deployment of confession as condition for punishment and redemption in *Internaat* and confession as “technology of the self” in *Das Mädchen Manuela*, I hope to outline the ways in which scenes of “revelation” enable us to explore the paradigmatic differences in the conceptualisation of female same-sex desires in German and Dutch interwar literature. Furthermore, by focusing on the object of the protagonists’ desires in the second half of this chapter, I will demonstrate that viewing novels concerning female same-sex desire only through the sexological framework of inversion, elides the plurality of queer experiences that are rendered within them, as well as the textual nuances of historical relationships between queer women.

# ‘Alone in the World’: Sexological Tropes in *Internaat*

For the most part, the subject of same-sex desire in Eva Raedt-de Canter’s novel *Internaat* is shrouded in symbolism, presented subtly through established tropes such as wild gardens, homosocial institutions, and fixations on mother figures.[[639]](#footnote-639) Described as an outsider, the protagonist (who shares the position of the reader due to the second-person pronoun) is presented as a lonely child who is jealous of what she perceives to be the other students’ *saamhorigheid* (sense of belonging). During the Sunday reading hour, the protagonist’s feelings of isolation are articulated explicitly through her choice of reading material..[[640]](#footnote-640) Utterly consumed by the exploits of the central male character René in Hector Malot’s *Alleen op de wereld* (Alone in the World, 1878), the protagonist lives vicariously through the boy’s adventures which take place in a ‘world full of romanticism […] purer and more tangible than your own’.[[641]](#footnote-641) Although the degree to which the protagonist consciously separates herself from her classmates remains ambiguous in the novel, her rebellious nature and her notable behavioural non-conformity frequently result in her being forcibly separated from her fellow pupils as punishment.

Published two years after Radclyffe Hall’s *The* *Well of Loneliness*, Raedt-de Canter’s references to an ‘abyss of loneliness’, the religious homosocial setting of her novel, and the protagonist’s identification with the male character René certainly appear to engage with several established “lesbian” literary tropes.[[642]](#footnote-642) Yet, despite the alienation of the protagonist and her separation from other students that frames the novel, Raedt-de Canter engages very little with sexological themes. In fact, the author’s deployment of the second-person narrative could be considered a challenge to the framework of the case study; there are no physical descriptions given of the protagonist, no lengthy descriptions of the protagonist’s family or background, for all intents and purposes the reader and the protagonist should be considered the same figure. Indeed, it is only through the positioning of the “Other” in the novel that the “Self” of the protagonist can be constituted in the mind of the reader. When the protagonist claims to be ‘fiercely jealous’ of the other students, for example, who are said to have ‘beautiful, gifted faces, […] prompt manners, [and] fine clothes’, it is the protagonist’s implied physical and behavioural negation of these ideals that presents the reader with an image of her.[[643]](#footnote-643) When she prays to St Antoine for long ringleted hair like her fellow student Marietje’s, for example, it is a figure of a shorter-haired protagonist that is inferred by the reader. These physiological insights, however, remain few and far between. There is no clear image of the “child invert” in Raedt-de Canter’s novel, the physical appearance of the protagonist can only be constructed by the reader relation to what which she is *not*. Indeed, the only direct description of the protagonist’s physical appearance in the text comes in the final chapter, ‘Vacation’ (*Vacantie*), when a male friend voices the notably subjective opinion that the protagonist has become ‘beautiful’(*mooi*).

The protagonist’s frequent misdemeanours and her outsider status encourage the reader to view her as a (gender) non-conformist, particularly in the most explicit exploration of the protagonist’s struggle against gender norms which take place as she returns to the domestic domain during summer. After dismissing the compliment that she has ‘become beautiful’, the traditional marker of female worth, the reader is told that the protagonist looks forward to fighting and wrestling her male friends and cousins. She is soon left frustrated, however, as she realises that she is being treated differently by her male peers, particularly her childhood friend Harry, who no longer want to wrestle with her but to kiss her:

Broer and Tump are fighting. You watch with fierce interest. ‘Should we join in, Harry?’ […] ‘Us, fight? Of course not. But I know what I’d rather do …’ You become impatient and reply petulantly: ‘Not me. We have always fought together, why not now?’ ‘Because I don’t want to fight with a nice girl’. There it was. You look at him but he meant it. […] You feel yourself on unchartered territory with this strange new Harry, who absolutely does not want to fight you, and you begin to doubt any of the arguments you could use to persuade him.[[644]](#footnote-644)

Despite Harry’s dismissal, the protagonist is determined to overcome what she perceives to be a ‘difficult problem’ in her relationship with her friend and she attempts tirelessly to convince Harry to wrestle with her. Ultimately realising her efforts are futile, the protagonist reluctantly reaches the conclusion that they ‘will no longer fight together, no longer play [Cowboys and] Indians. […] Not this summer and not the following summer, either’.[[645]](#footnote-645) Pleased to see the protagonist has achieved a sense of closure, Harry responds with a declaration of his love and the suggestion that they get married in the future. Once the protagonist responds affirmatively, albeit indifferently, to Harry’s “proposal”, he succumbs to her desire to fight him. Yet, despite the initial pleasure of the physical combat and the joyful memories that are stirred in the protagonist’s mind of her previous “battles”, the protagonist loses the tussle and leaves the encounter with a feeling of bitterness after Harry publically kisses her:

Harry wins. Sitting straddled over you he roars a victory cry through the room and you are finally defeated. But then he leans forward and kisses you, three, four times in a row, quickly and firmly. ‘There, there, and there. You can have it your way but I can also have it mine. You’re such a sweet girl’. As you head back to your bed, tired and sore, there is, for the first time in your life, a feeling of resentment toward the male sense of superiority.[[646]](#footnote-646)

Having been put into her place – that is, both physically and symbolically beneath Harry – the protagonist resents the unexpected position she finds herself in. Although this does not lead to a directly negative reflection on her own gendered identity, as Krafft-Ebing suggested in his writing on the *Urningskind*, her critical assessment of the gender imparity that she is confronted with is certainly uncharacteristic for a young female character in Dutch literary writing during this time.

As is typical of the novel’s non-linear structure, the encounter with Harry ends abruptly, shifting to a scene in a meadow where the protagonist is relaxing with her later love interest, Pierre, on a typical ‘bright Limburg summer afternoon’.[[647]](#footnote-647) The protagonist relishes the feeling of being in nature and allows her surroundings to wash over her: ‘It is mild and warm and light in the air. […] Behind the rhododendron is shade and it smells green. Bitter and juicy. The coolness of the grass against your back and the depth of the blue sky in which your eyes can gaze, endlessly’.[[648]](#footnote-648) Having been humiliated by Harry in the previous scene, the image of the protagonist as ‘endlessly’ fulfilled by nature appears to reinforce the traditional gendered dualism that places the feminine in natural settings. The instability of this designation, however, is reflected as the protagonist quietly questions the ‘vicissitudes of fate’ and the sun drifts ‘slowly out, wavering, indecisive’ above her.[[649]](#footnote-649) Although the protagonist is presented in a typically gendered setting having been made forcibly aware of the limits of her own sex, the very “indecisiveness’” of nature and her general questioning of fate, acts as a challenge to the previous scene. The freneticism of the temporal jump in the narrative further serves to upset the stability of the social role that has been imposed upon the protagonist by Harry, suggesting that the “closure” she had supposedly reached is by no means final. Abrupt temporal shifts in the narrative also emphasise, more generally, the resistance of the text to the sexological search for “origins”. Although Raedt-de Canter does not appear to engage with the somatic signifiers that formed the foundation of Krafft-Ebing’s and Hirschfeld’s theories on congenital homosexual desires, she nonetheless shows her protagonist to be isolated from the world around her, lonely and resistant to male attention, and ultimately a gender non-conformist within the setting of the bourgeois Catholic boarding school system. Furthermore, the intense passion(*Schwärmerei*) that the *Urningsmädchen* was said to develop for the maternal figure, as I will discuss later in this chapter, plays a fundamental role in the construction queerness in Raedt-de Canter’s text.

# ‘Ich will ja ein Junge sein’: Sexological Tropes in *Das Mädchen Manuela*

Christa Winsloe’s *Das Mädchen Manuela* sits structurally much closer to the genre of “case study” than Raedt-de Canter’s non-linear narrative. Unlike Raedt-de Canter’s novel, *Das Mädchen Manuela* does not commence in a school environment but encompasses the history of Manuela’s childhood, presenting the reader with ample examples of the ‘elementary data’ that sexologists such as Havelock Ellis believed was central to the construction of a sexological case study.[[650]](#footnote-650) Furthermore, the fact that ‘Der Fall Manuela’, as Winsloe termed it, existed in two visual forms – the stage play and the film – prior to the publication of the novel means that readers would have had a mental imprint of the protagonist and her story, encouraging them to remain alert for sexological signifiers within the text. Opening with the “Christ-like” Christmas birth of Manuela von Meinhardis, the reader is told that the protagonist ‘sollte geboren werden’ and further, ‘sollte ein Mädchen sein’.[[651]](#footnote-651) In spite of a sense of initial fixidity regarding Manuela’s gender, the ambiguity of this declaration becomes apparent as the protagonist is later shown to desire nothing more than escape the confines of her biological sex. Indeed, the first image the reader receives of Manuela negates the initial statement: ‘Obwohl jeder sagte, das Kind sei schön, entsprach das nicht der Wahrheit. Denn die dunklen Augen, deren Weißes Blau war, entbehrten der Augenbrauen. Man stülpte dem Säugling ein Häubchen auf, um die Kahlheit des Schädels zu decken’.[[652]](#footnote-652) Manuela is neither beautiful nor typically feminine; her baldness only serves to emphasise the significance of hair in traditional displays of female-bodied femininities.

The first half of Winsloe’s narrative is dedicated to the events that precede Manuela’s arrival at the boarding school, offering to the reader insights into the origins of the protagonist’s gender non-conforming behaviours through the troubling and traumatic events that characterise her childhood. Like a typical case study, the first explicit description of Manuela’s gender non-conformity is presented to the reader in terms of her desire to play “boys’” games. Relegated to the role of the ‘squaw’ during a game of Cowboys and Indians, Manuela is frustrated with her lot and sits dejectedly in a make-shift kitchen imagining what life would be if she were able to enjoy the freedoms of her male siblings:

Manuela ist die Squaw und hat zu Hause zu bleiben und zu kochen, während die Männer, sich auf den Kriegspfad begeben. [...] Sie ist traurig, daß sie bloß eine Squaw ist. Wieder einmal grübelt sie über das Unglück nach, daß sie ein Mädchen ist und keine Indianerhosen tragen darf […] es muß doch wunderbar sein, so wie ein Mann daherstreiten zu können, eine Waffe im Gürtel…’ [[653]](#footnote-653)

Like Hirschfeld’s subjects “Helene N.”, who ‘was very wild [and] took a lively interest in games of Indians and soldiers’ and “Fräulein Katharina T.”, who ‘never felt she was a girl […] she preferred to play the pirate, at the helm with a sabre and a whip’, Manuela frequently conceives of herself as a male subject in her childhood games.[[654]](#footnote-654) As the picture of Krafft-Ebing’s *Urningsmädchen*,described at the beginning of this chapter, Manuela also engages frequently in ‘schmerzliche Reflexionen’ about the inescapability of her sex and imagines herself embodying a male role with a phallic weapon attached to her belt.

The heroic male, whose masculinity is publically celebrated, becomes the ultimate subject of Manuela’s childhood fantasies. When playing she imagines herself as a trapeze artist, for example, with a ‘riesiges Publikum’ whose rapturous applause confirms the protagonist’s successful presentation in the male form:

Dann war da ein riesiges Publikum, und sie schwebte in der Zirkuskuppel, und alle Scheinwerfer beleuchteten sie, und die Musik hielt an, wenn sie die “Große Welle” machte, und wirbelte einen Tusch, wenn sie in hohem Bogen durch die Luft absprang, in die Kniebeuge versank und mit einem weiteren Sprung stand. Dann raste Applaus, und Manuela, die natürlich ein Mann war, in engem, weißem Seidentrikot, verneigte sich lächelnd, als wollte sie sagen: Oh bitte sehr, das ist noch gar nichts …[[655]](#footnote-655)

In a scene that foreshadows Manuela’s later performance as Ritter Nérestan, the protagonist is presented ‘obviously’ as a man, echoing the ‘Naturnotwendigkeit’ of the transition of the *Urningskind* from gender non-conformist to queer subject. Although the imagined scene is explicitly situated as a performance of gender, complete with ‘Scheinwerfer’ and ‘Musik’, Manuela’s fixation on the ‘engen weißem Seidentrikot’ of the trapeze artist, as well as the ‘Indianerhosen’ of her brothers, stresses Manuela’s a desire to embody the male role both somatically and sartorially. As Manuela’s tomboyism ‘transcends into the realm of the sexuality’, however, her gender non-conformity is less willingly accepted by those around her.

Although, as Halberstam writes, the gender variance of the tomboy is more easily accepted than that of the “sissy” – for whom gender non-conformity is often a dangerous occupation – tomboyism is generally met with hostility only when it appears as ‘the sign of extreme male identification’ or when it is paired with same-sex desire. When gender dissonance is not refocused during adolescence, Halberstam suggests, tomboyism is rejected and ‘the full force of gender conformity descends on the girl’.[[656]](#footnote-656) Indeed, it is when Manuela is sent to boarding school that her ‘extreme identification’ with the male role, when placed against the backdrop of the homosocial institution and her emerging queer desires, is swiftly identified and forcefully punished. Shortly after Manuela arrives at the school, a milestone moment takes place that forces the protagonist to confront her womanhood in much a similar way to Eva’s loss of her battle against Harry. After noticing that she is bleeding, Manuela turns to her later love interest, Fräulein von Bernburg, for guidance. The teacher reassures the protagonist that what is happening to her body is natural: ‘Das ist keine Krankheit Manuela [...] Das ist nichts als ein Zeichen, daß du schon groß bist und nun beinahe aufgehört hast, ein Kind zu sein. [...]’.[[657]](#footnote-657) As ‘a culturally scripted physiological event’, the menarche, as Janet Lee suggests, ‘has important implications for a girl’s sense of herself and her world’.[[658]](#footnote-658) Not only does a girl’s first period encourage a critical reflection on one’s gender identity but, as Lee contends, it also ‘triggers politics associated with being an adult female in a society that devalues women’.[[659]](#footnote-659) That the onset of Manuela’s menarche is followed by a punishment from Frau Oberin for acting like a ‘Junge’, therefore, suggests that Manuela reacts negatively to the inescapable proof of her biological sex. To this end, she rejects the norms of her biological sex in favour of a masculine role. When Fräulein von Bernburg questions Manuela about her behaviour, the protagonist attempts to explain to her teacher her profound sense of dissatisfaction with her sex and admits her desire to *become* male: ‘weil ich ja ein Junge sein will. Ich mag meine Haare nicht und meinen Rock, zu Hause habe ich immer Hosen getragen, wenn ich mit meinem Bruder geturnt habe, und am liebsten trüge ich sie immer. […] Ich mag keine Frau werden – ich möchte ein Mann sein und immer für Sie da sein, Fräulein von Bernburg […]’.[[660]](#footnote-660) Manuela’s forceful rejection of her womanhood as well as the sartorial signifiers of femininity, are linked to her desire to “be there” for Fräulein von Bernburg, cementing Winsloe’s employment of theories of inversion in her portrayal of Manuela’s queer desires.

Manuela’s performance as Ritter Nérestan at the end of the novel, however, is by far the most explicit image of the “child invert” in Winsloe’s novel. After she is awarded the role the role of the gallant knight in the school play, Manuela’s costume becomes a formative aspect of the unification between her physical appearance with her inner sense of masculinity. As she embodies the male role of Ritter Nérestan in rehearsals, she finally appears able to identify with her ‘true self’: ‘jetzt [werde ich] zum ersten Male im Leben so sein können, wie ich bin’.[[661]](#footnote-661) It is only through “becoming” Ritter Nérestan, that Manuela can break away from the regulations enforced upon her and engage with her body in a positive way:

Durch das Fehlen des Rockes hatte sie das Gefühl, als sei sie gewachsen. Ihr Gang war verändert. Es hatte plötzlich Wichtigkeit, wie man einen Fuß vor den anderen setzte. Verantwortung. [...] Kein Rock hinderte sie jetzt [...] Man konnte seine Beine plötzlich ganz anders gebrauchen. [...] Sie fühlte, wie sie langsam mehr und mehr zum Ritter Nérestan wurde.[[662]](#footnote-662)

No longer ‘hindered’ by her skirts, Manuela feels able to use her body in an entirely new way. Indeed, Manuela’s costume acts almost as an ‘unconscious language’ that enables her to communicate and engage with her surroundings in a way, as Emanuel Hermann suggests, that ‘clearly expresses itself all the more’ because her desires had previously been ‘condemned to silence’.[[663]](#footnote-663)

Following the performance, Manuela’s classmates are in awe of her authentic portrayal of the young knight, although some students appear fearful of the accuracy of the protagonist’s ability to physically embody her character: ‘Deine Stimme war […] ganz dunkel, und dann hattest du auf einmal Bewegungen, so echt … dir hat man heute abend geglaubt daß du - daß du eigentlich ein halber Junge bist’.[[664]](#footnote-664) To this statement Manuela says nothing but raises a glass in a toast to her achievement. By deploying sexological frameworks to construct an image of the protagonist’s “true” self, Winsloe’s authorial engagement with the case study offers a markedly different approach to queer identity and desire than Raedt-de Canter. In Winsloe’s text, the fulfilment of queer desire appears contingent upon the protagonist’s ability to present as “male”, whereas in Raedt-de Canter’s writing, as I shall shortly discuss, gender performance and queer desire do not appear to be conflated in the same way.

# “Confessions” and “Comings-Out”: Queer Desires as Queer Identities?

As a “technology of the self”, the act of confession is intimately related to Foucault’s understanding of a ‘hermeneutics of the subject’ and determined by a ‘recognition that there is a truth in the subject, that the soul is the place where this truth resides, and that true discourses can be articulated concerning it’.[[665]](#footnote-665) In Foucault’s genealogy of the modern self, he argues that religious authority has been utilised as ‘a form of power which makes individuals subjects’ and suggests that the act of confession could be seen as a process of performative “becoming” that ‘categorises the individual, marks [them] by [their] own identity, imposes a law of truth upon [them] which [they] must recognise and which others have to recognise in [them]’.[[666]](#footnote-666) The act of confession is central to the epistemological infrastructure of Foucault’s theory of knowledge/power. Although this has been discussed briefly in the introduction to this thesis, it bears clarification here as the transformative potential of confession is central to the argument about the conceptual differences between *Internaat* and *Das Mädchen Manuela*.

Through a rigorous process of self-examination, which is demanded by the normalising and disciplinary practice of religious confession, Foucault suggests one becomes able to articulate and produce the “truth” about who/what one is. It is this process of telling ‘the truth about oneself’ that enables an individual to be constituted as a “subject”.[[667]](#footnote-667) Of course, the question of what “truth” *is* is undeniably problematic. If, as Jeremy Tambling suggests, confession is a process of ‘power at the centre inducing people at the margins to internalise what is said about them’, there appears to be little agency of the subject, as they are forced ‘to accept that discourse and to live it, and thereby to live their oppression’.[[668]](#footnote-668) In this interpretation, the confession of “truth” has not constituted an individual as a subject but rather a social discourse is used to police and discipline has been internalised and “lived” by that individual. Although the metaphysical question of “truth” has been at the centre of philosophical study for centuries, within the context of this thesis it is not the question of what truth *constitutes* that is so important. Since these “truth” bearing discourses ‘make available positions for people to take up’, it is possible to use the confessional act to further our understanding of the construction of queer female desires across cultural borders.[[669]](#footnote-669) By which I mean to suggest that the internalisation of a discourse about the “self”, and the later confession of it, can only take place if that discourse has been made available to that subject.

If, as Eve Sedgwick suggests, by the end of the nineteenth century ‘it was as obvious to Queen Victoria as to Freud – that knowledge meant sexual knowledge, and secrets sexual secrets’, one would expect to find in two novels that engage with queer experimentation, adolescent formation, and revelation, an exploration of the process by which through confession a “sexual subject” is constituted.[[670]](#footnote-670) Considering the role of confession as a “technology of the self” in Raedt-de Canter’s *Internaat* and Winsloe’s *Das Mädchen Manuela*, however, it becomes clear that the dominant discourses formulated about sexuality in each cultural context result in rather different negotiations of queer experience. Although there are traces of sexological discourses in Raedt-de Canter’s *Internaat*, the dominant religious discourse of homosexual desire as an “act” means that queer desire is not (or cannot be?) articulated in terms of a self-reflexive identitarian practice. In Winsloe’s *Das Mädchen Manuela*, however, the reader witnesses a process of diagnosis from outside that ultimately concludes in the protagonist being constituted as sexual “Other”.

Religious Confessions: Regulating the Body and its Desires

The religious regulation of the body and its pleasures in Raedt-de Canter’s novel is established from the opening scenes of the narrative. Joining the protagonist as she rises from bed and washes her hands and face, the reader is told that she leaves the rest of her body untouched because ‘to be further uncovered is immoral’.[[671]](#footnote-671) Provided with a note from the doctor after her family conclude that such practices are ‘dirty’ (*vies*), the protagonist is entitled to a bath each month, which is closely supervised by Soeur Willibrord. Wrapped in a bathrobe to protect her modesty, the monthly ritual is turned from something potentially pleasurable into an event that is rather traumatising:

God gave you a body and you were not allowed to look at it. You were not allowed to wash it, you were not allowed to touch it. You sinned against God’s commands if you displayed yourself as he created you. God gave you a free will and if you used it freely, you sinned. You imagine how much you would love God […] if you did not have to wear the long, wet bathrobe until your own undershirt was over your head and gradually followed down your body, while the bathrobe, wet and heavy and cold, slipped onto the ground. Leaving you wet and cold in your damp, clinging clothes.[[672]](#footnote-672)

The physical pain the protagonist endures throughout the day because the cold water leaves her ‘skin open’, serves as a constant reminder of the consequences of exposing one’s flesh. The protagonist’s body is also subject to other regulations throughout the novel. Her joy at receiving ‘witbrood’ (white bread) for supper, for example, an item that she describes as ‘particularly delicious because of its paucity’, suggests a systematic denial of bodily pleasure that comes in any form of physical indulgence. As the novel progresses, the reader is made aware that these processes of regulation have been mentally absorbed by the protagonist and that she has become a critical self-regulator of her own thoughts and behaviours. During one particularly fervent sermon, Soeur Alphonse admonishes the protagonist by calling her a ‘little serpent’, declaring that the girl’s soul ‘stinks of depravity’.[[673]](#footnote-673) Although the protagonist initially dismisses the tirade, when her fellow students turn to look at her as she enters the dining hall, the power that Souer Alphonse’s punitive words exert over the protagonist’s sense of self becomes quickly apparent: ‘You know immediately how bad you are. How bewilderingly and mysteriously characterised [you are] by sin and corruption’.[[674]](#footnote-674)

The regulation and policing of the body and its pleasures throughout the novel is instrumental to the act of confession; a ritual that demands a self-reflective assessment of one’s daily actions and the revelation of these to an authority figure who will ‘judge, punish, forgive, console, and reconcile’.[[675]](#footnote-675) The power of the confession as a transformative action that constitutes the individual as some kind of subject – irrespective of the “truth” of the confession – is illustrated in a scene in which the protagonist confesses to something she has *not* done. Accompanying the students to their dormitory after the evening prayer, Soeur Padua hears a voice in the corridor:

Soeur Padua asked: Qui a parlé? It pulled you out of your dreams and you wondered if she would believe you if you raised your hand. If you had spoken and you did not raise your hand, she did not ever believe you. Whether she would not believe you now, when you were silent and dreamy and had not spoken? Your curiosity filled you with questions, questions that insisted upon an answer and, with a war cry, you fiercely raised your hand. She pulled you out of the line. ‘Attendez là.’ ‘But I didn’t speak, I just wanted to…’ [[676]](#footnote-676)

Sent to sit out in the cold for her supposed transgression, a punishment from which ‘Mother Fenna’ later rescues her, the protagonist’s admission of guilt effectively *makes* her guilty, despite her own innocence. The potential of confession as a transformative act alongside the regulation of bodily pleasures – depicted through the shrouding of the body in the bath and the dietary restrictions placed on the students – continues in the novel to frame the protagonist’s experiences of same-sex desire.

Hoping to escape the cold during play, the protagonist and a fellow student, Mariette, hide in the school refectory. As they exchange stories about legendary mischief-makers in the school, their senses are aroused by the scent of something sweet from the kitchen. Here, the protagonist and Mariette find bushels of apples and, unable to resist temptation, they begin to gorge on the fruit: ‘Dried apple slices. Stuff them in your mouth, lots, lots. Chew, grab again, a handful. […] Grab again and eat. Until we are no longer able. Once we are full, the reality hits us’.[[677]](#footnote-677) Like Eve, who ate of the Tree of Knowledge, Eva, the protagonist, incurs a ‘punishment from God’ for her wrongdoing. Soon after eating the apples, the protagonist and Mariette fall ill. Mariette confesses to their “sin” but claims that it was the protagonist who had instigated the plan. While Mariette is “acquitted” of her crime after her prompt confession, while the protagonist – a known instigator – is punished and sent to a dark attic to contemplate her wrongdoings. It is during her time the attic, after she has symbolically eaten the “fruit of knowledge”, that the protagonist begins to think about the ritualist kiss that takes place in her dormitory each evening. Describing the event as something ‘inexplicable, for which there was no name’, the protagonist remembers the first occurrence of the act, which she concludes, like the eating of the fruit, was ‘simultaneously sinful and delicious’.[[678]](#footnote-678)

Framing the kiss with a scene mirroring that of the ‘original sin’, the reader would perhaps expect the kiss to inspire a moment of self-reflection. Yet, it is not the implications of what the kiss might mean that weigh on the protagonist’s mind but rather the identity of the anonymous individual initiating the act:

After the fourth time, you asked ‘Who are you?’ ‘Shhh,’ you heard and she snuck away quickly and did not return for three nights. But, on the fourth night – you had waited faithfully, ever more longingly – she came and kissed you. Long and powerfully. […] How strange it was. How strange that you could love something that wasn’t anything at all. Because you didn’t know her, you didn’t even know her name.[[679]](#footnote-679)

Unable to articulate her feelings for that which ‘wasn’t anything at all’, the protagonist wonders whether the kiss could be considered a sin: ‘Was it a sin, perhaps? Kissing *was* a sin; even sisters were not allowed to kiss each other. Was this, then, not a sin?’.[[680]](#footnote-680) As discussed in the first half of this thesis, the Catholic Church had started to make a distinction between ‘homosexuality as *inclination* (predisposition) and homosexuality as *deed’* by the 1930s.[[681]](#footnote-681) Although the Church ruled that thoughts of committing homosexual acts were not in themselves sinful, as Pastor L Bender outlined in his 1936 pamphlet *Pernicious Propaganda* the homosexual act was considered sinful. Within terms of this assessment, the protagonist, who not only ‘hungers after the kiss’ from the moment she awakes but also engages in the homoerotic act itself, would certainly have been judged as committing a “sin”. Despite this fact, however, the protagonist simply concludes that the kiss is a ‘wondrous glory’ (*wonderlijke heerlijkheid*).

Shortly after the protagonist’s reverie about the kiss during her punishment for eating the apples, she undergoes the routine act of confession. As she prepares herself for confession, a clear sense of excitement and fear rises within the protagonist: ‘how wonderfully your heart would beat as, after careful examination, and with the list of misdemeanours already on your lips, you kneeled behind the closed lattice window in the confessional box’.[[682]](#footnote-682) Despite her reflective nature and the ‘careful examination’ that takes place before her confession, the protagonist does not mention the “sinful” kiss to the rector but, instead, rattles off her ‘ever identical offences in a habitual drone’:

[I have] spoken three times in church, was naughty fifteen times, insolent seven times, disrespectful during prayer thirty-eight times [I displayed] insensitivity, slovenliness, laziness, impoliteness at the dinner table, lickerishness … All very often but I don’t precisely know in figures.[[683]](#footnote-683)

Unlike the Foucauldian notion of confession as a “technology of the self”, an act that constitutes the individual as a subject, confession in *Internaat* has nothing to do with the transformative practice of Sapphic self-fashioning. There is no suggestion in the protagonist’s confession that the kiss has changed the way in which she conceives of herself or her desires. Although the protagonist briefly considers whether the act might be sinful, she does not attempt to seek redemption for the kiss and, ultimately, it remains unpunished. As the kiss is not articulated during the confession, there is also no way that it can produce a “truth” about the protagonist; there appears to be no sexual secret that must be confessed nor is there a hidden essence or identity to be revealed. The kiss remains, then, an “act” and does not produce an “identity”, lesbian or otherwise.[[684]](#footnote-684)

Sexual Identities and Technologies of the Self

Confession also plays a pivotal role in Winsloe’s *Das Mädchen Manuela*, with moments of revelation frequently used in the novel to propel forward the narrative trajectory. The public declaration of Manuela’s love for Fräulein von Bernburg, which ultimately leads to Manuela’s suicide, is not the only “confession” to take place in the novel, however. In fact, Manuela makes several admissions throughout the text, which act to foreshadow her fatal declaration of love for her teacher. Throughout the novel are a series of smaller “milestone” admissions that serve to create the sense of a growing crescendo to a climactic declaration of difference, which arguably mirrors the perpetual cycle of “coming out”.[[685]](#footnote-685) Instead of conceiving of the novel as a process of “lesbian” coming out, however, I argue that the protagonist’s confessions signal a self-reflexive and performative utterance of gendered and sexual difference of the self that does not appear to be concentrated around a specific identity. Although Winsloe’s employment of confession provides several “diagnostic elements” about her protagonist, the act of confession in a religious sense does not feature in the novel.[[686]](#footnote-686)

In the story of Manuela von Meinhardis, the first significant revelatory statement to take place occurs before the protagonist arrives at the boarding school, after a Christmas bazaar, at which Manuela’s friend Fritz introduces the protagonist to his mother. Believing the protagonist’s blossoming friendship with Fritz is inappropriate, Manuela’s governess recognises that Manuela is ‘verliebt über beide Ohren’ but incorrectly positions Fritz as the object of the protagonist’s affections. After reluctantly agreeing that Manuela should be sent to boarding school to save her reputation, Major von Meinhardis tells Manuela that she will be sent away and is no longer allowed to visit her friend. In Manuela’s desperation to see Fritz’s mother, however, she tells her father that she cannot leave the town: ‘Nein Papa, es ist nicht wegen Fritz – es ist wegen seiner Mama ...’.[[687]](#footnote-687) Erroneously believing her admission to be ruse, Major von Meinhardis’ response highlights the social inarticulability of queer adolescent desires. That Manuela does not desire Fritz but his mother, Frau Lennartz, is unfathomable to the protagonist’s father: ‘Ach, du bist ja großartig! Mädel, bist du mir ähnlich! Eine Ausrede hat sie gleich bei der Hand […] Kind du machst mir Spaß. Aber weißt du, eins mußt du noch lernen. Wenn du dich rausreden willst, mußt du das besser machen. So fällt keiner drauf rein’.[[688]](#footnote-688) In an inversion of the “false confession” that Raedt-de Canter’s protagonist makes in *Internaat*, Manuela tells her father the truth but she is not believed. The protagonist’s revelation of her feelings for Frau Lennartz is ultimately dismissed by her father and Manuela is sent to boarding school.

Shortly after Manuela arrives at the school, her second significant admission takes place. Admonished for acting like a boy, Manuela explains to her beloved Fräulein von Bernburg why she was behaving in such a way, stating directly: ‘Ich mag keine Frau werden – ich möchte ein Mann sein und immer für Sie da sein, Fräulein von Bernburg […]’.[[689]](#footnote-689) Manuela’s ignorance of the implications of such a statement forces her teacher to caution her, sternly instructing the girl that ‘Solche Worte dürfen zwischen uns nicht fallen’.[[690]](#footnote-690) After the rejection of her revelation, and at the behest of her beloved teacher, Manuela apologises to Frau Oberin, who asks the protagonist whether she belongs to the students who are “too keen” on the young teacher. With Fräulein von Bernburg’s words in her mind, Manuela is forced for the first time to deny the feelings that she had once declared openly. Following the encounter, Frau Oberin warns Fräulein von Bernburg that such “elements” could be poisonous ‘wenn man sie nicht in ihre Schranken zurückweist’.[[691]](#footnote-691) The danger posed by the verbalisation of Manuela’s desires is highlighted by Frau Oberin’s need to force them back into their “closet”. Indeed, silence as a speech act, as Sedgwick suggests, becomes characteristic of the “closet”: ‘“Closetedness” itself is a performance initiated as such by the speech act of a silence – not a particular silence, but a silence that accrues particularity by fits and starts, in relation to the discourse that surrounds and differentially constitutes it’.[[692]](#footnote-692) Frau Oberin’s social reproach following the ‘fits and starts’ of Manuela’s articulation of queerness forces the protagonist to begin to police her desires, turning them into what D.A. Miller terms an ‘open secret’.[[693]](#footnote-693)

Manuela’s desire for Fräulein von Bernburg, however, does not appear so easily to be contained in its “closet”. When the teacher gives Manuela a blouse after noticing that the young girl’s own is beyond repair, the protagonist breaks down in tears at the generous gesture. When questioned about her outburst, Manuela, whose desires have been condemned to self-regulating silence, explains to Fräulein von Bernburg that it is ‘schwer zu sagen’.[[694]](#footnote-694) Finally, however, Manuela passionately discloses to her teacher her secret:

Zu lang hat sie dies alles zurückgedrängt. Beide Arme um die Hüften der vor ihr stehenden Frau, läßt sie die Worte aus sich hervorstürzen. ‘Ich kann ich kann nicht anders. Ich liebe Sie, liebes Fräulein von Bernburg. Ich liebe Sie, so, so sehr wie meine Mutter, ja, und auch viel viel mehr. Wenn ich Ihre Hände sehe, zieht es mich hin, sie zu fühlen. Ihre Stimme, wenn Sie rufen, packt mich, reißt mich – ich kann nichts dafür, ich liebe, liebe Sie’.[[695]](#footnote-695)

The warning of Fräulein von Bernburg in the previous section and the fearsome interrogation of Frau Oberin have forced Manuela to repress her feelings until this point. Although Fräulein von Bernburg ultimately rejects Manuela’s confession of love, she makes an important confession of her own inner conflicts, which will be discussed in further detail below.

Following her successful performanceas the French knight Nérestan in Voltaire’s *Zaïre*, Manuela celebrates her success with her classmates and drinks several glasses of punch. In her state of inebriation, she parades in front of her audience the blouse Fräulein von Bernburg had given her:

‘Fräulein von Bernburgs Hemd ... mir geschenkt [...] An ihren Schrank ist sie gegangen und hat ein Hemd herausgenommen und es mir gegeben, ich soll es tragen, tragen und an sie denken ... Nein, das hat sie nicht gesagt aber ich weiß es doch nun [...] daß sie mich lieb hat ... das weiß ich. [...] Ihr Hand hat sie auf meinen Kopf gelegt, ihre schöne, weiße Hand’. Lela [Manuela C.S] legt beide Hände auf ihre Brust: ‘Das hier zu fühlen, macht gut. Von jetzt an will ich nur gute, reine Gedanken haben. Ich will ein guter Mensch sein’.[[696]](#footnote-696)

Through Winsloe’s employment what Sedgwick terms ‘the speech act of silence’, Manuela’s omissions become just as important as her verbal articulation of queerness. Indeed, it is only through the implication that Manuela is *not* ‘ein guter Mensch’ and *does* *not* currently think ‘gute, reine Gedanken’ that her queerness is constituted. Furthermore, the transformative potential of Manuela’s confession as a “technology of the self”, only becomes visible in the responses of others to the articulation of her desires. Although initially concluding that Manuela’s outburst is the ‘Ursache von Exzessen’, that is, the result of too much alcohol, Frau Oberin soon pronounces Manuela to be a pestilence: ‘Dieses Kind ist eine Pest. Sie steckt die anderen an. Sowas wird Mode. Das Kind gefährdet das Haus, den Ruf der Anstalt’.[[697]](#footnote-697)

No longer an “open secret” but the public knowledge, Manuela’s desires brings with them the dangerous and toxic potential that Frau Oberin had earlier feared. Drawing on the social and sexological discourses that positioned queer female desire as “fashionable” but, more importantly, “contagious”, Frau Oberin ultimately invokes the theory of congenital inversion as she concludes that Manuela is ‘unnormal veranlagt’.[[698]](#footnote-698) Forcing Manuela to pay penance for her transgression, Frau Oberin accuses the protagonist of wrongdoing in front of her peers and Manuela is forced into ‘a rite that consists of a dramatic and theatrical exposition of the penitent’ and effectively “quarantined” in the sanatorium.[[699]](#footnote-699) Through her cumulative series of confessions, Manuela is finally constituted as a “sexual subject”. Yet, although there is considerable engagement from the protagonist with the search for an “inner truth”, marked primarily through her relationship with her gender identity, the protagonist is in fact only constituted as sexual subject by the those who seek to judge and punish her for her perceived sexual transgressions. After concluding, then, that there is nothing left for her without Fräulein von Bernburg, ‘keine Heimat, keine Familie, keine Welt’, Manuela climbs the steps of the clock tower and throws herself to her death.[[700]](#footnote-700)

# A Mother’s Love

Sleeves and Scents

The setting of the homosocial boarding school, as Elaine Marks observes, has been ‘the preferred locus for most fictions about women loving women’ since the resurgence of interest in Sappho’s poems during the nineteenth century.[[701]](#footnote-701) Although there is no evidence that Sappho’s followers formed any kind of “gynaecium” or followed the male erastes/eromenos tradition, the image of the school ‘ruled by the seductive or seducing teacher’ is a trope, as Marks notes, that has continually stirred the Sapphic imagination.[[702]](#footnote-702) In sexological works, too, the nurturing and guiding teacher was thought to play a pivotal role in the life of the *Urningskind* by shaping their educational interests and nurturing them in their social development. Indeed, as Magnus Hirschfeld stated: ‘das Interesse für den Unterrichtsgegenstand steht bei vielen im engsten Zusammenhang mit der Person des Lehrers. Die Verehrung [...] diejenige urnischer Mädchen für bestimmte Lehrerinnen und Erzieherinnen trägt oft den Charakter abgöttischer Schwärmerei’.[[703]](#footnote-703) Within the conventions of what Marks terms the ‘lesbian fairy tale based on the model of Sappho’, the ‘abgöttischer Schwärmerei’ of the younger girl for the older woman is often presented in the form of an erotic mother-daughter bond that becomes essential to the narrative trajectory:

The younger woman, whose point of view usually dominates, is always passionate and innocent. […] The older woman as object of the younger woman’s desire is restrained and admirable, beautiful and cultivated […] The exchanges between the older and younger woman are reminiscent of a mother-daughter relationship. The mother of the younger woman is either dead or in some explicit way inadequate. Her absence is implied by the young woman’s insistent need for a good-night kiss. The dénouement in these lesbian fairy tales is often brought about by a public event during which private passions explode.[[704]](#footnote-704)

As Richard Dyer notes, Marks’ framework effectively chronicles the events of Winsloe’s novel as, when Manuela arrives at the boarding school, it is ‘the restrained and admirable’ Fräulein von Bernburg with her ritualistic good-night kiss, who causes Manuela’s private passions to explode.[[705]](#footnote-705) In Raedt-de Canter’s novel too, however, an inexplicably missing mother, as I will now discuss, provides the locus of the protagonist’s lesbian desires.

Throughout Raedt-de Canter’s novel, the figure of the mother becomes present, in a Derridean sense, through her absence and shapes each of the protagonist’s homoromantic and erotic encounters. Indeed, the absent mother, as Roof writes, has traditionally played a formative role in the construction of “lesbian” narratives with her absence denying ‘the nostalgic wish and maternal fulfilment’ that commonly structure heterosexual narratives.[[706]](#footnote-706) Furthermore, the queer *Bildungsroman*,as Roof suggests, ultimately refutes the relevance of genetic origins and, above all, posits ‘the missing mother as the original model for unfulfilled desire’.[[707]](#footnote-707) While the mother is notably absent in Raedt-de Canter’s novel, the “maternal” and the “feminine” are nonetheless central to the textual construction of queer desires.[[708]](#footnote-708) Thinking back to the source of her ceaseless hatred for the ‘scourge of heretics’, Soeur Alphonse, the protagonist recounts to the reader the instance when ‘your hate was born’.[[709]](#footnote-709) Condemned by the cruel teacher as a ‘mistake in God’s beautiful creation’, the protagonist is sent to a room filled with disturbing taxidermy figures.[[710]](#footnote-710) Scared and alone, the student swallows a ‘frightened “mother” cry’ and wakes up, days later, to find herself in the school sanatorium.[[711]](#footnote-711) It is in the sanctuary of the sanatorium, following the silenced cry for her mother, that the reader witnesses the protagonist’s first emotional, and arguably romantic, attachment to the maternal school nurse, Soeur Veronica.

Allusions to violets and wild gardens, both historic symbols of love between women, signal the underlying romantic feelings of the protagonist during her encounter with the nurse: ‘Soeur Veronica.… Veronica. You see a flowerbed of dark violets when, gently, on the tip of your tongue, you say: Veronica. […] A flowerbed full, in a dim old yard with swaying trees and mossy paths’.[[712]](#footnote-712) When the protagonist attempts to break down the boundaries of propriety that distance her from the nurse with an informality, however, she is gently rebuffed: ‘“Veronica …” you said and paused. “Sister Veronica.…” “Oh, Veronica.…” you said, embarrassed, and rubbed your head along her warm, rough cotton sleeve’.[[713]](#footnote-713) The embarrassment of the protagonist and the suggestive imagery of her rubbing her head against the nurse’s ‘warm, rough cotton sleeve’ presents the nurse, who had answered the protagonist’s ‘mother cry’, in an undeniably erotic light, laying the foundations for a framework that becomes paradigmatic of the protagonist’s erotic encounters with female characters.

When the protagonist is later punished by being sent to sit outside in the cold, an older student comes to her rescue. Fenna van Beers, who is initially described as ‘ugly’, ‘fat’, ‘broad’ and ‘weak’, brings the protagonist food and carries her to the warmth of a radiator. Attempting to encourage the protagonist to eat, Fenna promises to tuck the younger girl into bed if she finishes her meal. The protagonist’s eager, but embarrassed, response to Fenna’s motherly care echoes her earlier reaction to the nurturing nurse: ‘“Just like old times?” Strange that you are so embarrassed by this question’.[[714]](#footnote-714) As Fenna carries Eva to her dormitory, the protagonist begins to draw direct comparisons between the older student and her own mother: ‘[Fenna] smells like mother smelled, she walks like mother walked’.[[715]](#footnote-715) Inhaling Fenna’s ‘mother smell’ (*moedergeur*), Eva concludes that the older student isn’t ugly at all and, as Fenna tucks her into bed with a gently admonishing goodnight wish, the protagonist responds affectionately: ‘sleep well, mother Fenna’.[[716]](#footnote-716) The protagonist’s bashful response to early actions of motherly care in the novel, as well as the suggestive imagery that indicates an erotic attachment to these caregivers, resonates with Helene Deutsch’s suggestion of a ‘desire for the mother [that] acquires characteristics of a fantasy about the mother’s body’. [[717]](#footnote-717) The scent of the mother and the image of the ‘warm sleeve’ are further suggestive of a primal urge in the protagonist that culminates with the series of clandestine kisses in her dormitory.

As the protagonist searches for her mother’s rosary one evening, an object that she has hidden from Soeur Alphonse, an unknown girl steals up behind her and, hidden by the darkness, turns the protagonist around and kisses her firmly on the mouth:

The kiss! How sinful and simultaneously glorious! [...] Two soft, warmly-clad arms had been thrown around your neck, and two cool, moist lips had, calmly and firmly, kissed your mouth. Your heart was pounding when she let you go. Why? [...] A strange unknown hunger was stilled by her kiss. A strange uncontainable hunger was left behind. For what did that blazingly fierce, thrilling desire mean, that made you blush deeply, made you feel sinful and rejected, yet weighed, at the same time, like a heavy treasure in your heart?[[718]](#footnote-718)

Raedt-de Canter’s use of the second-person narrative form ensures that the reader is also consumed by the kiss and made complicit in the erotic act. Employing similar narrative techniques to the queer activists responsible for the magazine *Wij*, discussed in the previous chapter, Raedt-de Canter’s use of this jarring narrative form, creates in the novel the sense of a shared secret among those sensitive to certain signifiers. Furthermore, the author’s use of metonymic personification, brings to mind Deutsch’s ‘fantasy about the mother’s body’. It is the other girl’s arms and lips that consume the protagonist in the darkness. The suggestive imagery of the anonymous girl’s ‘warmly clad’ arms (*warm-bemouwde armen*) and the ‘blazingly fierce, thrilling desire’ left behind after the kiss, also mirrors the earlier encounters with Soeur Veronica and Fenna and provides a clear pattern to the protagonist’s experiences with previous maternal figures in the text.

Departing from these earlier moments, the maternal goodnight kiss that takes place between the protagonist and the unknown student is explicitly erotic and connected to an unknown and unknowable ‘hunger’. Preceded by the protagonist’s search for her mother’s missing rosary, the anonymous girl’s identity is framed by the protagonist’s desire to fill the void of her missing mother. In terms of my general thesis about the significance of queer desires to a female social identity in the Netherlands, the kiss appears to follow on from Freud’s proposal of the pre-oedipal attachment to the mother, wherein the mother-child bond colours all those that come after it.[[719]](#footnote-719) In light of the growing prominence of psychoanalytic theory in the Netherlands, as well as the author’s employment of queer tropes and imagery throughout the novel, one might surmise that Raedt-de Canter is consciously engaging with Freud’s idea of universal bisexuality and knowingly evokes established images of queer love. Interestingly, however, no further reference is made to the kiss after this scene; not when the protagonist is angry at Harry for his ‘male sense of superiority’ nor when her later love interest Pierre asks her if she has ever been kissed before. Although the protagonist’s tomboyishness, her attraction to the maternal and feminine, and her ‘uncontainable hunger’ for the secret midnight kiss appear to indicate an underlying queerness, then, there is no search for an origin of queer desire, no study in the narrative of the cause or effect of such an act, and, ultimately, the kiss disappears from the text without a trace, regarded simply as ‘a wonderous glory’.[[720]](#footnote-720)

Mutual Confessions

Like Raedt-de Canter, Winsloe also adopts the mother-figure as the “original model” for her protagonist’s queer desire. Already on the second page of the novel, the reader is informed that Manuela’s mother is the centre of her childhood world: ‘Mutter war sie, die immer da war. Sie, die kam, wenn Lela schrie, sie, die beruhigte, wenn Lela weinte’.[[721]](#footnote-721) When Manuela’s mother takes her brother away from the family home to help him recover from an illness, the protagonist is heartbroken and quickly becomes consumed by her desire for ‘Muttis Kuß’ which, due to her mother’s absence, is missing from her daily routine.[[722]](#footnote-722) Following the death of her mother, a moment that passes by in the text with surprisingly little comment, Manuela becomes friends with Fritz Lennartz, who invites the protagonist to his musical performance at the Christmas bazaar. As Fritz plays onstage, Manuela catches sight of the boy’s mother. This moment, like Raedt-de Canter’s introduction of Soeur Veronica, marks the protagonist’s first romantic attachment to an older female figure: ‘Als Lela dieses neue Gesicht sah, erstarrte etwas in ihr. Unwillkürlich rückte sie auf ihrem Stuhl etwas vor, um näher hinsehen zu können. Was war das? Diese Frau hatte Fritzens Gesicht – nur schöner, weicher, liebreizender [...]’.[[723]](#footnote-723) Here, the adjective ‘unwillkürlich’ is the first indication that Manuela’s desire is instinctive and, as the performance continues, the protagonist’s body reacts involuntarily to the woman’s presence: ‘[Manuelas] Ohren färbten sich rot, ihr Gesicht erblaßte vor Anstrengung. Ihr Mund trocknete aus, ihre Handflächen wurden feucht. Was war es nur, was? Es tat weh furchtbar weh, und auch wieder nicht’.[[724]](#footnote-724) Like the ‘unknown hunger’ that consumes the protagonist of Raedt-de Canter’s *Internaat*, Manuela’s desire appears initially indecipherable to her, yet fills her with a curious inner conflict. After the protagonist is introduced to Fritz’s mother, a moment she describes as ‘Dämmerstunde mit Mutter’, Manuela sits on the older woman’s lap, closes her eyes and ‘atmete den Duft, der von der fremden Frau kam: Lavendel und Mutter’.[[725]](#footnote-725) Mirroring the “mother-smell’ that Raedt-de Canter’s protagonist fixates on, the scent of Fritz’s mother is also suggestive of the primal mother-child bond. Manuela’s connection with Fritz’s mother, however, is cut short after the protagonist is sent to boarding school, an environment in which the figure of the “Ersatz-Mother” is depicted in an increasingly erotic light.

After Manuela arrives at the boarding school following the death of her mother, Fräulein von Bernburg is also framed by Deutsch’s ‘fantasy about the mother’s body’ when, during her first encounter with Manuela, she is reduced to a series of body parts and maternal actions:

‘Wir haben uns noch nicht richtig begrüßt, kleine Manuela!’ […] und ehe Manuela antworten kann […] beugen sich die Hände, beugt sich die Stimme, beugt eine warme Brust, beugt ein Mensch zu sich nieder, und Fräulein von Bernburg küßt Manuelas Stirn, ganz als ob sie von den Tränen nichts sähe, die jetzt zu beiden Seiten befriedend niederinnen.[[726]](#footnote-726)

The hands, voice, and warm breast of Fräulein von Bernburg are ultimately detached from the teacher until the moment of the goodnight kiss, where they are united in the full form of the maternal figure. Soon after this encounter, Manuela’s symbolic menarche forces Fräulein von Bernburg to consciously adopt the ‘mother role’ to explain to Manuela what is happening to her body: ‘nun muß ich wohl schon ein wenig Mutterstelle an dir vertreten und dir sagen, was du zu tun hast, wenn sie kommen”’.[[727]](#footnote-727) The bonding that occurs between Manuela and Fräulein von Bernburg during this “menstrual education” takes the place of the pivotal moment of mother-daughter connectedness that generally occurs when the mother helps to ‘facilitate the transition to womanhood’.[[728]](#footnote-728) The absence of the mother at this particular point in the narrative consolidates Fräulein von Bernburg’s quintessential position in the queer ‘Mutterstelle’.

The routine goodnight kiss in the dormitory serves to eroticise the mother figure in Winsloe’s novel further and acts as a fundamental part of the construction of Manuela’s queer desire. Although Fräulein von Bernburg kisses the forehead of the protagonist before bed, it is only after a particularly emotional outburst from Manuela that the teacher crosses this unspoken physical boundary. When Manuela prepares a passage for Fräulein von Bernburg’s religious studies class, the protagonist is left ashamed after she forgets the text when she is confronted with the gaze of her beloved teacher. Later that evening, she is overcome with emotion when Fräulein von Bernburg makes her ritualistic round of the dormitory:

[Manuela] breitete die Arme aus und warf sich, alle Kraft verlierend, Fräulein von Bernburg um den Hals, die fast das Gleichgewicht verlor und erschrocken das zitternde Kind festhielt. […] Zart versucht sie, die Arme um ihren Hals zu lösen. Lela griff gierig nach den Händen […] Die Hände wehrten sich nicht. Sie ließen geschehen. Sie nahmen das tränennasse Gesicht des Kindes auf, und Fräulein von Bernburg beugte sich herab und küßte den bebenden Mund.[[729]](#footnote-729)

Although Fräulein von Bernburg initially attempts to release herself from Manuela’s emotional embrace, the repeated use of metonymic personification suggests again that an instinctive impulse that prevents the teacher from doing so. Instead, Fräulein von Bernburg increases the level of physical contact with Manuela, leaning forward and kissing the student directly on her ‘trembling mouth’, cementing the erotic potential of the Ersatz-mother. The kiss on the mouth is also the first, and only, explicitly erotic moment that occurs between the two. Indeed, as Freud already suggested in his *Vorlesungen zur Einführung in die Psychoanalyse* (1916/1917), the kiss could be interpreted as the precursor to all other “perversions”: ‘Schon der Kuß hat Anspruch auf den Namen eines perversen Aktes, denn er besteht in der Vereinigung zweier erogener Mundzonen an Stelle der beiderlei Genitalien. Aber niemand verwirft ihn als pervers, er wird im Gegenteil in der Bühnendarstellung als gemilderte Andeutung des Sexualaktes zugelassen’.[[730]](#footnote-730) Manuela’s anxiety at having disappointed her teacher is effectively soothed by Fräulein von Bernburg’s transgression of acceptable conduct and the bond that has developed between the two after Manuela’s menarche is strengthened.

Even as she makes her own ‘schweres Geständnis’, the social implications of Manuela’s declaration of love compels Fräulein von Bernburg to become complicit in the oppressive discourse of Frau Oberin. The young teacher realises that her focus on Manuela has broached the established boundaries of teacher-student relationship as well as a maternal love for a child:

Es hatte [...] für sie nur “die Kinder” zu geben, es gab kein einzelnes Kind, an das sie ihr Herz hängen durfte. Und nun, da sie es doch getan hatte, vom ersten Mal an, da dieses Kindes Augen und die ihren sich begegnet waren, durfte es nichts anderes für sie geben als Selbstzucht und Verzicht. […] sie wäre nicht Elisabeth von Bernburg gewesen, hätte sie sich nicht selber gestraft dafür, daß sie glücklich war durch dieses Kind und daß sie es wiederliebte, grundlos, mit aller Kraft ihres Herzens.[[731]](#footnote-731)

The ‘Verzicht’ that Fräulein von Bernburg imposes upon herself, stresses her awareness of the social implications of her feelings for her student and, for this reason, she sublimates them and denies her desire for Manuela. After Manuela confesses her love to her teacher, Fräulein von Bernburg tells the protagonist that she must learn to “control” her feelings in the same way the teacher does: ‘Du mußt sich zusammennehmen. Man muß sich beherrschen können. Verstehst du? Jeder Mensch muß sich beherrschen können, Manuela. Ich beherrsche mich auch!’.[[732]](#footnote-732) The careful self-policing of Fräulein von Bernburg and her command that the protagonist must learn to control her desires does not deter Manuela, however, whose final confession of queerness proves fatal.

When Fräulein von Bernburg visits Manuela in the infirmary, the teacher informs the protagonist that they must separate because she must be ‘healed’:

‘Wie war das? “Trennen” und “wir”? […] Die beiden Worte stehen vor ihr in der Luft […] “Wir” fühlte sie – wie schön das Wort ist. Zum erstenmal umfaßt es uns beide zusammen in einem Wort – sie und mich. Ja. “Wir” – aber *trennen* jetzt, wo sie doch zusammen sind?’[[733]](#footnote-733)

In keeping with the framework of the diagnosis narrative, Manuela is confused by Fräulein von Bernburg’s rhetoric, asking why she must be healed and, ultimately, ‘wovon?’.[[734]](#footnote-734) The diagnosis from ‘outside’ by Fräulein von Bernburg, however, is not articulated in the form of a name or label but rather through euphemisms and omissions as the teacher explains: ‘Du darfst mich nicht so lieb haben Manuela, das ist nicht gut. Das muß man bekämpfen, das muß man überwinden, abtöten …’.[[735]](#footnote-735) Fräulein von Bernburg’s use of the impersonal ‘man’ does not go unnoticed by Manuela who wonders whether Fräulein von Bernburg feels the same way. Indeed, in Winsloe’s novel the older maternal, and feminine, woman is shown to be equally as queer as the younger tomboy protagonist, but ultimately more aware of the transgressive implications of acting upon such desires. With this painful parting statement, Fräulein von Bernburg leaves Manuela. It is only after Manuela throws herself from the clock tower, that the “wir” that had been forcefully separated is eventually reunited in the final sentence of the novel Fräulein von Bernburg rushes to find Manuela’s body: ‘Man läßt die beiden allein: Fräulein von Bernburg und Manuela’.[[736]](#footnote-736)

# Conclusions

As a popular work of fiction, Raedt-de Canter’s *Internaat* was able to communicate the erotic elements of female homosocial environments to a mass audience. Yet, whether the protagonist’s tomboyishness, her attraction to the maternal and feminine, and her ‘uncontainable hunger’ for the secret midnight kiss were read as queer signifiers by a contemporary Dutch audience cannot be known. The very structure of the non-linear narrative, with its chaotic temporal shifts back and forth, resists the regimented structure of a sexual identity and reflects the experiences of contemporary queer women who did not consider queer desire as an identitarian marker. Reflecting on the state of play in sexual politics in Dutch interwar society, *Internaat* can be considered a novel situated on the brink of a new discourse. Although there exist traces of sexological and psychoanalytic theories in Raedt-de Canter’s novel, the conceptualisation of queer desire as a fundamental element of one’s identity does not manifest itself in her writing. The protagonist’s queer encounters leave her longing for another girl’s touch, yet the stability of the protagonist’s sense of “Self” never falters. The novel rejects homosexuality as a “received category” and challenges the idea that the protagonist is engaged on an identitarian journey of discovery.[[737]](#footnote-737) The maternal imagery that colours the protagonist’s queer encounters further points to the alternative models through which love between women may have been conceptualised and configured in this period as well as the protagonist’s own struggles with her femininity and the lack of any depictions in the novel of somatic signifiers of sexual difference.

Winsloe’s novel engages explicitly with the genre of the case study in its opening pages. Detailing the origins of her protagonist’s queer desires and gender non-conforming behaviours, the author makes use of the lexicon of signs and signifiers that had become more readily recognisable to readers in German contexts following the explosion of socio-sexological texts on the German literary market. The somatic markers of gender non-conformity and their link to theories of inversion and, ultimately, perversion in the text, as well as the explicit engagement with desire as (enforced) identity, encourages a reading of the protagonist’s journey as a self-reflexive exploration of sexual selfhood. Winsloe’s engagement with the vicissitudes of gender identity further highlights her protagonist’s desire to come to “know” herself as a gendered subject. In terms of her erotic same-sex attractions, however, is only through a diagnosis from the outside – much like the facilitating sexologist of the case study – that Manuela is constituted as a sexual subject. While the positioning of the feminine object appears initially only to reaffirm Manuela’s identity as a congenitally “inverted” subject, Fräulein von Bernburg’s queer desires are shown to be as authentic as the protagonist’s. The teacher’s feelings for her student are only suppressed through constant surveillance and self-regulation. Her natural instincts often break through these self-imposed boundaries, however, and result in the physical contact both characters equally desire.

# Chapter Six: When Object becomes Subject: Feminine Protagonists in Anna E. Weirauch’s *Der Skorpion* (1919 – 1931) and Josine Reuling’s *Terug naar het eiland* (1937)

I will use the final chapter of this thesis to rethink relationships between femininity, agency, and queer desire in fictional writing. Taking Anna Elisabet Weirauch’s trilogy *Der Skorpion* (1919 – 1931) and Josine Reuling’s novel *Terug naar het eiland* (Back to the Island, 1937) as what I term “counter-discourses” of queer experience, I will assess the degree to which these novels could be considered as a challenge to the contemporary medico-social discourses that positioned the queer feminine woman only as the object of a congenital invert’s desire. As both protagonists reject the virile female invert as a model of identification and have feminine love interests, I will explore the alternative paradigms and configurations of queer desire that are presented in the novels, ultimately questioning whether it can be said that the protagonists speak from what Julian Carter terms ‘nonlesbian subject positions’.[[738]](#footnote-738)

With a handful of notable exceptions, the experiences of queer feminine women, as this thesis has suggested, have remained a neglected site of historical and literary investigation. As Hannah O’Connor notes, the focus on female masculinities is particularly problematic when looking at novels about queer desire in the early twentieth century, ‘which are still deeply preoccupied with questions of femininity and the place of the sapphic subject in the feminine roles traditionally ascribed to them’.[[739]](#footnote-739) Although I do not suggest that the masculine woman in literature is undeserving of scholarly attention, this chapter offers an often overlooked counterpoint to the well-documented figure of the invert. To demonstrate what Shane Phelan rightfully terms, the ‘irreducible plurality’ of depictions of female same-sex desire in literature, this chapter will foreground the complex interactions between class, gender, and desire that were specific to bourgeois queer feminine figures in fictional writing in the interwar era.[[740]](#footnote-740) Although both *Der Skorpion* and *Terug naar het eiland* (Back to the Island) have been the focus of several important scholarly studies in German and Dutch literary fields, within these writings the significance of the protagonist’s gender expressions has been largely disregarded. I will argue, therefore, that it is the transgressive potential of queer femininities to destabilise the dyad that posits homosexual desire as “non-normative” and “immoral” that enables authors to challenge the image of the queer woman as sexual “Other” and to offer a counter-discourse to the figure of the sexological invert.

As already discussed in Chapter Three, the feminine woman was a figure both revered and reviled within the queer community. Positioned in the magazine *Die Freundin* as the object of queer masculine desire, the gendered performance of the feminine was subject to strict regulations. The flirty “coquette” was largely rejected from the BfM’s community as a danger to the politics of respectability considered key to the broader aims of the homosexual emancipation movement. For the most part, queer feminine women were considered untrustworthy partners who would turn to men in the event of difficulties, a view upheld in sexological writing wherein, unless desires became pathological through the persistent practice of Sapphic love, the queer feminine woman was primarily viewed as a “pseudo-homosexual”. In the magazine *Frauenliebe*, however, the feminine woman was shown to be a strong and female-focused figure, who embraced gender non-conforming elements within her femininity. Contributors to *Frauenliebe* pointed to the plurality of queer feminine experience in their writing and did not dismiss bisexual desire and even explored the experiences of married women who took a female girlfriend “on the side”. Hirschfeld’s more progressive stance also suggested that although the most visible group of female homosexuals consisted of virile and mannish women, there existed ‘eine nicht mindergroße Gruppe’ who appeared ‘in ihren Gefühls-, Geschmacks- und Gedankenäußerungen so durchaus weiblich, daß sie niemand für homosexuell halten würde’.[[741]](#footnote-741) This more moderate analysis of the queer feminine woman, however, was an exception.

Anna Elisabet Weirauch’s and Josine Reuling’s novels offer insights into the complex negotiations of class, gender, and sexuality in the experiences of queer feminine protagonists. Examining the authors’ engagements with – and departures from – contemporary discourses of queer female femininities in the novels, I will demonstrate the multiple and often conflicting ways in which queer femininities have been portrayed in literature across cultural borders. The protagonists’ active creation of “hierarchies” of femininity in the novels serves further to contest the idea that queer feminine women submit to patriarchal ideals of womanhood and should be considered less transgressive than their queer masculine counterparts. The engagement of the protagonists with psycho-sexual discourses, however, as well as more traditional markers of femininity such as motherhood, modesty, and morality, challenge what it means to be a queer woman and resignifies the culturally rooted codes of femininity. Furthermore, drawing on the discussion of the distinct relationships between femininity and queer desire of the first two sections of this thesis, this chapter will refine the earlier conclusions I have already made. Finally, I will comment more broadly on the overarching developments that appear to have taken place in literary constructions of queer desire in German and Dutch contexts, focusing specifically on what literature might tell us about the ways in which the feminine women’s “non-normative” instincts were conceptualised in different cultural contexts and across a turbulent socio-political period.

# Anna Elisabet Weirauch (1887-1970)

Born in Galati, Romania, in 1887, Anna Elisabet Weirauch was the youngest of four children. After her father passed away in 1891 and her two brothers died in early childhood, Weirauch’s mother relocated with her daughters to Germany, where they eventually settled in Berlin. In the German capital, Weirauch received acting lessons from a young age and made her stage debut in 1903 in an adaption of Shakespeare’s *Wintermärchen*. Discovered by the director of the *Deutsches Theater*, Max Reinhardt, when she was eighteen, Weirauch soon made a name for herself across Berlin and appeared no less than eighty times as part of Reinhardt’s ensemble.[[742]](#footnote-742) In 1908 Weirauch wrote and directed her own stage play, *Treulieb und Wunderhold: Weihnachtsmärchen in acht Bildern*, which was a resounding critical success. Followed by *Im Zeppelin zum Mars* (1909) and *Das böse Mädel* (1911), Weirauch produced several plays while continuing to pursue her own stage career, winning the ‘goldenen Medaille für Kunst und Wissenschaft’ in 1916 for her contributions to theatre.

In 1918, Weirauch published her first novel *Die kleine Dagmar*,which was well-received by critics who concluded the novel showed ‘ein starkes schriftstellerisches Talent’.[[743]](#footnote-743) It was not until a year later, however, that Weirauch published her first work containing homosexual themes: *Der Tag der Artemis* (1919). In the same year, the author offered her readers the first novel in her trilogy, *Der Skorpion*, a new and exciting addition to the growing number of novels that emerged at this time concerning love between women. Centred around the experiences of a young girl who falls in love with an older woman, the trilogy was written over twelve years. The three instalments of *Der Skorpion*, which proved to be very popular, were advertised in both *Frauenliebe* and *Die Freundin*, in which a contributor from the latter claimed that the first two novels ‘fast sofort nach Erscheinen vollkommen vergriffen [gewesen seien]’.[[744]](#footnote-744) Weirauch’s contribution to the ‘heikles Thema von der gleichgeschlechtlichen Liebe’ was considered by critics from both queer and national newspapers as well-informed and ‘dezent’.[[745]](#footnote-745) Yet, although many reviewers discussed the novel in terms of its positive didactic potential, there were also some critics who were keen to acknowledge the “danger” that such a publication presented to those who could be easily influenced by its subject.[[746]](#footnote-746) Following the Nazi assumption of power in 1933, Weirauch’s novels were blacklisted and the author moved to Upper Bavaria with her Dutch partner Helena Geisenhainer. Although neither became a member of the Nazi party, Weirauch could continue publishing novels in the Third Reich after she joined the *Reichsschrifttumskammer*.[[747]](#footnote-747) After the end of the Second World War, she moved to Munich with Geisenhainer before returning to Berlin in 1961, where the couple lived together until her death in 1970.

# Josine Reuling (1899-1961)

Born in Amsterdam in 1899, Gerardina Anna Reuling spent much of her youth travelling through Russia with her parents, who were opera singers. Returning to the Netherlands with her family aged fifteen, Reuling settled in Amsterdam, which seemed to her after so many years of travel ‘a paradise’.[[748]](#footnote-748) Working initially as a secretary for the paper wholesalers G. H. Bührmann, Reuling published her debut novel *Siempie* in 1927, which was praised in national newspapers as offering a snapshot of humanity. Several of Reuling’s early publications, which appeared under her childhood nickname ‘Josine’, were inspired by her upbringing in Eastern Europe, which was coloured by the bohemian lifestyle of her opera-singing parents, and the later task of caring for her dying mother.

When Reuling began work on her second novel *Sara Vierhout*,she left Bührmann’s due to poor health and moved to Switzerland. Printed initially as a serial story in *Elsevier’s Geïllustreerd Maandschrift* (Elsevier’s Illustrated Monthly Magazine, 1891-1940) and later as a novel, *Sara Vierhout* received critical acclaim for its authentic and original depictions and granted Reuling a place in the Dutch-speaking literary world of her time. With the release of her novel *Intermezzo met Ernst* (Intermezzo with Ernst, 1934), the first in a series of more psychological publications, there appears to have been a shift in the critical reception of Reuling’s work. Challenging the increasingly conservative social attitudes towards sexuality and gender, the author’s detailed depictions of figures on the margins of society were received negatively by the conservative newspapers as portrayals of ‘abnormal’ lifestyles.[[749]](#footnote-749) Religious newspaper *De Tijd* (The Times), for example, believed that there was ‘no place in Catholic libraries’ for Reuling’s independent female characters, particularly *Intermezzo*’s modern protagonist Bep, whose lifestyle and behaviours, according to one critic, showed ‘unforgivable weaknesses’.[[750]](#footnote-750)

Like her protagonist Bep, Reuling was an independent and modern woman who belonged to the only known queer literary circle in the Netherlands, which included the authors Anna Blaman (1905-1960) and Marie-Louise Doudart de la Grée (1909-1981).[[751]](#footnote-751) Moving from Switzerland to France, a country she called her ‘second homeland’ (*tweede vaderland*), Reuling finished her fourth novel *Terug naar het eiland* (1937), which was the first Dutch literary text to thematise explicitly the nature of love between women.[[752]](#footnote-752) Despite her previous success, the publication met with strong criticism in literary journals in the Netherlands and newspapers in its colonies because of the portrayal of ‘the abnormal affection for one’s own sex’.[[753]](#footnote-753) Following the Second World War, Reuling returned to Amsterdam, where she worked as the secretary for the director of a public library. When she left her position, due to her desire for travel and writing, she began to give lessons in Dutch literature at the open library and organised popular reading groups. Despite having battled with poor health for much of her life, Reuling continued to publish smaller projects while she worked in Amsterdam and remained dedicated to the idea of bringing literature to a broader audience until she moved into a retirement home, where she died in 1961.

# *Der Skorpion* (1919 – 1931)

Printed between 1919 and 1931, Weirauch’s trilogy is the most extensive depiction of love between women to exist from the Weimar era. Set in Berlin, Munich and Hamburg, Melitta Rudloff – known throughout the text as Mette – grows up in a privileged but conservative household under the care of her father, Franz Rudloff, and her self-righteous Aunt Emilie following the death of her mother shortly after her birth. In a moment that Mette recalls as ‘der Auftakt zu [ihrem] Leben’, a young governess, Friedel Eggebrecht, arrives at the family home to take care of the protagonist who promptly falls in love with her.[[754]](#footnote-754) Mette is taught to steal and pawn the family silver by Friedel, who rewards the protagonist with confectionary and embraces. After Mette’s “crime” has been discovered, a psychologist is called to the house to assess her mental faculties and Friedel is dismissed.

The rest of Mette’s youth is relatively uneventful until she encounters the exotic Olga Radó through her friendship with the boringly bourgeois Möbius daughters. Ten years older than the protagonist, and of German-Hungarian descent, Olga immediately attracts Mette’s attention with her intelligence and beauty. Introducing the protagonist to the pleasure of knowledge by teaching her history and French, Olga becomes Mette’s teacher and friend. After Mette pawns the family silver to help Olga from a debt collector, the protagonist is sent to live with her uncle’s family in the countryside before her desperation to see her friend drives her to steal money from her uncle to reunite with Olga in an unknown town. It is here that Olga finally gives into Mette’s affections and the two enjoy their first intimate experience together. The following morning, Olga convinces Mette to write to her father to explain what she has done. Mette agrees only to be informed that her father is dying following a stroke. Returning home to see her father, Mette turns to Olga for emotional support when her father dies and her unforgiving Aunt Emilie calls the police to the older woman’s pension. Confronted, Olga denies her relationship with the protagonist and claims that Mette is infatuated with her. Devastated by the betrayal, Mette retreats from social life and later becomes engaged in a bid to live a “normal” life. Soon after, however, Mette is told by a mutual friend, Otto Petterman, that Olga has committed suicide and the protagonist calls off her wedding. In the final pages of the novel, the reader sees Mette with Olga’s revolver and her lover’s most treasured possession: a cigarette case emblazoned with the symbol of the scorpion.

In the second novel, the reader joins Mette in a small pension in Munich. Alone and depressed after Olga’s death, Mette identifies two distinct groups among the lodgers; the moral and respectable circle of Luise Peters and the “loose” friends of cabaret artist Mara Luigi. Although Mette feels instinctively that she belongs to the “class” of Luise Peters, upon hearing that a woman in Mara’s circle, Gisela Werkenthin, has been driven to morphine because a woman has broken her heart, Mette approaches Mara.[[755]](#footnote-755) Through the cabaret artist, Mette is introduced to Sophie Degebrodt and her disabled partner Nora von Hersfeld, whose home serves as a gateway to Munich’s queer subculture. At a party thrown by Sophie and Nora, Mette encounters the enchanting Corona von Gjellerström, the woman responsible for Gisela Werkenthin’s heartache. During the following months, Mette begins to feel at home in her new environment and with her new companions. When Sophie confesses to the protagonist that she has developed feelings for her, however, she asks Mette to leave the city so that the older woman can save her relationship with Nora.

After a night of drinking and gambling following Sophie’s declaration, Mette is taken to a bar where she tries cocaine and flirts openly with the patrons, kissing an attractive woman who approaches her. When the effects of the drug wear off, Mette is repulsed by her actions and leaves the club, resolving to kill herself with Olga’s pistol. Luise Peters, whose conventional “circle” Mette had initially snubbed, saves the protagonist and suggests to her that she spends some time with her well-to-do family in Hamburg. Mette agrees and is soon surrounded by the bourgeois elite that she had once rejected. After Mette is befriended by the young Gwendolen and her love interest, Fred Wietinghoff, who pull the protagonist into their curious relationship, the three take a short weekend break together. Following a staged “surprise” encounter, the friends enjoy a meal before retiring for the evening. In their shared bedroom, Gwen confronts Metta about her past affairs with women and ultimately seduces the protagonist. As Mette gives in to Gwen’s advances, Fred appears in the room and attempts to join the erotic scene playing out before him. Disgusted by the pair and wounded by their betrayal, Mette packs her bags to leave at first light.

In the final instalment of Weirauch’s trilogy, Mette has taken a room in a pension in the countryside. Frustrated by life with the other tenants, she decides to buy some land upon which she can build a house. For this, Mette enlists the help of her old friend Otto Petermann and returns briefly to Berlin. In Petermann’s pension, Mette is reunited with Corona Gjellerström, the woman who had broken Gisela Werkenthin’s heart, and the protagonist discovers that it was Corona who had originally given Olga the symbolic cigarette case. Mette and Corona embark on a turbulent affair that is subject to Corona’s frequently changing moods and Mette’s jealousy. When Mette’s house has been built, the protagonist returns to the countryside to work the land and live a solitary life. When Corona finally arrives at the house, it becomes clear that she does not approve of Mette’s isolated lifestyle and the pair eventually decide that they must part ways. As the trilogy comes to an end, Mette is seen to be happy in her country home and arrives at the conclusion that she must learn to live alone before she can share her life with another.

# *Terug naar het eiland* (1937)

In another story about a young woman from a wealthy family, Reuling explores the early childhood experiences and adolescence of her protagonist Brita Salin. Moving between Stockholm, Paris, and the fictional Swedish island of Semmarö, Reuling explores Brita’s relationships with her family and her various female partners. In a manner similar to Weirauch, Reuling begins her novel with detailed descriptions of Brita’s childhood and the protagonist’s close relationship with her Swiss governess, Mademoiselle Henriëtte Chabert, known throughout the text as “Zelle”. Following an outline of Brita’s youth that foregrounds her father’s frequent absences, the protagonist is shown to develop into a much-desired debutante who, to the chagrin of her mother, claims that she is ‘unsuitable for marriage’. Uninterested in the lessons she is taught at school and unwilling to commit herself to the hobbies of a woman of her standing, Brita publishes a collection of poetry entitled ‘Dark Dreams’ (*Donkere dromen*) on her twenty-first birthday, which establishes her a name as an exciting and experimental writer. Disowned by her grandmother, who believes that such an occupation is unsuitable for a young woman, and with increasing pressure from her mother to marry, Brita begins to spend longer periods in Paris and Semmarö.

During one of her summer vacations in Paris, Brita has an affair with Marja Wastouwska, a seemingly fickle Hungarian socialite. When Marja lies to Brita about going to dinner with the Swedish consul to help with her aims to climb the social ladder, however, the protagonist forces her lover to leave the flat and cuts off all contact with her. When Marja realises that her chance to join Swedish high society is lost to her, she becomes vengeful. Travelling to Sweden with a bundle of letters that had been sent to her by Brita, Marja visits the protagonist’s father to blackmail him details of her relationship with his daughter in return for ten thousand Kronor. Brita’s father coolly pays Marja the money but leaves the letters unopened. Furious, Marja sends a poison pen letter to the protagonist’s mother revealing the nature of Brita’s “perverse” sexual inclinations. After Brita’s parents realise the implications of their daughter’s affair, the protagonist is disinherited by her family and she moves to Paris, helped by her governess Zelle who initially supports her financially. During Brita’s time in the French capital, the reader is informed of her encounters with the homosexual scene and the social prejudice that she faces as a queer woman. Brita’s friend, the psychologist Hans Thorstad, makes repeated attempts during this time to “heal” the protagonist so that he can marry her and ‘cure her with the power of his love’. Brita remains adamant, however, that she cannot be cured. Amid Hans’ attempts to persuade Brita to undergo psychoanalytic treatments, the protagonist meets the boyish artist Renée and falls in love with her. Although Renée and Hans do not get along, Renée convinces the protagonist to go on a vacation with the psychologist, promising to meet them in Nice. Following the traditionally tragic ending of many queer novels of the era, however, as Brita and Hans are driving to Nice, they are involved in a car crash and Brita dies. Her body is shipped back to Sweden and buried on the island of Semmarö.

# Subverting Sexological Frameworks

Prefaced with an observational prologue from an almost entirely heterodiegetic narrator, Weirauch places the *Der Skorpion* directly within the contemporary socio-medical discourses of its time. Unlike Raedt-de Canter and Winsloe, who do not explicitly reference the structure of the sexological case study, Weirauch engages critically with these frameworks from the opening scene of her trilogy. Drawing enthusiastically on the rhetoric employed by contemporary sex researchers, Weirauch’s narrator states the intention to depict the story of Mette Rudloff ‘mit der klaren und kalten Freude des Forschers’.[[756]](#footnote-756) Informed by an interest in ‘die Kranken, die Verlorenen [und] die Ausgestoßenen’, the prologue functions as a truncated literary case study that is developed and challenged over the course of Weirauch’s series.[[757]](#footnote-757) In a manner similar to Felix Ortt’s opening statement in Joannes François’ *Open Brief*, as examined earlier in the introduction to this thesis, the narrator distances themselves from their subject, claiming only to have sought out the protagonist ‘um sie zu vivisezieren, zu analysieren, sie in Systeme einzuschachteln’.[[758]](#footnote-758) By positioning the narrator as “medical” authority, as Nancy P. Nenno observes, the novel functions ‘as a revelation of, and an attempt to fill, the lacunae that the scientific discourse had created in its narratives of female homosexuality’.[[759]](#footnote-759) As the narrator vehemently denies any possibility of their subjectivity, however, the framing soon appears little more than a parody of sexological studies: ‘Ich bin nicht dazu geschaffen, zu verteidigen oder anzuklagen. Ich verfolge keinen Zweck, wenn ich etwas erzähle. Ich habe keine Ziele und keine Absichten, nicht einmal eine Meinung oder ein Urteil, und kaum ein Gefühl’.[[760]](#footnote-760) Indeed, as Cathrin Winkelmann proposes, the prologue functions as a ‘satire illustrating the failure of the scientific […] gaze to present an objective narrative of lesbian love’.[[761]](#footnote-761) Inserted between a veritable tick list of sexological signifiers, the emerging image of the protagonist is presented in terms of the narrator’s already established hypothesis that queer desire is the result of congenital pathology and the lack of a mother figure, which is evidenced through the protagonist’s criminal actions.

In an apparent attempt to fit each noteworthy episode of the protagonist’s life into crude sexological categories, the narrator introduces Mette’s primary love interest, Olga Radó, as a ‘merkwürdigen Frau […] einer Hochstaplerin mit ausgesprochen männlichem Gebaren’.[[762]](#footnote-762) Suggesting the older woman may have “seduced” Mette, the narrator plays simultaneously with several recognised tropes of female same-sex desire; Olga is not only portrayed as the masculine counterpart to the feminine protagonist but also as the criminal seductress who takes advantage of her sexually innocent and ‘unmündig’ partner. Yet, despite the narrator’s exaggerated efforts to pin the protagonist down to a series of sexological tropes, as Winkelmann suggests, the scientific framework of the narrative ultimately fails because of the narrator’s own vested interest in the story.[[763]](#footnote-763) As the narrator admits to their initial attempts to cure the protagonist, it becomes clear already before the story begins that this has been a hopeless endeavour. Indeed, as Taylor concludes: ‘in this textual moment, the sexologist narrator doubts – goes beyond doubting – specifically rejects the possibility of curing the lesbian. It cannot be done and it is a delusion of the sexologist that it could be’.[[764]](#footnote-764) As the novel progresses, the narrator’s “scientific” observations soon fade into the background and they interject in the plot with markedly less fervour. Indeed, by the end of the first novel, the narrative voice is focalised almost entirely through the protagonist and has lost all semblance of its initial scientific objectivity. The scientific framework fails, as Nenno suggests, because the narrator ‘attempts to delve into precisely those aspects of Mette’s life which elude scientific categories’.[[765]](#footnote-765) Yet, while Nenno correctly identifies the difficulty of labelling the protagonist’s experiences and desires, she fails to specify that it was the gendered aspect of the desires of queer *feminine* women that particularly confounded sexologists who could not make sense of the discrepancy that complicated the “heterosexual matrix”.

Further to the failed the sexological framework and the disappearance of the “objective” narrative voice, the protagonist’s encounters with her love interest Olga throughout the novel serve to challenge the initial assessments made about her in the prologue. Described initially as a charlatan with masculine features, Olga’s first meeting with Mette’s complicates this masculine-feminine binary by depicting the older woman as neither singularly masculine nor overtly feminine. In fact, as Mette observes her, Olga appears to be characterised ‘einen sonderbaren Kontrast’.[[766]](#footnote-766) Her tone, described as ‘scharf und hart’, Mette suggests, stands in juxtaposition to the timbre and cadence of her voice, which instead evokes a ‘weichen Celloklang’.[[767]](#footnote-767) Her ‘fast drohenden Ausdruck’ is further contrasted with her beautiful features and ‘wunderschöne Hände’.[[768]](#footnote-768) The initial rigid “scientific” assessment of the narrator, therefore, is softened with a more nuanced gendered image. Although Olga is indeed typified by some traditionally “masculine” behaviours, such as her habit of smoking, the level of her education, and her independent travel, her gender expression is more complex than the narrator’s brief physiognomic evaluation would suggest. Furthermore, the depiction of Olga as the mature seductress is also challenged as the novel progresses. Although there certainly exists a complex power relationship between the two in which Olga is positioned as the more educated, cultured, and wilful character, it is Mette who persistently attempts to break down her friend’s resistance to her advances and Olga who is ultimately “persuaded” to give into her desires.

The failed “scientific” observations of the narrator are not the only echoes of the medical world present in Weirauch’s trilogy. By introducing other figures of medical authority into the text, Weirauch explicitly discusses and challenges multiple discourses of desire that specifically concerned queer feminine woman. After Mette’s governess, Friedel Eggebrecht, introduces the protagonist to the workings of the pawn shop, for example, Aunt Emilie calls a doctor to the family home. Bearing the ‘grauenerregenden und unheimlichen Titel’ “Psychiater”’, the doctor examines the protagonist for signs of more serious pathological predispositions. Little is learned from the exercise, however, as Mette refuses to speak about her governess or the curious case of the missing cutlery. Later, when Mette pawns the family silverware to save Olga Radò from debt, she is forced to undergo another psychiatric examination, which elicits a decidedly different response. During her confrontation with the psychiatrist, Mette’s every action is keenly observed and recorded; from her passion for smoking to her relationship with Olga, the protagonist’s life is mined for details that could explain the origins of her queer desire. Yet, although the focus of the examination appears to remain fixed on the protagonist’s psychological and behaviour deviance, the spectre of the Sapphic body nonetheless looms large in the background. Throughout the encounter with the psychiatrist, Mette becomes increasingly aware of Aunt Emilie’s role in the discovery of her relationship with Olga. After sending investigators to spy on the couple, Mette’s aunt proceeds to rifle through the protagonist’s personal belongings, an act that leaves Mette feeling ‘als ob erbarmungslose Hände ihr Stück für Stück der Kleidung vom Leibe rissen’.[[769]](#footnote-769) The protagonist’s sense of the psychiatric examination as a physical violation is evocative of the bodily examinations that formed part of many sexological case studies. The intrusive assessments that many “non-normative” sexual subjects underwent for signs of genital hypertrophy or atrophy enabled sexologists to conceive of a complex system of corporeal codes to identify homosexual desires.

Although such an examination does not take place in the text, after Mette’s psychiatric observation, Aunt Emilie corners the psychiatrist to demand that he carry out the promised physical examination of Mette’s body to identify signs of ‘körperlichen Anomalien’.[[770]](#footnote-770) That Mette feels as though pitiless hands are removing her clothing piece by piece, therefore, is no real stretch of the imagination and reminds the reader once again of the problematic status of the queer feminine woman within sexological research. Bearing no outward physical manifestations of its subject’s sexual alterity, the queer feminine body offers no biological explanation or congenital trace to account for Mette’s sexual “pathology”. Arguably for this reason, the psychiatrist is unable to make a diagnosis of congenital deviance and concludes instead that Mette is ‘ein Kind, das gar nicht weiß, in welcher Gefahr es schwebt’.[[771]](#footnote-771) Concluding that Olga, the masculine seductress, is the ‘verderbliches’ element, the psychiatrist suggests that if Mette were sent to the countryside to live with her Uncle Jürgen and Aunt Antonia, she might recover from the episode. Olga, as the supposedly masculine woman, cannot be cured but Mette, the innocent youth, can be removed from the damaging influence of the adult corruptor and “recover”. Feeding into the moral panic surrounding the mature homosexual seducer, the psychiatrist’s contention concomitantly offers Mette “refuge” within the class-bound gender norms of respectability and propriety while simultaneously reinforcing sexological stereotypes.[[772]](#footnote-772)

Denying Mette any form of sexual agency as a feminine woman, and unable to envisage the reality that the protagonist has pursued Olga, the psychiatrist draws his conclusion based on Mette’s gendered presentation and her bourgeois background. When the protagonist arrives at the house of her uncle and aunt, it becomes clear how entrenched such views about the adult seducer had become at a social level.[[773]](#footnote-773) Mette’s young cousin Hermann, for example, is forbidden by his Aunt Antonia from visiting the protagonist’s bedroom because of a supposed ‘Ansteckungsgefahr’.[[774]](#footnote-774) Asked by “Männe” if she has recovered from her “illness”, Metta explains to her cousin that she is not infectious: ‘Weißt du, Männe […] mich hat ein Skorpion gestochen. Nun ist mein ganzes Blut vergiftet. Und du weißt doch: Gegen Skorpionengift hilft nur Skorpionengift. […] Ich glaube wohl das es *tödlich* sein kann – aber ansteckend ist es nicht’.[[775]](#footnote-775) Although the image of the stinging scorpion, ‘das Zeichen des Sexualismus und der Geheimnisse des Todes’ under which Olga was born, evokes the image of the seductive phallic woman, that Mette claims the sting is not contagious dismisses the idea that queer desire is a threat to her young cousin.[[776]](#footnote-776)

As well as Mette’s encounter with the psychiatrist, the protagonist’s introduction to sexological literature plays a key role in her understanding of homosexual desire ‘as identity’ and the subsequent positioning of herself in relation to this new knowledge. Following the death of her father and Olga’s public rejection, Mette closes the family house and isolates herself in her father’s study. Here, as she writes letters to Olga which remain unanswered, Mette finds a range of ‘Bücher, Hefte, Broschüren, […] Romane, medizinische Werke [und] angestrichene Tageszeitungen’ which have been planted assiduously on her desk by Aunt Emilie.[[777]](#footnote-777) Venturing a closer examination of the material, it soon becomes clear that the materials have one overarching theme:

Da waren seltsame und unheimliche Geschichten von Gräfinnen, die sich in Männerkleidung in Kaschemmen herumtreiben [...] Berichte von widerlichen Orgien in großen Clubs, wo Hunderte von Weibern sich als Männer anzogen und gebärdeten […] Schilderungen aus dem Seelenleben Konträr-Sexualer, die vermuten ließen, daß diese Tausende von Menschen alle miteinander eine große Gemeinde bildeten, eine Gemeinde, die durch nichts verbrüdert wurde, [...] nichts als den Trieb zur gleichen Ausschweifung.[[778]](#footnote-778)

Disgusted by the immoral images and orgiastic scenes that are reminiscent of Forel’s work on *Die sexuelle Frage*, Mette rejects the images she reads in the material. The protagonist’s rejection of the queer community and the image of queer woman, as Taylor argues, could be considered an attempt to ‘sever herself from all possibilities of being “read” as lesbian’ and to ‘separate herself from the reigning ideas about lesbian sexual excess’.[[779]](#footnote-779) Yet, as I have already suggested, Mette cannot be “read” as congenitally queer. Indeed, her femininity precluded this diagnosis in her psychiatric examination. As she reads through the material about queer women, it further becomes apparent that the only image Mette is presented in these texts is that of the virile female invert, reinforcing the idea that femininity disqualifies an identification with congenital queerness:

Wenn von männlich veranlagten Frauen gesprochen wurde, war viel von ihrem überlegenen Geist, von ihrem Wissensdurst und Bildungsdrang die Rede. Auch von einer krankhaften Verschwendungssucht mitunter, von einem leidenschaftlichen Hang zum Luxus, von einer unnatürlichen Vorliebe für schöne Stiefel. Oder auch von unheimlichen Don-Juan-Naturen, die mit unersättlicher Genußgier von Abenteuer zu Abenteuer rasten.[[780]](#footnote-780)

Although the ‘Wissensdurst und Bildungsdrang’ and the ‘leidenschaftlichen Hang zum Luxus’ are recognisable character traits in her lover Olga, who the reader is told has ‘eine fast krankhafte Abneigung gegen alles, was billig war’, Mette is unable to recognise her own experiences in the theories she has been presented with.[[781]](#footnote-781) Falling into the ‘qualvollste Verwirrung’, Mette imagines herself confronting Olga: ‘bin ich so? Bist du so?’.[[782]](#footnote-782) The very articulation of these questions underscores Mette’s inability to identify with the images she sees in sexological literature.

Although Mette’s conventional, bourgeois background would certainly have made her sensitive to the ‘orgiastic scenes’ depicted in the documents, it is the fact that the protagonist cannot recognise herself in them as a *feminine* womanthat causes her ultimately to reject them. Mette’s dismissal of the texts highlights the dearth of sexological writing that existed about the queer feminine experience. Mette’s own experiences of queer love with Olga do not correlate with the descriptions of virile masculine experiences in the texts that she reads. The ubiquitous image of the virile masculine woman is called into question, however, not only by the protagonist’s sheer existence as a queer feminine woman, but also through her interactions with the circuit of queer people in Munich in the second novel. Making the acquaintance of Mara Luigi, a bisexual cabaret artist, Mette comes to know Johannes, a beautiful Ephebic figure caught up in a morally conspicuous financial relationship with the disreputable Drencker; Nora von Hersfeld and Sophie Degebrodt, an older queer couple who form the heart of Munich’s queer scene; Gisela Werkenthin, a morphine addict who had her heart broken by the beautiful Corona von Gjellerström; and Eccarius, a caring and seemingly neutral figure who protectively takes Mette under his wing. Suffering deeply from Olga’s suicide, Mette rejects the bourgeois circle that she feels she belongs to because of her social background and instead joins the notorious group of Mara Luigi: ‘die sind meine Klasse, sind mir verwandt, zu ihnen gehöre ich – aber ich lose mich von ihnen und gehe mit den andern, mit den Fremden – mit denen, die mir verwandt sind, weil sie mein Schicksal haben’.[[783]](#footnote-783)

It is Mette’s interactions with this wider community that highlight most forcefully the discrepancy between the unitary figure of the congenital invert presented in sexological literature and the realities of the heterogeneous queer circuit. When Mette spends a night with Mara Luigi’s circle at a bar in Munich, for example, the reader is informed that it is patronised by a panoply of queer individuals:

Es war eine ganze Stufenleiter von Erscheinungen da. Solche, die zum dunklen Jackenkleid mit Aufschlag und Brusttasche den steifen Kragen, zum kurzgeschnittenen Haar den kleinen Herrenhut trugen – andere, die sich nur durch eine leise Schattierung verrieten – einige, aus deren scharfen Zügen Geist und Charakter sprachen, andere, die ganz den Typ der Kokotte vertraten.[[784]](#footnote-784)

The gamut of identities visible in the bar stresses the plurality of queer existence; there are not only women with stiff collars and short hair but also those who are less “visibly” queer, as well as the hyperfeminine coquettish women that sex researchers such as Forel and queer icons such as Selli Engler warned of. The ongoing battle between Mette’s sense of bourgeois morality and her queer sensibilities that partly informed her rejection of a ‘community based on desire,’ comes to a crisis point during the evening.[[785]](#footnote-785) After breaching the boundaries of bourgeois propriety and feminine modesty at the bar by consuming copious amounts of cocaine, allowing herself to be complemented on the allures of her body, and kissing a boyish woman, Mette feels a sudden ‘Grauen und Ekel vor sich selber’ and returns home with the intention of committing suicide.[[786]](#footnote-786) Mette’s response to her transgressions explores the tension between respectability and sexual fulfilment that, as Marti Lybeck observes, was often so resolute that, when confronted with the ‘interface with the realm of respectability and power’, many bourgeois women sacrificed their desires in order to maintain their honour and standard of living.[[787]](#footnote-787) When Mette returns home and reaches for Olga’s pistol it is the bourgeois Luise Peters who saves Mette before she can pull the trigger. It is her rejection of the queer community and of the masculine invert in this scene, therefore, that marks the beginning of Mette’s journey to navigate a “nonlesbian” subject position.

# Psychoanalysis as Narrative Stimulus

The complexities of class and sexual desire, as well as the idea that the feminine woman could be “cured” of her queerness, also figures prominently in Josine Reuling’s novel *Terug naar het eiland*. Structured more explicitly by the psychoanalytic writings of Freud than by the somatic discourses of medico-scientific research, Reuling employs very few anatomical or physiognomical referents to make queer desires visible to her readers. Unlike Weirauch’s trilogy, which initially aligns itself closely with methodological frameworks of sexological research, Reuling’s writing essentially challenges the models that coded same-sex desire for women as a masculine drive and her protagonist forcibly rejects the idea that love between women must be conceived in terms of gendered inversion. Presented through a third-person omniscient narrator, the story offers no trace of the scientific objectivity that Weirauch’s narrator purports to embody. With a liberal use of free indirect speech, Reuling’s writing is peppered with insights into the thoughts and emotions of each of her characters, although it is focalised primarily through the protagonist.

Opening with a brief introduction to Brita’s parents – a rich timber trader and the daughter of one of Sweden’s wealthiest families – the narrator swiftly chronicles the events of the protagonist’s youth. Reading for signs of “inversion” in these flashbacks, however, is a futile exercise. Instead of stories of somatic difference, the memories that are relayed to the reader detail the protagonist’s poor academic performance, her talent for writing, and the tearful farewells that take place by the boat each time her father leaves the summerhouse on Semmarö to return to work. Unlike the protagonists that have been discussed previously in this section, Reuling does not portray Brita as a lonely gender nonconforming tomboy but instead as a young independent woman; Brita’s parents allow the protagonist ‘complete freedom’ as she grows up and interfere little with her life and her decisions.

Described as ‘sweet’ and ‘amiable’ in these early chapters, the protagonist is not associated with masculine markers of identity and her childhood is not presented in terms of congenital inversion. When non-traditional gender traits *are* associated with the protagonist, they are couched between hyperbolic assertions of her gender conformity, such as the moment her father describes her as an ‘exceptionally pretty girl, extremely sporty yet so feminine, so charming’ or when her mother prefaces a statement about her daughter’s athletic ability with a claim that Brita is ‘the sweetest, most charming girl there was’.[[788]](#footnote-788) Later, when Brita’s behaviour is shown to transgress the boundaries of propriety, it is presented to the reader as a contravention of a class norm rather than strictly being a transgression of her gender. When the protagonist publishes a bundle of poems entitled ‘Dark Dreams’ (*Donkere dromen)*, for example, her grandmother threatens to disinherit her after claiming that Brita had broached subjects in her collection that ‘one did not speak of’.[[789]](#footnote-789) Interestingly, her grandmother claims that she is not against Brita publishing altogether but rather that her granddaughter’s choice of subject is not “appropriate” or “respectable”.[[790]](#footnote-790) Similarly, when Brita announces her intention to paint the summer house on the island of Semmarö, her mother responds that it ‘is no job for a girl’.[[791]](#footnote-791) Although this is clearly a comment on Brita’s subversion of gendered norms, her mother’s suggestion that they ‘get someone in’ to paint the summer house for the protagonist implies more distinctly that such a job is not appropriate for a girl of Brita’s *standing*.

The tension inherent in Brita’s negotiation of class and sexual identity also plays out in her conceptualisation of queer desire. Indeed, like Mette, Brita’s class ultimately disqualifies her from accessing the community of the Parisian queer circuit during her summers in the French capital. Yet, despite the similarities that exist between Reuling’s and Weirauch’s protagonists in terms of their class, gender presentation, and sexual preferences, their engagement and approach to desire differs markedly. As I shall discuss shortly, Mette appears to make a clear distinction between ‘love’ and ‘erotic desire’. Brita, however, does not conceive of the two as mutually exclusive and suggests that ‘love without eroticism is not possible’ for her.[[792]](#footnote-792) In fact, Brita actively engages in her poetry with themes of desire and, following *Dark Dreams*, she publishes another collection explicitly titled “Desires” (*Verlangen*). Pointing to a generational rupture in the Netherlands against the backdrop of the growing significance of sexological writing in the Netherlands by the late 1930s, Brita is said to find her mother’s embarrassment about sexual questions and her poetry ‘almost charming’ and she cannot help but laugh at her mother’s discomfort when talking about such ‘“delicate issues”’.[[793]](#footnote-793)

Although Brita does not entirely conform to the mandates of upper-middle class society, she nonetheless maintains some of the more respectable characteristics of that class. When the protagonist attempts to dissuade her lover Marja Woustouska from joining her in Sweden for the Christmas holiday, for example, Marja questions the protagonist’s motives for not wanting to take her friend to her native country. Unable to discern any dishonest intentions, however, Marja concludes bitterly that Brita ‘did not tell lies. Oh goodness no, she was too sincere for that, too “by-the-book”, too this and too that, nothing but respectable qualities’.[[794]](#footnote-794) Despite this seeming respectability, however, Brita uses her social position, or at least the wealth accessible to her as a member of high society, as a gateway to exactly the kind of communities that Weirauch’s protagonist wishes to distance herself from. Spending her fortune on funding struggling artists and traveling to Paris to support queer friends, Brita’s economic independence makes it possible for her to refuse marriage and gain access to the queer world. Thinking about her acquaintances Pierre and Willy, however, a couple she allows to stay in her Parisian apartment during summer, Brita realises, however, that despite her attempts to transcend class boundaries, and her liberal attitude to questions of desire, she will never truly belong to their circle: ‘Brita longed to return to Paris, although she knew that [Willy and Pierre] would never see her as one of their own. She was and remained: the rich Swede, la bourgeoisie…’.[[795]](#footnote-795)

Reuling offers a thorough exploration of Brita’s liberated and enlightened approach to sex and sexual desire throughout the novel and her equally prominent descriptions of the protagonist’s beauty, charm, and good manners – as well as her seemingly endless line of male suitors and admirers – stand in stark contrast to the images of the queer feminine woman described in contemporary sexological writing. Brita does not appear to have been seduced by another woman or fallen prey to her own excessive lusts and, in addition, her femininity is certainly not depicted as “lesser” than that of “normal” women. In fact, Brita is presented as the model of femininity; her blonde hair, blue eyes and charming smile are the very picture of the heterosexual ideal. In spite of her gender conformity, however, Brita is resolute in her queerness and she communicates explicitly to her parents that she will ‘likely never marry’.[[796]](#footnote-796) When questioned by her mother, Brita explains that she is ‘not suitable for marriage’ because she ‘does not love men’.[[797]](#footnote-797) Throughout this dialogue, Brita’s mother continues comically to misunderstand her daughter, highlighting again the generational gap in sexual knowledge, particularly as she responds to Brita’s argument that to love one man you must be able to love all men: ‘“All men?” […] One seems more than enough to me”’.[[798]](#footnote-798)

Claiming that she can only communicate with her parents in ‘incomplete phrases’, Brita’s conversations with her mother and father further explore the complex politics of the unsaid, particularly in terms of the construction of sexual identity and the articulation of sexual desire in the Netherlands. The gaps that appear in the narrative, marked by ellipses within the text as well as the use of indefinite noun phrases such as ‘now she *had* to say it’, occupy a space that the referents such as “homosexual woman”, “Sapphist”, and “lesbian” could arguably take.[[799]](#footnote-799) Although Brita is open about her love for women, she does not label her desires in the text, however, and other characters do not refer to queerness with an identitarian lexicon. Instead adverbial phrases such as ‘non-normative inclinations’ and intentional omissions within the text point to the persistently complex negotiation of articulating same-sex desire as an identitarian practice within Dutch contexts. Despite the move towards an understanding of sexual desire “as identity” is more visible in Reuling’s writing than in Raedt-de Canter’s, the continued difficulties in constituting desires *as* identity become visible in the responses of characters who conceive of same-sex desires as “transient” and “curable”.

Brita’s closest friend in the novel, the undeterrable ‘doctor of psychology’ Hans Thorstadt, is shown to make several attempts to persuade the protagonist to undergo psychoanalytic therapy. Believing that psychoanalysis could help to “heal” Brita, Hans suggests that the protagonist could be happier if she did not need to ‘use her strength’ to ‘control herself’. Following successful therapy, Hans suggests, Brita could focus instead on her true destiny: marriage and, most importantly, motherhood.[[800]](#footnote-800) Brita determinedly rejects Hans’ offer of treatment, however, and claims that ‘few people were as happy as she’.[[801]](#footnote-801) Considering homosexual desire to be a psychic problem and himself to be an authority on the issue, Hans positions the field of psychoanalysis in opposition to the medico-scientific frameworks that have been discussed elsewhere in this thesis. Well-versed in the works of Adler, Jung and, ‘the master himself’, Freud, Hans concludes that ‘science, as such, is dead’.[[802]](#footnote-802) He further explains to Brita that scientific study is too ‘insular’ because ‘it does not help people; it establishes facts’.[[803]](#footnote-803) While sexologists are fixated on somatic signifiers of pathological deviance, psychoanalysts, Hans argues, looked more deeply into the mind: ‘to heal the soul required other methods than those used to heal the body, to operate it you needed finer tools than the surgeon used’.[[804]](#footnote-804) Although Hans positions psychoanalysis and sexology as different forms of study, Brita identifies similarities between the central tenets of psychoanalysis and the aims and objectives of other, more traditional, cultural discourses:

[Hans] also thought in dogmas, he also presented theories; this label must fit that statement, this conclusion must be drawn from that deed. It must. It was logical, inevitable […] “We psychoanalysts can help, heal.” - “We, the Catholic Church, can help, heal.” - “We, the Calvinists, pure in our teachings, can help, heal”.[[805]](#footnote-805)

Exposing the inconsistencies in Hans’ argument, Brita’s statement also highlights the connection between psychoanalysis and the practices of religious institutions and also invokes the image of a pillarised Dutch society, in spite of the Swedish setting of the novel. Although Freud did not hide his disdain for religious doctrine, terming it the ‘universal obsessional neurosis of humanity’, an enduring interest in spirituality informed his claim that psychoanalysis was a science of the soul.[[806]](#footnote-806) Indeed, speaking of the relationship between religious confession and psychoanalysis, Freud suggested that ‘the cathartic method was the immediate precursor of Psycho-analysis; and, in spite of every extension of experience and of every modification of theory, it is still contained within it as its nucleus’.[[807]](#footnote-807) Bearing in mind the conclusions reached in the previous chapter, it is not surprising that Reuling’s novel takes the “talking cure” as its focus. In a deeply religious society that was fundamentally structured by the gender norms and conventions of its time, a “science” of the soul that built on the confessional technologies already established through religious practices appear to have been an appropriate way to communicate queer desires in Dutch literature.[[808]](#footnote-808)

# Sexual Desires, Gendered Hierarchies: “Good” and “Bad” Desires

Rendered invisible by the sexological and psychoanalytical studies that analysed female same-sex desire, Weirauch’s and Reuling’s protagonists are offered little comfort by the medico-social discourses of desire they are confronted with. Instead of attempting to fit their protagonists into these binary frameworks, however, Weirauch and Reuling choose instead to challenge the discourses that deny their protagonists the legitimation of their queer experiences. By creating their own hierarchies of desire, I argue that the authors call into question the contemporary coding of female same-sex desire as a masculine and abnormal drive. Redressing the “normative/non-normative” binary by exploring the “darker side” of heterosexual desire, Weirauch subverts the image of heterosexuality as the eternally normative. Reuling’s creation of an alternative queer orthodoxy alongside her subversion of what constitutes normative desires suggests an attempt in the Dutch author’s novel to do away with this binary entirely.

Excessive and Degenerate Desires

Throughout the course of the *Skorpion* trilogy, Mette is perpetually occupied with existential questions about the meaning of her life and whether ‘sie ein guter oder schlechter Mensch war’.[[809]](#footnote-809) The crude dualism drawn up by the protagonist between “good” and “bad” is complicated throughout the series, particularly as the more “questionable” characters in the novel are provided with rounded and nuanced storylines. The beautiful and effeminate Johannes, for example, is in a “kept” relationship with the unsavoury Drencker. Johannes is said to be in love with the failing heterosexual artist Willi Kraft and maintains his association with Drencker only to help Willi finance his studies. Yet, although the love Johannes feels for Willi is depicted by Nora as selfless and pure, the story of Johannes is complicated further as Sophie speaks of the benefits that each party reaps from the curious situation. Explaining that Willi is now financially able to produce his art and that Drencker must no longer worry about the boys that might blackmail him, Sophie concludes:

Am Glücklichsten aber ist der kleine Johannes. Er führt das Leben, wozu seine eigentliche Natur ihn treibt. […] Jetzt hat er alles, was er sich im Grunde immer ersehnt hat. Er ist begehrt, verwöhnt, angebetet. Er sieht seine Schönheit, die er nebenbei sehr zu schätzen weiß, im richtigen Rahmen. Er bringt halbe Tage damit zu, vor seinem dreiteiligen Toilettenspiegel zu sitzen, sich zu bewundern, sich mit Salben und Pudern und Haarwassern zu pflegen. Das tut er alles Willi Krafft zuliebe? Redet euch doch so etwas nicht ein. Er täte es ohne Willi Krafft genauso![[810]](#footnote-810)

Johannes’ femininity, which had previously been described by Mette as ‘widerlich’, is shown in this context to be in its “rightful place”. Although Mette’s later experiences of being coveted and worshipped at the club make her feel disgusted with herself, this “desire to be desired” is considered a natural part of Johannes’ narcissistic feminine nature. Although Johannes’ behaviour is not excused by either Nora or Sophie, presented in the broader context of the complex interaction between the three men, it becomes in many ways understandable to the reader. Indeed, throughout the trilogy, Weirauch attempts to build a more nuanced image of the stereotypical queer characters that were reviled in socio-sexological studies. Furthermore, by highlighting the damaging and dangerous potential of heterosexuality by reassigning to it the typical features associated with degenerate homosexual desires, Weirauch manages to subvert the image of the pathological queer woman.

In another appraisal of queer femininity, Mette’s retreat from the queer community in Munich brings her into contact with Gwendolen, a young bourgeois girl who Luise Peters had considered to be ‘ein passender Umgang’ for the protagonist, unlike Mara Luigi’s circle. Gwendolen, known to her friends as “Gwen” enjoys a flirtatious relationship with the attractive and charming Fred Wietinghoff and after she arrives Mette is introduced into the strange dynamic between the pair. Presented as pictures of physical perfection, Gwen and Fred do little to threaten the image of bourgeois respectability:

Mette war von neuem entzückt, wie Gwendolen die schmalen Füße mit den federnden Gelenken schön und sicher setzte, wie die schlanken, festen Formen sich unter dem weißen Kleid zeichneten, wie das lockige Haar in der Sonne gleißte und flirrte. […] Ihr Herz war ebenso froh, wenn sie Fred Wietinghoff sah, der neben Gwedolen ging, viel größer als sie, breit in den Schultern, schmal in den Hüften, alle Konturen der Muskeln zeigend unter dem seidenen Hemd.[[811]](#footnote-811)

Seeing her friendship with Gwen and Fred as something worthier than the relationships she has left behind in Munich, Mette believes that she shares an affinity with them due to their shared bourgeois roots and that, for this reason, she can trust them as morally upstanding individuals. As a symbol of this trust and friendship, during the holiday weekend that results in Mette ultimately taking her leave from Hamburg, the three friends raise their glasses to ‘gute und ehrliche Kameradschaft!’ and Fred pays Mette the highest compliment by calling her ‘der geborene Kamerad’.[[812]](#footnote-812) Later that evening, however, Gwen and Fred betray Mette in what she considers to be the worst possible way. After pressing Mette on her past experiences with women, Gwen seduces the protagonist who lets down her guard:

Gwen warf sich über [Mette] und küßte ihr Mund und Augenlider, Hals und Wangen. ‘Ich will nicht,’ dachte Mette, ‘sie ist mir anvertraut, und ich rühre sie nicht an. Ich bin [Freds] Kamerad… ich bin sein Kamerad…’ Rosenrote Wellen hoben sich. Sie stiegen ihr bis zum Hals, bis über die Augen. Das Zimmer schien zu schwanken, wie in zitternden Atemzügen, wie in ruckweisen Herzstößen. Plötzlich war alles still, hell, es war wie ein blendendes Licht, und wie ein schmetternder Hornstoß. […] Irgend etwas war im Zimmer, was vorher nicht da gewesen war. Ein violetter Fleck. Und darüber Fred Wietinghoffs Gesicht. Fred Wietinghoffs Augen. Brennend. Gierig. Ganz unverhüllt, wie die Augen brünstiger Tiere – ganz nackte Augen. […] ‚Abgekartet. Alles abgekartet.’ [Mette] richtete sich auf und griff nach ihren Kleidern.[[813]](#footnote-813)

Recognising that Gwen and Fred had pre-arranged this erotic deception, it becomes clear to Mette that even among the supposedly respectable bourgeois elite, there exists questionable characters. Weirauch’s redeployment of behaviours and acts typically associated with queer individuals to characterise the heterosexual relationships in the novel, highlights that individuals, irrespective of their sexual preferences, cannot be categorised simply as “good” or “bad”.

When Mette is first introduced to Sophie and Nora at one of their celebrated soirées in Munich, the protagonist realises that Nora is partially paralysed. Although the protagonist initially pities Nora, she is reprimanded by Eccarius who states that although Nora has had ‘ein sehr trauriges Schicksal […] Mitleid eigentlich – meinem Gefühl nach – gar nicht angebracht wäre’.[[814]](#footnote-814) Through Eccarius, Mette learns more about the unfortunate events that left her new acquaintance paralysed. After she entered innocently into a marriage with the ‘ausgeheilt’ syphilitic Majorat von Hersfeld, Nora soon became pregnant with the Majorat’s son. When the young boy was born, however, it quickly became apparent to all concerned that the ‘case was hopeless’.[[815]](#footnote-815) Locking herself away with her child to protect him from prejudice, Nora effectively became a recluse. A few years later, when she became pregnant for the second time, a doctor let slip ‘ein leichtsinniges, aber ehrlich entrüstetes Wort vor der Unverantwortlichkeit, Kinder in die Welt zu setzen’.[[816]](#footnote-816) Entirely unaware about the cause of her first child’s sickness, Nora is enlightened by the doctor about her husband’s condition. Later that day, the pregnant Nora suffered a fall from a hayloft which caused severe internal injuries from which she never recovered. Following the incident, Nora’s husband procures a divorce and embarks on a relationship with another ‘schönes, unschuldiges junges Mädchen aus bester Familie’.[[817]](#footnote-817) Although sexual illness was not explicitly associated with queer communities until much later in the twentieth century, the seemingly uncontrollable desires of Nora’s ex-husband and his later death from ‘Gehirnerweichung’ were certainly characteristics that were associated with same-sex desiring subjects. While it is perhaps the imparity between the social judgement of deeds committed by queer individuals and those committed by so-called “normal” individuals that comes to the fore in this scene, it is significant that in Weirauch’s “counter-discourse”, however, Nora is saved from the wickedness of Majorat van Hersfeld’s excessive sexuality by her female lover Sophie, who cares for her unconditionally.

Queer as “Normative”

Unlike Mette, who appears to be locked in a constant battle between her bourgeois respectability and her desires, Reuling’s protagonist exhibits an unwavering sense of the normalcy of her sexual preferences. Despite the deep-seated social antipathy towards same-sex desiring subjects, and Hans’ desperate attempts to cure the protagonist of her ‘abnormal sympathies’, Brita forcefully rejects the idea that her desires deviate from what should be considered ‘normal’. Indeed, in a radical claim that it is *she* who is normal and women who desire men who are *not*, Brita subverts the contemporary dyad that positioned “normative” desires above “non-normative” homosexual inclinations:

And now she, Brita Salin, declared that she believed herself to be normal, and all the others, who were not like her: abnormal. For her, every woman who desired to hold a man – who was capable of giving her love, her passion, to a man – was a wonder, an entirely incomprehensible figure, that she observed with astonishment and masked aversion.[[818]](#footnote-818)

While activists such as Anna Rüling argued that masculine homosexual women were “normal” and, indeed, often superior to heterosexual women, it is Reuling’s decision to position Brita as a *feminine* homosexual woman that makes her novel so radical. Yet, although femininity is not anchored to heterosexuality in Reuling’s writing, it is nonetheless used to re-inforce a sense of normality. Indeed, proclaiming the normality of her own feelings, Brita rejects those of heterosexual women, suggesting that she is simply doing ‘precisely the same thing to them as the others were doing to her’.[[819]](#footnote-819) The protagonist’s contempt for women who desire the opposite sex functions as part of a broader attempt in the novel to establish an alternative hierarchy of desire in which heterosexual instincts are perceived to be base and objectionable. Yet, while Weirauch uses examples of nefarious heterosexual relationships to “even the playing field”, Reuling is much more explicit in her criticism of the hetero-homo binary. The protagonist’s rejection of the heterosexual sex instinct as being some incomprehensible to her serves to legitimate her own desires as “normal”. The subversion of the heteronormative framework in Reuling’s novel thus enables Brita to position homosexual desire as something that is “normal” only at the cost, however, of heterosexuality’s hegemonic position as such. Ultimately, the binary of “normative/non-normative” in Reuling’s writing is not so much challenged, then, as it is inverted.

Brita’s subversive notion of what can be considered “normal” (*gewoon*) is further reinforced by evidence of the “naturalness” of her sexual instincts.[[820]](#footnote-820) When Hans suggests that the power of his love could cure the protagonist, for example, the reader is told that Brita is overwhelmed by a ‘sick feeling of disgust’ as he embraces her, the kind ‘that knots your stomach and rises into your nose’.[[821]](#footnote-821) The protagonist’s physical reaction to Hans’ embrace is used to suggest that Brita’s aversion to the opposite sex originates from an inherently instinctive and biological impulse. Yet despite this impulse, Brita, as a feminine woman, is not physically discernible as queer “Other”. In fact, her femininity is arguably key to her underlying sense of herself and her desires as “normal”. Although her *desires* deviate from hegemonic models, Brita is fully committed to the idea of traditional femininity. During one of the novel’s flashbacks to Brita’s experiences in Paris, for example, the reader is told that the protagonist finds the idea of love between women in terms of gendered inversion distasteful and she forcefully rejects the medical models that coded desire for women as a masculine drive:

‘She had no longer visited special bars, the professionals were too dégoutant. Why did those women imitate a sex to which they had an aversion? Why did they dress as men, with shirts and ties, closely cropped hair, and brusque masculine movements? […] She had never understood it’.[[822]](#footnote-822)

The “professionals” of the Parisian queer scene, as Brita terms them, are incomprehensible to her and she finds their gender non-conforming styles and behaviours to be repulsive. Instead, Brita states firmly that ‘she was happy that she was a woman, she wanted nothing other than to be a woman’.[[823]](#footnote-823)

The protagonist’s distaste for the masculine and virile element can also be seen in the choice of her female partners, of whom each are feminine presenting. Even Brita’s ultimate partner Renée, who is given an androgynous name and described by Hans as ‘mischievous’ and ‘boy-like’, is ultimately prescribed traditionally feminine qualities. Taking on the role of a nurse for her sick neighbour, Renée is shown to have a caring and nurturing nature, which is continually foregrounded over her tomboyish brazenness. When Renée later adopts a stray kitten and nurses it back to health, Reuling also emphasizes the inherently maternal nature of Renée’s character, an important element of the queer femininities presented in both novels that will be discussed in the final section of this chapter. Although Brita appears to champion the figure of the queer feminine woman and is intent on challenging the contemporary ideals of “normativity”, in this process the protagonist nonetheless creates her own rigid gendered and sexual orthodoxy, which determines the limits and boundaries of acceptable and appropriate queer feminine desires.

In the protagonist’s relationship with the Hungarian socialite Marja Woustowskja, the reader is presented with an example of what the protagonist perceives to be an unacceptable form of queer feminine desire. When Brita refuses to take Marja home with her to visit her parents and friends, Marja’s determination to enter high society drives her to what Brita considers an unforgivable act. Seeing no other alternative to achieve her goals, Marja resorts to positioning herself as the femme fatale in her flirtatious encounters with the Swedish consul, a man who she believes will ensure her successful entrance into Swedish society, and the reader is presented with an excessive and exaggerated performance of femininity. After Marja arranges a secret meeting with the consul, telling Brita that she is going to a Hungarian lecture, the protagonist breaks off all contact once she discovers Marja’s deception, and denounces her as a ‘mistake’ (*vergissing*). Brita’s previous condemnation of the heterosexual impulse in conjunction with Marja’s display of excessive femininity leads the protagonist to reject her partner and distinguish her own desires clearly from those of her ex-lover: ‘she was not like me, I was mistaken’.[[824]](#footnote-824) It is not only the femme fatale that Brita dismisses, however. Thinking back to her first romantic encounter, Brita compares her own “respectable” inclinations with the untempered passions of her young friend and classmate, Vera, as she explains the moment she and her friend parted ways: ‘Vera became sick and did nothing but weep and call out for Brita – well, at fourteen years of age girls can behave so excessively! Fortunately, she was soon better’.[[825]](#footnote-825) Vera’s inappropriate and “excessive’ passions are associated by Brita with sickness and a temporal deviation from the norm – Vera recovers from her “illness” after she moves to Switzerland and breaks off contact with Brita – while the protagonist considers her own controlled passions to be healthy, fixed, and normal.

Arguably the most damaging form of desire presented in the novel, much like in Weirauch’s trilogy, is the obsessive love of heterosexual Hans, which ultimately leads to Brita’s demise. Although Hans claims that he has ‘healthy sexual desires’, his relentless efforts to convince Brita to undergo therapy so that he can marry her presents evidence to the contrary. From the fetishist desire to carry with him a piece of cloth from Brita’s evening gown to the suggestion that he marry Brita and allow her to continue her relationship with Renée, Hans is blind to the unhealthy and selfish nature of his own love for the protagonist. Throughout the road trip at the end of the novel, during which Brita eagerly anticipates being reunited with Renée in Nice, Hans prolongs the journey to spend more time alone with the protagonist. Peppering the trip with numerous pit stops, Hans uses the excursion to make a final attempt to convince Brita of the integrity of his romantic intentions. Stopping short of their ultimate destination because of poor weather, Hans and Brita eat a meal at a bar, during which Hans drinks heavily and convinces Brita to dance with him.

Employing much the same rhetoric as Fred Wietinghoff, Hans reveals his true intentions only after couching them in the rhetoric of camaraderie: ‘Do you know what I think? No, what I *imagine,* now that we are together like this, going out, and dancing? […] I imagine that it’s completely ordinary [gewoon] and, because we are such good friends, good comrades, I can tell you this: I imagine that we are married’.[[826]](#footnote-826) Reiterating to Brita that she is a ‘true comrade’, Hans employs a term of equality to reinforce his will onto the protagonist. Following yet more alcohol, Hans persuades Brita to take a trip to the next town so that they can continue their evening together at a dance hall:

At a rapid pace, they drove along the abandoned shiny wet roads; trees shot past like ghosts, the tires bit and squeaked over the gravel as Hans took the corners at a barely reduced speed […] ‘Bayonne, Brita’, called Hans, ‘Now we are almost there’. ‘Oh, right’ she called back. Another eight kilometres. They rode across the large, bumpy cobblestones along the outskirts of the city. […] It started to rain again, in fine streams, but it was not worth the effort to put the hood up, they were almost there. Then the car spun in a semi-circle. Brita saw Hans tugging convulsively at the steering wheel. It had lost control. They drove towards a tree. Against that - there… [[827]](#footnote-827)

Hans ultimately survives the accident, although he is badly wounded. Brita, however, is killed and her body is taken “back to the island” of Semmarö, where she is buried. The protagonist’s death symbolises the unspeakablity of queer desire, and specifically queer feminine desire in this period. Despite Brita’s unwavering understanding of her own desire as normal, it is the interpretive and smothering voice of the psychiatrist who wants to “heal” his patient that ultimately kills her.

# Mother-Love and “Nonlesbian” Subjects

Queer femininities in history and literature have often been considered ‘to *obscure* lesbianism’.[[828]](#footnote-828) In this way, and taking this argument to its logical conclusion, Julian Carter observes ‘that feminine gender has often shaped same-sex love and desire *into* *nonlesbian forms*’.[[829]](#footnote-829) One of the most comprehensive forms of nonlesbian sexual expression between women that Carter explores in his article is the concept of “mother-love”, which he loosely defines as both the ‘love mothers feel’ and ‘love felt for mothers’.[[830]](#footnote-830) Arguing that queer feminine women in America in the early twentieth century did not identify with lesbian subject positions during the interwar era, Carter contends that ‘nonlesbian, feminine women understood their explicitly sexual intimacies with other women in terms of the love between mothers and daughters’.[[831]](#footnote-831) As we have already seen, this maternal love – and the love for the maternal – was fundamental to the construction of queer tomboy desires. In *Der Skorpion* and *Terug naar het eiland*, this framework also figures as an alternative model of queer desire and identity, shaping the sexual experiences of feminine protagonists who desire other women and explicitly reject typical “lesbian” subject positions.

In the prologue to *Der Skorpion*, embedded within the sexological framing of the story, the reader is told that Mette’s mother passed away soon after the protagonist’s birth. Following the incident with her governess, the protagonist connects the loss of her own mother with the tragic events of her life:‘[Mette] hat eine phantastische Vorstellung von der Wesenheit einer Mutter und glaubte immer, daß der frühe Tod der ihren alles Unheil ihres Lebens verursacht hätte’.[[832]](#footnote-832) Like Raedt-de Canter’s protagonist in *Internaat*, Mette often cries out for her mother in times of distress and she spends the story in the search for someone to fill this void. When Mette meets Olga, their relationship develops initially around the didactic Sapphic model discussed in the previous chapter, with Olga adopting the position of the sometimes stern teacher and Mette, the enamoured student. Providing Mette with an overview of world historical events, Olga presents the protagonist with a series of books and invites her to discuss them at her pension, an event that marks the beginning of their relationship:

‘Wollen Sie lesen lernen bei mir? […] Kommen Sie zu mir herauf, sooft Sie wollen, bis es Ihnen langweilig wird […] Wenn du weiter nix tust, kannst du gut hundert Seiten am Tag lesen – ach mehr – und wenn du fertig bist – alle drei, vier Tage – je nachdem – kommen Sie her und tauschen sich den Band ein und trinken hier Tee, und wir plaudern ein bissel. Gell, ja? Wollen wir’s so halten?’ So fing es an.[[833]](#footnote-833)

Over the course of Mette’s “education”, Olga proves herself to be a skilful teacher who lights a ‘Feuerreife’ in her pupil. Olga’s employment of the terms ‘Kind’, ‘Mädchen’, and ‘Schäfchen’ during their classes, as O’Connor observes, ‘not only emphasises her superior knowledge and age, but also situates Olga as a maternal figure’.[[834]](#footnote-834) Unlike the pederastic images of the erastes/eromenos relationship, within the realm of the gynaecium, Olga is shown to take an unselfish joy in the nurturing of her student’s education. As an older female figure of authority, Olga further serves to fill the emptiness left by Mette’s absent mother. Yet, as Carter writes, it is important to remember that ‘the mother-child relationship in [such] affairs is not only about tenderness or responsibility, it is also about sexual desire and activity’ and it is during the time that Olga nurtures Mette’s educational development, that the relationship being cultivated between the two develops an increasingly erotic undertone.[[835]](#footnote-835)

After Mette is sent to live with Uncle Jürgen and Aunt Antonia, she steals money to be reunited with Olga, and the friends take a room together in an unknown town. After desperately attempting to ignore her growing desire for Mette, it is here that Olga’s resistance is ultimately broken down by the protagonist:

Sie bohrten die Augen ineinander, ernsthaft und unverwandt, und spürten in allen Adern das rasende Hämmern ihrer Herzen. Dann neigten sie sich gegeneinander wie zwei Verdurstende und legten Mund auf Mund. - Sie ließen einander nicht mehr los. Sie küßten sich nur immer durstiger eins am anderen. [...] Die Kleider glitten von ihnen nieder, achtlos, blieben auf der Erde liegen. […] Sie drängten sich aneinander, als wollten sie ineinander übergehen, verschmelzen, eins werden. […] Ihre Leiber bäumten sich gegeneinander wie wilde Tiere, wenn sie an Käfiggittern rütteln. Sie gruben einander die Nägel in die Glätte der Haut und schlugen einander die Zähne in die geschwellten Muskeln. Und sie lagen aneinandergeschmiegt wie müde gespielte Kinder, und ihre Lippen berührten des anderen Lider und Wangen so sanft, so leise, wie Schmetterlingsflügel schwankende Blüten. “Kleines”, sagte Olga, und alle Glocken schwangen in ihrer Stimme. “Mein Schönes, mein Gutes! […] Bist du nicht stolz, kleines Mädchen, daß du solche Wunder tun kannst?”[[836]](#footnote-836)

Depicted through the imagery of wild animals, nails scratching into one another’s skin, and teeth biting into each other’s muscles, the scene scetched above is undeniably erotic. Yet, as they lie beside one another, they are described as ‘müde gespielte Kinder’ conflating the amorous scene that had just taken place with images of child’s play. Although this association potentially de-eroticises the act, as Winckelmann suggests, I argue that Olga’s concluding words of praise and her use of ‘Kleines’ and ‘kleines Mädchen’ reasserts the mother-child paradigm that had hitherto structured their relationship and, in fact, explicitly explores the erotic potential of mother-love that Carter describes.[[837]](#footnote-837) The image of the couple clinging to one another ‘als wollten sie ineinander übergehen, verschmelzen, eins werden’ is notably sensual yet simultaneously evokes the Freudian fantasy of returning to the womb.[[838]](#footnote-838) The mirror imagery of the bodies melting into one another also underscores the unselfish desire of mother-love and emphasises the egalitarian nature of their desires. The reference to a return to the mother is reinforced when Mette declares later in the scene: ‘Heut’ bin ich geboren worden und nicht vor zwanzig Jahren. Jetzt kann ich zum erstenmal mit Bewußtsein sagen: Ich lebe!’.[[839]](#footnote-839)

In another discussion of “mother-love”, Otto Petermann joins Mette and Olga for a discussion about the letters of Bettina von Arnim and Karoline von Günderrode, who present in the novel another configuration of the student/teacher, mother/daughter paradigm of queer desire. The manner in which the relationship between the two Romantic writers is presented in the novel has been convincingly read by Anjeana Kaur Hans as the original script for the relationship between Olga and Mette, which ‘not only denies pseudo-medical definitions, but also discards these generalized models (constructed by men) for one written by a woman’.[[840]](#footnote-840) The model of ‘ideal friendship’ that is typified by Bettina and Karoline was not unusual among upper-class women in the eighteenth and nineteenth century. Indeed, as Smith-Rosenberg posits, before sexologists established a taxonomical framework to differentiate between ‘homosexual’ and ‘heterosexual’ individuals, there existed a diverse range of social structures and norms that actively encouraged the development of exclusively homosocial environments. Although Smith-Rosenberg describes the concept specifically in terms of American society, in the late eighteenth to the mid-nineteenth century, intimate female networks had also become an essential and established part of German culture.

The relationship presented between Bettina and Karoline, Hans argues, can be considered as ‘a sort of proto-history’ for queer women, a model in the text that ‘establishes a […] history of lesbian love that goes back even to the age of Goethe’.[[841]](#footnote-841) Although I agree that Weirauch is presenting an alternative paradigm of queer desire through the two Romantic writers, I suggest that the importance of this model lies in its focus on the spiritual connection – that is, moral, bourgeois, feminine – between two women as opposed to an understanding of queer female desire that relies on notions of somatic difference. Olga declares, in fact, that she has no idea what Karoline looks like, despite being deeply in love with her: ‘Ich habe nie ein Bild von ihr gesehen […] Ich weiß auch gar nicht, ob es Bilder von ihr gibt. Ich möchte auch keins sehen’.[[842]](#footnote-842) Weirauch’s alternative frameworks for queer desire rely on the notion of similarity over difference. The mother/daughter dyad arguably takes the place of the gendered hierarchy of masculine and feminine roles, while the idea of romantic friendship posits spiritual connection over sensual desire.

# Father-Love and Maternal Desires

Reuling’s narrative is the only text in this final section that is not structured in some way by the trope of the “absent mother”. Instead, it is Brita’s father who is absent during her childhood. On the first page of the novel, the reader is told that Brita’s father, a timber trader, rarely visits the island of Semmarö, where his daughter spends her summers, because: ‘his business did not allow him any time. “The Timber”, said the family. He immersed himself a little too much in it’.[[843]](#footnote-843) The protagonist shares a strong bond with her father who is described as ‘the only person [Brita] had ever truly loved’, and it is only after she is rejected by him after Marja’s poison pen letter that she reaches breaking point: ‘No one, nothing, could give her her father back […] Brita cried. It was a shaking, shocking cry, which might last for days. She knew it. It was like a sudden fever, which rose high and suddenly dropped and left you empty and exhausted. You could not do anything about it, you had to let it rage’.[[844]](#footnote-844) Despite the protagonist’s unconditional love for her father, a large and impressively built man who appears himself ‘to be carved from wood’, and the Freudian theories that influence much of the novel, Brita does not seek out the masculine element in her partners. As discussed earlier in this chapter, Brita’s lovers are decidedly feminine. Even the tomboyish Renée is characterised by the traditionally feminine traits. Presented in the role of the caregiver, Renée nurses her sick neighbour each evening and nurtures a stray cat back to health, while also caring for a pet tortoise she has adopted. She even stays behind to care for the animals while Hans and Brita depart for their holiday. Interestingly, it is also the boyish figure Renée who speaks at length about the concept of mother-love and its close connection to the “ideal” romantic love:

‘The people who love us the most are the least demanding. I’m thinking now particularly about maternal love, which comes the closest to ideal love. […] It has nothing to do with being a mother. Most women who have children think that they also possess mother-love, but they are mistaken. Every woman can have a child, almost every woman can feed it, but they already possess a child and a mother’s milk, that does not mean, however, that they possess a mother’s love […] I even know a father who possess the ideal mother’s love for his children’ ‘Then you must say father-love, otherwise you do him a disservice’. Renée was having none of it. The sentiment was intrinsically feminine, father-love was something totally different.[[845]](#footnote-845)

Seeing mother-love as a fundamentally feminine experience, Renée conceives of the concept as something entirely fluid, that can be mapped across genders and onto various types of relationships. The fluidity of this construct suggests that even within partnerships between feminine women that are not typified by a substantial age gap, much like that of Renée and Brita, the mother-daughter paradigm could still be a workable concept.[[846]](#footnote-846)

‘Mother-love’, as the ‘love mothers feel’, is explored in the second half of the novel as Hans tries to convince Brita that she should undergo psychoanalytic therapy so that she can fulfil her role as a mother.[[847]](#footnote-847) Although Brita rejects his offer, the reader is told that motherhood is something that Brita desperately wants but is unsure if it is possible for her to achieve:

If she were more mature she would want to have a child, it would certainly be the best training […] She had to push this wish aside for a while, ignore it, although sometimes it could become desperate: ‘Your daughter is knocking at the door and wants to be born,’ she sighed and smiled shyly. You will have to wait a little while, lamb, your ma is at a crossroads, her life is taking another turn and she doesn’t know how she will emerge from this new struggle. And she doesn’t know if she has the right to bring you up without a father, whether the masculine element is not indispensable for a child.[[848]](#footnote-848)

Brita’s longing for a child does not appear in any way to negate her desire for other women and she does not conceive of bringing a child into the world with a male partner. Her only concern is that the child would “need” the masculine element in its life, something that she does not desire in either a male or female partner. In what could ultimately be considered the most selfless act, she realises that her wish to be a mother could be egotistic: ‘Is it selfishness, this desire [*verlangen*] for you, my child? According to Hans and all the intelligent and intellectual people who unravel our emotions, who explain them and put them neatly into boxes, everything we do, everything we desire, is egotism’.[[849]](#footnote-849) The ultimate depiction of Brita’s femininity is shown in the text through her innate desire to have a child, further bolstering the gendered and sexual hierarchy that Reuling creates throughout the novel. Brita’s maternal instincts, however, conflict with the desire that she feels for other women and her rejection of the masculine element, conflating once again the maternal with undertones of the erotic.

# Conclusions

The novels by Weirauch and Reuling challenge the medico-scientific and social discourses that classified the queer feminine protagonist as a “pseudo-homosexual” and her desires as degenerate and temporary. Presenting models of feminine desire that destabilise the relationship between gender inversion and sexual preference, the authors challenge the broader concept of what constitutes “normative” and “non-normative” behaviours and desires in their diverse representation of same-sex loving women. Although sexological and psychological theories of same-sex desire provide the authors with an entry point into discussion of queer desire in *Der Skorpion* and *Terug naar het eiland*, Weirauch and Reuling in no way attempt to reproduce the rigid sexual paradigms created by contemporary sex researchers in their writing.

The destabilisation of the dyad that posits homosexual desire as “non-normative” and “immoral” in the novels, enables the authors to challenge the image of the queer woman as sexual “Other” and to foreground the complex identitarian interactions that take place between class, gender, and desire for queer feminine women. Furthermore, while contemporary sex researchers claimed that the passive and temporal nature of the feminine woman’s desires meant that there existed a distinct possibility for her return to a normal heterosexual relationship, both Mette and Brita remain resolute in their queerness and gender identity, and neither narrative features an ultimate return to men. Furthermore, their desires do not become visible through the masculine since – much like Elberskirchen’s feminine homosexual woman – both protagonists are feminine subjects who desire feminine objects. Indeed, in both novels the protagonists’ relationships with other feminine women serve to disrupt the binary opposition of masculinity and femininity, placing queer feminine desire outside the dominant active-passive dichotomy, giving sexual agency to queer women who have historically been denied it.

The search for alternative paradigms of feminine desire in the novels take the authors in markedly different directions, however. While Mette’s desires in *Der Skorpion* trilogy are structured by the dominant restrictions of her class and her desire to fit into the regimes of respectable bourgeois behaviour, Brita abrasively rallies against social norms in *Terug naar het eiland*, denaturalising the eternal myth of heterosexuality as “normative” by radically positioning her desire for women as normal. Brita’s attempt to subvert the binary that positions the queer woman as non-normative, however, inscribes a traditional regime of gender norms and boundaries onto her protagonist, leaving little room for the “excessive” passions and bisexual impulses of her lover Marja or the masculine behaviours of the virile female invert in the Parisian bar culture. In Weirauch’s novel, however, Mette’s encounters with Munich’s queer subculture offer a diverse range of images of queer women that do not necessarily align with rigid gendered and sexual orthodoxies.

The ultimate unspeakability of Brita’s desires highlights more broadly the continued difficulty of articulating queer desires in Dutch contexts in this period. That Reuling creates a narrative in which a Swedish protagonist travels between Stockholm, Paris, and Semmarö and is ultimately killed her in a car crash illustrates the difficulty of creating an alternative Dutch discourse of queer female desire that I proposed in the introduction to this chapter. Reuling’s depiction of a queer feminine protagonist nonetheless calls into question the contemporary boundaries of “normal” desire and gives voice to a figure that was invisible in Dutch sexological theory as well as in the civil rights movements that were said to represent queer desires. Furthermore, despite the lack of a specific terminology in Reuling’s discussion of queer identities, that Brita is engaged in an inner struggle about an identitarian ‘truth’ (*waarheid*) marks a strong departure from Raedt-de Canter’s 1930 novel *Internaat*, pointing to the changes that were taking place in the conceptualisation of queer female desires. Importantly, however, Reuling’s protagonist is *not* lesbian. Indeed, Brita forcefully rejects the third sex and images of somatic inversion that had come to be associated with this label, as well as the position of non-normativity that coloured discussions of lesbianism.

In much a similar way, Weirauch’s protagonist removes herself from queer communities. Unable to recognise herself in the images she reads in sexological writing, Mette ultimately rejects the queer community that she had first embraced to explore her desires. Her “return to nature” in the final instalment of the trilogy underscores her position above all as a “traditionally” feminine woman. The configuration of mother-daughter roles in her relationship with Olga is not to be found in the sexological literature that placed the queer female subjects in the dualistic roles of ‘mothers’ and ‘fathers’. Although it would be problematic to perceive either author as a champion for the freedom of queer expression in all its various forms, both Reuling’s and Weirauch’s writing points to the increased complexity of the dialogue that existed between contemporary discourses on (homo)sexuality and literature in this period. By positioning the feminine woman as subject *and* object within their novels, Reuling and Weirauch force the masculine invert to the margins of their narratives, creating space for what could be considered queer “non-lesbian” protagonists.

## Conclusion

This thesis has compared the historical construction of queer femininities and desires across a range of discourses in German and Dutch contexts. By focusing on the experiences of feminine women, this thesis has sought to redress the conspicuous absence of female-bodied femininities within queer historical narratives and to shed new light on experiences that have traditionally been elided from discussions about the queer past. In adjusting the gendered lens of analysis across multiple discursive sites, I have demonstrated the various ways in which queer femininity has been conceptualised in medico-social, “community”, and fictional discourses. Furthermore, by foregrounding texts that concern queer feminine women and their desires, this thesis has considered elements of women’s love for their own sex that have often been denied historical significance. I have examined the vested socio-cultural and sexological interests in conflating femininity with heterosexual desire and, furthermore, I have considered the discursive destabilisation of the relationship between gender inversion and sexual preference in women’s writing, which ultimately challenged broader social conceptions of “normative” and “non-normative” sexual behaviours. Through a closer analysis of these wider discursive divergences, I have been able to demonstrate how women engaged, or did not engage, in the self-reflexive process of labelling their sexual desires as sexual identities and to suggest why this may, or may not, have been the case. Through such comparisons, this thesis has shown not only the productive potential of this kind of academic endeavour but also the need to pay closer attention to the cultural specificities of female experiences and to resist ‘the desire for the recognition of the present in the past’.[[850]](#footnote-850)

Considered the ‘birthplace of a modern identity’, Berlin’s consumer and leisure culture after 1923 resulted in the development of an unprecedented number of bars, organisations, and periodicals aimed at queer individuals. As same-sex acts between women were omitted from the purview of Paragraph 175, and the *Sittenpolizei* exercised a surprising degree of tolerance for the development of queer establishments, sexual subcultures could flourish in the German capital in this period more prolifically than anywhere else in Europe. Furthermore, women’s entrance into the public sphere during this time began to challenge traditional attitudes towards gender norms which meant that women in Berlin were generally more outward looking than they had been prior to the First World War. Across the western border in post-war Amsterdam, society remained structured by a stringent bourgeois morality that was characterised by the gendered roles of “breadwinners” and “caregivers”. Women’s lives in particular were affected by the pillarisation of Dutch society, and their social experiences remained parochial and directed towards domesticity. Furthermore, after the introduction of Article 248bis in 1911, same-sex desires were regulated both for men *and* women. Unlike the relative tolerance exercised by vice squads in Berlin, the size of Amsterdam meant that it was much easier to regulate “immoral” activities and to shut down those that were considered inappropriate or a danger to society, which effectively prevented the development of urban sexual sites within the Dutch capital.

In terms of the visibility of queer female desire, the widespread rejection of ‘the somatic style of medicine’ and the anatomical-physiological school of sexological thought as discussed in Chapter Two, meant that the figure of the sexological “invert” was far less established in the Netherlands.[[851]](#footnote-851) Terms such as ‘Uranisme’ and ‘homosexualiteit’ were also widely considered only to represent male same-sex practices, which meant that queer love between women was virtually invisible within socio-medical discourses in the Netherlands during this time. In Germany, ‘the intellectual homeland of the burgeoning scientia sexualis’, theories depicting the virile female invert had given queer female desire ‘a name and an image’.[[852]](#footnote-852) Despite the central focus on the masculine invert, however, theories concerning queer feminine women had also begun to emerge in this period, through the attempts of sexologists such as Magnus Hirschfeld and Albert Moll to map more nuanced theories about homosexual desires. Yet, while the performance of femininity does not mean feminine women were not discussed in theories of same-sex desire at this time, the theories that did concern queer feminine women were tied up in a discourse of situational and curable “pseudo-homosexuality”, which coloured the discussions of the feminine woman within queer communities.

My focus on community-based periodicals in Chapters Three and Four has explored how queer women engaged with the medico-social discourses of their time. Contributing to existing studies of queer print media, my examination of the ways in which femininity is configured in the social, sexological, and literary discourses in the German magazines *Die Freundin* and *Frauenliebe* shows how queer women ‘borrowed from and broke with mainstream images of sexuality and sexual identity’ to establish their own gendered hierarchies and orthodoxies. Furthermore, this analysis has engaged more closely with the aims of the organisations to which these magazines were affiliated than previous studies of queer Weimar periodicals, and suggested ultimately that *Frauenliebe* has been unfairly dismissed in scholarly research as an *Unterhaltungsblatt* due to its favouring of “feminine” content. Against the backdrop of the legacy of the “newspaper stamp” and the process of direct subscription in the Netherlands, Chapter Four suggested that the silences and omissions of the subject of female same-sex desire in the queer Dutch periodicals *Wij* and *Levensrecht* tells us much about the masculinist leanings of Dutch queer organisations. The shifts that I have identified between the two magazines highlight a turning point in queer Dutch history, when female same-sex desire became more visible prior to the Second World War, particularly due to the female contributions presented in Benno Stokvis’ collection *De homosexueelen* (1939).

The analysis of queer femininity in fictional writing in Chapters Four and Five contributes to existing literary studies of same-sex desire by shedding further light on the dialogues that existed between medico-social discourses and queer literature during the interwar era. Looking first at the feminine “object” in Eva Raedt-de Canter’s *Internaat* and Christa Winsloe’s *Das Mädchen Manuela*, I suggest in Chapter Five that the maternal imagery that colours the protagonists’ queer desires points to an alternative model of ‘mother-love’ through which female same-sex desire may have been conceived during this this era. Furthermore, my comparison of the novels highlighted the distinction in the way that the tomboy protagonists conceived of their desires and identities. While Raedt-de Canter does not depict the protagonist’s self-reflective understanding of their sexual “otherness”, Winsloe actively engages with the discourses of the child “invert” through the diagnosis narrative. In Anna Elisabet Weirauch’s *Der Skorpion* and Josine Reuling’s *Terug naar het eiland*, the focus is placed on the experiences of queer feminine protagonists with maternal feelings once again situated in a specifically erotic light to explore love between women in both narratives. The forcible rejection of the figure of the female invert in these two texts also suggests that there were “nonlesbian” configurations of desire that women writers engaged with that have received little scholarly attention. Indeed, by positioning the feminine woman as desiring subject *and* desired object in their novels, Reuling and Weirauch force the masculine invert to the margins of their narratives to create space for queer “non-lesbian” protagonists.

This thesis constitutes the first comprehensive study of Dutch female same-sex desires to appear in the English language. In terms of German queer research, my study contributes to the recent interest in queer (bourgeois) feminine identities in the interwar era. By bringing to bear queer theoretical methods on a selection of historical discourses that depict female same-sex desires, this study has crucially identified gaps in previous research, which I argue have resulted from the marginalisation of the queer feminine woman in order to privilege the experiences on the masculine invert. By decentralising the queer masculine woman more broadly from this study, I have further been able to demonstrate the need to pay closer attention to the discords and inconsistencies in the historical documentation of queer female experience, in order to depict more convincingly the ‘irreducible plurality’ of historical female same-sex desire. There is, however, much that remains to be examined about the ways in which queer feminine women organised and experienced their desires for one another in the past.

Beyond the scope of this thesis was a closer analysis of the cultural transfers and exchanges that took place between the two countries during the interwar era. Winsloe’s play *Gestern und Heute*, for example, was also performed in the Netherlands in 1932, translated and directed by Pierre Mols (1885-1961). Given that the title of the play was changed from *Meisjes in uniform* (Girls in Uniform) to *Jongedames in uniform* (Young Ladies in Uniform) to avoid “misunderstandings” (*misverstanden*) and adverts for the performances state that the play was ‘only suitable for adults’, it is likely that an analysis of the play’s reviews in each country would point to interesting divergences and potential overlaps that would develop my analysis.[[853]](#footnote-853) Building on this notion of a dialogue and exchange, it could be productive to analyse more recent narratives of German and Dutch queer feminine identities and experiences in light of those under examination in this thesis. By doing so, it would be possible to put into practice Traub’s “cycles of salience” and to identify more explicitly ‘recurring patterns of identification, social statuses, behaviour, and meanings of women who erotically desired other women across large spans of time’.[[854]](#footnote-854)

As a future direction for the study of queer historical experiences, Dutch scholars could take the impulses of this study to reflect on the omissions and gaps in their histories of female same-sex desire in the early twentieth century. Those considering further research in German contexts must continue to question the inherent privileging of masculinity within the field. Following on from this thesis, there is also the potential for a wider conversation about the privileging of masculinity in historical enquiries about female same-sex desire and, in terms of the current state of play of queer politics, this thesis can be considered an impetus for, inevitably uncomfortable, conversations about why embodiments of femininity by queer women continue to be devalued and maligned in queer communities. Through this thesis, I have been able to apply queer principles to specific historical discourses and to read for conflicts and inconsistencies in historical accounts of desire between women. In doing so I have demonstrated the need for new historical approaches to account for the experiences and desires of women who were, indeed, ‘different to the others’.

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1. Not only does the journal *Men and Masculinities* have no “*Women and Femininities”* equivalent but there has also been little interest in taking up the subject of queer femininities in German or Dutch historical contexts. For more on historical masculinities see, for example: Judith Halberstam (known as Jack Halberstam), *Female Masculinity* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1998); *Masculinities in German Culture* ed. by Sarah Colvin and Peter Davies (Rochester, NY: Camden House, 2008); Katie Sutton, *The Masculine Woman in Weimar Germany*, (New York and Oxford: Berghahn Books, 2011); Geertje Mak, *Mannelijke vrouwen: Over de grenzen van sekse in de negentiende eeuw* (Amsterdam Meppel: Boom, 1997). [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. Sarah Cefai, ‘Navigating Silences, Disavowing Femininity and the Construction of Lesbian Identities’ in *Geography and Gender Reconsidered: Women and Geography Study Group* (2004), 108-17 (p. 112). [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. Trans.: ‘Een stilzwijgende samenzwering’. Judith Schuyf, *Een stilzwijgende samenzwering: Lesbische vrouwen in Nederland 1920-1970* (The Hague: IISG, 1994). [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. Emphasis in original. Judith Schuyf, ‘Lesbian Emancipation in the Netherlands’ in *Gay Life in Dutch Society* ed. by A.X. Naerssen (New York and London: Harrington Park Press, 1987), p. 21. [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
5. Julian Carter, ‘On Mother-Love: History, Queer Theory and Nonlesbian Identity’, *Journal of the History of Sexuality*, 14 1⁄2 (2005), 107-38 (p.108). [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
6. Laura Doan, *Disturbing Practices: History, Sexuality, and Women’s Experience of Modern War* (Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press, 2013), p. 144. [↑](#footnote-ref-6)
7. Ibid., p. 160. [↑](#footnote-ref-7)
8. Ibid., p. 90. [↑](#footnote-ref-8)
9. Michel Foucault, *The History of Sexuality: Volume I* trans. by Robert Hurley (London: Penguin, 1984), p. 43. [↑](#footnote-ref-9)
10. I will discuss the concept of “sexual modernity” in more detail below. [↑](#footnote-ref-10)
11. Although the categories “Uranism” and “Uranier” appear in this initial pamphlet to describe both men and women, no specific distinction was made between the experiences of queer men and women in the text. None of the authors responsible for the publication were women and of the thirty-two signatories of the attached petition to abolish the laws restricting homosexuality, only one was female: the feminist Maria “Mietje” Rutgers-Hoitsma (1847-1934), wife of sex reformer Jan Rutgers (1850-1924). Trans.: ‘Uranisme (= Homosexualiteit = Liefde voor personen van het eigen geslacht)’. NWHK, *Wat iedereen behoort te weten omtrent Uranisme* (The Hague: Gebr. Belinfante, 1912), p. 2. [↑](#footnote-ref-11)
12. Joannes Henri François often wrote under the pseudonym “Charley van Heezen”, under which he published the homosexual novels *Anders* (Different, 1918) and *Het Masker* (The Mask, 1922). He also published in the homosexual magazines *Wij* (We) and *Levensrecht* (The Right to Live). ‘Bewaar mij voor de waanzin van het recht – 100 jaar strafrecht en homoseksualiteit in Nederland’ Exhibition in the IHLIA archive, Amsterdam between 18 November 2011 – 29 February 2012, <http://www.ihlia.nl/wp-content/uploads/2015/03/Bewaar-mij_brochure-FINAL-small-min.pdf> [Accessed: 07/07/17]. [↑](#footnote-ref-12)
13. Trans.: ‘de schrijver – homosexueel – spreekt tot zijn mede-homosexueelen’. Joannes Henri François, *Open brief aan hen die anders zijn dan de anderen. Door een hunner* (The Hague: H.J. Berkhout, 1915), p. 8. [↑](#footnote-ref-13)
14. This is not to say, of course, that such terms were not being used in Germany at this time. The film *Anders als die Andern* (1919) directed by Richard Oswald and financially supported by Magnus Hirschfeld and the *Wissenschaftlich-Humanitäres Komitee*, for example, highlights that such euphemisms were still widely employed in German society alongside the practice of self-reflexive labelling. [↑](#footnote-ref-14)
15. Trans.: ‘aan een intiemen omgang tusschen twee vrouwen [wordt] veel minder aandacht geschonken dan aan dien tusschen twee mannen’. Ibid., p. 40. [↑](#footnote-ref-15)
16. See: Caroll Smith-Rosenberg, ‘The Female World of Love and Ritual: Relations between Women in Nineteenth-Century America’, *Signs* 1 (1975), 1-29. [↑](#footnote-ref-16)
17. This is a view that Lillian Faderman put forth in her article on the “morbidification” of love between women in which she claimed, like Smith-Rosenberg, that in the late nineteenth century a much broader spectrum of socially acceptable loving and affectionate relationships existed between women which were ultimately rejected and “morbidified” with the advent of sexological writings. See: Lillian Faderman, ‘The Morbidification of Love Between Women by 19th-century Sexologists’, *Journal of Homosexuality* 4 (1) (1978), 73-90. [↑](#footnote-ref-17)
18. Trans.: ‘Ik zit zeer op de grens hoor. Ik been echt niet helemaal 100% lesbisch. […] Ik wilde dolgraag kinderen, dus ik ben een zeer dubieus geval’. Anja van Kooten Niekerk and Sacha Wijmer, *Verkeerde vriendschap: Lesbisch leven in de jaren 1920-1960* (Amsterdam: Feministische uitgeverij Sara, 1985), p. 73. [↑](#footnote-ref-18)
19. Trans.: ‘Ik ben niet lesbisch, al zei een echte lesbische vriendin van mij van wél. Maar ik ben toch zeven jaar getrouwd geweest, dus ik weet het niet, jullie moeten het maar zeggen’. Ibid., p. 71. [↑](#footnote-ref-19)
20. Trans.: ‘Het is nu wel vrijer geworden, maar vroeger vond ik het gezelliger, intiemer, […] Ik geloof niet dat jullie zo’n gezellig leven hebben op de manier zoals wij dat hadden. Ons leven was eigenlijk vrijer’. Ibid., p. 178. [↑](#footnote-ref-20)
21. See, for example: Lillian Faderman, *Surpassing the Love of Men: Romantic Friendship and Love between Women from the Renaissance to the Present* (London: Women’s Press, 1981); *Lesbian-Feminism in Turn-of-the-Century Germany* eds. Lillian Faderman and Brigitte Erikson(Tallahassee, FL: The Naiad Press, 1980). [↑](#footnote-ref-21)
22. Doan, *Disturbing Practices*, p. x. [↑](#footnote-ref-22)
23. Such criticisms, however, as John Boswell identifies, overlook the undeniably political impulse of the original erasure of queer desire and other minority experiences from mainstream history writings, which itself cannot have stemmed from a purely scholarly interest in narrating history. See: John Boswell, ‘Revolutions, Universals, and Sexual Categories’ in *Hidden from History: Reclaiming the Gay and Lesbian Past* ed. by Martin Duberman et al. (New York: Meridian, 1989), pp. 17-37. Here: Thomas Piontek, *Queering Gay and Lesbian Studies* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2006), p. 7. [↑](#footnote-ref-23)
24. Halberstam, *Female Masculinity*, p. 54. [↑](#footnote-ref-24)
25. Valerie Traub, *Thinking Sex with the Early Moderns* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2016),p. 61. [↑](#footnote-ref-25)
26. Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick, *Epistemology of the Closet* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2008),p. 45. [↑](#footnote-ref-26)
27. Halberstam, *Female Masculinity*, p. 53. [↑](#footnote-ref-27)
28. As outlined in *Epistemology of the Closet*, Sedgwick describes the process of a ‘denaturalisation of the present’ not only as an attempt to trouble the categories of gender and sexuality that are often taken for granted but also to ‘render less destructively presumable homosexuality as we know it today’, p. 48. [↑](#footnote-ref-28)
29. Halberstam, *Female Masculinity,* pp. 52-3. [↑](#footnote-ref-29)
30. Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick, *Tendencies* (London: Routledge, 1994), p. 8. [↑](#footnote-ref-30)
31. Madhavi Menon, *Unhistorical Shakespeare: Queer Theory in Shakespearean Literature* *and Film* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2008), p. 3. [↑](#footnote-ref-31)
32. Jonathan Goldberg and Madhavi Menon, ‘Queering History’, *PMLA*, 120 (5), (2005) 1608-17 (p. 1609). [↑](#footnote-ref-32)
33. Lisa Duggan, ‘The Discipline Problem: Queer Theory Meets Gay and Lesbian History’, *GLQ: A Journal of Lesbian and Gay Studies* 2 (3), (1995) 179-91, (p. 189). [↑](#footnote-ref-33)
34. Carolyn Dinshaw, *Getting Medieval: Sexualities and Communities, Pre- and Postmodern* (Durham and London: Duke University Press, 1999), p. 12. [↑](#footnote-ref-34)
35. Ibid., p. 206. [↑](#footnote-ref-35)
36. Helmut Puff, ‘After the History of (Male) Homosexuality’ in *After the History of Sexuality: German Genealogies with and Beyond Foucault* ed. by Scott Spector et al. (New York and Oxford: Berghahn Books, 2012), p. 23. [↑](#footnote-ref-36)
37. Valerie Traub, ‘The Present Future of Lesbian Historiography’ in *A Companion to Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender, and Queer Studies* ed. by George E. Haggerty and Molly McGarry (Oxford: Wiley Blackwell, 2007), p. 125. [↑](#footnote-ref-37)
38. Carla Freccero, ‘The Queer Time of the Lesbian Premodern’, in *The Lesbian Premodern* ed. by Noreen Giffney et al. (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2011), p. 62. [↑](#footnote-ref-38)
39. Sedgwick, *Tendencies*, p. 8. [↑](#footnote-ref-39)
40. David Halperin, *How to do the History of Homosexuality* (Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press, 2002),p. 29. [↑](#footnote-ref-40)
41. *The Lesbian Premodern* ed. by Noreen Giffney, Michelle Sauer, and Diane Watt (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2011). [↑](#footnote-ref-41)
42. See: Robert Beachy, *Gay Berlin: Birthplace of a Modern Identity* (New York: Vintage, 2014). [↑](#footnote-ref-42)
43. George Chauncey, ‘From Sexual Inversion to Homosexuality: Medicine and the Changing Conceptualization of Female Deviance’, *Salmagundi* 59 (1983), 114-46 (p. 115). [↑](#footnote-ref-43)
44. Susan Lanser, *The Sexuality of History: Modernity and the Sapphic 1565-1830* (Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press, 2014), p. 28. [↑](#footnote-ref-44)
45. Ibid., pp. 18-21. [↑](#footnote-ref-45)
46. Weeks, *Sexuality*, p. 34. [↑](#footnote-ref-46)
47. *After the History of Sexuality: German Genealogies with and Beyond Foucault* ed. by Scott Spector et al. (New York: Berghahn Books, 2012)and Clayton J. Whisnant, *Queer Identities and Politics in Germany: A History* (New York: Harrington Park Press, 2016) being only two of the most recent studies that adopt a queer methodological approach. [↑](#footnote-ref-47)
48. See, for example: Dirk Jaap Noordam, *Riskante relaties: Vijf eeuwen homoseksualiteit in Nederland 1233-1733* (Hilversum: Verloren, 1995); Rudolf Dekker and Lotte van de Pol *Vrouwen in mannenkleren: de geschiedenis van een tegendraadse traditie Europa 1500-1800* (Amsterdam: Wereldbibliotheek, 1989); Theo van der Meer, *De wesentlijke sonde van sodomie* *en andere vuyligheeden. Sodomietenvervolgingen in Amsterdam 1730-1811* (Amsterdam: Tabula, 1984*)*; Arend H. Huussen, ‘Sodomy in the Dutch Republic during the 18th Century’, *Eighteenth Century Life* 9(1985), 169-78; *Onbreekbare burgerharten. De historie van Betje Wolff en Aagje Deken* ed. by Peter Altona and Myriam Everard (Nijmegen: Ventilate, 2004); Geertje Mak, *Mannelijke vrouwen: Over de grenzen van sekse in de negentiende eeuw* (Amsterdam: Boom, 1997). [↑](#footnote-ref-48)
49. By employing Barbara Ponse’s theory of a “gay trajectory” as a measurement of how women identified their desires in the past, Schuyf ultimately suggests that same-sex desires for women in the early twentieth century resulted invariably in a sexual identity. Schuyf, *Een stilzwijgende samenzwering*, p. 363. [↑](#footnote-ref-49)
50. Marti M. Lybeck, *Desiring Emancipation: New Women and Homosexuality in Germany 1890-1933* (Albany, NY: SUNY Press, 2014), p. 85. [↑](#footnote-ref-50)
51. Ibid., p. 45. [↑](#footnote-ref-51)
52. David Halperin, *Saint Foucault: Towards a Gay Hagiography* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1995), p. 62. [↑](#footnote-ref-52)
53. Furthermore, as both the “lesbian continuum” and the “lesbian-like” romantic friendships have been deployed in ways that elides the erotic impulse between women, I do not consider them to be suitable categories for a study concerning women’s sexual desires for other women. [↑](#footnote-ref-53)
54. For a more comprehensive discussion of the role of queer visual culture in the construction of sexual identities during the interwar era see: Richard Dyer, *Now You See It: Studies in Lesbian and Gay Film* (London and New York: Routledge, 1990); Alice A. Kuzniar, *The Queer German Cinema* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2000); *Queering the Canon: Defying Sights in German Literature and Culture* ed. by Christoph Lorey and John L. Plews (Columbia, SC: Camden House, 1998); Christopher Reed, *Art and Homosexuality: A History of Ideas* (Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 2011); *The Queer Encylopedia of the Visual Arts* ed. by Claude Summers (San Francisco, CA: Cleis Press, 2004). [↑](#footnote-ref-54)
55. Foucault, *The History of Sexuality*, pp. 100-1. [↑](#footnote-ref-55)
56. Cited in: Joanne Hollows, *Feminism, Femininity and Popular Culture* (Manchester and New York: Manchester University Press, 2000), p. 33. [↑](#footnote-ref-56)
57. See: Judith Butler, *Gender Trouble*, (New York and London: Routledge, 1990). [↑](#footnote-ref-57)
58. Amy Goodloe, *Queer Theory: Another ‘Battle of the Sexes?’*, <http://amygoodloe.com/papers/lesbian-feminism-and-queer-theory-another-battle-of-the-sexes/>, [Accessed: 10/07/2017]. [↑](#footnote-ref-58)
59. Gayle Rubin, ‘Of Catamites and Kings: Reflections on Butch, Gender and Boundaries’ in *The Persistent Desire: A Femme-Butch Reader* ed. by Joan Nestle (Boston: Alyson Books, 1992), p. 480. [↑](#footnote-ref-59)
60. Betty Friedan, *The Feminine Mystique* (New York: W.W. Norton & Co., 1963). [↑](#footnote-ref-60)
61. Kate Millet, *Sexual Politics* (New York: Avon Books, 1969), p. 25. [↑](#footnote-ref-61)
62. Biddy Martin, *Femininity played Straight: The Significance of Being a Lesbian* (New York and London: Routledge, 1996), p. 3. [↑](#footnote-ref-62)
63. Esther Newton, ‘The Mythic Mannish Lesbian: Radclyffe Hall and the New Woman’ in *Hidden from History* ed. by Martin Duberman et al. (New York: Meridian, 1989), p. 281. [↑](#footnote-ref-63)
64. Linda Strega, ‘The Big Sell-Out: Lesbian Femininity’, *Lesbian Ethics*, 1 (3) (1985), 73-84. [↑](#footnote-ref-64)
65. Sherrie A. Inness, *The Lesbian Menace: Ideology, Identity, and the Representation of Lesbian Life* (Amherst, MA: University of Massachusetts Press, 1997), pp. 73-4. [↑](#footnote-ref-65)
66. As Kim Akass and Janet McCabe suggest, ‘the fact that the series was renewed for a second season only days after its first episode premiered in January 2004 is partly attributable to the fact that it did *not* show the full diversity of the gay community’, Kim Akass and Janet McCabe, *Reading ‘The L Word’: Outing Contemporary Television* (London and New York: I.B. Taurus, 2006), p. 4. [↑](#footnote-ref-66)
67. Biddy Martin, *Femininity Played Straight*, pp. 71-94. [↑](#footnote-ref-67)
68. Lisa M. Walker, ‘How to Recognize a Lesbian: The Cultural Politics of Looking like What You Are’, *Signs* 18.4 (1993), 866-90 (pp. 881-2). [↑](#footnote-ref-68)
69. *Visible: A Femmethology* ed. by Jennifer Burke (Michigan: Homofactus Press, 2009). [↑](#footnote-ref-69)
70. Clare Hemmings, *Bisexual Spaces: A Geography of Sexuality and Gender* (New York: Routledge, 2007), p. 117. [↑](#footnote-ref-70)
71. Sarah Cefai, ‘Navigating Silences’, p. 113. [↑](#footnote-ref-71)
72. *The Persistent Desire: A Femme-Butch Reader* ed. by Joan Nestle(Boston: Alyson Publications, 1992), p. 140. [↑](#footnote-ref-72)
73. Some notable exceptions to this rule can be found in Elizabeth Kennedy and Madeline Davis’ *Boots of Leather, Slippers of Gold: The History of a Lesbian Community* (New York: Penguin Books, 1993); Lillian Faderman, Odd Girls and Twilight Lovers: A History of Lesbian Life in Twentieth-Century America (New York: Columbia University Press, 1991); Leila Rupp, Sapphistries: A Global History of Love between Women (New York: New York University Press, 2009); *Butch/Femme: Inside Lesbian Gender* ed. by Sally Munt (London: Cassell, 1998); *Femme: Feminists, Lesbians, and Bad Girls* ed. by Laura Harris and Elizabeth Crocker (London and New York: Routledge, 1997). [↑](#footnote-ref-73)
74. *After the History of Sexuality: German Genealogies with and Beyond Foucault* eds. Scott Spector et al. (New York: Berghahn Books, 2012). [↑](#footnote-ref-74)
75. Weeks, *Sexuality*, p. 11; Leng, ‘Permutations of the Third Sex’, p. 228. [↑](#footnote-ref-75)
76. Joanne Hollows, *Feminism, Femininity and Popular Culture* (Manchester and New York: Manchester University Press, 2000), p. 33. [↑](#footnote-ref-76)
77. Curt Moreck, *Führer durch das “lasterhafte” Berlin* (Leipzig: Verlag moderner Stadtführer, 1931), p. 10. [↑](#footnote-ref-77)
78. Jet Bussemaker, ‘Gender and the separation of spheres in twentieth century Dutch society: pillarisation, welfare state formation and individualisation’ in *Gender, Participation and Citizenship in the Netherlands* ed. by Jet Bussemaker and Rian Voet (Aldershot: Ashgate, 1998), p. 29. [↑](#footnote-ref-78)
79. Heike Schader, *Virile, Vamps und wilde Veilchen: Sexualität, Begehren und Erotik in den Zeitschriften homosexueller Frauen im Berlin der 1920er Jahre* (Königstein/Taunus: Ulrike Helmer, 2004), p. 28. [↑](#footnote-ref-79)
80. Trans.: ‘zooveel vrijer en vlotter […] dan de onze in ons kille land’. L., ‘Wij in den vreemde’, *Wij*,1932, p. 7. [↑](#footnote-ref-80)
81. Schader, *Virile, Vamps und wilde Veilchen*), p. 28. [↑](#footnote-ref-81)
82. Elaine Showalter, *Sexual Anarchy: Gender and Culture at the Fin de Siècle* (London: Virago, 1992). [↑](#footnote-ref-82)
83. See: Gert Hekma and Jan Willem Duyvendak, ‘Gay Men and Lesbians in the Netherlands’ in *Introducing the New Sexuality Studies*,ed. by Nancy L. Fischer and Steven Seidman, 3rd edn. (London and New York: Routledge, 2016). [↑](#footnote-ref-83)
84. Detlev Peukert, *The Weimar Republic: A Crisis of Classical Modernity* trans. by Richard Deveson (London: Penguin Books, 1993); Eberhard Kolb, *The Weimar Republic* trans. by P.S. Falla and R.J. Park (London: Routledge, 2001), p. 83. [↑](#footnote-ref-84)
85. See, for example: Rory MacLean, *Berlin: Imagine a City* (Berlin, Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 2014); Brian Ladd, *The Ghosts of Berlin: Confronting German History in the Urban Landscape* (Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press, 1997); Anthony McElligott, *The German Urban Experience: Modernity and Crisis 1900-1945* (New York: Routledge, 2001); *Geschiedenis van Amsterdam: Hoofdstad in Aanbouw 1813-1900* ed. by Willem Frijhoff et al. (Amsterdam, SUN, 2006); Richter Roegholt, *Amsterdam na 1900* (Amsterdam: Meppel, 1993); Geert Mak, *Amsterdam: A Brief Life of the City* trans. by Philipp Blom (London: The Harvill Press, 1994). [↑](#footnote-ref-85)
86. Frances Mossop, *Mapping Berlin: Representations of Space in the Weimar Feuilleton* (Oxford: Peter Lang, 2015), p. 8. [↑](#footnote-ref-86)
87. Stephen J. Lee, *The Weimar Republic* (New York: Routledge, 1998), p. 147. [↑](#footnote-ref-87)
88. Otto Dix’s post-war images, which often depicted scenes of brutal violence against women, as Maria Tatar has noted, attempted to deal with male anger at ‘the female enemy on the domestic front’. With images of sexually available women blended with mutilated female bodies, Dix’s imagery also engaged with the concerns with changing gender and sexual norms that characterised the Weimar era. Similarly, Fritz Lang’s film *Metropolis* (1927) also took up the new challenges to the status quo and prevailing gender norms as its central theme. See: Maria Tatar, *Lustmord: Sexual Murder in Weimar Germany* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1995), here: pp. 68-9. [↑](#footnote-ref-88)
89. ‘Introduction’ in *Weimar Publics/Weimar Subjects: Rethinking the Political Culture of Germany in the 1920s* eds. Kathleen Canning, Kerstin Barndt, Kristin McGuire (New York: Berghahn, 2010), p. 19. [↑](#footnote-ref-89)
90. Foucault, *History of Sexuality*,p. 139. [↑](#footnote-ref-90)
91. In the conclusion to his work *The Mass Ornament*, cultural commentator Siegfried Kracauer (1889-1966) observed that the dancers were little more than ‘products of American distraction factories’, claiming that ‘the hands in the factory’ could easily be said to ‘correspond to the legs of the Tiller Girls’. Siegfried Kracauer, *The Mass Ornament: Weimar Essays*,trans. by Thomas Y. Levin (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1995), pp. 75-9. [↑](#footnote-ref-91)
92. Mossop, *Mapping Berlin*, p. 14. [↑](#footnote-ref-92)
93. Mak, *Amsterdam*, p. 190. [↑](#footnote-ref-93)
94. Ibid. [↑](#footnote-ref-94)
95. Ibid., p. 221. [↑](#footnote-ref-95)
96. The first Golden Age in the Netherlands, of course, refers to the scientific innovations and cultural prosperity of the seventeenth century. Ibid. [↑](#footnote-ref-96)
97. ‘Introduction’ in *Sociaal Nederland: Contouren van de twintigste eeuw* ed. by Corrie van Eijl et al. (Amsterdam: Aksant, 2001), p. 6. [↑](#footnote-ref-97)
98. The Dutch government was elected through a system in which only property-owning adult males had the right to vote until 1917. Mak, *Amsterdam*, p.91. [↑](#footnote-ref-98)
99. Around 200,000 Dutch troops were mobilised during the First World War. See: Maartje M. Abbenhuis, *The Art of Staying Neutral: The Netherlands in the First World War, 1914-1918* (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2006), p. 217. [↑](#footnote-ref-99)
100. Joop M. Roebroek, ‘The Arrival of the Welfare State in Twentieth Century Mass Society: The Dutch Case’ in *Twentieth Century mass society in Britain and the Netherlands* ed. by Bob Moore and Henk van Nierop (Oxford: Berg, 2006), p. 55. [↑](#footnote-ref-100)
101. Ibid. [↑](#footnote-ref-101)
102. Mineke Bosch, ‘Domesticity, Pillarization and Gender: Historical Explanations for the Divergent Pattern of Dutch Women’s Economic Citizenship’, *BMGN – The Low Countries Historical Review*, 125 (2010), 269-300, (p. 285). [↑](#footnote-ref-102)
103. Trans.: ‘slechts één minuut met iemand hoefde te spreken of men wist dat die ander christelijk, rooms, liberaal of socialist was’, Ivo Schöffer, *Veelvormig verleden: zeventien studies in de vaderlandse geschiedenis* (Amsterdam: Bataafsche Leeuw, 1987), p. 90. [↑](#footnote-ref-103)
104. Arend Lijphart, *The Politics of Accommodation: Pluralism and Democracy in the Netherlands* (Berkeley and London: University California press, 1975), p. 16. [↑](#footnote-ref-104)
105. Ibid. [↑](#footnote-ref-105)
106. As Rudy B. Andeweg and Galen Irwin suggest, the “Pacification” of 1917 is an echo of the Pacification of Ghent in 1576, when the Dutch provinces agreed to respect religious differences and stand united against the Spanish. See: Rudy B. Andeweg and Galen A. Irwin, *Governance and Politics of the Netherlands*, 4th edn. (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2014), p. 45. [↑](#footnote-ref-106)
107. Bosch, ‘Domesticity’, p. 283. [↑](#footnote-ref-107)
108. Inge Bleijenbergh and Jet Bussemaker, ‘The Women’s Vote in The Netherlands: From the “Houseman’s Vote”’ in *The Struggle for Female Suffrage in Europe: Voting to Become Citizens* ed. by Blanca Rodríguez-Ruiz and Ruth Rubio-Marín (Leiden and Boston: Brill, 2012), p. 184. [↑](#footnote-ref-108)
109. Cited in: Karen-Sue Taussig, *Ordinary Genomes: Science, Citizenship, and Genetic Identities* (Durham and London: Duke University Press, 2009), p. 23. [↑](#footnote-ref-109)
110. Mak, *Amsterdam*,p. 232. [↑](#footnote-ref-110)
111. Bussemaker, ‘Gender and the separation of spheres in twentieth century Dutch society: Pillarisation, Welfare State Formation and Individualisation’ in *Gender, Participation, and Citizenship*,p. 26. [↑](#footnote-ref-111)
112. Trans.: ‘de katholieke opgevoede meisjes mochten alleen afstemmen op de KRO terwijl de protestantse meisjes alleen mochten luisteren naar de NCRV’. Van Kooten Niekerk and Wijmer, *Verkeerde vriendschap*,p. 11. [↑](#footnote-ref-112)
113. The Dutch saying ‘twee geloven op een kussen daar slaapt de duivel tussen’ (two faiths in one bed – lit. on one pillow – between them sleeps the devil) highlights the social taboo that surrounded, what was termed, a “mixed marriage”. [↑](#footnote-ref-113)
114. Even the supposedly apolitical *Vrije Vrouwenvereniging* (Free Women’s Association) struggled to overcome the boundaries of cultural segmentation despite its unprecedented attempt to unite women from all social backgrounds. For more on the Dutch women’s movements see: Maria Grever and Berteke Waaldijk, *Transforming the Public Sphere: The Dutch National Exhibition of Women’s Labour in 1898* trans. by Mischa F.C. Hoyinck and Robert E. Chesal(Durham and London: Duke University Press, 2004); Mineke Bosch, ‘History and Historiography of First-Wave Feminism in the Netherlands 1860-1922’ in *Women’s Emancipation Movements in the Nineteenth Century: A European Perspective* ed. by Sylvia Paletschek and Bianka Pietrow-Ennker (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2004). [↑](#footnote-ref-114)
115. Pieter Koenders, *Homoseksualiteit in bezet Nederland* (s’-Gravenhage: De Woelrat, 1983), pp. 30-4. [↑](#footnote-ref-115)
116. Ibid. [↑](#footnote-ref-116)
117. ‘Gij, uransische ratten; gij, onvruchtbare echtverbrekers; gij homosexueele honden; gij lesbische krengen; gij rottend vulsel van deze samenleving, die toch zoo graag coquetteert met Christus, maar dien gij gedegradeerd hebt thans tot een indisch homosexueeltje, tot een juffrouwachtig jongetje, tot de verpersoonlijking van uw eigen bleeke genietinkjes’. Cited in Koenders, *Homoseksualiteit*, p. 32. [↑](#footnote-ref-117)
118. Ibid., p. 33. [↑](#footnote-ref-118)
119. Trans.: ‘eerder regel dan uitzondering’, Rob Tielman, *Homoseksualiteit in Nederland* (Amsterdam: Boom Meppel, 1982), p. 69. [↑](#footnote-ref-119)
120. See: Karin Hausen, ‘The German Nation’s Obligation to the Heroes’ Widows of World War One’ in *Behind the Lines: Gender and the Two World Wars* ed. by Margaret Randolph Higonnet et al. (London: Yale University Press, 1987), p. 128. [↑](#footnote-ref-120)
121. Richard Bessel, *Germany after the First World War*, (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1993),p. 225. [↑](#footnote-ref-121)
122. Siegfried Kracauer, *The Salaried Masses: Duty and Distraction in Weimar Germany* trans. by Quintin Hoare (London and New York: Verso, 1998), p. 29. [↑](#footnote-ref-122)
123. Ibid., p. 30. [↑](#footnote-ref-123)
124. Ute Frevert, *Women in German History: From Bourgeois Emancipation to Sexual Liberation* trans. by Stuart McKinnon-Evans(New York: Berg, 1993), p. 156. [↑](#footnote-ref-124)
125. Helen Boak, *Women in the Weimar Republic* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2013), p. 135. [↑](#footnote-ref-125)
126. Frevert, *Women in German History*,p. 176. [↑](#footnote-ref-126)
127. Renate Bridenthal and Claudia Koonz, ‘Beyond Kinder, Küche, Kirche: Weimar Women in Politics and Work’ in *When Biology Became Destiny Women in Weimar and Nazi Germany* ed. by Renate Bridenthal et al. (New York: Monthly Review Press, 1984), pp. 33-66. [↑](#footnote-ref-127)
128. Boak explains that the census was broken down into five occupational categories: independent workers, family helpers, white-collar workers and civil servants, manual workers, and domestic servants. There were also five employment sectors: agriculture, industry, trade and commerce, the civil service and the professions, and domestic service. Boak, *Women in the Weimar Republic*, p. 150. [↑](#footnote-ref-128)
129. Moreck, *Führer*,p. 52. [↑](#footnote-ref-129)
130. Katharina von Ankum, ‘Gendered Urban Spaces in Irmgard Keun’s *Das kunstseidene Mädchen*’ in *Women in the Metropolis: Gender and Modernity in Weimar Culture* ed. by Katharina von Ankum (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press,1997), pp. 162-85. [↑](#footnote-ref-130)
131. Mila Ganeva, *Women in Weimar Fashion: Discourses and Displays in German Culture 1918-1933* (Rochester: Camden House, 2008), p. 192. [↑](#footnote-ref-131)
132. Katie Sutton, *The Masculine Woman in Weimar Germany*, (New York and Oxford: Berghahn, 2013), p. 6. [↑](#footnote-ref-132)
133. See, for example: Barbara Drescher, ‘Die ‘Neue Frau’ in *Autorinnen der Weimarer Republik* ed. by Walter Fähnders and Helga Karrenbrock (Bielefeld: Aisthesis Verlag, 2004); Kerstin Haunhorst, *Das Bild der Neuen Frau im Frühwerk Irmgard Keuns: Entwürfe von Weiblichkeit am Ende der Weimarer Republik* (Hamburg: Diplomica, 2008). [↑](#footnote-ref-133)
134. Vibeke Rützou Petersen, *Women and Modernity in Weimar Germany: Reality and Its Representation in Popular Fiction* (New York and Oxford: Berghahn, 2001),p. 80. [↑](#footnote-ref-134)
135. As Katie Sutton notes in her study of the masculine woman in Weimar Germany, ‘concerns about Germany’s emasculated manhood and uncertain reproductive future’ after the First World War, ‘were compounded by women’s increasing movement into social and political life’. See: Sutton, *The Masculine Woman*, p. 4. [↑](#footnote-ref-135)
136. Boak, *Women in the Weimar Republic*, p. 153. [↑](#footnote-ref-136)
137. Ibid., p. 134. [↑](#footnote-ref-137)
138. Bleijenbergh and Bussemaker, ‘The Women’s Vote in the Netherlands’, pp. 175-90. [↑](#footnote-ref-138)
139. Bosch, ‘Domesticity’, p. 290. [↑](#footnote-ref-139)
140. ‘Introduction’ in *Gender Participation and Citizenship in the Netherland*s ed. by Jet Bussemaker, Rian Voet (Aldershot: Ashgate, 1998), p. 6. [↑](#footnote-ref-140)
141. Ibid., p. 3. [↑](#footnote-ref-141)
142. Francisca de Haan, *Gender and Politics of Office Work: The Netherlands 1860-1940* (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 1998), p. 117.As Deborah Simonton observes, in Germany in the period, married women’s labour participation was around 45 per cent. See: Deborah Simonton, *A History of European Women’s Work 1700 to Present* (London and New York: Routledge, 1998), p. 192. [↑](#footnote-ref-142)
143. Ibid. [↑](#footnote-ref-143)
144. Ibid., p. 117. [↑](#footnote-ref-144)
145. In contrast to the debates around the masculinisation of the modern woman in Berlin, it is interesting to note that the case of the ‘boy-ish’ office worker in the Netherlands was framed in terms of a “new femininity” as opposed to a perceived masculinisation of women. Ibid., p. 76. [↑](#footnote-ref-145)
146. Ibid., p. 42. [↑](#footnote-ref-146)
147. As Leo Lucassen observes, the cuts at the rail service and the Post Office were only the tip of the iceberg for resistance against women’s work. See: Leo Lucassen, ‘Sekse en nationaliteit als ordenend principe: De uitsluiting van vrouwen en vreemdelingen op de Nederlandse arbeidsmarkt (1900-1995) in *Sociaal Nederland*, ed. by C. Van de Eijl et al. (Amsterdam: Aksant, 2001),p. 88. [↑](#footnote-ref-147)
148. De Haan, *Gender and Politics*, p. 99. [↑](#footnote-ref-148)
149. Ibid., p. 58 [↑](#footnote-ref-149)
150. Bussemaker, ‘Gender and the separation of spheres’,p. 22. [↑](#footnote-ref-150)
151. Cited in Jane Fenoulhet, *Making the Personal Political: Dutch Women Writers 1919-1970* (London: Legenda, 2007), p. 19. [↑](#footnote-ref-151)
152. Beachy, *Gay Berlin*, p. 189. [↑](#footnote-ref-152)
153. Ibid., p. 192. [↑](#footnote-ref-153)
154. Ibid., p. 196. [↑](#footnote-ref-154)
155. See, for example: John D’Emilio, ‘Capitalism and Gay Identity’ in *The Gay and Lesbian Studies Reader*, ed. by Henry Abelove et al. (London: Routledge, 1993), pp. 467-76; Amy Gluckman and Betsy Reed, *Homo Economics: Capitalism, Community, and Lesbian and Gay Life* (New York: Routledge, 1999); Jeffrey Weeks, ‘Capitalism and the Organization of Sex’ in *Homosexuality: Power and Politics*, ed. by Gay Left Collective (London: Allison and Busby, 1980), pp. 11-20; Justin Bengry, ‘Courting the Pink Pound: *Men Only* and the Queer Consumer, 1935-1939’, *History Workshop Journal* 68 (2009): 122-48. [↑](#footnote-ref-155)
156. Moreck, *Führer*, p. 172. [↑](#footnote-ref-156)
157. Roellig, *Berlins lesbische Frauen*, p. 46. [↑](#footnote-ref-157)
158. As will become apparent in the final chapter of this thesis, the type that gathered in the *Taverne* bar – discussed below – is not redolent of any of the characters that presented in Weirauch’s trilogy. Ibid., p. 57. [↑](#footnote-ref-158)
159. Schader, *Virile*, pp. 111-9. [↑](#footnote-ref-159)
160. The name *Die Zauberflöte* could be an allusion to the German-Swiss poet and artist Else Lasker-Schüler, who adopted the alter-ego of Yusuf “The Prince of Thebes” in an appeal to the Ancient Egyptian and Arab Near-East cultures and Lasker-Schüler was often pictured playing a flute. For more on Lasker-Schüler, see: Katrin Sieg, *Exiles, Eccentrics, Activists: Women in Contemporary German Theater* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1994). Here: Roellig, *Berlins lesbische Frauen*, p. 29. [↑](#footnote-ref-160)
161. Ibid., p. 57. [↑](#footnote-ref-161)
162. Ibid., p. 58. [↑](#footnote-ref-162)
163. Roellig, *Berlins lesbische Frauen*, p. 71. [↑](#footnote-ref-163)
164. Ibid., p. 25. [↑](#footnote-ref-164)
165. Moreck, *Führer*, p. 157. [↑](#footnote-ref-165)
166. Roellig, *Berlins lesbische Frauen*, p. 53. [↑](#footnote-ref-166)
167. Moreck, *Führer*, p. 170. [↑](#footnote-ref-167)
168. Roellig, *Berlins lesbische Frauen*, p. 52. [↑](#footnote-ref-168)
169. In a bid to make sure bars were as accessible as possible for women, however, many female organisers attempted to keep the cost of ‘die Verpflegung und Eintritt’ as low as possible and some members-only bars threw *Studentenbälle* with lower priced tickets and offered gifts to their patrons as well as attractive promotions. [↑](#footnote-ref-169)
170. Roellig, *Berlins lesbische Frauen*, p. 30. [↑](#footnote-ref-170)
171. Magnus Hirschfeld, *Die Homosexualität des Mannes und des Weibes* (Berlin: Louis Marcus, 1914), p. 910. [↑](#footnote-ref-171)
172. Gert Hekma, *De roze rand van donker Amsterdam* (Amsterdam: Van Gennep, 1992), p. 11. [↑](#footnote-ref-172)
173. The infamous Bet van Beeren, who will be discussed shortly, was said to have established this code. See: Sjuul Deckwitz, ‘Bet van Beeren’ in *Goed verkeerd: een geschiedenis van homoseksuele mannen en lesbische vrouwen in Nederland* ed. by Gert Hekma et al. (Amsterdam: Meulenhoff, 1989), p. 129-30. [↑](#footnote-ref-173)
174. Hekma, *De roze rand*, p. 17. [↑](#footnote-ref-174)
175. Trans.: ‘weinig meer bekend is dan dat ze sigaren rookte’. Ibid., p. 19. [↑](#footnote-ref-175)
176. Trans.: ‘[…] kwam nogal een en ander aan het licht, ook dingen, welke in strijd waren met de openbare zeden’, ‘Inval in een Amsterdamsche bar’, *Nieuwsblad van het Noorden*, 17 September 1932. [↑](#footnote-ref-176)
177. Deckwitz, ‘Bet van Beeren’,p. 129. [↑](#footnote-ref-177)
178. Trans.: ‘het was een ongelofelijk goed feest waarbij de mensen ongeacht hun sexe met elkaar mochten dansen en dat was in die tijd een soort fenomeen, want dat mocht nérgens, dat mocht nóoit (maar) bij Bet mócht het en kón het en niemand vond het vreemd’. Yvonne van den Heuij and Diana van Laar ‘Café ‘t Mandje’, <http://www.cafetmandje.amsterdam/geschiedenis/> [Accessed: 04/07/17] [↑](#footnote-ref-178)
179. See: Gert Hekma, *De roze rand van donker Amsterdam*; Judith Schuyf, *Een Stilzwijgende samenzwering*; Rob Tielman, *Homoseksualiteit in Nederland* (Amsterdam Meppel: Boom, 1982). [↑](#footnote-ref-179)
180. Van Kooten Niekerk and Wijmer, *Verkeerde vriendschap*, p. 87. [↑](#footnote-ref-180)
181. As Robert Beachy describes, Commissioner Hüllessem adopted a policy of tolerance due to the ‘impractical task of investigating dozens of small bars where homosexuals might congregate, a nearly impossible task in a large, sprawling city’ (p. 46). Furthermore, so long as homosexual activities did not cause a public disturbance, it was almost impossible for individuals to be charged under paragraph 175. For a more comprehensive description of the policing of homosexuality in Berlin see: Beachy *Gay Berlin*, particularly, pp. 42-84. [↑](#footnote-ref-181)
182. Beachy, *Gay Berlin*, p. 55. [↑](#footnote-ref-182)
183. The first city to introduce a “vice squad” was Rotterdam in 1908, followed by The Hague in 1913, and Utrecht in 1918. Schuyf, *Stilzwijgende samenzwering*, p. 112. [↑](#footnote-ref-183)
184. Two of the twenty-one women interviewed in Van Kooten Niekerk and Wijmer’s study had encounters with Article 248bis. Ton Oosterhout’s name was placed on a blacklist for immoral behaviour when she breached the law in the 1950s as a minor and Ien Duursma was blacklisted in the 1960s for breaching the law as an adult. For Ton, the investigation marked her first encounter with the term ‘lesbische relatie’ (lesbian relationship). Van Kooten Niekerk and Wijmer, *Verkeerde vriendschap*, p. 205-9. According to Judith Schuyf in the sixty years that Article 248bis was in force, 48 women were committed to trial in comparison to 4987 men. See: Schuyf, *Stilzwijgende samenzwering*, p. 117. [↑](#footnote-ref-184)
185. See: ‘Preußisches Strafgesetzbuch von 1851’, <http://www.koeblergerhard.de/Fontes/StrafgesetzbuchPreussen1851.pdf> [Accessed: 04/02/17]. [↑](#footnote-ref-185)
186. Although crimes of sodomy had become more closely associated to sexual acts between men by the early nineteenth century, sodomy was used as a broad referent to describe a diverse range of vices “against nature” and was not reserved exclusively for the description of male same-sex intercourse. For further reading on the linguistic development of the terms “sodomy” and “sodomite”, see Arthur Gilbert, ‘Conceptions of Homosexuality and Sodomy in Western History’, *Journal of Homosexuality*,6 (1/2) (1981), 57-68; Gert Hekma ‘A History of Sexology: Social and Historical Aspects of Sexuality’, in Jan Bremmer (ed.), *From Sappho to De Sade: Moments in the History of Sexuality*, New York 1991. For more on the biography of Linck, see: Brigitte Eriksson, ‘A Lesbian Execution in Germany, 1721: The Trial Records’, *Journal of Homosexuality* 6 (1980/81), 27-40. [↑](#footnote-ref-186)
187. Laurie Marhoefer, *Sex and the Weimar Republic: German Homosexual Emancipation and the rise of the Nazis* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2015), p. 71. [↑](#footnote-ref-187)
188. Ibid. [↑](#footnote-ref-188)
189. Tracie Matysik, *Reforming the Moral Subject: Ethics and Sexuality in Central Europe, 1890-1930* (Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 2008), p. 160. [↑](#footnote-ref-189)
190. Marhoefer, *Sex in the Weimar Republic*,p. 74. [↑](#footnote-ref-190)
191. Ibid., p. 71-2. [↑](#footnote-ref-191)
192. The Eulenburg affair of 1906-1909 was a domestic scandal that centred upon the German Emperor Wilhelm II and the ‘allegedly abnormal and effeminate sexuality displayed by the Kaiser’s circle of friends and advisers’. The daily press was scandalised by the story, which brought queer desire into the public domain. See: Claudia Bruns, ‘Masculinity, Sexuality, and the German Nation: The Eulenburg Scandals and Kaiser Wilhelm II in Political Cartoons’ in *Pictorial Cultures and Political Iconographies: Approaches, Perspectives, Case Studies from Europe and America*, ed. by Udo K. Hebel and Christoph Wagner (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 2011), p. 119. [↑](#footnote-ref-192)
193. See: Anna Rüling, ‘Welches Interesse hat die Frauenbewegung an der Lösung der homosexuellen Problems?’, *Jahrbuch für sexuelle Zwischenstufen* 7 (1905), 131-51. [↑](#footnote-ref-193)
194. Helene Stöcker, ‘Die beabsichtigte Ausdehnung des §175 auf die Frau’ in *Weibliche Homosexualität um 1900 in zeitgenössischen Dokumenten* ed. by Ilse Kokula (Munich: Frauenoffensive, 1981), p. 267. [↑](#footnote-ref-194)
195. Käthe Schirmacher, ‘§175 des deutschen Strafgesetzes’ in *Weibliche Homosexualität*, p. 257. [↑](#footnote-ref-195)
196. Ibid., p. 258. [↑](#footnote-ref-196)
197. Anna Pappritz, ‘Zum §175’ in *Weibliche Homosexualität*, p. 260. [↑](#footnote-ref-197)
198. The openly “urnische” feminist Anna Rüling also shared this view, claiming that the children of women-who-desired-women born through marriages to men ‘stellen einen großen Prozentsatz zu der Zahl der Schwachsinnigen, Blödsinnigen, Epileptischen, Brustkranken, Degenerierten aller Art’. Ibid., p. 262. [↑](#footnote-ref-198)
199. Otto Weininger, *Geschlecht und Charakter: Eine prinzipielle Untersuchung*, 10th edn.(Vienna and Leipzig: Wilhelm Braumüller, 1910), p. 84. [↑](#footnote-ref-199)
200. Katharina Rowold*, The Educated Woman: Minds, Bodies, and Women’s Higher Education in Britain, Germany, and Spain 1865-1914* (New York and London: Routledge, 2010), p. 131. [↑](#footnote-ref-200)
201. Emphasis in original: Matysik, *Reforming the Moral Subject*, p. 167. [↑](#footnote-ref-201)
202. Such a statement, of course, does not refer to the existence of the visibly queer and masculine woman, whom Krukenberg would have presumably considered “unnatural”. Krukenberg, ‘§175’, *Weibliche Homosexualität*,p. 256. [↑](#footnote-ref-202)
203. Ibid. [↑](#footnote-ref-203)
204. Marhoefer, *Sex and the Weimar Republic*, p. 120. [↑](#footnote-ref-204)
205. Rictor Norton, *Myth of the Modern Homosexual: Queer History and the Search for Cultural Unity* (London: Bloomsbury Academic, 2016), p. 138. [↑](#footnote-ref-205)
206. Schuyf, *Stilzwijgende samenzwering*, p. 102. [↑](#footnote-ref-206)
207. Gert Hekma, *Amsterdam: The Last Vestiges of the Sixties? (*Amsterdam: University of Amsterdam Press, 2000), p. 16. [↑](#footnote-ref-207)
208. Trans.: ‘weerzinwekkende en naamloze zonde’ and ‘psychologisch en medisch-wettig probleem’. Van Kooten Niekerk and Wijmer, *Verkeerde vriendschap*, p. 24. [↑](#footnote-ref-208)
209. Frank van Vree, ‘Media, Morality and Popular Culture: The Case of the Netherlands, 1870-1965’ in *Twentieth Century Mass Society in Britain and the Netherlands* ed. by Bob Moore and Henk van Nierop (Oxford: Berg, 2006), p. 87. [↑](#footnote-ref-209)
210. Maarten Salden, ‘Artikel 248 bis wetboek van strafrecht de geschiedenis van een strafbaarstelling’, *Groniek Historisch Tijdschrift* 66 (1980), 33-48 (p. 41). [↑](#footnote-ref-210)
211. H. J. van Heek, ‘“Het Koekoeksei van Regout” De parlementaire geschiedenis van artikel 248 bis’ pp. 12-33 reprinted in Maurice van Lieshout, *Een groeiend zedelijk kwaad: documenten over de criminalisering en emancipatie van homoseksuelen 1910-1916* (Amsterdam: Het Spinhuis, 1992). [↑](#footnote-ref-211)
212. Anna Tijsseling, *Schuldige Seks: homoseksuele zedendelicten rondom de Duitse bezettingstijd* (Unpublished Doctoral Thesis, University of Utrecht, 2009), p. 52. [↑](#footnote-ref-212)
213. The law was in force between 1911-1971 and read as follows: ‘De meerderjarige, die met een minderjarige van hetzelfde geslacht, wiens minderjarigheid hij kent of redelijkerwijs moet vermoeden, ontucht pleegt, wordt gestraft met gevangenisstraf van ten hoogste vier jaar’. See: Maartin Salden, ‘Artikel 248 bis wetboek van Strafrecht de geschiedenis van een strafbaarstelling’, *Groniek Historisch Tijdschrift* 66 (1980), 38-48. [↑](#footnote-ref-213)
214. The trouser ban is a particularly striking point of comparison between the sexual and gendered control of bodies and their pleasures in Amsterdam and Berlin. While the trouser ban was not removed from the Amsterdam’s local governmental laws until the late 1980s, in some exceptional cases *Transvestitenscheine* were being granted in Berlin which permitted the holder to present as the gender they were not assigned at birth. Already in 1909, Magnus Hirschfeld had convinced local authorities in Berlin that his patient, Frau Katz, should be awarded a *Transvestitenschein* after she was detained on several occasions by authorities after they assumed that she was a man attempting to pass as a woman. For further information on the “trouser ban”, see J. Schuyf and M. Schoonheim, ‘Geschiedenis’, in *De lesbo- encyclopedie*, ed. by M. Hemker and L. Huijsmans (Amsterdam: Ambo-Anthos, 2009). For a more comprehensive discussion about *Transvestitenscheine*,see: Beachy, *Gay Berlin*, pp. 171-2. [↑](#footnote-ref-214)
215. Tijsseling, *Schuldige Seks*,p. 52. [↑](#footnote-ref-215)
216. Tielman, *Homoseksualiteit in Nederland*, p. 118. [↑](#footnote-ref-216)
217. Myriam Everard, ‘Vier feministen en het Nederlandsch Wetenschappelijk Humanitair Komitee. De historische verhouding tussen de Nederlandsche vrouwenbeweging en het lesbische’ in *Socialisties-Feministiese Teksten* VIII ed. by Selma Sevenhuijsen et al. (Amsterdam: Sara, 1984), pp. 149-75. [↑](#footnote-ref-217)
218. Myriam Everard, ‘Vier feministen’, p. 149. [↑](#footnote-ref-218)
219. Ibid., pp. 165-6. [↑](#footnote-ref-219)
220. Van Kooten Niekerk and Wijmer, *Verkeerde vriendschap*, p. 14. [↑](#footnote-ref-220)
221. In Helmond 98 per cent of the population was Catholic during this period. All eight women who signed from the Helmond area, however, belonged to the Protestant minority. See: Karen Hillege ‘Eén van de acht: Marie de Boer. Over Helmondse ondertekenaars van de Schorer-petitie’ in *Homojaarboek 3: Artikelen over emancipatie en homoseksualiteit* ed. by Michael Dallas et al. (Amsterdam: Van Gennep, 1985), p. 19. [↑](#footnote-ref-221)
222. That women who signed the petition and were “gender conforming” – or, indeed, had husbands – have been largely dismissed from the study of queer female experience, highlights the privileging of masculinity within the historical study of queer female desires. For more on De Boer, see: Hillege ‘Eén van de acht’, pp. 12-24. [↑](#footnote-ref-222)
223. Beachy, *Gay Berlin*, p. 85-6. [↑](#footnote-ref-223)
224. ‘Besprechung des Jahrbuchs’, *Jahrbuch für sexuelle Zwischenstufen* 10 (1909), p. 441. [↑](#footnote-ref-224)
225. James P. Steakley, *The Homosexual Emancipation Movement in Germany* (New York: Arno Press, 1975), p. 26. [↑](#footnote-ref-225)
226. This contrasts with Adolf Brand’s anti-feminist *Gemeinschaft der Eigenen* (GdE). The GdEwas a literary and cultural circle of homosexual men who separated themselves from Magnus Hirschfeld’s WhK and the “Third Sex” theory in 1903. The name of Brand’s organisation has inspired various translations into English. While the most popular translation appears to be the “Community of the Special”, the *Gemeinschaft der Eigenen* has also been translated as the “Community of Self-Owners/the Self-Determined”, and the “Community of Free Spirits”, foregrounding the separatist (and elitist) nature of the organisation. The term “Eigen”, in both the name of Brand’s organisation and his publication *Der Eigene* (The Self-Owner), was inspired by Max Stirner’s philosophy put forth in his seminal *Der Einzige und sein Eigentum* (The Ego and Its Own, 1844). [↑](#footnote-ref-226)
227. Kirsten Leng, ‘Culture, Difference, and Sexual Progress in Turn-of-the-Century Europe: Cultural Othering and the German League for the Protection of Mothers and Sexual Reform, 1905–1914’, *Journal of the History of Sexuality* 25 (1) (2016), 62–82. [↑](#footnote-ref-227)
228. Beachy, *Gay Berlin*, pp. 160-3. [↑](#footnote-ref-228)
229. Cited in: Ute Scheub, *Verrückt nach Leben: Berliner Szenen in den zwanziger Jahren* (Reinbek: Rowohlt, 2000), p. 133. [↑](#footnote-ref-229)
230. Bauer, *The Hirschfeld Archives: Violence, Death and Modern Queer Culture* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 2017), p. 79. [↑](#footnote-ref-230)
231. Ibid. [↑](#footnote-ref-231)
232. Rob Tielman, ‘Schorer en het Nederlandsch Wetenschappelijk Humanitair Komitee (1911-1940)’ in *Homojaarboek 1: Artikelen over emancipatie en homoseksualiteit* (Amsterdam: Van Gennep, 1981), p. 107. [↑](#footnote-ref-232)
233. Koenders, *Homoseksualiteit*, p. 24. [↑](#footnote-ref-233)
234. ‘Schorer wás het NWHK, het NWHK wás Schorer’, Tielman, *Homoseksualiteit in Nederland*,p. 88. [↑](#footnote-ref-234)
235. Most of the publications listed in the catalogue were printed originally in German. Like Hirschfeld, Schorer was in the process of building a library and archive of sexological and emancipatory materials. Whereas Hirschfeld’s Institute was destroyed in 1933 and the contents of his archive and library were burned or expropriated, Schorer pre-empted the Nazi attack on knowledge in the Netherlands and dissolved the NWHK, destroying the records. The library was confiscated by the Nazis, however, and has since been lost. From the 1980s, IHLIA (Internationaal Homo/Lesbisch Informatiecentrum en Archief) has worked to piece together Schorer’s collection from the catalogue of books that the activist compiled. [↑](#footnote-ref-235)
236. Trans.: ‘bij vrouwen zoo goed als bij mannen’, Rob Tielman, ‘Schorer en het Nederlandsch Wetenschappelijk Humanitair Komitee (1911-1940)’ in *Homojaarboek 1*, p. 122. [↑](#footnote-ref-236)
237. Carl Westphal, ‘Die conträre Sexualempfindung, Symptom eines neuropathischen (psychopathischen) Zustandes’ *Archiv für Psychiatrie und Nervenkrankheiten* 2 (1) (1869), 73-108 (p. 77). [↑](#footnote-ref-237)
238. Westphal, ‘Die conträre Sexualempfindung’, p. 77. [↑](#footnote-ref-238)
239. Jonathan Ned Katz, *The Invention of Heterosexuality* (Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press, 2007), p. 19. [↑](#footnote-ref-239)
240. Ibid. [↑](#footnote-ref-240)
241. Kirsten Leng, ‘Contesting the Laws of Life: Feminism, Sexual Science, and Sexual Governance in Germany and Britain c. 1880-1914’ (Unpublished Doctoral Thesis, University of Michigan, 2011), p. 6. [↑](#footnote-ref-241)
242. In her work *Gender Trouble* (1990), Butler uses the term “heterosexual matrix” to denote ‘that grid of cultural intelligibility through which bodies, genders, and desires are naturalized […] to characterize a hegemonic discursive/epistemic model of gender intelligibility that assumes that for bodies to cohere and make sense there must be a stable sex expressed through a stable gender […] that is oppositionally and hierarchically defined through the compulsory practice of heterosexuality’. See: Judith Butler, *Gender Trouble* (New York: Routledge, 1990), p. 208. [↑](#footnote-ref-242)
243. Lisa Walker, *Looking Like What You Are: Sexual Style, Race, and Lesbian Identity* (New York: New York University Press, 2001) p. 4. [↑](#footnote-ref-243)
244. Ibid. [↑](#footnote-ref-244)
245. ‘Introduction’ in *Science and Homosexualities*, ed. by Vernon A. Rosario (New York: Routledge, 1997), p. 15. [↑](#footnote-ref-245)
246. As Marhoefer suggests, irrespective of political leaning, many early sexologists were influenced by the eugenics movement and a more progressive political party leaning did not necessarily result in scientific position that could also be deemed progressive: ‘[Eugenics] had broad popular support in Weimar-era Germany from the Right, the moderate middle, and the Left, but at the same time, the versions of eugenics backed by the various political players differed quite widely’. Marhoefer, *Sex and the Weimar Republic*, p. 204. Joachim S. Hohmann, *Sexualforschung und –aufklärung in der Weimarer Republik: Eine Übersicht in Materialien und Dokumenten* (Berlin: Foerster Verlag, 1985), p. 88. [↑](#footnote-ref-246)
247. ‘Man erfährt dabei allerlei aus dem Sexualleben der Menschen, womit sich ein nützliches und lehrreiches Buch füllen ließe, lernt es auch nach jeder Richtung hin bedauern, daß die *Sexualwissenschaft* heutzutage noch als unehrlich gilt’, cited in Volkmar Sigusch, *Geschichte der Sexualwissenschaft* (Frankfurt: Campus, 2008), p. 50. [↑](#footnote-ref-247)
248. Both Robert Deam Tobin’s *Peripheral Desires* and Robert Beachy’s *Gay Berlin* situate Berlin as the birthplace of the modern homosexual identity and Germany more broadly as the country in which sex was ‘discovered’. [↑](#footnote-ref-248)
249. Steakley, *The Homosexual Emancipation Movement*, p. 24 [↑](#footnote-ref-249)
250. Judith Schuyf, ‘Lollepotterij. Geschiedenis van het ‘sapphisch vermaak’ in Nederland tot 1940’ in *Homojaarboek 1* (Amsterdam: Van Gennep, 1981), p. 31. [↑](#footnote-ref-250)
251. Koenders, *Homoseksualiteit*, p. 23. [↑](#footnote-ref-251)
252. Maurice van Lieshout, ‘Lustvijandig, wetenschappelijk voorzichtig en volhardend; de Nederlandse homobeweging in het begin van de 20e eeuw’ *Groniek Historisch Tijdschrift* 66 (1980), 55-62. [↑](#footnote-ref-252)
253. Given the status of German as the “language” of science during this time, and the more liberal publishing climate that existed for sexological writing, many studies were printed first in German and often later in the author’s native language. See also: Havelock Ellis and J.A. Symonds, *Das konträre Geschlechtsgefühl*,trans. Hans Kurella (Leipzig: Georg H. Wigand’s, 1896). [↑](#footnote-ref-253)
254. Arnold Aletrino initially published under the pseudonym Karl Ihlfeld. [↑](#footnote-ref-254)
255. Ilse Bulhof, ‘Psychoanalysis in the Netherlands’, *Comparative Studies in Society and History*,24 (4) (1982), 572-88, (p. 575). [↑](#footnote-ref-255)
256. Ibid. [↑](#footnote-ref-256)
257. Freud was not universally welcomed by psychiatrists and general practitioners in the Netherlands and many found his focus on sex to be unpalatable. Furthermore, although some religious leaders in the Netherlands saw Freud, as Ilse Bulhof notes, as a welcome addition ‘to traditional spiritual care and the training of preachers; the majority of Calvinist and Roman Catholic commentators denounced Freud because of his “materialistic” world view’. Trans.: ‘op de traditionele zielzorg en de predikantenopleiding; de meerderheid van hervormde, gereformeerde en rooms-katholieke commentatoren waarschuwde echter tegen Freud vanwege diens ‘materialistische’ wereldbeschouwing’. See: Bulhof, *Freud en Nederland: de interpretatie en invloed van zijn ideeën* (Baarn: Ambo, 1983), pp. 273-9. [↑](#footnote-ref-257)
258. Van Lieshout, ‘Lustvijandig’, p. 55. [↑](#footnote-ref-258)
259. Mara Taylor, ‘Diagnosing Deviants: The Figure of the Lesbian in Sexological and Literary Discourses 1860-1931’ (Unpublished Doctoral Thesis, University of Pennsylvania, 2010) p. 73. [↑](#footnote-ref-259)
260. While I agree with Tobin’s assertion that queer femininity was given unprecedented visibility through the discussion of male inversion, this conclusion ultimately disregards the complexities of the relationship between visibility, sexuality, and gender that queer feminine-presenting women were faced with. [↑](#footnote-ref-260)
261. Despite the dichotomous view of female sexuality in Forel’s work, sexual desire more generally is presented, as Michael Trask points out, as being ‘at once singular and “variant”, coherent and unstable, concentrated and diffuse’ and contains multiple inconsistencies and contradictions’. See: Michael Trask, *Cruising Modernism: Class and Sexuality in American Literature and Social Thought* (Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 2003), p. 31. [↑](#footnote-ref-261)
262. Edward Ross Dickinson, *Sex, Freedom, and Power in Imperial Germany 1880-1914* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2014), p. 251. [↑](#footnote-ref-262)
263. Auguste Forel, *Die sexuelle Frage: Eine naturwissenschaftliche, psychologische, hygienische und soziologische Studie für Gebildete* 9th edn. (Munich: E. Reinhardt, 1909), p. 252. [↑](#footnote-ref-263)
264. Ibid., p. 99. [↑](#footnote-ref-264)
265. Ibid. [↑](#footnote-ref-265)
266. Ibid., p. 98. [↑](#footnote-ref-266)
267. Ibid. [↑](#footnote-ref-267)
268. Ibid., pp. 102-3. [↑](#footnote-ref-268)
269. Jane Fenoulhet, ‘Love, Marriage and Disappointment: Women’s Lives in the Work of Ina Boudier-Bakker’ *Dutch Crossing* 21 (1) 52-68, (p. 55). [↑](#footnote-ref-269)
270. Trans.: ‘hart heeft den ganschen dag gemord tegen het onnatuurlijk bestaan’; ‘terwijl haar wenschen en verlangens naar huis trokken’. Ina Boudier Bakker, *De moderne vrouw en haar tekort* (Amsterdam: P. N. Van Kampen en zoon, 1921), p. 35. [↑](#footnote-ref-270)
271. Trans.: ‘Vrouwenhersenen in ‘t algemeen zijn alleen helder voor wat hun *hart* interesseert’. Ibid., p. 11. [↑](#footnote-ref-271)
272. Fenoulhet, *Making the Personal Political*, p. 65. [↑](#footnote-ref-272)
273. Katz, *The Invention of Heterosexuality*, p. 13. [↑](#footnote-ref-273)
274. Theodoor van de Velde, *Ideal Marriage: Its Physiology and Technique* 20th edn. (London: William Heinemann Medical Books, 1947), p. 1. [↑](#footnote-ref-274)
275. The second installment of Van de Velde’s trilogy was *Sex Hostility in Marriage* (1931) and the final instalment was titled *Fertility and Sterility in Marriage* (1931). Van de Velde’s *Ideal Marriage* was a resounding success in Europe and was already in its forty-second print in Germany by 1932. For more about Van de Velde and his works see: Willem Melching, ‘“Het volkomen huwelijk” Opvattingen omtrent huwelijk en seksualiteit in het werk van Th. H. van de Velde’ in *Grensgeschillen in de seks: Bijdragen tot een culturele geschiedenis van de seksualiteit* ed. by Gert Hekma et al. (Amsterdam: Atlanta, 1990). [↑](#footnote-ref-275)
276. See for example, Marie Stopes, *Married Love: A New Contribution to the Solution of Sex Difficulties* (1918) and Max Hodann, *Geschlecht und Liebe in biologischer und gesellschaftlicher Beziehung* (1932). [↑](#footnote-ref-276)
277. Emphasis in original. Van de Velde, *Ideal Marriage*, p. 171. [↑](#footnote-ref-277)
278. Emphasis in original. Ibid., p. 21. [↑](#footnote-ref-278)
279. Ibid. [↑](#footnote-ref-279)
280. Although men are positioned as the educators of their wives, they are dually placed in the role of Van de Velde’s students. [↑](#footnote-ref-280)
281. Ibid., p. 46. [↑](#footnote-ref-281)
282. Emphasis in original. Ibid., p. 171. [↑](#footnote-ref-282)
283. Lisa Duggan, ‘The Social Enforcement of Heterosexuality and Lesbian Resistance in the 1920s’ in *Class, Race, and Sex: The Dynamics of Control* ed. by Amy Swerdlow and Hanna Lessinger (Boston, MA: Barnard College Women’s Center, 1983), p. 85. [↑](#footnote-ref-283)
284. Cited in Duggan, ‘Social Enforcement of Heterosexuality’, p. 84. [↑](#footnote-ref-284)
285. A forensic scientist and criminologist, Caspar asserted in his article ‘Über Nothzucht und Päderastie und deren Ermittlung Seitens des Gerichtsarztes’(1852), that homosexual desire could be a congenital trait as opposed to an acquired one. See: “Introduction” in *Homosexuality and Male Bonding in Pre-Nazi Germany: The Youth Movement, the Gay Movement and Male Bonding Before Hitler’s Rise* ed. by Hubert Kennedy and Harry Oosterhuis(New York: The Routledge, 2011), p. 12. [↑](#footnote-ref-285)
286. Ulrichs first suggested that male homosexual desire was the result of a “passive animal magnetism” although he later dismissed this notion in favour of his theory of the existence of a “third sex” (*drittes Geschlecht*). For a more comprehensive outline of the development of Ulrichs’ theory and his works, see Hubert Kennedy, *Ulrichs: The Life and Works of Karl Heinrich Ulrichs, Pioneer of the Modern Gay Movement* (Boston: Alyson, 1988). [↑](#footnote-ref-286)
287. The terms “Urningin” and “Dioningin” were employed by Ulrichs to describe the Urning’s female counterpart, despite the fact that he had had no contact with women who desired their own sex at this point. [↑](#footnote-ref-287)
288. Claudia Honegger, *Die Ordnung der Geschlechter. Die Wissenschaft vom Menschen und das Weib* (Frankfurt and New York: Campus, 1991), p. 56. [↑](#footnote-ref-288)
289. Plato, *Symposium* *and Phaedrus* (New York: Cosimo, 2010), p. 15. [↑](#footnote-ref-289)
290. Carl Heinrich Ulrichs, *Vindex: Social-juristische* *Studien über mannmännliche Liebe* (Leipzig: Max Spohr, 1898), p. 25. [↑](#footnote-ref-290)
291. Eighteenth century and early nineteenth century studies that engaged with same-sex desire such as the Swiss physician Samuel-Auguste Tissot’s *L’onanisme* (1764) and Ambriose Tardieu’s *La Pédérastie* (1857) posited masturbation and bodily deformations as both the causes and origins of same-sex desires. [↑](#footnote-ref-291)
292. Taylor, *Diagnosing Deviants*,p. 73. [↑](#footnote-ref-292)
293. Emphasis in original. Numa Numantius, *Inclusa*: Forschungen über das Räthsel der mannmännlichen Liebe (Leipzig: Heinrich Matthes, 1864),p. 50. [↑](#footnote-ref-293)
294. Kennedy, *Pioneer*, p. 72. [↑](#footnote-ref-294)
295. Karl Heinrich Ulrichs *Formatrix: Anthropologische Studien über urnische Liebe* (Leipzig: Heinrich Matthes, 1864) p. 59. [↑](#footnote-ref-295)
296. Taylor, ‘Diagnosing Deviants’, p. 41. [↑](#footnote-ref-296)
297. Ivan Crozier, ‘Introduction: Havelock Ellis, John Addington Symonds and the Construction of *Sexual Inversion*’ in *Sexual Inversion: A Critical Edition* (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2008), p. 20. [↑](#footnote-ref-297)
298. Carl Westphal, ‘Die conträre Sexualempfindung. Symptom eines neuropathischen (psychopathischen) Zustandes’, *Archiv für Psychiatrie und Nervenkrankheiten* 2 (1), 1869, 71-108 (p. 73). [↑](#footnote-ref-298)
299. In defence of his genital examinations, Westphal stated: ‘Ich bemerke ausdrücklich, dass sich Patientin der Untersuchung ohne Widerspruch aber auch ohne die geringste Spur eines Cynismus unterzog, auch jetzt, wie früher, einen durchaus gesitteten Eindruck machte und gern eine ärztliche Behandlung vorgeschrieben haben wollte’. See: Westphal, ‘Die conträre Sexualempfindung’, pp. 77-8. Here, ibid. [↑](#footnote-ref-299)
300. For more on neurasthenia, see: David Schuster, *Neurasthenic Nation: America’s Search for Health, Happiness, and Comfort 1869-1920* (New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 2011). Here: p. 80. [↑](#footnote-ref-300)
301. Ibid., p. 76. [↑](#footnote-ref-301)
302. Ibid., p. 78. [↑](#footnote-ref-302)
303. The title of Krafft-Ebing’s sourcebook, *Psychopathia sexualis*, had already been used in 1846 by Heinrich Kaan, who categorised a variety of “sinful” sexual acts as mental illnesses. [↑](#footnote-ref-303)
304. By the time of Krafft-Ebing’s death, *Psychopathia Sexualis* had expanded to contain around three hundred case studies. [↑](#footnote-ref-304)
305. Cited in Ulrichs, *Vindex*, p. 7. [↑](#footnote-ref-305)
306. Although women in the category “Androgynie/Gyandrie” bore markers of the opposite sex, Krafft-Ebing emphasised they should not be classified as intersex. [↑](#footnote-ref-306)
307. Harry Oosterhuis, *Stepchildren of Nature: Krafft-Ebing, Psychiatry, and the Making of Sexual Identity* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2000),p. 244. [↑](#footnote-ref-307)
308. Richard von Krafft-Ebing, *Psychopathia sexualis mit besonderer Berücksichtigung der konträren Sexualempfindung: eine medizinisch-gerichtliche Studie für Ärtze und Juristen* 13th edn. (Stuttgart: Ferdinand Enke, 1907), pp. 292-4. [↑](#footnote-ref-308)
309. Richard von Krafft-Ebing, *Psychopathia Sexualis: Eine klinisch-forensische Studie* (Stuttgart: Ferdinand Enke, 1886), p. 57. [↑](#footnote-ref-309)
310. Ibid., p. 63. [↑](#footnote-ref-310)
311. Richard von Krafft-Ebing, ‘Neue Studien auf dem Gebiete der Homosexualität’, *Jahrbuch für sexuelle Zwischenstufen*, 3 (1901) 1-36(p. 257). [↑](#footnote-ref-311)
312. Ibid. [↑](#footnote-ref-312)
313. Ibid. [↑](#footnote-ref-313)
314. We must assume that Krafft-Ebing considered the feminine partners of Fräulein X. to have been pathological or hyper-sexed women who desired more in a feminine partner than simply ‘kisses and embraces’. Ibid., p. 263. [↑](#footnote-ref-314)
315. In fact, Krafft-Ebing regularly emphasised that intimate acts between persons of the same sex in and of themselves, did not reveal a ‘konträre Sexualität’. [↑](#footnote-ref-315)
316. Von Krafft-Ebing, ‘Neue Studien’, p. 24. [↑](#footnote-ref-316)
317. Harry Oosterhuis, ‘Sexual Modernity in the Works of Richard von Krafft-Ebing and Albert Moll’, *Medical History*, 56 (2),(2012) 133-55, (p. 138). [↑](#footnote-ref-317)
318. Moll contributed a preface to the 16th and 17th editions of Krafft-Ebing’s *Psychopathia Sexualis.* [↑](#footnote-ref-318)
319. Oosterhuis, ‘Sexual Modernity’, p. 144. [↑](#footnote-ref-319)
320. Steven Angelides, *A History of Bisexuality*, (Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press, 2001), p. 42. [↑](#footnote-ref-320)
321. Ibid. [↑](#footnote-ref-321)
322. Albert Moll, *Die konträre Sexualempfindung* 3rd edn. (Berlin: Fischer’s Medicinische Buchhandlung, 1899), p. 510. [↑](#footnote-ref-322)
323. Ibid., p. 525. [↑](#footnote-ref-323)
324. Ibid., p. 544. [↑](#footnote-ref-324)
325. Ibid., p. 574. [↑](#footnote-ref-325)
326. Ibid. [↑](#footnote-ref-326)
327. Ibid. [↑](#footnote-ref-327)
328. Ibid., p. 547. [↑](#footnote-ref-328)
329. Ibid., p. 255. [↑](#footnote-ref-329)
330. Albert Moll, ‘Die Behandlung der Homosexualität’ in *Jahrbuch sexuelle Zwischenstufen*, 2 (1900) 1-29, (p. 27). [↑](#footnote-ref-330)
331. As Butler explains: ‘The classical association of femininity with materiality can be traced to a set of etymologies which link matter and *mater* and *matrix* (or the womb) and, hence, with a problematic of reproduction’. Judith Butler, *Bodies that Matter: On the Discursive Limits of “Sex”* (New York and London: Routledge, 1993), p. 31. [↑](#footnote-ref-331)
332. Moll, *Die konträre Sexualempfindung*, p. 266. [↑](#footnote-ref-332)
333. After four pages of calculations, Hirschfeld calculates a total figure of: 43,046,721. See: Magnus Hirschfeld, *Die Transvestiten: eine Untersuchung über den erotischen Verkleidungstrieb* 2nd edn. (Leipzig: Ferdinand Spohr, 1925), pp. 287-90. [↑](#footnote-ref-333)
334. Magnus Hirschfeld, ‘Ursachen und Wesen des Uranismus’, *Jahrbuch für sexuelle Zwischenstufen*,5 (1903), 1-159, (p. 127). [↑](#footnote-ref-334)
335. Magnus Hirschfeld, *Die Homosexualität des Mannes und des Weibes* (Berlin and New York: Walter de Gruyter, 2001), p. 277. [↑](#footnote-ref-335)
336. Angelides, *A History of Bisexuality*, p. 42. [↑](#footnote-ref-336)
337. Hirschfeld was initially resistant to the term *Homosexuelle*, which he considered to foreground only the sexual element, and continued to use Ulrichs’ *Urning* and *drittes Geschlecht*. Hirschfeld claimed that Westphal’s term *Konträrsexualismus* had been used ‘fast ausschließlich von den Psychiatern’ and it slowly fell out of favour. Eventually Hirschfeld also employed the term “homosexual”. See: Magnus Hirschfeld, *Die Homosexualität des Mannes und des Weibes* (Berlin: Louis Marcus, 1914), p. 22-3. [↑](#footnote-ref-337)
338. Ibid., p. 272. [↑](#footnote-ref-338)
339. Ibid. [↑](#footnote-ref-339)
340. Here “niemand” presumably means no *heterosexual* individual. Ibid., p. 109. [↑](#footnote-ref-340)
341. Interestingly, maternal instincts are not altogether absent from Hirschfeld’s work. Indeed, he maintains that for many queer feminine women ‘einer der häufigsten Träume […] ist, daß sie von einem geliebten Weibe ein Kind empfangen haben’. The maternal instinct, therefore, only appears as a result of the drive of a woman towards a love-object which, in this case, is another woman. Hirschfeld, *Der urnische Mensch*, pp. 86-7. [↑](#footnote-ref-341)
342. Ibid., p. 276. [↑](#footnote-ref-342)
343. Johanna Elberskirchen, *Die Liebe des dritten Geschlechts: Homosexualität, eine bisexuelle Varietät keine Entartung – keine Schuld* (Leipzig: Max Spohr, 1904), p. 9. [↑](#footnote-ref-343)
344. Ibid., p. 18. [↑](#footnote-ref-344)
345. Ibid., p. 19. [↑](#footnote-ref-345)
346. Johanna Elberskirchen, *Was hat der Mann aus Weib, Kind und sich gemacht? Revolution und Erlösung des Weibes; eine Abrechnung mit dem Mann – ein Wegweiser in die Zukunft!* (Berlin: Magazin, 1904), p. 1. [↑](#footnote-ref-346)
347. Ibid. [↑](#footnote-ref-347)
348. Ibid., p. 2-4. [↑](#footnote-ref-348)
349. Elberskirchen, *Die Liebe des dritten Geschlechts*, p. 27. [↑](#footnote-ref-349)
350. Kerstin C. Leng, ‘Contesting the “Laws of Life”’, p. x. [↑](#footnote-ref-350)
351. Ibid. [↑](#footnote-ref-351)
352. Forel, *Die sexuelle Frage*, p. 281-2. [↑](#footnote-ref-352)
353. Ibid., p. 287. [↑](#footnote-ref-353)
354. Ibid. [↑](#footnote-ref-354)
355. Ibid. [↑](#footnote-ref-355)
356. Leila J. Rupp, *Sapphistries*,p. 147. [↑](#footnote-ref-356)
357. Forel, *Die sexuelle Frage*, p. 288. [↑](#footnote-ref-357)
358. Working from the assumption that the patient’s statement is never a straightforward utterance of “truth” but can only provide the first clues to underlying unconscious processes and desires, Freudian analysts viewed the patient’s initial “confession” as a construct that worked to stabilize her or his personality at the starting point of analysis, rather than as the final word on their condition. Birgit Lang and Katie Sutton, ‘The Queer Cases of Psychoanalysis: Rethinking the Scientific Study of Homosexuality, 1890s-1920s’ *German History* 34.3 (2016), (pp. 419-44), 420. [↑](#footnote-ref-358)
359. Sigmund Freud, *Drei Abhandlungen zur Sexualtheorie* (Göttingen: Vienna University Press, 2015), p. 62. [↑](#footnote-ref-359)
360. Sigmund Freud, *Sexuality and the Psychology of Love* (USA: Touchstone, 1997), p. 130. [↑](#footnote-ref-360)
361. In one of Freud’s most famous analytic “failures”, he overlooked the desires of his case study “Dora” (1900) for another woman. See: *Sapphic Modernities: Sexuality, Women and National Culture* ed. by Laura Doan and Jane Garrity(New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2006). [↑](#footnote-ref-361)
362. Sigmund Freud, ‘Über die Psychogenese eines Falles von weiblicher Homosexualität’, *Internationale Zeitschrift für Psychoanalyse*, 6 (1920), 1-24 (p. 1). [↑](#footnote-ref-362)
363. Ibid., p. 3. [↑](#footnote-ref-363)
364. Uncommon in Freud’s case studies, the female subject remained anonymous and it was not until 2004 that she was given the pseudonym Sidonie Csillag by the biographers detailing her life story. In the biography, Sidonie, or to use her birth name, Margarethe Csonka (1900-1999), recalls a different series of events to those that Freud describes in his study. According to Csonka, she did not think that her father saw her on the day she jumped onto the train tracks. She claims that she had attempted suicide because her lover had broken off their relationship. See: I. Rieder & D. Voigt, *Sidonie Csillag: La ‘joven homosexual’ de Freud* (Buenos Aires: El Cuenco de Plata, 2004). [↑](#footnote-ref-364)
365. Ibid., p. 8. [↑](#footnote-ref-365)
366. Ibid., p. 9. [↑](#footnote-ref-366)
367. Ibid. [↑](#footnote-ref-367)
368. Ibid., p. 10. [↑](#footnote-ref-368)
369. While Freud considered these women to have a “weak homosexual fixation”, Forel had spoken previously about a “weak hereditary disposition”. [↑](#footnote-ref-369)
370. Birgit Lang and Katie Sutton have stressed the constructed nature of case studies through the ways in which sexologists selected material: ‘that would best illustrate their theories, sometimes editing patients’ statements before publication, and using a number of strategies to underline discursively the authenticity of their case materials, such as publishing these in the first person, and setting them off from the surrounding text by font size, margins and other textual markers’. See: Lang and Sutton, ‘The Queer Cases of Psychoanalysis’, p. 434. [↑](#footnote-ref-370)
371. Trans.: ‘Artsen, Geestelijken, Rechters, Advocaten [en] Politie-ambtenaren’. Maurice van Lieshout, ‘De homosexueelen 1939: Mijnheer is zeker óók zoo?’ in *Sek*, 11 (1981), 12-16. [↑](#footnote-ref-371)
372. Trans.: ‘De beeldvorming van potten uit de medische bronnen is de beeldvorming vanuit de heersende cultuur. Ze werpt een licht op de mentaliteit van de buitenwereld’. Judith Schuyf, ‘Lollepotterij’, p. 21. [↑](#footnote-ref-372)
373. Trans.: ‘Ik heb nog weinig [liefde] werkelijk belééfd. Maar genoeg om ten volle te kènnen en te begrijpen het felle leed dat onder ons, homosexueelen, geleden wordt’. Benno Stokvis, *De homosexueelen* (Lochem: De Tijdstroom, 1939), p. 163. [↑](#footnote-ref-373)
374. Trans.: ‘geen wonder, dat er zooveel werken der duisternis onder ons, homosexueelen, gevonden worden!’. Ibid., p. 146. [↑](#footnote-ref-374)
375. Trans.: ‘Hoe ver ik ook terug ga in mijn herinnering, altijd zie ik mezelf als een recalcitrant en schuw wezen, “anders dan de anderen”, nu eens trots op dit “anders-zijn” dan weer dodelijk bevreesd ervoor’. Ibid., p. 146. [↑](#footnote-ref-375)
376. Trans.: ‘Wanneer ik tracht mij te herinneren wanneer de eerste verschijnselen van mijn anders-zijn zich openbaarden, moet ik teruggaan tot den tijd dat ik als kind de lagere school bezocht. […] Met de jongens was ik betere vrienden; vaak mocht ik meedoen met hun wilde spelletjes omdat ik “zoo sterk in m’n armen was” en evengoed vechten en worstelen kon als zij’. Ibid., p. 156. [↑](#footnote-ref-376)
377. Trans.: ‘Normaal – àbnormaal - … hoe dikwijls zijn die twee woorden door mijn hoofd gegaan? […] “abnormaal”, het begrip, dat ik het meest van alles haatte om den walgelijken bijsmaak, dien het voor mij had: onrein, verachtelijk, gevaarlijk’. Ibid., p. 146. [↑](#footnote-ref-377)
378. Trans.: ‘Toen ik ongeveer 20 jaar was, las ik “De bron van eenzaamheid’. Met verbazing vond ik in Stephen Gordon veel van mezelf terug. Toèn wist ik … En met grote blijdschap, ik zou haast zeggen: dankbaarheid, ontdekte ik dat liefde tusschen twee vrouwen mògelijk is’. Ibid., p. 163. [↑](#footnote-ref-378)
379. Oswald Spengler, *Der Untergang des Abendlandes: Umrisse einer Morphologie der Weltgeschichte*, II Band, (Munich: C.H. Becksche Verlagsbuchhandlung, 1922), p. 579. [↑](#footnote-ref-379)
380. Shortly after the First World War, Spengler put forth his influential theory about the rise and fall of civilisations, suggesting that the linear view of history should be rejected in favour of a cyclical one. Declaring the Great War to have been part of an inevitable world-historic process, Spengler asserted that the modern Western world can be conceived of as ‘Faustian’. Characterised by ‘pure, imperceptible, unlimited space’, the tragic Faustian urbanite is said to strive to create something significant but knows the actual goal can never be reached. Although Spengler’s historical philosophy of “becoming” is of more than merely a tangential interest to the broader ideas concerning queerness within this thesis, it Spengler’s belief in the relativity of truth – that what was true for him might not be true for another – that is relevant here. [↑](#footnote-ref-380)
381. Spengler, *Der Untergang*,p. 578. [↑](#footnote-ref-381)
382. Here, I do not mean “reverse discourses”. That is, I do not suggest that German and Dutch groups were attempting to reappropriate categories used to oppress them as a form of empowerment. While the magazine *Frauenliebe* arguably wanted to use employ terms such as “homosexual woman” and “lesbian woman” in a political manner, those involved in *Die Freundin* were focused instead on assimilation and creating a sense of normativity within the movement. [↑](#footnote-ref-382)
383. As I will discuss in the first chapter of this section, the content of many queer magazines comprised of debates, letters, and poems and short stories that were submitted by readers, providing them with a voice as a contributor. The decision of which content was published in the magazine, however, remained at the discretion of the editors. Here: Spengler, *Der Untergang,* p. 578. [↑](#footnote-ref-383)
384. Spengler, *Der Untergang,* p. 580. [↑](#footnote-ref-384)
385. Bernhard Fulda, *Press and Politics in the Weimar Republic* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2009), p. 3. [↑](#footnote-ref-385)
386. Howard Eiland, *Walter Benjamin: A Critical Life* (Cambridge: Belknap Press, 2014), p. 235. [↑](#footnote-ref-386)
387. Ibid. [↑](#footnote-ref-387)
388. Fulda, *Press and Politics*, p. 13. [↑](#footnote-ref-388)
389. Other publishing companies of the time, such as Scherl and Mosse, for example, soon followed suit. For further information, see: Gideon Reuveni, *Reading Germany: Literature and Consumer Culture in Germany before 1933* (Oxford: Berghahn Books, 2009), p. 142. [↑](#footnote-ref-389)
390. Reuveni, *Reading Germany*, p. 112. [↑](#footnote-ref-390)
391. The *Spandauer Zeitung* is an example of one of the most popular *Bezirksblätter*, regularly selling over 20,000 copies. The smallest was the *Karlshorster Lokal-Anzeiger*, which sold 2,500 copies. See: Fulda, *Press and Politics*, p. 14. [↑](#footnote-ref-391)
392. After an article written by feminist activist Luise Otto-Peters on the conditions of political prisoners appeared in the *Frauen-Zeitung* in 1850, Saxon press officers inserted a paragraph that prohibited women from carrying out editorial decisions. The paragraph read: ‘The editorial responsibility of a newspaper can only be taken on and continued by men’. See: Petra Boden ‘Political Writing and women’s journals: the 1848 revolutions’ in *A History of Women’s Writing in Germany, Austria and Switzerland* ed. by Jo Catling (Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2000) p. 107. [↑](#footnote-ref-392)
393. Adrian Bingham, *Gender*, *Modernity, and the Popular Press in Inter-War Britain* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004), p. 19. [↑](#footnote-ref-393)
394. Florence Tamagne, *The History of Homosexuality: Berlin, London, Paris Volume I & II* (USA: Algora Publishing, 2006), p. 78. [↑](#footnote-ref-394)
395. Roellig was a regular contributor to *Die Freundin*. Of the magazines available to queer women, *Die Freundin* was by far the most closely associated with the male emancipation movement and was considered more “serious” than *Frauenliebe*. Roellig, *Berlins lesbische Frauen* (Leipzig: Bruno Gebauer Verlag, 1928) reprinted in Adele Meyer, *Lila Nächte: Die Damenklubs der Zwanziger Jahre* (Köln: Zitronenpresse, 1981), p. 23. All following footnotes will be cited under the title of Roellig’s original work. [↑](#footnote-ref-395)
396. The magazines inspired groups across Berlin, Weimar, Zwickau, Halle, and Karlsruhe as well as some in more international locations in America, Switzerland, and Austria. See: K. Sutton, *The Masculine Woman in Weimar Germany,* (New York: Berghahn Books: 2011), p. 154. [↑](#footnote-ref-396)
397. Hirschfeld, *Berlins drittes Geschlecht*, p. 5. [↑](#footnote-ref-397)
398. Ilse Kokula, *Jahre des Glücks, Jahre des Leids: Gespräche mit älteren lesbischen Frauen* (Kiel: Frühlings Erwachen, 1986), p. 78. [↑](#footnote-ref-398)
399. Here, the ‘kleine Zeitung’ the interviewee is referring to is the magazine *Die Freundin*. Ibid. [↑](#footnote-ref-399)
400. Reuveni, *Reading Germany*, p. 256. [↑](#footnote-ref-400)
401. The original banning of *Wij* was quite a strong stance for the vice squad to adopt given that the liberal censorship laws that had been place in the Netherlands since 1848 made it extremely difficult for a magazine or book to be censored or banned once it was available in the public domain. For more on censorship laws and literature, see in particular: *Boeken onder druk: censuur en pers-onvrijheiden in Nederland sinds de boekdrukkunst,* ed. by Marita Mathijsen (Amsterdam: University of Amsterdam Press, 2011). [↑](#footnote-ref-401)
402. Tijsseling, *Schuldige Seks*, p. 52. [↑](#footnote-ref-402)
403. Trans.: ‘eenheid en […] vriendschapsbonden’, *Wij*, 1, 1932, p. 4. [↑](#footnote-ref-403)
404. See: *The War for the Public Mind: Political Censorship in Nineteenth Century Europe* ed. by Robert Justin Goldstein (Westport, CT and London: Praeger, 2000). [↑](#footnote-ref-404)
405. As an attempt to circumvent taxation, the “lilliputter press” was developed and consisted of various oppositional pamphlets, which were printed in such a small format that they were not subject to taxation. In 1845, the government put an end to this by taxing all printed journal formats. ‘Dagbladzegel: belasting betalen om het lezen van kranten’ <http://kunst-en-cultuur.infonu.nl/geschiedenis/161258-dagbladzegel-belasting-betalen-om-het-lezen-van-kranten.html> [accessed: 14 October 2016] [↑](#footnote-ref-405)
406. Trans.: ‘progressieve, christelijke, neutrale, volkse, het maakte niet uit: voor elke burger van elke gezindte was er omstreeks 1900 wel een krant’. *Pers en politie in Amsterdam*, Henri Beunders et al. (Amsterdam: Bas Lubberhuizen, 2010), p. 37. [↑](#footnote-ref-406)
407. ‘Introduction’ in *Pers en politie in Amsterdam*, p. 13. [↑](#footnote-ref-407)
408. Trans.: ‘vrijwel nergens in de wereld krijgen zoveel krantenlezers het dagelijks nieuws thuisbezorgd als in Nederland’. Jan van de Plasse, *Kroniek van de Nederlandse dagblad- en opiniepers* (Amsterdam: Otto Cramwinckel Uitgever, 2005), p. 122. [↑](#footnote-ref-408)
409. Trans.: ‘waarvoor men de deur uit moet’. Ibid. [↑](#footnote-ref-409)
410. Ibid., p. 309. [↑](#footnote-ref-410)
411. Maarten Schneider and Joan Hemels, *De Nederlandse krant: 1618-1978: van “nieuwstydinghe” tot dagblad‬* (Amsterdam: Wereldvenster, 1979), p. 308. [↑](#footnote-ref-411)
412. Trans.: ‘elke vereniging, club of groepering leek in het verzuilde Nederland haar eigen tijdschrift te hebben’. Plasse, *Kroniek*, p. 122. [↑](#footnote-ref-412)
413. The end dates for the *De Amsterdamsche* *Dameskroniek* and *De Arbeidster* have ben approximated. See Fenhoulet, *Making the Personal Political*, p. 57. [↑](#footnote-ref-413)
414. Trans.: ‘de kachel, de koffie én de krant’. Maarten Schneider and Joan Hemels, *De Nederlandse krant: 1618-1978: van “nieuwstydinghe” tot dagblad‬* (Amsterdam: Wereldvenster, 1979), p. 287. [↑](#footnote-ref-414)
415. Trans.: ‘die courant is in de eerste plaats voor den vader des gezins, die er zijn bril voor opzet en als die ceremonie-meester fungeert bij die plechtige gebeurtenis’, Schneider and Hemels, *De Nederlandse krant*, p. 282. [↑](#footnote-ref-415)
416. ‘Briefe die wir gerne lesen!’ *Die Freundin*,02 September 1931. [↑](#footnote-ref-416)
417. Although actual circulation figures do not exist for *Die Freundin*, its relationship to the *Bund für Menschenrecht*, the largest group for homosexual people in Germany, means that it can be assumed that circulation figures for this magazine were reasonably high. For further information on the popularity of *Die Freundin* in comparison to other Weimar lesbian periodicals, see: Schader, *Virile, Vamps und wilde Veilchen*; Angeles Espinaco-Virseda, ‘“I feel that I belong to you”; Subculture, Die Freundin and Weimar Lesbian Identities’ in *Spaces of Identity: Tradition, Cultural Boundaries and Identity Formation in Central Europe*, 4 (2004), 83-100. [↑](#footnote-ref-417)
418. Although previous studies have suggested that *Liebende Frauen* was available for purchase only during the time that *Frauenliebe* was banned, numerous issues of *Liebende Frauen* also appeared after 1928 and were identical to those printed as *Frauenliebe* in everything but name. At the time of writing this thesis, however, I have been able to find no further evidence as to why the Bergmann Verlag, who were responsible for the publication of both magazines, would continue to print their magazine under two different names. It could be the case that *Liebende Frauen* was a cover page provided for subscribers, although this has not been confirmable. [↑](#footnote-ref-418)
419. It is likely that this periodical was linked to Sengler’s organisation *Bund idealer Frauenfreundschaft*. [↑](#footnote-ref-419)
420. Amy D. Young, “‘Club of Friends’: Lesbian Periodicals in the Weimar Republic’ in *Tribades, Tommies and Transgressives* *Histories of Sexualities: Volume I* ed. by Mary McAuliffe and Sonja Tiernan (Newcastle: Cambridge Scholars, 2008), p. 169. [↑](#footnote-ref-420)
421. Schader, *Virile, Vamps und wilde Veilchen*, p. 44. [↑](#footnote-ref-421)
422. Only one issue was published at the higher price, presumably due either to a slump in sales or unsustainable printing costs. [↑](#footnote-ref-422)
423. Given that experiments in gender reassignment surgery were not being practised until the early 1930s, the term “transvestite” is used in the magazines to encompass a diverse range of experiences. The term was used both to describe individuals who engaged in discrete periods of cross-dressing as well as those whose gender identity did not align with their birth sex. However, as it is difficult to distinguish in the supplements between cross-dressers and historical subjects who would now be considered transgender, I will continue to deploy the term “transvestite” throughout this chapter as the term that was most often employed by the individuals themselves, unless they describe their identities in other terms which I will recognise. [↑](#footnote-ref-423)
424. Stefan Micheler, ‘Zeitschriften, Verbände und Lokale: gleichgeschlechtlich begehrender Menschen in der Weimarer Republik’ in *Invertito - Jahrbuch für die Geschichte der Homosexualitäten*, 10 (2008), p. 31. [↑](#footnote-ref-424)
425. The magazine was not party political, however, and did not associate itself with any specific political agenda other than the emancipation of queer people. [↑](#footnote-ref-425)
426. Verlag und Redaktion, ‘Zur Beachtung!’, *Die Freundin*,15 September 1924,p. 2. [↑](#footnote-ref-426)
427. Schader, *Virile*, p. 47. [↑](#footnote-ref-427)
428. It is likely that *Garçonne* was named after Victor Margueritte’s novel *La Garçonne* (1923). [↑](#footnote-ref-428)
429. Micheler, ‘Zeitschriften, Verbände und Lokale’, p. 60. [↑](#footnote-ref-429)
430. Schader, *Virile*, pp., 52-3. [↑](#footnote-ref-430)
431. Florence Tamagne, *A History of Homosexuality in Europe Vol 1. Berlin, London, Paris 1919-1939* (New York: Algora, 2004), p. 111. [↑](#footnote-ref-431)
432. Petra Schlierkamp, ‘Die Garconne’ in *Eldorado: Homosexuelle Frauen und Männer in Berlin 1850-1950 Geschichte, Alltag und Kultur* ed. by Michael Bollé et al. (Berlin: Fröhlich & Kaufmann, 1984), p. 171. [↑](#footnote-ref-432)
433. Ikarus ‘An meine Mitschwestern’, *Frauenliebe*, 5 January 1928. [↑](#footnote-ref-433)
434. Ibid. [↑](#footnote-ref-434)
435. Ibid. [↑](#footnote-ref-435)
436. Max Danielsen, ‘Die Wahrheit über den “Bund für Menschenrecht”’, *Frauenliebe*, 14, 1928. [↑](#footnote-ref-436)
437. For further information on the divisions between the BfM and the DFV and the popularity of Weimar lesbian periodicals, see, for example: Stefan Micheler, “Zeitschriften, Verbände und Lokale: gleichgeschlechtlich begehrender Menschen in der Weimarer Republik” in *Invertito - Jahrbuch für die Geschichte der Homosexualitäten*, 10 (2008), 2-72; Schader, *Virile*;Angeles Espinaco-Virseda, ‘“I feel that I belong to you”; Subculture, Die Freundin and Weimar Lesbian Identities’ in *Spaces of Identity: Tradition, Cultural Boundaries and Identity Formation in Central Europe*, 4 (2004), 83-100; Young, “‘Club of Friends”’. [↑](#footnote-ref-437)
438. Gideon Reuveni, ‘“Productivist” and “Consumerist” Narratives of Jews in German History’ in *German History from the Margins* ed. by Neil Gregor et al. (Bloomington and Indianapolis, Indiana University Press, 2006), p. 164. [↑](#footnote-ref-438)
439. Ibid., p. 166. [↑](#footnote-ref-439)
440. Vendors were also prohibited from selling blacklisted material to individuals under eighteen years of age. [↑](#footnote-ref-440)
441. ‘Gesetz zur Bewahrung der Jugend vor Schund- und Schmutzschriften’ <http://www.zaoerv.de/01_1929/1_1929_2_b_533_2_536_1.pdf>. [Accessed: 08/10/16]. [↑](#footnote-ref-441)
442. Friedrich Radszuweit, ‘Gefühlsumnebelung’, *Die Freundin*,16 November 1932. [↑](#footnote-ref-442)
443. Karen, ‘Das Schund- und Schmutz Gesetz und wir Frauen’, *Frauenliebe*, 17, 1927. [↑](#footnote-ref-443)
444. Tamagne, *The History of Homosexuality*, p. 32. [↑](#footnote-ref-444)
445. After the magazine returned in 1929 Bruno Balz was positioned as editor. From 1930, Martin Butzkow-Radszuweit, the adopted son and lover of Friedrich Radszuweit, managed the editorial functions of *Die Freundin* as well as the BfM’s magazines for men *Die Insel*and the *Blätter für Menschenrecht*. See: Micheler, ‘Zeitschriften, Verbände und Lokale’. [↑](#footnote-ref-445)
446. These included *Die Insel – Magazin der Einsamen* (1926-1931) and *Das dritte Geschlecht* (1930-1931). [↑](#footnote-ref-446)
447. Lybeck, *Desiring Emancipation*, p. 161. [↑](#footnote-ref-447)
448. Micheler, ‘Zeitschriften, Verbände, und Lokale’, p. 29. [↑](#footnote-ref-448)
449. Mark Blasius and Shane Phelan, ‘Combining Political and Cultural Work: The League for Human Rights’ in *We are Everywhere: A Historical Sourcebook of Gay and Lesbian Politics*, (New York: Routledge, 1997), p. 174. [↑](#footnote-ref-449)
450. Friedrich Radszuweit, ‘Ihr Stammtisch wird lachen!’, *Die Freundin*, 9 July 1930. [↑](#footnote-ref-450)
451. Tamagne, *The History of Homosexuality*, p. 155. [↑](#footnote-ref-451)
452. In *The Twilight of Equality*, Lisa Duggan defines homonormativity as ‘a politics that does not contest dominant heteronormative assumptions and institutions, but upholds and sustains them, while promising the possibility of a demobilized gay constituency and a privatized, depoliticized gay culture anchored in domesticity and consumption’. See: Duggan, *The Twilight of Equality?: Neoliberalism, Cultural Politics, and the Attack on Democracy* (Boston: Beacon, 2003), p. 179. [↑](#footnote-ref-452)
453. Under the terms “bourgeois respectability” and “bourgeois masculinity”, I consider the upholding of class norms, as well as the sense of loyalty, honour, and friendship that was idealised by the middle classes. Carroll Smith-Rosenberg, *Disorderly Conduct: Visions of Gender in Victorian America*, (New York and Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1985), p. 278. [↑](#footnote-ref-453)
454. The Viennese surgeon Eugen Steinach was a pioneer of experimental sex surgeries. He believed that the process of sterilization, which became known the Steinach Operation, had rejuvenating effects on the body. Steinach also proposed that replacing the testicles of a homosexual man with those of a heterosexual man would help ‘redirect’ the patient to a normal sex instinct. See: P. Södersten, et. al. “Eugen Steinach: the first neuroendocrinologist”, *Endocrinology*, 3 (2014), 688-695; Thomas Schlich, *The Origins of Organ Transplantation: Surgery and Laboratory Science, 1880-1930* (New York: Rochester UP, 2014). [↑](#footnote-ref-454)
455. Max Danielsen, ‘Die Wahrheit über den “Bund für Menschenrecht”’, 14, *Frauenliebe* 1928, p. 7. [↑](#footnote-ref-455)
456. Lotte Hahm, ‘Klubnachrichten über Violetta’, *Die Freundin*, 11, 25 September 1929. [↑](#footnote-ref-456)
457. Ibid. [↑](#footnote-ref-457)
458. Elsbeth Killmer, ‘Wacht auf! Moralhexe, Schund- und Schmutzgesetz und unsere Zeitschrift ‘Die Freundin’, *Die Freundin* 8, 16 April 1928, p. 5. [↑](#footnote-ref-458)
459. Ibid. [↑](#footnote-ref-459)
460. Micheler, ‘Zeitschriften, Verbände, Lokale’, p. 39. [↑](#footnote-ref-460)
461. The use of the term ‘drittes Geschlecht’ for an exclusively transvestite magazine also points to Radszuweit’s desire to separate masculine homosexuals from the concept of the inverted *Zwitter*. [↑](#footnote-ref-461)
462. ‘Briefe die man der Freundin schreibt’, *Die Freundin*, 4, 20 February 1928, p. 7. [↑](#footnote-ref-462)
463. *Die Freundin*,16 December 1931. [↑](#footnote-ref-463)
464. Roellig, *Berlins lesbische Frauen*, p. 65. [↑](#footnote-ref-464)
465. Aenne Weber, ‘Unterhaltungsabende für Damen’, *Die Freundin*, 6, 1 November 1924, p. 4. [↑](#footnote-ref-465)
466. Roellig, *Berlins lesbische Frauen*, p. 65. [↑](#footnote-ref-466)
467. Ibid., p. 38. [↑](#footnote-ref-467)
468. ‘Kleine Anzeige’, *Frauenliebe*, 34, 1928. [↑](#footnote-ref-468)
469. Lybeck, *Desiring Emancipation*, p. 164. [↑](#footnote-ref-469)
470. G. Fü, ‘Worte an meine Mitschwestern’, *Frauenliebe*,34, 1928, p. 3. [↑](#footnote-ref-470)
471. Ibid. [↑](#footnote-ref-471)
472. Roellig, *Berlins lesbische Frauen,* p. 24. [↑](#footnote-ref-472)
473. ‘Einladung zur Mondschein-Dampferpartei am Sonnabend, dem 7. Juli abends 9 Uhr’, *Frauenliebe*, 27, 1929. [↑](#footnote-ref-473)
474. Roellig, *Berlins lesbische Frauen*, p. 66. [↑](#footnote-ref-474)
475. Aenne Weber, ‘Die homosexuelle Frau’, Die Freundin, 1, 8 August 1924. [↑](#footnote-ref-475)
476. Ibid. [↑](#footnote-ref-476)
477. Schader, *Virile*, p. 107-9. [↑](#footnote-ref-477)
478. Otto Weininger, ‘Geschlecht und Charakter’, *Die Freundin*, 2, 14 January 1931. [↑](#footnote-ref-478)
479. Selli Engler, ‘An die selbständigen homosexuellen Frauen!’, *Die Freundin*, 8, 25 February 1931. [↑](#footnote-ref-479)
480. Ibid. [↑](#footnote-ref-480)
481. Marie-Luise von Bern, ‘Der Klub der Freundinnen’, *Die Freundin*, 9, 30 April 1928. [↑](#footnote-ref-481)
482. Hirschfeld’s sixtieth birthday was even celebrated in the magazine with a special article dedicated to his greatest achievements. D.J. ‘Die Geburtstagsfeier’, *Frauenliebe*, 20,1928, pp. 1-3. [↑](#footnote-ref-482)
483. Herta Laser, ‘Was sagt Weininger über die Frau’, 2, *Frauenliebe*,1928, p. 3. [↑](#footnote-ref-483)
484. Laser concludes that the suggestion of a “Vermännlichung” of homosexual women could only harm (*nur schaden*) the goals and aims of the lesbian movement. Ibid. [↑](#footnote-ref-484)
485. ‘Amazonen’, *Frauenliebe*, 13, 1926, p. 2. [↑](#footnote-ref-485)
486. The image of the Amazon also blurs gendered norms. The Amazon’s missing breast, for example, removed to make bearing arms in war an easier task, undercuts the ideal image of the feminine. The single breast for nurturing female offspring, however, maintains a level of traditional maternalism. The Amazon, therefore, could be seen as an archetypal bisexual woman in the original sense of the term. Ibid. [↑](#footnote-ref-486)
487. Helga Karig, ‘Relativität der Minderwertigkeit’, *Frauenliebe*, 50, 1927. [↑](#footnote-ref-487)
488. Madeleine Marsh, *Compacts and Cosmetics: Beauty from Victorian Times to the Present Day* (Barnsley: Remember When, 2009), p. 97. [↑](#footnote-ref-488)
489. Ibid. [↑](#footnote-ref-489)
490. Adele, ‘Das persönliche Parfüm’, *Frauenliebe*, 1931, p. 1. [↑](#footnote-ref-490)
491. Ibid. [↑](#footnote-ref-491)
492. Ibid. [↑](#footnote-ref-492)
493. Regular advertisement, ‘Schönheit und Jugend der Freundin’, *Frauenliebe*, 1927. [↑](#footnote-ref-493)
494. Sabrina Brauneis, *The Relationship of Body Weight and Skepticism towards Advertising* (Wiesbaden: Springer Gabler, 2016), p. 43. [↑](#footnote-ref-494)
495. ‘Auf Anfrage’, *Femina*, 4, 1929. [↑](#footnote-ref-495)
496. Ibid. [↑](#footnote-ref-496)
497. Annelie Ramsbrock, *The Science of Beauty: Culture and Cosmetics in Modern Germany 1750-1930* trans. by David Burnett (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2015), p. 162. [↑](#footnote-ref-497)
498. Annelie Ramsbrock, ‘Social Cosmetics: Weimar Beauty Politics between Welfare and Empowerment’, *German History*, 4 (2016), 555-78, (p. 555). [↑](#footnote-ref-498)
499. Ibid., p. 557. [↑](#footnote-ref-499)
500. H.M, ‘Verurteilt sie nicht!’, *Die Freundin*, 9 January 1933, p. 2. [↑](#footnote-ref-500)
501. ‘Transvestiten-Modeschau - 6 November’, *Die Freundin*,15 October 1930. [↑](#footnote-ref-501)
502. Ibid. [↑](#footnote-ref-502)
503. Ibid. [↑](#footnote-ref-503)
504. ‘In welchem Rock geht es sich am besten?’, *Die Freundin*, 8, 16 April 1928, p. 3. [↑](#footnote-ref-504)
505. Ibid. [↑](#footnote-ref-505)
506. Paulowna, ‘Für oder gegen den Bubikopf’, *Die Freundin*, 8. 16 April 1928, p.7. [↑](#footnote-ref-506)
507. For more information specifically concerning transgender history see: Susan Stryker, *Transgender History: The Roots of Today’s Revolution* 2nd edn. (Berkeley: Seal Press, 2012). [↑](#footnote-ref-507)
508. Katie Sutton, ‘Sexological Cases and the Prehistory of Transgender Identity Politics in Interwar Germany’ in *Case Studies and* *Dissemination of Knowledge* ed. by Joy Damousi et al. (New York and Abingdon: Routledge, 2015), p. 86. [↑](#footnote-ref-508)
509. Katie Sutton, ‘“We Too Deserve a Place in the Sun”: The Politics of Transvestite Identity in Weimar Germany’, *German Studies Review*, 2 (2012): 335-54; Lybeck, *Desiring Emancipation*. [↑](#footnote-ref-509)
510. “Die Welt der Transvestiten”, *Die Freundin*, 1924. [↑](#footnote-ref-510)
511. Käthe Karl, ‘Aus dem Leben der Transvestiten’, “Die Welt der Transvestiten”, *Die Freundin*, 5, 1925,p. 8. [↑](#footnote-ref-511)
512. Sutton, ‘“We Too Deserve a Place in the Sun”’, pp. 335-54. [↑](#footnote-ref-512)
513. ‘Frau und Transvestit’, “Der Welt der Transvestiten”, *Die Freundin*, 4, 1930. [↑](#footnote-ref-513)
514. Sutton, ‘“We Too Deserve a Place in the Sun”’, p. 345. [↑](#footnote-ref-514)
515. ‘Kleine Anzeigen’, *Frauenliebe*, 10, 1927. [↑](#footnote-ref-515)
516. Sutton, ‘“We Too Deserve a Place in the Sun”’, p. 339. [↑](#footnote-ref-516)
517. Xela Eckats, ‘Freundschaftsehen’, *Die Freundin*, 9, 30 April 1928, p. 5. [↑](#footnote-ref-517)
518. Ibid. [↑](#footnote-ref-518)
519. Although in her most recent contribution to homosexual history, Laurie Marhoefer suggests that the BfM cannot be described as “homonormative”, I argue that in terms of Lisa Duggan’s definition of “homonormativity”, *Die Freundin* does ‘not contest dominant heteronormative assumptions and institutions but upholds and sustains them while promising the possibility of a demobilized gay constituency and a privatized, depoliticized gay culture’. See: Lisa Duggan, ‘The New Homonormativity: The Sexual Politics of Neoliberalism’ in *Materializing Democracy: Toward a Revitalized Cultural Politics* ed. by Russ Castronovo and Dana Nelson (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2002), 175-194 (p. 179). [↑](#footnote-ref-519)
520. Eckats, ‘Freundschaftsehen’, p. 5. [↑](#footnote-ref-520)
521. XYZ, ‘Freundinnen-Ehe’, *Die Freundin*, 2, 1933. [↑](#footnote-ref-521)
522. ‘Briefe die man der Freundin schreibt’, *Die Freundin*, 4, 20 February 1928, p. 7. [↑](#footnote-ref-522)
523. Ibid. [↑](#footnote-ref-523)
524. Clara K., ‘Soll eine homosexuelle Frau mit einer bisexuellen Freundschaft schließen?’, *Die Freundin*, 4, 20 February 1928. [↑](#footnote-ref-524)
525. S.S, ‘Duisburg zur Antwort’, *Die Freundin*, 6, 19 March 1928. [↑](#footnote-ref-525)
526. Duisburg, ‘Zur Beantwortung’, *Die Freundin*, 5, 05 March 1928. [↑](#footnote-ref-526)
527. Ibid. [↑](#footnote-ref-527)
528. Herta Laser, ‘Aus der Bewegung’, *Frauenliebe*, 28, 1927, p. 3. [↑](#footnote-ref-528)
529. Ibid. [↑](#footnote-ref-529)
530. Cläre, ‘Meinungsaustausch’, *Frauenliebe*, 4, 1928, p. 8. [↑](#footnote-ref-530)
531. Ibid. [↑](#footnote-ref-531)
532. N. Lermann, “Die Freundin der Olga Diers”, *Die Freundin*, 1, 8 August 1924. [↑](#footnote-ref-532)
533. Dusia, ‘Das Wiedersehen’, *Die Freundin*, 9, 1 March 1933. [↑](#footnote-ref-533)
534. Clare Rogan, ‘Good Nude Photographs’: Images for Desire in Weimar Germany’s Lesbian Diaries’ in *Tribades, Tommies and Transgressives* *Histories of Sexualities: Volume I* ed. Mary McAuliffe and Sonja Tiernan (Newcastle: Cambridge Scholars, 2008), p. 146. [↑](#footnote-ref-534)
535. Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak, *Worlds: Essays in Cultural Politics* (New York: Methuen, 1987), p. 170. [↑](#footnote-ref-535)
536. Roellig, *Berlins lesbische Frauen*, p. 38. [↑](#footnote-ref-536)
537. Hanna, ‘Geschlecht von Morgen’, *Frauenliebe*, 13, 1930, pp. 1-2. [↑](#footnote-ref-537)
538. Inge, ‘Die von der Liebe leben …’, *Frauenliebe*, 35, 1927. [↑](#footnote-ref-538)
539. Trans.: ‘Wij meenden dat wij met een eigen orgaan beter dan tot dusverre in staat zouden zijn, de verkeerde opvattingen, die omtrent homosexualiteit bij nog zoo heel veel menschen bestaan te bestrijden. Tevens meenden wij hierdoor een inniger contact met andere homosexueelen te zullen verkrijgen. In September 1932 kwam inderdaad het eerste (tevens helaas het laatste) nummer van “Wij” tot stand’, Stokvis, *De homosexueelen*, p. 101. [↑](#footnote-ref-539)
540. Brand’s published the first queer anarchist magazine, *Der Eigene*, in 1896. Brand was a proponent of Greek forms of eros, particularly pederastic ideals. *Der Eigene* was frequently censored on account of the nude images and its “kitsch” literary contributions. Brand even served a short prison sentence for morality charges relating to the magazine. Benedict Friedlaender, another supporter of “Greek love” was the main financial contributor to *Der Eigene*. See: Beachy, *Gay Berlin*, pp. 100-10. [↑](#footnote-ref-540)
541. Trans.: ‘eenige vrienden, die met dezen opzet sympathiseerden’, *Wij*, 1, 1932, p. 8. [↑](#footnote-ref-541)
542. Trans.: ‘Laten wij er ons van bewust worden, dat wij bij elkaar hooren, dat ons leven beter en mooier is als wij het te zamen leven […] En laten wij daarom ervoor zorgen dat dit ONS blad gedijt! […] Wij moeten ernstig trachten ons krachtig te maken door saamhoorigheid. En als dit maandblad er toe kan bijdragen ons deze saamhoorigheid meer en meer te doen gevoelen, dan kan het ons in ons niet altijd gemakkelijk leven wellicht een goeden steun zijn’, L., ‘Wij in den vreemde’, *Wij*, 1, pp. 7-8. [↑](#footnote-ref-542)
543. L., ‘Wij in den vreemde’, *Wij*,1932, p. 7. [↑](#footnote-ref-543)
544. Ibid. [↑](#footnote-ref-544)
545. Adolf Brand’s endorsement stated: ‘Ich beglückwünsche Sie zu dieser Idee und wünsche Ihrer neuen Vereinigung und Ihrer neuen Zeitschrift von ganze Herzen einen durchschlagenden Erfolg, der in Zukunft die Wiederholung von Homoerotenverfolgungen in Holland durch seinen gesellschaftlichen Einfluss einfach unmöglich machen muss!’, *Wij*, 1932, p. 5. [↑](#footnote-ref-545)
546. Trans.: ‘Wij allen gevoelen het gemis aan eenheid en sterke eerlijke vriendschapsbanden onder ons die door gebrek aan inzicht der maatschappij min of meer als uitgestotenen zijn te beschouwen’. C.P, ‘Vrienden!’, *Wij*, 1932, p. 5. [↑](#footnote-ref-546)
547. Trans.: ‘Weet ge, dat het geluk van zoo velen van Uw meening afhankelijk is? […] Een feit is het, dat ge nimmer hebt getracht, te begrijpen! […] Ge hebt veroordeeld omdat ge niet begreept en ge zult het ook nimmer begrijpen, omdat gij niet zóó zijn als wij. […] Wat voor U onnatuurlijk is, is voor ons gewoon; omdat wij zoo zijn geboren. […] Tracht iets van ons en ons leven te weten te komen, misschien kunt gij ons dan toestaan in vrijheid te leven zooals gij. Tracht te begrijpen!’. J.E, ‘Tracht te begrijpen! Aan allen die normaal zijn’, *Wij*, 1932, p. 6. [↑](#footnote-ref-547)
548. Trans.: ‘Wie ik ben, die dit schrijft doet niets ter zake… Ik ben als Gij … en dat geeft mij het recht en den plicht mij Uw Vriend te noemen’. C.P, ‘Aan allen!’, *Wij*, 1932, p. 12. [↑](#footnote-ref-548)
549. Rob Tielman, ‘Schorer en het Nederlandsch Wetenschappelijk Humanitair Komitee (1911-1940)’ in *Homojaarboek 1: Artikelen over emancipatie en homoseksualiteit* ed. by Michael Dallas et al. (Amsterdam: Van Gennep, 1981), p. 128-9. [↑](#footnote-ref-549)
550. Trans.: ‘Een strijd van anonymi heeft nooit kans op succes’. Ibid., p. 129. [↑](#footnote-ref-550)
551. Dietrich Orlow, *The Lure of Fascism in Europe: German Nazis, Dutch and French Fascists* 1933-1939 (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2009), p. 12. [↑](#footnote-ref-551)
552. Trans.: ‘Noodzakelijke voorlichting’. John Bradley, ‘Om de vrije mens der nieuwe gemeenschap’, *Levensrecht*, 3, 1940, p. 4. [↑](#footnote-ref-552)
553. Trans.: ‘ontwikkeling en ontspanning’. Bob Angelo, ‘Een woord vooraf’, *Levensrecht*, 1, 1940, p. 2. [↑](#footnote-ref-553)
554. Although Engelschman contends that Diekman financially supported the magazine, at the time of writing this thesis I have been able to find out little about who Diekman was or how he was able to fund *Levensrecht*. [↑](#footnote-ref-554)
555. Dagmar Herzog*, Sexuality in Europe: A Twentieth-Century History* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011), p. 122. [↑](#footnote-ref-555)
556. Trans.: ‘bonte en gevarieerde’; ‘uit verschillende plaatsen en uit vele milieus’. Editors, ‘Een kaleidoscoop van enthousiasme en ingenomenheid’, *Levensrecht*, 2, 1940, p. 15. [↑](#footnote-ref-556)
557. Menschenrecht was an international queer Swiss magazine that was originally published under the title *Schweizerisches Freundschaftsbanner* between 1932 and 1967. It changed its name to *Menschenrecht* in 1937 and later to *Der Kreis* in 1942. It was a magazine for both women and men and was produced as a joint endeavour between the queer female group *Amicitia* and the queer men’s organisation *Herrenclub Excentric*.

     Editors, ‘Mededelingen van de redactie’, *Levensrecht*, 3, 1940, p. 16. [↑](#footnote-ref-557)
558. Prof. Dr. Th. J Stomps, ‘De Mutatietheorie in hare beteekenis voor onze samenleving’, *Levensrecht*, 2, 1940, pp. 1-2; John Bradley, ‘Om de vrije mens der nieuwe gemeenschap’, *Levensrecht*, 3, 1940, pp. 1-4. [↑](#footnote-ref-558)
559. Trans.: ‘volstrekt waardeloos’. Stomps, ‘De Mutatietheorie’, p. 1. [↑](#footnote-ref-559)
560. Trans.: ‘het stichten van een gezin’. Ibid., p. 2. [↑](#footnote-ref-560)
561. ‘Prof. Dr. Th. J Stomps, ‘De Mutatietheorie’, pp. 2. [↑](#footnote-ref-561)
562. Trans.: ‘Natuurlijke vergissing’. Editors, ‘Een openbaar antwoord op een geheim schrijven’, *Levensrecht*, 2, 1940, p. 11. [↑](#footnote-ref-562)
563. Trans.: ‘Een openbaar antwoord op een geheim schrijven’; ‘eindelooze reeks van overgangen’, Ibid., p. 12. [↑](#footnote-ref-563)
564. Trans.: ‘Geen twee boombladeren, geen twee menschenduimen zijn gelijk. Het zou wel een boven-natuurlijk wonder zijn wanneer de sexualiteit éénvormig zich openbaarde’, Ibid. [↑](#footnote-ref-564)
565. Trans.: ‘homosexueelen zijn maar al te geneigd, ook door hun meer vrouwelijken timiden aanleg gauw “ja” te knikken, zelfs wanneer hun de grootste nonsens door een “kerel” wordt toegebulderd’. Ibid. [↑](#footnote-ref-565)
566. The moral scandals in the Hague (1936) and the Dutch East Indies (1938) caused outrage in the Dutch media. In the earlier Hague scandal, chief treasurer L.A. Ries was arrested alongside other members of the government for homosexual offences. Ries was fired despite much of the evidence against him not holding up in court. The affair in the Dutch East Indies came to light under the banner of ‘moral cleansing and hygiene’. Several high-ranking officials were charged with homosexual offences against local boys. For a more outline of these events, see: Pieter Koenders *Homoseksualiteit in bezet Nederland: Verzwegen hoofdstuk* (‘s-Gravenhage: De Woelrat, 1983). [↑](#footnote-ref-566)
567. Trans.: ‘Over de vrouwen niets dan lof. Haar biographieën lazen wij zonder uitzondering met interesse. Dat het aan den overkant al precies is “comme chez nous”, was een openbaring en vergroot onze sympathie voor deze groep van vrouwen, die het dikwijls nog veel moelijker zullen hebben dan wij, omdat er nog veel minder verband bestaat’. Arendt van Sandhorst, ‘Boekbespreking: De homosexueelen’, *Levensrecht*, 1, 1940, p. 15. [↑](#footnote-ref-567)
568. Smith-Rosenberg, ‘The Female World of Love and Ritual’. [↑](#footnote-ref-568)
569. Trans.: ‘waar deze voorlichting [*Levensrecht*] nog mogelijk is’. Angelo, ‘Een woord vooraf’, p. 2. [↑](#footnote-ref-569)
570. Spengler, *Der Untergang des Abendlandes*, p. 579. [↑](#footnote-ref-570)
571. Trans.: ‘[…] ik kreeg toevallig een boek over homosexualiteit in handen. Toen gingen mij de oogen wagenwijd open. Mijn kindsheid, de verwonderde blikken waarmede de menschen mij soms aanstaarden, ik zag het alles nu in de volle betekenis’. ‘XXIX’ in Stokvis, *De Homosexueelen*, p. 157. [↑](#footnote-ref-571)
572. For more detailed surveys of the rise of LGB literature in the early twentieth century see, for example: Rictor Norton, *The Homosexual Literary Tradition*, (New York: Revisionist Press, 1974); Jeffrey Meyers, *Homosexuality and Literature: 1890-1930* (Montreal: McGill-Queen’s University Press,1977). For studies specific to LGB literature in German and Dutch contexts see: *Queering the Canon: Defying Sights in German Literature and Culture*, ed. Christoph Lorey and John Plews (USA: Camden House, 1998); Myriam Everard, ‘Galerij der vrouwenliefde: “Sex variant women” in Nederlandstalige literatuur 1880-1940’ in *Homojaarboek 2: Artikelen over emancipatie en homoseksualiteit* (Amsterdam: Van Gennep, 1983), pp. 80-133. [↑](#footnote-ref-572)
573. Myriam Everard, ‘Galerij der vrouwenliefde’, p. 106. [↑](#footnote-ref-573)
574. Judith Schuyf, *Stilzwijgende samenzwering*, p. 153. [↑](#footnote-ref-574)
575. Laura Doan, *Fashioning Sapphism: The Origins of a Modern English Lesbian Culture* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2001), p. 163. [↑](#footnote-ref-575)
576. Anna Katharina Schaffner, *Modernism and Perversion: Sexual Deviance in Sexology and Literature, 1850-1930* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2012), p. 23. [↑](#footnote-ref-576)
577. On the importance of literary writings to the understanding of “non-normative” sexual proclivities, Krafft-Ebing even suggested in the preface of his first edition of *Psychopathia Sexualis* that ‘[…] die Dichter bessere Psychologen sein [dürften], als die Psychologen und Philosophen von Fach’. Krafft-Ebing, *Psychopathia Sexualis*, p. iv. [↑](#footnote-ref-577)
578. Heike Bauer, ‘Literary Sexualities’ in *The Cambridge Companion to the Body in Literature* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2015), p. 106. [↑](#footnote-ref-578)
579. Trans.: ‘Toen ik ongeveer 20 jaar was, las ik “De bron van eenzaamheid”. […] En met groote blijdschap, ik zou haast zeggen: dankbaarheid, ontdekte ik dat liefde tusschen twee vrouwen mogelijk is’. ‘XXXI’ in Stokvis, *De homosexueelen*, p. 163. [↑](#footnote-ref-579)
580. Completing the cyclical link between literature and sexology, Hall’s novel was prefaced by a commentary from the British sexologist Havelock Ellis and, on the dust-jacket, publisher Jonathan Cape emphasized the importance of ‘a broader and more general treatment’ of the subject of female same-sex desire, which, he suggests, had ‘not been treated frankly outside the regions of scientific text-books’. For more on the opinions on Hall’s work of the publishers and Ellis, see: Alison Oram and Annmarie Turnbull, ‘The Well of Loneliness’ in *The Lesbian History Sourcebook: Love and Sex between Women in Britain from 1780-1970* ed. (London: Routledge, 2001), pp. 181-201. Here: p. 185. [↑](#footnote-ref-580)
581. Esther Saxey, ‘Introduction’ in *The Well of Loneliness* (Hertfordshire: Wordsworth Editions, 2005), p. vii. [↑](#footnote-ref-581)
582. As discussed in Chapter Two, it was not until the fieldwork of Moll and Hirschfeld, however, that Krafft-Ebing’s pathologisation of patient discourses was challenged by case studies that engaged with the queer community on their terms. [↑](#footnote-ref-582)
583. ‘Introduction’ in *Case Studies and the Dissemination of Knowledge* ed. by Joy Damousi et. al (New York: Routledge, 2015),p. 2. [↑](#footnote-ref-583)
584. In her work *The Lesbian Menace: Ideology, Identity, and the Representation of Lesbian Life*, (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 1997), Sherrie Inness discusses the lesbians and gay men who were critical of *The Well of Loneliness*. While some critics read the novel’s unhappy ending as ‘anti-homosexual propaganda’, others, like writer and socialite Violet Trefusis, believed Stephen Gordon to be a ‘loathsome example’ of lesbianism that confirmed rather than challenged the heterosexual ‘norm’. See: pp. 13-6. [↑](#footnote-ref-584)
585. Liana Borghi defines the construction of a “lesbian literary canon” as a strategy of ‘resistance to the varied and complex heteropatriarchal practice of eradicating lesbian desire’. See: Liana Borghi, ‘Lesbian Literary Studies’ in *Lesbian and Gay Studies: An Introductory, Interdisciplinary Approach* ed. by Theo Sandford et al. (London: SAGE, 2000) p. 156. [↑](#footnote-ref-585)
586. Bonnie Zimmerman, ‘What Has Never Been: An Overview of Lesbian Feminist Literary Criticism’ in *Feminist Studies*, 7 (3) (1981), 451-75 (p. 456). [↑](#footnote-ref-586)
587. Bonnie Zimmerman, *The Safe Sea of Women: Lesbian Fiction, 1969-1989* (Boston: Beacon, 1990), p. 15; Lillian Faderman, *Surpassing the Love of Men: Romantic Friendship and Love Between Women from Renaissance to Present* (New York: Harper Collins Publishers, 1981), p. 53. [↑](#footnote-ref-587)
588. Judith Roof, *The Lure of Knowledge: Lesbian Sexuality and Theory* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1991),pp. 88-9. [↑](#footnote-ref-588)
589. Trans.: ‘bestaat uit kennis van context en codes, van lesbische geschiedenis en van andere lesbische teksten, uit een bereidheid lesbische betekenissen toe te laten, uit een sensibiliteit voor het verzwegene’. Maaike Meijer, *De lust tot lezen: Nederlandse dichteressen en het literaire system* (Amsterdam: Sara/Van Gennep, 1988), p. 250. [↑](#footnote-ref-589)
590. Marilyn Farwell, *Heterosexual Plots and Lesbian Narratives* (New York: New York University Press, 1996), p. 4. [↑](#footnote-ref-590)
591. Ibid., pp. 4-5. [↑](#footnote-ref-591)
592. ‘Introduction’, in *Novel Gazing: Queer Readings in Fiction* ed. by Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick (London: Duke University Press, 1997), p. 2. [↑](#footnote-ref-592)
593. Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick, *Tendencies* (Durham: Duke University Press, 1993), p. 8. [↑](#footnote-ref-593)
594. Trans.: ‘niet van het hout gesneden […] waaruit men Balzacs maakt’. Annie Romein-Verschoor, *Vrouwenspiegel: een literair-sociologische studie over de Nederlandse romanschrijfster na 1800* (Leiden: Hoeijenbos & Co., 1935), p. 151. [↑](#footnote-ref-594)
595. Trans.: ‘Er zijn in het laatste decennium nog een aantal vrouwen-romans verschenen, die […] het kenmerk mee delen van het botvieren van vrouwelijk, soms al te vrouwelijk eigenschappen. Wij rekenen daartoe het werk van Eva Raedt-de Canter, van Henriëtte Mooy, van Josine Reuling en de frisse eenling van Jo Zwartendijk […]’. Ibid., p. 158. [↑](#footnote-ref-595)
596. Gianfrance Balestra, ‘Women Writers on the Verge of the Twentieth Century: Edith Wharton *et al*’, *RSA*, 23 (2012), 10-24 (p.14). [↑](#footnote-ref-596)
597. Hedwig Lothringer, ‘Frauenbücher. Die Romane von Anna Elisabeth Weirauch’, *Neuer Berliner Zeitung* 12 February 1920. [↑](#footnote-ref-597)
598. Ibid. [↑](#footnote-ref-598)
599. Jane Fenoulhet, *Making the Personal Political: Dutch Women Writers 1919-1970* (London: Legenda, 2007), p. 60. [↑](#footnote-ref-599)
600. Elaine Showalter, *Sister’s Choice: Tradition and Change in American Women’s Writing* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1994), p. 108. [↑](#footnote-ref-600)
601. In 1978, the feminist publishing house Virago established the ‘Modern Classics’ series which, as Jane Potter notes, has been ‘instrumental in the rediscovery of a forgotten female literary tradition’. See: Jane Potter, ‘Women’s publishing’ in *Inside Book Publishing* ed. by Giles Noel Clark and Angus Phillips (London: Routledge, 2008), p. 14. [↑](#footnote-ref-601)
602. Although I am aware that the distinction I have drawn between “masculine” and “feminine” protagonists may initially appear to shore up the gendered binary that I seek to contest, the chapters that follow will offer alternative readings of multivalent queer figures who, I argue, offer dynamic rather than static representations of lesbian desire. [↑](#footnote-ref-602)
603. Carter, ‘On Mother-Love’, pp. 107-38. [↑](#footnote-ref-603)
604. Fenoulhet, *Making the Personal Political*,p. 2. [↑](#footnote-ref-604)
605. Michelle Ann Abate, *Tomboys: A Literary and Cultural History* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 2008), p. xxiii. [↑](#footnote-ref-605)
606. Von Krafft-Ebing, *Psychopathia Sexualis*, p. 297. [↑](#footnote-ref-606)
607. Magnus Hirschfeld, ‘Das urnische Kind’, *Zeitschrift für Kinderforschung* 8 (1903), 241-257 (p. 255). [↑](#footnote-ref-607)
608. Hirschfeld often kept contact with the subjects of his case studies for ten years or longer, see: Magnus Hirschfeld, *Die Transvestiten: eine Untersuchung über den erotischen Verkleidungstrieb mit umfangreichem casuistischen und historischen Material* (Berlin, A. Pulvermacher, 1910). Here: Hirschfeld, ‘Das urnische Kind’, p. 256. [↑](#footnote-ref-608)
609. See: *Tomboys! Tales of Dyke Derring-do*, ed. by Lynne Yamaguchi and Karen Barber (Los Angeles: Alyson, 1995). [↑](#footnote-ref-609)
610. In Hirschfeld’s study *Die Transvestiten* (1910), for example, the sexologist explores the meaning of gender variance across cultural borders, noting the existence of the Sakalaven tribe in Madagascar – among others – where it was culturally acceptable to raise boys as girls if they appeared to their parents ‘gentle and weak’, p. 331. Here: Abate, *Tomboys*, p. xvi. [↑](#footnote-ref-610)
611. Sutton, *The Masculine Woman*, p. 1. [↑](#footnote-ref-611)
612. ‘Introduction’ in *LGBT Studies and Queer Theory: New Conflicts, Collaborations, and Contested Terrain* ed. by Karen E. Lovaas et al. (New York: Harrington Park Press, 2006), p. 5. [↑](#footnote-ref-612)
613. ‘Eva Raedt-de Canter’ in *De Nederlandse en Vlaamse Auteurs: Van middeleeuwen tot heden met inbegrip van de Friese auteurs* ed. G.J. van Bork and P.J. Verkruijsse (Weesp: De Haan, 1985), p. 467. [↑](#footnote-ref-613)
614. ‘De geschiedenis van een succes’, *Utrechts volksblad* 04 May 1938, p. 8. [↑](#footnote-ref-614)
615. Ibid. For a more comprehensive account of the works and life of Carry van Bruggen see: Jane Fenoulhet, *Making the Personal Political: Dutch Women Writers 1919-1970* (London: Legenda, 2007). [↑](#footnote-ref-615)
616. Trans.: ‘beste oorspronkelijke en vertaalde romans’. Eva Raedt-de Canter, *Internaat*, (Amsterdam: Querido, 1933); Trans.: ‘frisch als de voorjaarswind’. A.M. de Jong, ‘Letterkundige Kroniek’ in *Het Volk*, 9 April 1931, p. 8. [↑](#footnote-ref-616)
617. Trans.: ‘hebben wij het maar open te slaan’. Roel Houwink, “Kroniek van het proza” in *Den Gulden Winckel*, 30. (1931), p. 148. [↑](#footnote-ref-617)
618. Trans.: ‘de bekrompen bigotterie van de wereldvreemde nonnen’. De Jong, ‘Letterkundige Kroniek’; Trans.: ‘de domme, grove, liefdeloosheid der benepen pedagogen’. Maurits Uyldert, “Letterkundige kroniek”, in *Nieuwe Amsterdamsche Courant*, 15 August 1931, p. 9. [↑](#footnote-ref-618)
619. A. M. de Jong, ‘Een stap terug’, ‘Letterkundige Kroniek’ in *Het Volk* 03 October 1933, p. 8. [↑](#footnote-ref-619)
620. Doris Hermanns, *Meerkatzen, Meißel und das Mädchen Manuela: Die Schriftstellerin und Tierbildhauerin Christa Winsloe* (Berlin, AvivA, 2012), p. 83. [↑](#footnote-ref-620)
621. After receiving complaints from theatre goers who expected the original Voltaire play *Zaïre* (1733) or, at least, a play about the story of a knight, Winsloe decided to change the name to *Gestern und Heute*. Hermanns, *Meerkatzen*, p. 111-3. [↑](#footnote-ref-621)
622. Richard McCormick, *Gender and Sexuality in Weimar Modernity: Film, Literature, and “New Objectivity”* (New York: Palgrave, 2001),p. 152. [↑](#footnote-ref-622)
623. Doris Hermanns, ‘Nachwort’ in *Das Mädchen Manuela: Der Roman zum Film Mädchen in Uniform* (Berlin: Krug & Schadenberg, 2012), p. 283. [↑](#footnote-ref-623)
624. Hermanns, *Meerkatzen*, p. 165. [↑](#footnote-ref-624)
625. Although *Das Mädchen Manuela* was published with exile publishers Allert de Lange in Amsterdam after Winsloe had relocated to United States, the fact that the novel was based on an earlier play that had been reworked into a film means that the novel cannot strictly be considered a piece of exile literature. Although the reworked text may well have been influenced by Winsloe’s self-imposed exile, I will not be discussing the text as belonging to the genre of “exile” literature during this chapter. Winsloe’s novel was also published in Leipzig and Vienna in 1934 but was quickly banned by the Nazi regime*.* [↑](#footnote-ref-625)
626. The circumstances of Winsloe’s death have been subject to much speculation. While some scholars contend that Winsloe was shot by French officers who believed the couple were spies, others have suggested the women were murdered by petty criminals. Ibid., pp. 255 – 72. [↑](#footnote-ref-626)
627. Annelies van Heijst, ‘The Disputed Charity of Catholic Nuns: Dualistic Spiritual Heritage as a Source of Affliction’ *Feminist Theology*, 21 (2), (2013) 155-72, (p. 165). [↑](#footnote-ref-627)
628. De Jong, ‘Letterkundige Kroniek’, p. 8. [↑](#footnote-ref-628)
629. Trans.: ‘Om vijf uur gaat de bel als een verre verschrikking door je dromen’. Raedt-de Canter, *Internaat*, p. 7. [↑](#footnote-ref-629)
630. Christa Reinig, ‘Nachwort’ in *Mädchen in Uniform* by Christa Winsloe (Munich: Frauenoffensive, 1983), pp. 241-8. [↑](#footnote-ref-630)
631. Winsloe, *Das Mädchen Manuela: Das Roman zum Film Mädchen in Uniform* (Berlin: Krug & Schadenberg, 2012), p. 155. [↑](#footnote-ref-631)
632. In the film adaption *Mädchen in Uniform* (1931), Manuela makes her thespian debut as Don Carlos in Friedrich Schiller’s eponymous play. [↑](#footnote-ref-632)
633. Both novels can also be situated within the history of girls’ boarding school novels, which gained in popularity after the turn of the twentieth-century with the entrance of (middle-class) girls to secondary education. For more on the *Mädchenpensionat* genre, see: Gisela Wilkending, *Mädchen der Kaiserzeit: zwischen weiblicher Identifizierung und Grenzüberschreitung* (Stuttgart and Weimar: Metzler, 2003). [↑](#footnote-ref-633)
634. Hermanns, *Meerkatzen*, p. 111. [↑](#footnote-ref-634)
635. As Lisa Bernstein outlines, confessional literature is a hybrid genre created from a fusion of autobiographical forms such as the memoir and the epistle. In terms of the Western canon, confessional literature has primarily been associated with male authors such as Augustine, Rousseau, and Gide. Yet, the ‘autobiographical or confessional impulse’ that is central to the genre also has a strong history of female voices, which, as Bernstein observes, can be traced back to the thirteenth century visionary writings of medieval nuns. See: *The Feminist Encyclopedia of German Literature* ed. Friederike Ursula Eigler and Susanne Kord (Westport, CT: Greenwood Publishing Group, 1997), p. 76. [↑](#footnote-ref-635)
636. Taylor, “Diagnosing Deviants”, p. 12. [↑](#footnote-ref-636)
637. The author surrogate, as de Man suggests, is ‘an alignment between the two subjects’, that is, author and protagonist, that is ‘involved in the process of reading in which they determine each other by mutual reflexive substitution. The structure implies differentiation as well as similarity, since both depend on substitutive exchange that constitutes the subject’, ‘Autobiography as De-facement’, *Modern Language Notes* 94.5 (1979), 919-930 (p. 921). [↑](#footnote-ref-637)
638. Trans.: ‘denk eens na, over de last die je bent voor ons. […] Je ziel stinkt van verdorvenheid’. Raedt-de Canter, *Internaat*, pp. 14-15. [↑](#footnote-ref-638)
639. For a more detailed discussion of the various tropes and symbolic language used in queer literature between 1900-1940 see, for example: *Encyclopedia of Lesbian Histories and Cultures* ed. by Bonnie Zimmerman (New York: Routledge, 2012), pp. 747-48. [↑](#footnote-ref-639)
640. In Malot’s original novel *Sans Famille*,the protagonist is called Rémi. Although, of course, this may have been an oversight by Raedt-de Canter, René is certainly a more ambivalent and androgynous name in terms of its significance within the text. Interestingly, however, Malot also published the novel *En Famille* (Nobody’s Girl), published in 1893 which is focused around the adventures of female protagonist, Perrine. In the 1970s a Japanese anime series was broadcast based on the novel entitled ‘Nobody’s Boy: Remi’ which was adapted as the film in 1980 and, like Malot’s original, was reworked and produced as ‘Nobody’s Girl: Remi’. For a more detailed discussion of gender in Malot’s novels, see: Carmen McCarron, ‘“Sans famille” et “En famille”: Le discours sexiste d’Hector Malot’ (The University of Calgary, Unpublished Master’s Dissertation, 2000). [↑](#footnote-ref-640)
641. Trans.: ‘Een wereld vol romantiek […] zuiverder en tastbaarder dan je eigen wereld’. Eva Raedt-de Canter, *Internaat* (Amsterdam: Querido, 1948), p. 26. [↑](#footnote-ref-641)
642. Trans.: ‘de afgrond van eenzaamheid’. *Internaat*, p. 15. [↑](#footnote-ref-642)
643. Trans.: ‘fel jaloers ben je op hun mooie gave gezichtjes, hun vlotte manieren, hun goede kleren’. Ibid., p. 57. [↑](#footnote-ref-643)
644. Trans.: ‘Broer en Trump zijn aan ‘t vechten. Je kijkt hevig geïnteresseerd toe. “Zullen we ook Harry?” […] “Wij vechten? Welnee. Ik weet wel wat ik liever doe …” Je wordt er ongeduldig van en zegt kribbig: “Ik niet. We hebben toch altijd samen gevochten, waarom nu dan niet?” “Omdat ik met een lief meisje niet wil vechten”. […] Je voelt je nu op onbekend terrein met deze nieuwe, vreemde Harry, die absoluut niet wil vechten en je twijfelt aan alle argumenten die je zoudt kunnen aanvoeren’. Ibid., p. 134-5. [↑](#footnote-ref-644)
645. Trans.: ‘we zullen niet meer samen vechten, niet meer samen indiaantje spelen […] ook niet de volgende vacantie’. Ibid.,p. 144. [↑](#footnote-ref-645)
646. Trans.: ‘Harry wint. Schrijlings over je heen gezeten, brult hij zijn overwinnarsroep door de kamer en je bent definitief verslagen. Maar dan buigt hij zich voorover en kust je, drie, vier keer achter elkaar, vlug en stevig. ‘Daar, daar, daar. Jij je zin, maar ik ook m’n zin. Je bent een lieve schat.’ Als je, moe en pijnlijk, naar je bed terug gaat, is er voor het eerst rancune in je, tegenover het mannelijk superioriteitsgevoel’. Ibid., p. 146. [↑](#footnote-ref-646)
647. Trans.: ‘een lichte, Limburgse zomermiddag’. Ibid. [↑](#footnote-ref-647)
648. Trans.: ‘Het is zoel en warm en licht in de lucht. […] Achter de rhododendrum is lommer en het ruikt naar groen. Bitter en sappig. De koelte van het gras in je rug en de diepte van de blauwe lucht, waarin je ogen kijken kunnen, eindeloos’. Ibid. [↑](#footnote-ref-648)
649. Trans.: ‘de zon drijft langzaam uit, zwaaiend, besluiteloos’. Ibid. [↑](#footnote-ref-649)
650. Bauer, ‘Literary Sexualities’, p. 108. [↑](#footnote-ref-650)
651. Winsloe, *Das Mädchen Manuela*, p. 7. [↑](#footnote-ref-651)
652. Ibid., pp. 7-8. [↑](#footnote-ref-652)
653. Ibid., p. 32. [↑](#footnote-ref-653)
654. Of the seventeen cases presented in Hirschfeld’s almost 600-page treatise, *Die Transvestiten* (1914), Helene N. (Fall XV pp. 116-27) is the only female-to-male transvestite case study. The story of Fräulein Katharina T. was discussed as part of the work’s ‘Kritische Teil: Differentialdiagnose’ and in the section dedicated to the nuances of cross dressing and homosexual desire. [↑](#footnote-ref-654)
655. Winsloe, *Das Mädchen Manuela*, p. 55. [↑](#footnote-ref-655)
656. Halberstam, *Female Masculinity*, p. 6. [↑](#footnote-ref-656)
657. Winsloe, *Das Mädchen Manuela*, p. 174. [↑](#footnote-ref-657)
658. Janet Lee, ‘“A Kotex and a Smile”: Mothers and Daughters at Menarche’, *Journal of Family Issues* 29 (10) (2008), 1325-47 (p. 1325). [↑](#footnote-ref-658)
659. Ibid. [↑](#footnote-ref-659)
660. Winsloe, *Das Mädchen Manuela*, pp. 181-2. [↑](#footnote-ref-660)
661. Ibid., p. 204. [↑](#footnote-ref-661)
662. Ibid., p. 223. [↑](#footnote-ref-662)
663. Manuela’s cross-dressing performance as Don Carlos in the cinematic adaption of *Mädchen in Uniform* has received vast amounts of scholarly attention. While Richard Dyer has identified the significance of the “male” space that Manuela occupies during her confession of lesbian love, for example, Katie Sutton notes how ‘Manuela’s masculine costume becomes a precondition for her “real-life” declaration of same-sex desire’. Within the novel, however, Manuela’s appearance on stage in male drag not only presents a space in which the protagonist can “safely” act out her same-sex desires but, furthermore, it grants her, significantly, the sought-after acknowledgement of the *authenticity* of the masculine identity that she has desired. [↑](#footnote-ref-663)
664. Although the fact that Manuela can only express her masculinity when presenting herself as “male” implies that heroic masculinity is a privilege exclusive to the male body, Winsloe also engages in a criticism of male-bodied masculinities, particularly “military masculinities”, which are shown to be restrictive and oppressive. Winsloe, *Das Mädchen Manuela*., p. 234. [↑](#footnote-ref-664)
665. James Bernauer, ‘Michel Foucault’s Ecstatic Thinking’ in *The Final Foucault* ed. by James Bernauer and David Rasmussen (Cambridge, M.A: The MIT Press, 1987), p. 52. [↑](#footnote-ref-665)
666. Michel Foucault, ‘The Subject and the Power’ in *Critical Inquiry* 8 (4) (1982), 777-95 (p. 781). [↑](#footnote-ref-666)
667. Michel Foucault, *Technologies of the Self* ed. by Luther H. Martin et al. (Amherst: The University of Massachusetts Press, 1988), p. 16. [↑](#footnote-ref-667)
668. Jeremy Tambling, *Confession: Sexuality, Sin, the Subject* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1990), p. 6. [↑](#footnote-ref-668)
669. Wendy Hollway, ‘Gender Difference and the Production of Subjectivity’ in *Changing the Subject: Psychology, Social Regulation and Subjectivity* (London: Routledge, 1984), p. 235. [↑](#footnote-ref-669)
670. Sedgwick, *Epistemology*, p. 73. [↑](#footnote-ref-670)
671. Trans.: ‘verder bloot te staan is onzedelijk’. Raedt-de Canter, *Internaat*, p. 8. [↑](#footnote-ref-671)
672. Trans.: ‘God gaf je een lichaam en je mocht er niet naar kijken. Je mocht het niet wassen, je mocht het niet betasten. Je zondigde tegen Gods geboden als je je vertoonde, zoals hij je schiep. God gaf je een vrije wil en als je hem vrij gebruikte, zondigde je. Je stelt je voor, hoe je God zou liefhebben, […] als je niet het lange natte hemd moest aanhouden tot je eigen hemd over je hoofd zat en geleidelijke volgde, wanneer de badjas, nat en zwaar en koud, op de grond gleed. Om je nat en koud en klevend in je kille kleren achter te laten’. Ibid., p. 9. [↑](#footnote-ref-672)
673. Trans.: ‘hier klein serpent […] je ziel stinkt van verdorvenheid’. Ibid., pp. 14-15. [↑](#footnote-ref-673)
674. The protagonist’s self-disciplining highlights the power within Foucault’s notion of the panopticism. Particularly in terms of the self-regulation of religious societies in which there is, arguably, a stronger social imperative to observe and “normalise” behaviours. See: Michel Foucault, *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison* (London: Allen Lane, 1975). Here, trans.: ‘Je weet ineens weer, hoe slecht je bent. Hoe verwarrend en raadselachtig getekend door zondigheid en verderf’. Ibid., p. 11. [↑](#footnote-ref-674)
675. Foucault, *The History of Sexuality*, p. 61. [↑](#footnote-ref-675)
676. Trans.: ‘Soeur Padua vroeg: Qui a parlé? Het haalde je uit je dromen en je vroeg je af, of ze je geloven zou, wanneer je een vinger opstak. Als je sprak en je stak geen vinger op, geloofden ze je nooit. Of ze je nu óók niet geloven zou, nu je stil was en dromerig en niet gesproken hadt? Je nieuwsgierigheid vulde je met vragen, vragen die aandrongen op een antwoord en je stak fel, met een kreetje, je vinger op. Ze had je uit de rij gehaald. ‘Attendez là.’ ‘Maar ik sprak niet eens, ik wou …’. Raedt-de Canter, *Internaat*, p. 31. [↑](#footnote-ref-676)
677. Trans.: ‘Gedroogde schuifjes appelen. Stopt hen in je mond, veel, veel. Kauwt, grijpt weer, een hand vol. [...] Graaien wéér en eten. Tot we niet meer kúnnen. Als we voldaan zijn valt opeens de realiteit op ons. [...]’. Ibid., p. 50. [↑](#footnote-ref-677)
678. Trans.: ‘zondig en heerlijk tegelijk’. Ibid., p. 73. [↑](#footnote-ref-678)
679. Trans.: ‘Na vier keer had je gevraagd: “wie ben je toch?” “Sssh,” hoorde je en zij was vlug weg gelipt en drie avonden weggebleven. Maar de vierde avond – je had trouw staan wachten, steeds meer hunkerend – was zij gekomen en had je gekust. Lang en fors. […] Hoe vreemd was dit. Hoe vreemd, dat je zo van een niets kon houden. Want je kende haar niet, je wist haar naam niet eens’. Ibid., p. 74. [↑](#footnote-ref-679)
680. Trans.: ‘Was het wellicht zonde? Kussen wàs zonde; zelfs zusjes mochten elkaar niet kussen. Was dit dan geen zonde?’. Ibid., p. 75. [↑](#footnote-ref-680)
681. Emphasis in original. Trans.: ‘homosexualiteit als *neiging* (aanleg) en homosexualiteit als *daad*’. Dr. L Bender, ‘Verderfelijke Propaganda’ (Heemstede: Comité van Katholieke Actie “Voor God”, 1937), p. 3. [↑](#footnote-ref-681)
682. Trans.: ‘hoe wonderlijk klopte je hart, als je na zorgvuldig onderzoek, met de lijst van overtreding volledig op je lippen, neerknielde achter het nog gesloten tralieraampje in de biechtstoel’. Raedt-de Canter, *Internaat* p. 76. [↑](#footnote-ref-682)
683. Trans.: ‘De altijd eendere vergrijpen in gewoontedreun: driemaal gesproken in de kerk, vijftienmaal ongehoorzaam geweest, zevenmaal brutaal, acht en dertig maal oneerbiedig onder het gebed. […] liefdeloosheid, slordigheid, luiheid, onbeleefdheid aan tafel, snoepzucht. Allemaal heel vaak, maar ik weet het niet precies in cijfers’. Ibid., pp. 76-7. [↑](#footnote-ref-683)
684. Foucault suggests, however, that it is not so easy to distinguish between what can bearticulated and the things ‘one declines to say, or is forbidden to name’ because silence, or that which is “not-articulated” is ‘less the absolute limit of discourse […] than an element that functions alongside the things said […] we must try to determine the different ways of not saying such things, how those who can and those who cannot speak of them are distributed, which type of discourse is authorized, or which form of discretion is required in either case’. Foucault, *The History of Sexuality*, p. 27. [↑](#footnote-ref-684)
685. As Julia Creet notes, ‘homosexual, gay, lesbian “identities”, formulated as identities rather than strictly as behavior, have been predicated on a speech act: “coming out”. This act often describes a process of signification, of naming or categorizing feelings that had previously existed. A single utterance will not suffice, for new situations demanding the revelation of identity are encountered constantly’, ‘Anxieties of Identity: Coming Out and Coming Undone’ in *Negotiating Lesbian and Gay Subjects* ed. by Monica Dorenkamp and Richard Henke (New York: Routledge, 1995), p. 182. [↑](#footnote-ref-685)
686. As the act of revelation is not enforced in a regulated manner as in the case of Raedt-de Canter’s text, I employ the concept of “confession” in Winsloe’s novel in a looser sense to encompass scenes of admission, revelation, as well as Manuela’s ultimate public confession. [↑](#footnote-ref-686)
687. Ibid., p. 137. [↑](#footnote-ref-687)
688. Ibid. [↑](#footnote-ref-688)
689. Ibid., pp. 181-2. [↑](#footnote-ref-689)
690. Ibid., p. 182. [↑](#footnote-ref-690)
691. Ibid., p. 183. [↑](#footnote-ref-691)
692. Sedgwick, *Epistemology*, p. 3. [↑](#footnote-ref-692)
693. D.A. Miller, *The Novel and the Police* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1988), p. 205. [↑](#footnote-ref-693)
694. Winsloe, *Das Mädchen Manuela*, p. 210. [↑](#footnote-ref-694)
695. Winsloe, *Das Mädchen Manuela*, p. 210. [↑](#footnote-ref-695)
696. Winsloe, *Das Mädchen Manuela*, pp. 236-7. [↑](#footnote-ref-696)
697. Ibid., p. 246. [↑](#footnote-ref-697)
698. Ibid., p. 248. [↑](#footnote-ref-698)
699. Ibid., p. 266. [↑](#footnote-ref-699)
700. Ibid., p. 267. [↑](#footnote-ref-700)
701. Elaine Marks, ‘Lesbian Intertextuality’ in *Homosexualities and French Literature: Cultural Context/Critical Texts*, ed. by George Stambolian and Elaine Marks (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1979), pp. 357-8. [↑](#footnote-ref-701)
702. The erastes/eromenos tradition was a socially acknowledged and idealised erotic relationship between an adult male (the *erastes*) and a younger boy (the *eromenos*) in ancient Greek culture. The younger of the two would often be experiencing adolescence and the relationship would end once the boy had become an adult. Although the relationship was certainly erotic, it was important that such pederastic relationships should serve the pursuit of knowledge. See: Kenneth James Dover, *Greek Homosexuality* (Cambridge MA: Harvard University Press, 1978). [↑](#footnote-ref-702)
703. Hirschfeld ‘Das urnische Kind’, p. 246. [↑](#footnote-ref-703)
704. Marks, ‘Lesbian Intertextuality’, p. 358. [↑](#footnote-ref-704)
705. Richard Dyer, *Now You See It: Studies on Lesbian and Gay Film* (London: Routledge, 1990), p. 55. [↑](#footnote-ref-705)
706. Judith Roof, *A Lure of Knowledge: Lesbian Sexuality and Theory* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1991), p. 108. [↑](#footnote-ref-706)
707. Indeed, to corroborate this view, in each of the novels chosen for this section the mother figure is missing or in some way ‘unmotherly’. See footnote 111. Ibid., p 171. [↑](#footnote-ref-707)
708. The protagonist’s use of the imperfect when referring to her mother suggests that she has died. [↑](#footnote-ref-708)
709. Trans.: ‘de gesel der ketters’; ‘je haat was geboren’. Raedt-de Canter, *Internaat*, p. 15. [↑](#footnote-ref-709)
710. Trans.: ‘een miswas in Gods schone schepping’. Ibid. [↑](#footnote-ref-710)
711. Trans.: ‘angstige “moeder” roep’. Ibid. [↑](#footnote-ref-711)
712. Trans.: ‘Soeur Veronica… Veronica. Een perkje vol donkere violen zie je, als je zachtjes, voor op je tong, Veronica zegt. […] Een perk vol, in een schemerige, oude hof met wuivende bomen en bemoste paden’. Ibid., p. 17. [↑](#footnote-ref-712)
713. Trans.: ‘Veronica….’ Zei je en zweeg. ‘Soeur Veronica….’ ‘Och, Veronica….’ Zei je verlegen en wreef je hoofd langs haar ruw katoenen, warme mouw’. Ibid., p. 18. [↑](#footnote-ref-713)
714. Trans.: ‘“Net als vroeger?” Vreemd, dat je zo verlegen wordt van deze vraag’. Ibid., p. 59. [↑](#footnote-ref-714)
715. Trans.: ‘[Fenna] ruikt zoals moeder rook, zij loopt zoals moeder liep’. Ibid., p. 61. [↑](#footnote-ref-715)
716. Trans.: ‘wel te rusten, moeder Fenna’. Ibid., p. 62. [↑](#footnote-ref-716)
717. Helene Deutsch, ‘Über die weibliche Homosexualität’, *Internationale Zeitschrift für Psychoanalyse* 18 (2) (1932), 219-41 (p. 239). [↑](#footnote-ref-717)
718. Trans.: ‘De kus! Hoe zondig en heerlijk tegelijk. […] twee armen, zachte, warm-bemouwde armen had ze om je hals geslagen en twee koele, vochtige lippen hadden even, rustig en ferm, jouw mond gekust. Je hart bonsde toen ze je losliet. Waarom? […] Wat toch dat brandendfelle, zinderende verlangen beduidde, dat je pijnlijk deed blozen, je zondig en verworpen maakte en tegelijk als een zware schat in je hart woog?’. Raedt-de Canter, *Internaat*, pp. 73-4. [↑](#footnote-ref-718)
719. Roof, *A Lure*, p. 185. [↑](#footnote-ref-719)
720. Trans.: ‘Een wondere heerlijkheid’. Raedt-de Canter, *Internaat*, p. 75. [↑](#footnote-ref-720)
721. Winsloe, *Das Mädchen Manuela*, p. 8. [↑](#footnote-ref-721)
722. Ibid., p. 92. [↑](#footnote-ref-722)
723. Ibid., pp. 122-3. [↑](#footnote-ref-723)
724. Ibid. [↑](#footnote-ref-724)
725. Ibid., p. 130. [↑](#footnote-ref-725)
726. Ibid., p. 169. [↑](#footnote-ref-726)
727. Ibid., p. 174-5. [↑](#footnote-ref-727)
728. Elizabeth Kissling, *Capitalizing on the Curse: The Business of Menstruation* (Boulder, CO: Lynne Rienner, 2006), p. 34. [↑](#footnote-ref-728)
729. Ibid., p. 202. [↑](#footnote-ref-729)
730. Sigmund Freud, *Vorlesungen zur Einführung in die Psychoanalyse* (Frankfurt: S. Fischer Verlag, 1916), p. 262. [↑](#footnote-ref-730)
731. Winsloe, *Das Mädchen Manuela*, p. 175-6. [↑](#footnote-ref-731)
732. Ibid., p. 211. [↑](#footnote-ref-732)
733. Ibid., p. 266. [↑](#footnote-ref-733)
734. Ibid., p. 267. [↑](#footnote-ref-734)
735. Ibid., p. 268. [↑](#footnote-ref-735)
736. Ibid., p. 272. [↑](#footnote-ref-736)
737. Although for those readers that recognised themselves in the text, the novel may have played a formative role some kind of identitarian process, playing a similar role to Radclyffe Hall’s *The Well* for many Dutch women. See: Stokvis, *De homosexueelen*. [↑](#footnote-ref-737)
738. Carter, ‘On Mother-Love’, 107-38. [↑](#footnote-ref-738)
739. Hannah O’Connor, ‘Sapphic Spectres: Lesbian Gothic in Interwar German Narratives’ (Unpublished Doctoral Thesis, Cardiff University, 2014), p. 17. [↑](#footnote-ref-739)
740. Shane Phelan, *Getting Specific: Postmodern Lesbian Politics* (Minneapolis and London: Minnesota University Press, 1994), p. 96. [↑](#footnote-ref-740)
741. Although this bolsters the image of the “true” virile homosexual woman, Hirschfeld’s studies also challenged the assumption that the desires of feminine women were ephemeral and “curable”. Hirschfeld, *Die Homosexualität des Mannes und des Weibes*, p. 292. [↑](#footnote-ref-741)
742. Claudia Schoppman, *Der Skorpion: Frauenliebe in der Weimarer Republik* (Kiel: Frühlings Erwachen, 1985), p. 14. [↑](#footnote-ref-742)
743. In 1921, the novel was adapted into a film directed by Alfred Halm (1861-1951) and starred Grete Reinwald (1902-1983) in the leading role. [↑](#footnote-ref-743)
744. The author of the article also claimed that in 1931 the first two novels of Weirauch’s trilogy were ‘im Buchhandel nicht mehr erhältlich’, ‘Was Sie interessieren dürfte ...’ in *Die Freundin*,9 November 1932. [↑](#footnote-ref-744)
745. Manfred Georg, ‘Der Skorpion’ *Berliner Zeitung,* 28 August 1919. [↑](#footnote-ref-745)
746. Although I have been unable to locate reviews for the final instalment of the novel, it can be assumed that, at least among the queer community, the third instalment was equally as popular. All three novels remained in *Die Freundin*’s‘book charts’ and were available for purchase through the *Friedrich Radszuweit Verlag* until the magazine ceased printing in 1933. In 1921, there was a suggestion in the *Berliner Zeitung am Mittag* that Weirauch was working with the director Käthe Wienskowitz (1887-1943) on a cinematic adaption of *Der Skorpion*. This endeavour did not come to fruition. See *Berliner Zeitung am Mittag* 12 October 1921. [↑](#footnote-ref-746)
747. Schoppman, *Der Skorpion*, p. 15. [↑](#footnote-ref-747)
748. Trans.: ‘leek het […] haar een paradijs’. G. A. van Riemsdijk, ‘Josine Reuling’, *Jaarboek van de Maatschappij der Nederlandse Letterkunde* (1972), p. 253. [↑](#footnote-ref-748)
749. ‘Boek en Blad: Intermezzo met Ernst’ in *De Tijd,* 11 October 1934, p. 2. [↑](#footnote-ref-749)
750. Ibid. [↑](#footnote-ref-750)
751. See: Judith Schuyf, Schuyf, Judith,‘Lesbian Emancipation in the Netherlands’ in *Gay Life in Dutch Society* ed. by A.X. Naerssen (New York and London: Harrington Park Press, 1987). [↑](#footnote-ref-751)
752. As Myriam Everard has noted, forty-seven literary works containing references to female same-sex desire were published in the Dutch language between the years 1880-1940, of which thirty-six were written originally in Dutch. Over half of the total number were written by female authors. Yet, it was not until Reuling’s publication that love between women became visible as a central theme in Dutch literature. See Everard, ‘Galerij der vrouwenliefde’. [↑](#footnote-ref-752)
753. It should be noted that there was a difference in the receptions of the novel between the colonial and national Dutch press. In the Netherlands, *Terug naar het eiland* received relatively mixed reviews; while the liberal and socialist newspapers remained generally indifferent to the release of the novel, religious newspapers were more negative in their descriptions of the text. The press in the Dutch colonies, however, was united in its dismissal of the novel and openly attacked the literary merit of the author as well as her subject matter. See, for example: ‘Het nieuwe boek: Terug naar het eiland, door Josine Reuling’ in *De Sumatra Post*, 16 October 1937, p. 12. [↑](#footnote-ref-753)
754. Anna Elisabet Weirauch, *Der Skorpion* (Frankfurt: Ullstein, 1993), p. 29. [↑](#footnote-ref-754)
755. The themes of queerness and the desire of the bourgeois protagonist to become an outsider relative to “respectable” society had already been taken up earlier in Thomas Mann’s *Tonio Kröger* (1903). [↑](#footnote-ref-755)
756. Anna E. Weirauch, *Der Skorpion: Band I* (Berlin: Feministischer Buchverlag, 1997), p. 7. [↑](#footnote-ref-756)
757. There has been no scholarly consensus concerning the gender of the narrator. While Cathrin Winkelmann suggests that the narrator is female, essentially conflating Weirauch with her narrator, Mara Taylor considers that it would be in line with the contemporary gender norms of the time to conclude the narrator to be male. Nancy P. Nenno’s work on the novel avoids the question of the gender of the narrator altogether. As Weirauch intentionally does not gender her narrator, the pronouns I use in this chapter adhere to the author’s original neutral narrative perspective. [↑](#footnote-ref-757)
758. Weirauch, *Der Skorpion: Band I*,p. 7. [↑](#footnote-ref-758)
759. Nancy P. Nenno, ‘*Bildung* and Desire: Anna Elisabet Weirauch’s *Der Skorpion*’ in *Queering the Canon: Defying Sights in German Literature and Culture* ed. Christoph Lorey, John L. Plews (Columbia, SC: Camden House, 1998), p. 213. [↑](#footnote-ref-759)
760. Ibid., p. 9. [↑](#footnote-ref-760)
761. Cathrin Winkelmann, ‘The Limits of Representation? The Expression and Repression of Desire in 20th-Century German Lesbian Narratives’ (Unpublished Doctoral Thesis, McGill University, 2001), p. 52. [↑](#footnote-ref-761)
762. Weirauch, *Der Skorpion*, p. 8. [↑](#footnote-ref-762)
763. Winckelman, ‘The Limits of Representation?’, p. 51. [↑](#footnote-ref-763)
764. Taylor, ‘Diagnosing Deviants’, p. 409. [↑](#footnote-ref-764)
765. Nenno, ‘*Bildung* and Desire’, p. 213. [↑](#footnote-ref-765)
766. Weirauch, *Der Skorpion*, p. 32. [↑](#footnote-ref-766)
767. Ibid., p. 31. [↑](#footnote-ref-767)
768. Ibid., p. 32. [↑](#footnote-ref-768)
769. Ibid., p. 136. [↑](#footnote-ref-769)
770. Ibid., p. 139. [↑](#footnote-ref-770)
771. The concept of the bourgeois “child-woman”, who was innocent in sexual matters and is typified in the novel by the Möbius daughters, ultimately creates a space in which Mette’s desires can be considered temporary and “curable”. Interestingly, it was German neurologist Paul Julius Möbius who wrote perhaps one of the most damning indictments of the infantilised bourgeois woman in *Über den physiologischen Schwachsinn des* *Weibes* (Halle: Carl Marhold, 1906), in which he claimed that the female subject was ‘ein Mittelding zwischen Kind und Mann’, p. 28. Ibid., p. 135. [↑](#footnote-ref-771)
772. As well as demonstrating various medico-scientific theories that women could be “cured”, Weirauch also depicts how these ideas were adopted by wider society. In the second instalment of her trilogy, morphine addict Gisela Werkendam is approached by her friend Giesbert who suggests that because Gisela is ‘kein Mannweib’ and ‘nur durch einen Zufall auf die falsche Bahn gelenkt’ that she can be cured: ‘Versuch es nur einmal mit einem reellen Mann, und du bist für immer geheilt und gerettet. Ich stelle mich dir gern zur Verfügung, gratis und franko. Du ahnst ja nicht, was für einen Spaß du haben wirst’, Weirauch, *Der Skorpion: Band II* (Berlin, Feministischer Buchverlag, 1993), pp. 129-30. [↑](#footnote-ref-772)
773. Nenno, ‘*Bildung* and Desire’, p. 213. [↑](#footnote-ref-773)
774. Weirauch, *Der Skorpion Band I*, p.142. [↑](#footnote-ref-774)
775. The image of Mette’s blood being ‘vergiftet’ calls to mind the earlier ideas of Karl Heinrich Ulrichs, who suggested in *Formatrix: Anthropologische Studien über urnische Liebe* (1864) that a blood transfusion might have the effect of turning an “Urning” into a “normal man” and vice versa. See: Hubert Kennedy, *Ulrichs: The Life and Works of Karl Heinrich Ulrichs: Pioneer of the Modern Gay Movement* (Boston, MA: Alyson Publications Inc., 1988). Here: Weirauch, *Der Skorpion*, p. 143. [↑](#footnote-ref-775)
776. Weirauch, *Der Skorpion Band III* (Berlin: Feministischer Buchverlag, 1993),p. 76. [↑](#footnote-ref-776)
777. Weirauch, *Der Skorpion Band I*,Ibid., p. 373. [↑](#footnote-ref-777)
778. Ibid. [↑](#footnote-ref-778)
779. Taylor, ‘Diagnosing Deviants’, p. 422. [↑](#footnote-ref-779)
780. Weirauch, *Der Skorpion: Band I*, p. 375. [↑](#footnote-ref-780)
781. Ibid., p. 52. [↑](#footnote-ref-781)
782. Ibid., p. 376. [↑](#footnote-ref-782)
783. Ibid., p. 50. [↑](#footnote-ref-783)
784. Ibid., pp. 313-4. [↑](#footnote-ref-784)
785. Taylor, ‘Diagnosing Deviants’, p. 424. [↑](#footnote-ref-785)
786. Weirauch, *Der Skorpion: Band I*, p. 326. [↑](#footnote-ref-786)
787. Lybeck, *Desiring Emancipation*, p. 154. [↑](#footnote-ref-787)
788. Josine Reuling, *Terug naar het eiland* (Amsterdam: Querido, 1937), p. 32. [↑](#footnote-ref-788)
789. Trans.: ‘dingen die je niet zèi’. Ibid., p. 18. [↑](#footnote-ref-789)
790. Brita’s grandmother holds up the Swedish author Selma Lagerlöf, whose novels about rural Swedish life won her the Nobel Prize in Literature, as an example. She further claims that if her granddaughter’s writing thematised the Swedish landscape and morals (*zeden*) she would have nothing against the practice. Ironically, Lagerlöf was known to have had several passionate relationships with women during her lifetime and fell deeply in love with the Jewish-Swedish author Sophie Elkan. See: Rose Collis, *Portraits to the Wall: Historic Lesbian Lives Unveiled* (London: Bloomsbury, 1994), pp. 87-103. [↑](#footnote-ref-790)
791. Trans.: ‘ik vind het geen werk voor een meisje’. Reuling, *Terug*, p. 53. [↑](#footnote-ref-791)
792. Trans.: ‘liefde zonder erotiek niet mogelijk is’. Ibid., p. 156. [↑](#footnote-ref-792)
793. Trans.: ‘“delicate kwesties”’. Ibid., p. 38. [↑](#footnote-ref-793)
794. Trans.: ‘vertelde geen leugens. Got-o-got, daar was zij te oprecht voor, te recht-door-zee, te dit en te dat, niets dan verheven eigenschappen’. Ibid., p. 85. [↑](#footnote-ref-794)
795. Trans.: ‘dan verlangde Brita naar Parijs, al wist zij dat zij haar nooit als een der hunnen zouden beschouwen. Zij was en bleef: de rijke Zweedse, la bourgeoisie…’. Ibid., p. 56. [↑](#footnote-ref-795)
796. Trans.: ‘Ik trouw waarschijnlijk nooit’. Ibid., p. 36. [↑](#footnote-ref-796)
797. Trans.: ‘niet geschikt voor het huwelijk’; ‘houd niet van mannen’. Ibid., p. 37. [↑](#footnote-ref-797)
798. Trans.: ‘“Alle mannen?” […] Mij lijkt één meer dan voldoende”. Ibid. [↑](#footnote-ref-798)
799. Furthermore, by creating omissions in the text, the author invites the reader to take part in the creative process by interpreting the meanings of the gaps in the dialogue. Trans.: ‘nu *moest* zij het zeggen’. Ibid., p. 42. [↑](#footnote-ref-799)
800. Although Brita forcefully rejects the notion of gender inversion, she appears to accept more willingly the theories of psychoanalysis, claiming at one point that if she were ‘rijper’ (more mature) she would have a child. Interestingly, during this inner monologue she does not believe that becoming a mother would make her ‘heterosexual’ and, further, she does not envisage bringing up her child with a man. Here: p. 137. [↑](#footnote-ref-800)
801. Trans.: ‘dat weinig mensen zo gelukkig zijn als ik’. Ibid. [↑](#footnote-ref-801)
802. Trans.: ‘De wetenschap als zodanig is dood’. Ibid., p. 167. [↑](#footnote-ref-802)
803. Trans.: ‘zij helpt niet, zij constateert feiten’. Ibid. [↑](#footnote-ref-803)
804. Trans.: ‘de ziel te genezen eiste andere methoden dan het lichaam, om haar te opereren had je fijnere instrumenten nodig dan de chirurg gebruikte’. Ibid., p. 166. [↑](#footnote-ref-804)
805. Trans.: ‘En toch dacht ook [Hans] in dogma’s, toch hing ook hij theorieën op; dit etiket moest passen op die stelling, deze conclusie moest getrokken worden uit die handeling. Het moest. Het was logisch, onvermijdelijk […] “Wij psycho-analytici, kunnen helpen, genezen.” – Wij, katholieke kerk, kunnen helpen, genezen.” – “Wij, gereformeerden, zuiveren in de leer, kunnen helpen, genezen.”’. Ibid., pp. 166-7. [↑](#footnote-ref-805)
806. Jean-Michel Quinodoz, *Reading Freud: A Chronological Exploration of Freud’s Writings* trans. by David Alcorn (London and New York: Routledge, 2005), p. 231. [↑](#footnote-ref-806)
807. Sigmund Freud, ‘*Psychoanalysis: Exploring the Hidden Recesses of the Mind’* in *These Eventful Years: The Twentieth Century in the Making as Told By Many of its Makers* trans. A.A. Brill (London: The Encyclopedia Britannica Company, 1924), pp. 520-1. [↑](#footnote-ref-807)
808. It should be noted, however, that “confession” does not appear to fit in with the norms of the Protestant Swedish society in which Reuling’s novel is set. [↑](#footnote-ref-808)
809. Weirauch, *Der Skorpion: Band II*, p.35. [↑](#footnote-ref-809)
810. Ibid., pp. 153-4. [↑](#footnote-ref-810)
811. Ibid., p. 351-2. [↑](#footnote-ref-811)
812. Ibid., p. 449. [↑](#footnote-ref-812)
813. Ibid., pp. 457-9. [↑](#footnote-ref-813)
814. Ibid., p. 111. [↑](#footnote-ref-814)
815. Ibid., p. 232. [↑](#footnote-ref-815)
816. Ibid., p. 233. [↑](#footnote-ref-816)
817. Ibid., p. 234. [↑](#footnote-ref-817)
818. Trans.: ‘Nu zij, Brita Salin, verklaarde, dat zij zichzelf normaal vond en alle anderen, die niet waren zoals zij: abnormaal. Voor haar was elke vrouw, die ernaar verlangde, een man te omhelzen, die in staat was haar liefde, haar hartstocht te geven aan een man, een wonder, een haar volkomen onbegrijpelijk wezen, dat zij met verbazing en heimelijke afkeer bekeek’. Reuling, *Terug*, p. 138. [↑](#footnote-ref-818)
819. Trans.: ‘Dus zij deed precies hetzelfde tegenover hen als de anderen tegenover haar’. Ibid. [↑](#footnote-ref-819)
820. Although Reuling suggests that an inherently physical impulse is at the heart of Brita’s aversion to men, this is not presented in terms of somatic gender traits. [↑](#footnote-ref-820)
821. Trans.: ‘wee gevoel van walging’; ‘dat je maag samenkneep en in je neus omhoogsteeg’. Reuling, *Terug*, p. 143. [↑](#footnote-ref-821)
822. Trans.: ‘Speciale bars had zij niet meer gefrequenteerd, de professionals waren te dégoutant. Waarom imiteerden die vrouwen een sexe, waar zij een afkeer van hadden? Waarom kleedden zij zich als mannen, met overhemden en dassen en kortgeknipte haren en hadden bruuske mannelijke bewegingen? […] Zij had het nooit begrepen’, ibid., p. 140. [↑](#footnote-ref-822)
823. Trans.: ‘zij was blij dat zijn een vrouw was, zij wilde niets anders zijn dan vrouw’, ibid. [↑](#footnote-ref-823)
824. Trans.: ‘zij was niet zoals ik – ik heb mij in haar vergist’, ibid., p. 49. [↑](#footnote-ref-824)
825. The use of free indirect speech makes it difficult to distinguish between the voice of the narrator and the views of ‘wider society’. It could also be argued, therefore, that Brita is ironically mocking society’s perception of girlhood ‘crushes’. Trans.: ‘Toen was Vera ziek geworden en had niets anders gedaan dan huilen en roepen om Brita – ach, met veertien jaar konden meisjes zo overdreven doen! Gelukkig, dat zij spoedig beter werd’. Ibid. pp. 164-5. [↑](#footnote-ref-825)
826. Trans.: ‘weet je, wat ik denk? Nee, wat ik me verbeeld, nu wij zo samenzijn en uitgaan en dansen? […] ik stel me voor, dat het gewoon is en omdat wij zulke geode vrienden zijn, echte kameraden, kan ik ‘t je zeggen: ik verbeeld mij, dat wij getrouwd zijn en straks naar huis rijden’. Ibid., p. 266. [↑](#footnote-ref-826)
827. Trans.: ‘In razend tempo reden zij over de verlaten, natglimmende weg; bomen schoten voorbij als schimmen, de banden snerpten en knersten over het grint, als Hans die bochten nam in nauwelijks verminderde vaart. […] Bayonne, Brita, riep Hans. Nu zijn wij er bijna. O juist, riep zij terug. Nog acht kilometer. Zij reden over grote, hobbelige keien langs de buitenkant van de stad. Vaal licht van booglampen verhelderde nu de straatweg. […] Het begon opnieuw te regenen, in fijne stralen, maar het was de moeite niet waard om de kap op te zetten, zij wàren er. Toen slipte de wagen, tolde in een halve cirkel. Brita zag Hans één ondeelbaar onderdeel van een seconde voorovergebogen krampachtig aan het stuur rukken. Het was uit! Zij reden tegen een boom op. Tegen die – daar…’. Ibid., pp. 272-3. [↑](#footnote-ref-827)
828. Carter, ‘Mother-Love’, p. 111. [↑](#footnote-ref-828)
829. Ibid. [↑](#footnote-ref-829)
830. Ibid., p. 134. [↑](#footnote-ref-830)
831. Ibid., p. 108. [↑](#footnote-ref-831)
832. Weirauch, *Der Skorpion: Band I*,p. 8. [↑](#footnote-ref-832)
833. Ibid., pp. 58-9. [↑](#footnote-ref-833)
834. O’Connor, ‘Sapphic Spectres’, p. 70. [↑](#footnote-ref-834)
835. Carter, ‘Mother-Love’, p. 129. [↑](#footnote-ref-835)
836. Weirauch, *Der Skorpion: Band I*, pp. 296-8. [↑](#footnote-ref-836)
837. Winckelmann, ‘The Limits of Representation’, p. 69. [↑](#footnote-ref-837)
838. Ibid., p. 296. [↑](#footnote-ref-838)
839. Ibid., p. 300. [↑](#footnote-ref-839)
840. Anjeana Kaur Hans, ‘Defining Desires: Homosexual Identity and German Discourses 1900-1933’ (Unpublished Doctoral Thesis, Harvard University, 2005), pp. 185. [↑](#footnote-ref-840)
841. Kaur Hans, ‘Defining Desires’, pp. 187-8. [↑](#footnote-ref-841)
842. Weirauch, *Der Skorpion: Band I*, p. 123. [↑](#footnote-ref-842)
843. Reuling, *Terug*, p. 5. [↑](#footnote-ref-843)
844. Trans.: ‘de enige mens waar zij werkelijk van hield’ ibid., p. 111; ‘Niemand, niets kon haar haar vader teruggeven […] Brita huilde. Het was een schuddend, schokkend huilen, dat misschien dagen zou duren. Zij wist het. Het was als een plotselinge koorts, die hoog opliep en even plotseling weer afzakte en je uitgeput en leeg achterliet. Je kon er niets aan doen, je moest het laten razen’. Ibid., p. 112-4. [↑](#footnote-ref-844)
845. Trans.: ‘De mensen, die het meest van ons houden, zijn het minst veeleisend. Ik denk nu speciaal aan de moederlijke liefde, die toch de ideale liefde het meest nabij komt. […] Met moeder-zìjn heeft het niets te maken. De meeste vrouwen, die kinderen hebben, denken, dat zij dáárom ook de moederliefde bezitten, maar zij vergissen zich. Elke vrouw kan een kind krijgen, bijna elke vrouw kan het voeden, maar al hebben zij nog niet de moederliefde. […] Ik ken zelfs een vader, die de ideale moederliefde bezit voor zijn kinderen. – Dan moet je zeggen: vader-liefde, anders doe je hem onrecht. Daar wilde Renée niets van weten. Het sentiment was als zodanig oer-vrouwelijk, vaderliefde was iets totaal anders’. Ibid., pp. 225-6. [↑](#footnote-ref-845)
846. Looking at other characters in the novel, Brita’s governess “Zelle” also fits into this mother-love model, even though she remains entirely unaware of it. ‘[Zelle] loved this radiant, innocent child with a passionate, longing and hidden love, that she did not even know herself (Trans: [Zelle] hield van dit stralende, argeloze kind met een hartstochtelijke, hunkerende en verborgen liefde, die zichzelf niet kende’), p. 9. [↑](#footnote-ref-846)
847. Carter, ‘On Mother-Love’, p. 134. [↑](#footnote-ref-847)
848. Trans.: ‘Als zij rijper was zou zij een kind willen hebben, het zou zeker de beste leerschool zijn. […] Nu moest zij deze wens voorlopig opschuiven, er geen gehoor aan schenken, al kon hij soms dringend, kwellend worden. “Je dochter klopt aan en wil geboren worden,” zuchtte zij dan en glimlachte verlegen. “Je moet nog even wachten schaap, je Ma staat aan een kruispunt, haar leven neemt een andere wending en zij weet niet hoe zij uit deze nieuwe strijd te voorschijn zal komen. Zij weet ook niet of zij het recht heeft om je zonder vader groot te brengen, of niet het mannelijk element onmisbaar is voor een kind’. Reuling, *Terug*, p. 140-1. [↑](#footnote-ref-848)
849. Trans.: ‘Is het egoïsme, dit verlangen naar jou, mijn kind? Volgens Hans en alle intelligente en intellectuele mensen, die onze emoties uiteenrafelen, ze verklaren en ze keurig registreren, is alles wat wij doen, waarnaar wij verlangen, egoïsme. “Lust en unlust”, zegt Freud, “is de kern van al ons handelen, van ons wezen en al zijn drijfveren”. Waarom staat mij dit zo tegen?’. Ibid. pp. 141-2. [↑](#footnote-ref-849)
850. Julian Carter, ‘On Mother-Love: History, Queer Theory and Nonlesbian Identity’, *Journal of the History of Sexuality*, 14 1⁄2 (2005), 107-38 (p.108). [↑](#footnote-ref-850)
851. Bulhof, ‘Psychoanalysis in the Netherlands’, p. 575. [↑](#footnote-ref-851)
852. Kirsten Leng, ‘Permutations of the Third Sex’, p. 227; Jeffrey Weeks, *Sex, Politics and Society: The Regulations of Sexuality Since 1800* (London: Routledge, 2014), p. 146. [↑](#footnote-ref-852)
853. Trans.: ‘alleen geschikt voor volwassenen’. ‘Jongedames in uniform’, Algemeen handelsblad, 05 August 1932, p. 9. [↑](#footnote-ref-853)
854. Valerie Traub, ‘The Present Future of Lesbian Historiography’ in *A Companion to Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender, and Queer Studies* ed. by George E. Haggerty and Molly McGarry (Oxford: Wiley Blackwell, 2007), p. 125. [↑](#footnote-ref-854)