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Helene Stöcker, Weimar Germany and Prophylactics: An Investigation Into the Context and Effects of the Reichsgesestz zur Bekämpfung Geschlechtskrankheiten

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Introduction

The Weimar government, which came to power in Germany following the Imperial government's defeat in World War I, existed in a tenuous state. The government was founded in backlash to the perceived inequalities in German society (the dominance of the Prussian Jünker class, of whom von Bismarck was a member and emblematic), thus began intensive experimentation with democratic practices. Resulting from these attempts, fractionalization occurred on a widespread basis in the Weimar Years. As has been much discussed, there was a huge number of political organizations that competed for people's attention during the Weimar years (1919-1933).[1] Organizations devoted to singular issues arose contemporaneously to others that were far more open in their message; but what is seen in the Weimar years is the dissemination of a huge variety of rhetoric of democratization on local and national levels.

This study seeks to look at factionalization and Weimar life as it pertained to women and their rights over their body. Part of the efforts at democratization were aimed at the perceived, and tangible, inequalities of life between men and women-- women were granted universal suffrage by the Weimar government; and, they were allowed to work and take part in public/social life much the same as men.[2] Article 109 of the Weimar Constitution stated, "In principle, men and women have the same rights and obligations."[3] The creation of the "new

[1] Peter Fritzsche, *Germans Into Nazis* (Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University Press, 1998). Inter-University Consortium for Political and Social Research, "German Weimar Republic Data, 1919-1933." 1998.

[2] Annette Timm, *Politics of Fertility in Twentieth-Century Berlin* (Cambridge, United Kingdom: Cambridge University Press, 2010). See: "Venereal Disease and the Crisis of Sexuality in the Weimar Republic" pgs. 35-80.

[3] *Weimar Constitution of August 11th, 1919:* http://www.zum.de/psm/weimar/weimar_vve.php.

woman" derived from the political sphere but existed and thrived in the social and cultural milieus of Weimar Germany; women were seen in the streets smoking cigarettes and socializing at cafes side-by-side with men. They went to the cinemas and took part in culture in ways that previously was not available. Education and technology became available in new forms to women. With this advancement and change, women began to understand their bodies and take control of them. Thus, there came a desire for greater understanding of reproductive sciences, part of which focused on contraception and contraceptive devices. This emphasis on science and the body is a part of a greater scientific movement of understanding, part of the Weimar rationalization.

One such example of the "new woman" was Helene Stöcker. She was a highly educated liberal, in the modern sense, and emancipated woman who lived a modern life and encouraged other women to follow suit. Stöcker, born in 1869 in Elberfield, became one of the first women to earn a doctorate, completing hers in 1901. Her activism began shortly thereafter, leading to the founding of the *Bund für Mutterschutz* (Organization for Protection of Motherhood, BfM) in 1905. This group, which rose to prominence in part because of Stöcker's activism, provided her a means to spread her message promoting women's rights. Topics she advocated for included abortion rights, contraceptive rights, and encouraging the passing of laws aiding mothers and children. Although the Weimar Constitution stated that men and women were to be equal, that was not the case in practical matters. In 1933 with the rise of National Socialism, she fled Germany, because of her liberal politics and public figure. Continuing to advocate for the rights of women in Germany and worldwide, she travelled from Sweden to the United Kingdom,

eventually living in New York City for the final two years of her life.[4] Through her association with women's organizations and peace movements, Stöcker spread her voice and message to women across the world for over forty years. Her writings and ideas on contraception will be the focus of this work; however, the overall importance of her work is not to be lost nor forgotten.

Another important person in this fight is Stöcker's ally, partner in the BfM and famed sexologist and homosexual crusader, Magnus Hirschfeld. Hirschfeld really furthered the cause of Stöcker and brought a certain celebrity to the organization and the fight. Also, through Hirschfeld's connections, the women's movement and the struggle against Paragraph 175 or the fight for legalizing and recognizing homosexuality connected and coalesced.

The investigation of contraception in Germany, which will be done within this paper, will hinge upon the passage of laws that revoked the 1918 decrees against the advertising of contraceptive devices in public. In the Weimar Constitution, as many historians have discussed, the advertising of contraception and birth control was forbidden. These devices and medical tools, which enabled women to have more control over their bodies, could only be disseminated and used in consultation with doctors or other medical professionals. In 1927 the Weimar Government repealed this law and passed the *Reichgesetz zur Bekämpfung Geschlechtskrankheiten*, and allowed the advertising of contraceptive devices under the explicitly stated goal of protecting society from Venereal Disease; this law maintained the general ban on abortions (outside of certain circumstances in consultation with doctors). The repeal of the law would seem to mark a high point in Stöcker's fight for women's rights,

[4] "Helene Stöcker," DG 035, Swarthmore Peace Collection, Swarthmore College (Swarthmore, PA).

however the reality of how dissemination and education involving contraception did not meet the rhetoric of the law. That is, although it became legal to educate and advertise contraceptive devices, this paper will show how there was still a struggle to educate the masses on these devices. Although Stöcker and the *Bund fur Muttershutz* established clinics throughout Germany to educate women about their bodies, the political and cultural climate remained closed to much of this message.[5] It remained difficult for women to learn how they could use contraception as a means, or part of, emancipating their bodies.

The context for the changing legality is a key part of this paper. That is, the movement for control over the body, the efforts to emancipate women, took place in the face of rationalization efforts in Weimar Germany. This is a period where the body, society, and general aspects of life were framed and understood in scientific terms. There was a general scientization of life that took place throughout the 1920s in Germany, as well as elsewhere in the world (mainly the United States and Germany were at the forefront of these new life sciences). Prior to the Weimar government, paternalistic policies were very much in place and the government had little to no understanding of homosexuality and other non-normative sexual or gender practices. Attempts to reform these policies, beginning in 1923, in the face of rising rates of Venereal Disease and marked increases in prostitution, saw the Weimar government begin to put attempts to pass new policies reforming contraceptive restrictions.[6]

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[5] Cornelie Usborne, *Politics of the Body in Weimar Germany: Women's Reproductive Rights and Duties* (Ann Arbor, MI: The University of Michigan Press, 1992), 102-133.

[6] Culminating in the 1927 passage, and repeal of the 1871 Abortion laws, allowing women to get abortions for strictly medical reasons. For more on this see: Cornelie Usborne, "Social Body, Racial Body, Woman's Body. Discourses, Policies, Practices from Wilhelmine to Nazi Germany," *Historical Social Research* 35, No. 2 (2011), 147.

This topic is informed by, as a lot of the field of gender studies has grown to be, from Michel Foucault's writing in *History of Sexuality*.[7] Foucault put forth an understanding of gender and power that has informed and influenced historians' understanding and discussions of gender rights throughout the world. Dagmar Herzog, as many of the other historians whose works are just important to this paper, uses Foucauldian methodologies in her approach to studying German women throughout the 20th century. It is her work that led me to think about gender conceptions and rights in Germany, and begin my work on this topic.[8] Herzog showed how one can use power and hegemony as a means for discussing women in Germany. She, however, focuses much of her work on a later period, looking at fascism and gender and the legacy left in Germany; but the model for understanding the subordination, at times of women, is clear.

To gain critical perspectives and understandings for exploring gender inequalities and relationships in Weimar Germany, Cornelie Usborne's works proved to be key. Her writings in *Cultures of Abortion* and *The Politics of the Body* inform readers of an under-explored but wholly interesting facets to life for women in Weimar Germany. She focuses on aspects and policies related to the policing and controlling of women's bodies. While never focusing specifically on contraception, as much of her focus is on abortions and birth rates, Usborne details restrictive practices and policies beginning in Wilhelminian Germany through the National Socialists era. However, in her works, Usborne is careful to detail areas where women gained new rights, found areas for autonomy and made use of new freedoms and rights

[7] Michele Foucault, *The History of Sexuality: Volume 1, An Introduction* (New York, NY: Vintage Books, 1990.)

[8] Dagmar Herzog, *Sex After Fascism: Memory and Morality in Twentieth-Century Germany* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2005).

granted to them. She details, in great depth, the climate and debate about abortion in Weimar Germany. This is a key debate for women's rights over their bodies, as part of emancipation and freedom for women involved being able to make decisions about their bodies without state or other interference.[9]

More informative for this topic, is Usborne's work in general on women and their bodies in Weimar, Germany in *Politics of the Body in Weimar Germany* (1992). This is far more of an intellectual/political history, which details the changing understanding and policies dictating men and women's control over their bodies. This work has a chapter devoted to contraception, which mentions the efforts of Stöcker and the *Bund fur Mutterschutz*, in promoting contraception and working to disseminate materials. One can build off Usborne, and use the details of the changing political climate around the body in Weimar Germany as part of an intellectual history on gender.[10] Usborne's works provide an excellent account of various gender policies and practices in Weimar Germany, and at times she offers comparisons to other eras in German history (mainly the Imperial/Wilhelmine era just prior, and National Socialism which followed) showing how practices and policies continued or changed in German history.[11]

Building off Usborne's work, a number of other excellent historians and works helped to inform and build a context for looking at gender in the Weimar period. These books, some more focused than others, detail the various struggles over the body and gender that was taking place in the face of a concerted effort for democratization.[12]

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[9] Cornelie Usborne, *Cultures of Abortion in Weimar Germany* (New York: Berghahn, 2007).

[10] Cornelie Usborne, *Politics of the Body in Weimar Germany*.

[11] Cornelie Usborne, "Social Body, Racial Body, Woman's Body."

[12] Helen Boak, *Women in the Weimar Republic* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2013). James Woycke, *Birth Control in Germany, 1871-1933* (London: Routledge, 1998). Kathleen Canning, Kerstin Barndt and Kristin McGuire, eds. *Weimar Public/Weimar Subjects: Rethinking of the Political Culture of Germany in the 1920s*

Edward Ross Dickinson laid a foundation for a historian to write about gender in Weimar Germany through his work on Imperial Germany (1880-1914); he reports on the activity of Stöcker, Helene Lange, the *BfM* and other organizations in the period prior to World War I.[13] Dickinson's work takes Foucault's understanding of gender and power and applies to the Kaiserreich period; he shows how modernization, at the turn of the century, opened up multitudes of possibilities and new potentials for members of society, of which women were able to capitalize upon (and integrate themselves into the changing society and world). Dickinson does an excellent job in this work of informing the reader of conditions in the early 20th century, which allows historians studying later periods to create a contrast and understand the evolution of gender in Germany. In conjunction with works by Dickinson, further information about the body sciences in Germany in this paper can be attributed to a small set of rather influential and very useful works.[14] Perhaps most important and useful for this paper, in that regard, is Charlotte Wolff's biography on Magnus Hirschfeld.[15]

(New York: Berghahn Books, 2010). Ute Frevert, *Women in Germany History: From Bourgeois Emancipation to Sexual Liberation* (New York: Berg, 1989). Richard Evans, *The Feminist Movement in Germany, 1894-1933* (London: Sage Publications, 1976). George Mosse, *Nationalism and Sexuality: Respectability and Abnormal Sexuality in Modern Europe* (New York: Howard Fertig, 1985). Laurie Marhoefer, "Among Abnormals: The Queer Sexual Politics of Germany's Weimar Republic, 1918-1933," PhD Diss., Rutgers, 2008. Michael Hau, *Cult of Healthy and Beauty in Germany: A Social history, 1890-1930* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2003).

[13] Edward Ross Dickinson, *Sex, Freedom and Power in Imperial Germany, 1880-1914* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2014). Edward Ross Dickinson, "Not So Scary After All?: Reform in Imperial and Weimar Germany," *Central European History* 43, No 1 (March 2010), 149-172. Edward Ross Dickinson, ""Biopolitics, Fascism, Democracy: Some Reflections on Our Discourse about 'Modernity'," Central European History 37, No. 1 (2004), 1-48.

[14] Eric Weitz, *Weimar Germany: Promise and Tragedy* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2007). Peter Fritzsche, *Rehearsals For Fascism: Populism and Political Mobilization in Weimar Germany* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1990). Peter Fritzsche, "Landscapes of Danger, Landscapes of Design: Crisis and Modernism in Weimar Germany." Peter Fritzsche, "Did Weimar Fail?" *The Journal of Modern History* 68, No. 3 (Sept., 1996), 629-656. Dagmar Herzog, *Sexuality in Europe: A Twentieth-Century History* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011). Dagmar Herzog, "Sexuality, Memory, Morality," *History & Memory* 17, No. ½ (Spring/Summer 2005), 238-266.

[15] Charlotte Wolff, *Magnus Hirschfeld: A Portrait of a Pioneer in Sexology* (London: Quartet Books, 1986).

A discrete set of books led to the focus and emphasis on contraception within this paper. Led by Götz Aly and Michael Sontheimer fairly recent investigation into Julius Fromm's condom empire in Germany from the 1910s through his forced sale to Hermann Goering's godmother in the 1930s. Aly and Sontheimer in great detail discuss the changing climate for contraceptive devices in the 1920s, and show tangibly how one company (Fromms Act) reacted and handled the tenuous and shifting situations.[16] With not as much of a focus on the Weimar period, Robert Jütte in *Contracpetion* gives an excellent and detailed history of contraception globally. He does focus, at various points, on relevant times and idea, but in a more general sense this work provides great context for the emphasis on contraception and hygiene that came to dominant sexual rhetoric in the 20th century.[17]

To truly understand the various means for disseminating such materials and devices, the culture and science of advertising that emerged in the Weimar era had to understood. Several studies investigated the shifting practices in the field of marketing, and drew connections to the industrialization and commodification of the economy taking place. Janet Ward Lungstrum and Julia Sneeringer, taking different approaches, give models and examples of the way that advertisers sought to appeal to certain groups within German society.[18] *Selling Modernity*, a collection of essays on the connection between modernization and advertising, helped to show how advertising became a science in this period.[19] Continuing to try to inform knowledge of

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[16] Götz Aly and Michael Sontheimer, *Fromms: Wie Der Jüdische Kondomfabrikant Julius F Unter Die Deutschen Räuber Fiel* (Frankfurt am Maim: S Fischer Verlag GmbH, 2007).

[17] Robert Jütte, *Contraception: A History* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2008).

[18] Janet Ward Lungstrum, "The Display Window: Designs and Desires of Weimar Consumerism," *New German Critique* 76, No. 3 (Winter 1999), 476-501. Julia Sneeringer, "The Shopper as Voter: Women, Advertising, and Politics in Post-Inflation Germany," *German Studies Review* 27, No. 3 (Oct., 2004), 683-730.

[19] Pamela E Swett, Jonathan Wiesen and Jonathan R Zatlin, eds., *Selling Modernity: Advertising in Twentieth-Century Germany (Durham: Duke University Press, 2007).*

advertising, and its changes and relations to sexuality and gender, Amy Sarch's excellent and detailed dissertation is a great place to turn. Although focused on and centered in the United States, the strategies and ideas fleshed out in this work seem to have a more global application as advertising approaches were being adopted globally.[20]

Adding to knowledge on Weimar Germany, as well the continuities and differences in gender practices between the Weimar Government and Hitler's government, is the collection of essays edited by Renate Bridenthal, Atina Grossman and Marion Kaplan in *When Biology Became Destiny*. This work, a collection of thirteen essays divided into two sections (one on Weimar and one on Nazi Germany), focus for the most part on political expressions and activism. This work spans varying methodologies, but focuses on and is used as a tool for understanding different facets of political activism that women were involved with in the Weimar Era.[21] One article included, by Amy Hackett, looks specifically at the life of Helene Stöcker, in a very cultural sense, to place her and her beliefs and ideas.[22]

Primary works from this period, dealing with the topic of gender and sexuality proved to be rather accessible. However, works by Stöcker in the United States are not widely disseminated; her papers are held in two locations: in Philadelphia, PA (at Swarthmore College) and Boulder, CO. Stöcker's correspondence, memoirs, manuscripts (including a recently published autobiography) and speeches held at the Collection contain difficult to find

[20] Amy Sarch, "Dirty Discourse: Birth Control Advertising in the 1920s and 1930s" PhD Dissertation, UPenn, 1994.

[21] Renate Bridenthal, Atina Grossman and Marion Kaplan, eds. *When Biology Became Destiny: Women in Weimar and Nazi Germany* (New York: Monthly Review Press, 1984).

[22] Amy Hackett, "Helene Stöcker: Left Wing Intellectual and Sex Reformer" in Ibid., 109-130.

information regarding Stöcker's message about contraceptive rights.[23] Very recently, fortunately enough for this work, Stöcker's previously unpublished memoirs were finally published.[24] The New York Public Library has a large number of editions of *Die Frau* as well the newsletter for the BfM *Die Neue Generation*, published by Hirschfeld and Stöcker. In *Die Frau* and *Die Neue Generation*, many articles concerning women's bodies, rights, and other such politics were published.[25] A couple of handbooks and works from various series published in the 1920s and 1930s gave an understanding from the ground of how contraception, sexuality and gender was being perceived.[26] The collection of primary and secondary works have led to an understanding of gender in the Weimar Republic and under its constitution, whereby one sees that supposed equalities were met by tangible inequalities. While women were made promises, in reality the paternalism and restrictive policies continued.

This paper will investigate the debate over contraceptive education and dissemination, as it is a part of a larger fight over women's rights and bodies, one that will plague Germany for years. Contraceptive rights were a small part of the larger struggle for control and autonomy that some women undertook in this era. This paper will seek to show, through an intensive examination into the intellectual debate surrounding this law and contraceptive devices, what change was truly brought about. Was there a shift in mindset and perception that occurred?

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[23] "Stöcker," Swarthmore Peace Collection. Helene Stöcker, *Lebenserinnerungen: die uvollendete Autobiographie einer frauenbewegten Pazifistin* (Weimar, Ge: Böhlau Verlag Köln, 2015).

[24] Stöcker, *Lebenserinnerungen*

[25] *Bund Deutscher Frauenvereine* Collection, New York Public Library. *Die Neue Generation*, New York Public Library.

[26] Felix Pinkus, *Die Normale Anatomie der Haut: Erster Band Erster Teil,* Handbuch der Haut und Geschlecktskrankheiten (Berlin: Verlag von Julius Springer, 1927). Barbara von Treskow and Johannes Weyl, *Das Lexikon der Hausfrau: ein praktischer Ratgeber für Heim und Familie* (Berlin: Ullstein A.G., 1932). Rosa Kempf*, Die deutsche Frau: nach der Volks-, Berufs-, und Betriebszählung von 1925* (Bensenheim: Mannheim u.a., 1931).

Did the repeal of the ban on contraceptive advertising change the condition of life for the everyday women? And how were contraceptives marketed and advertised, and does this fit into the greater tide of advertising at this time?

The Effect of World War I on Women's Place in Weimar Germany (1890s-1927)

The maintenance of wartime economy and attempts to keep the country as steady as possible during the First World War, meant that many women had to take on jobs never before available to them. Many of the women took on the jobs that their husbands, sons, fathers, or other male relatives or even occasionally friends once held in the hopes that they will return and resume life as before war. However, the unfortunate destruction of war, on an unprecedented scale because of new technologies and strategies, meant that many of these men would not return. Some of these women, thus, had to continue working in the factories producing ammunition, steel, or other necessities the country needed to have any chance of winning the war. Helene Lange, an influential leader of the *Bund Deutscher Frauenvereine*, saw opportunity in this change and labeled 1914 as the "year of Women's Service" (*weibliche Dienstjahr.*[27] As the mentality towards the jobs shifted from the positions being temporary to the realization that perhaps there could be more permanence to these positions, some interesting questions arose in Germany society about the abilities and status of women.

This question could only be answered with time, which has shown that women are more than capable. However, that is not to say that there was not reaction and backlash against the changing place of women in German society. As they entered the workforce in greater

[27] Helene Stöcker, "*Die Frau und Die Heiligkeit des Lebens," Sonderdruck der Neuen Generation* Heft 5/6, 1921. Accessed at the New York Public Library.

numbers, conservatives and members of the merchant class worked to dissuade women from working and make stringent barriers of entry. Attempts were made to get the public against any and all notions of women in the work place, by arguing that the rightful place for women is in the home. They saw women as being responsible for maintaining the house, having and raising children, and caring for their husbands. Women were not to be providers for the family in the same way as men did. The conservatives and members of the merchant class were not in favor of the ideas of double earners (*doppelverdiener)*.[28] Politically this manifested itself in a very interesting situation, as Julia Sneering found in her studies on the post-war place of women, there was a material relegation of women that occurred. Women were told to focus on the home and domestic life, and were supposed to be preoccupied with consumerism (buying all the goods for the family) instead of dealing with "real issues". Real issues refer to anything in the political realm, it was thought that women could be distracted from dealing with politics by focusing on their buying powers. Thus, as will be detailed later, advertisements and product placements, as they existed at that time, were very much targeted towards middle class women.[29]

The dialectic at play between the roles of women as workers, replacing men in battle and continuing that role after many of the men did not return or could not work upon returning, and the attempt to keep women out of politics, placed females in a very precarious place. Also, the split role is telling about the ideas many, especially those in charge, held in

[28] Helen Boak, *Women in the Weimar Republic*, 164.

[29] Belinda Davis, *Home Fires Burning: Food, Politics, and Everyday Life in World War I Berlin* (University of North Carolina Press: Chapel Hill, NC, 2000), 48-75. Julia Sneeringer, *Winning Women's Votes: Propoganda and Politics in Weimar Germany* (University of North Carolina Press: Chapel Hill, NC, 2002), 66, 77.

regards to gender and the differences between the sexes. Women had new freedom, but at the same time that freedom only existed in certain sectors and facets of life. Once they crossed to an area they should not, the freedom is curtailed and their voice is not listened to. As Weztell argues, in studying criminology and crimes at this time, part of this change led to a "masculization" of the female, the effects of which only came to be seen in the explosion of ideas in Weimar.[30]

One position and attempt at reform that seemed to stand in contrast to many of the pro-natal and paternalistic ideas held by many, came from the attempts beginning in 1918 to pass anti-Venereal Disease laws which would enable the general public (women and men, not just the latter) access to prophylactic devices. In 1916, at the height of war, Germany realized they faced a huge VD problem. In the Homefront, and on the battle field, prostitution and brothels saw large numbers of visitors without access to prophylactic devices. Thus, unwanted pregnancy and VD ran rampant. This led to the German military advising soldiers, in 1916, to use condoms as a form of protection from VD.[31] They were distributed in droves to soldiers on the front lines, and at home in Germany men could simply visit their local physician to receive condoms. Women were left with more primitive means as protection, centering around hygiene and cleanliness, and when contraception could not be had, *coitus interruptus.* In 1918, just prior the beginning of the Weimar government, calls were made to expand the anti-VD laws and hopefully protect more of the population from these ailments.

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[30] Richard Wetzell, *Inventing the Criminal: A History of German Criminology, 1880-1945* (University of North Carolina Press: Chapel Hill, NC, 2000), 112.

[31] Fahd Khan, Saheel Mukhtar, Ian K Dickinson, and Seshadri Sriprasad, "The Story of the Condom" *Indian Journal of Urology*, Volume 29, Jan-March 2013, pgs. 12-15.

The leadership of Germany wanted to encourage pronatalism and a wider dissemination of prophylactic materials would hurt the population regrowth needed. In the aftermath of war, as many men died in battle, Germany faced a surplus of women (*Frauenüberschuß).*[32] Thus, much of the efforts and rhetoric focused on the rebuilding of German society, much of which targeted the 20-40-year-old segment of the population. It was this demographic that carried much of the burden of repopulating Germany. With abortions outlawed in Germany, and prophylactics mostly available to men, it seems that women were left with little to no recourse for protection from unwanted pregnancies. It is also important to remember the primitive means of which were available to combat the venereal diseases many of the husbands returned from carrying.[33] Thus, many women were afraid of having sex with their husbands, especially procreative sex as proscribed by the government.

Marion Kaplan, in her ground-breaking work on the League of Jewish Women (*Jüdischer Frauenbund)*, part of the umbrella group the BDF, found that in post-war Germany, the prostitution problem increased. Many women, especially many Jewish women, had to sell their bodies as a means to provide. Also, as women had recourse from unwanted pregnancy and limited protection from disease, many were afraid of having sex with their husbands upon their return from war; leaving many men with brothels and prostituted as their only release. With the economy getting direr as the 1920s progressed, many families also could not afford the costs and burdens that childbirth brings.[34] Rosa Kempf, in her work published in 1932 about the

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[32] Catherine L. Dollard, *The Surplus Women: Unmarried in Imperial Germany, 1871-1918* (Berghahn Books: New York, 2009) 11-16.

[33] Edward J Bristow, *Prositution and Prejudice: The Jewish Fight Against White Slavery, 1870-1939* (Schocken Books: New York, 1983), 285.

[34] Marion Kaplan, *The Jewish Feminist Movement in Germany: The Campaigns of the Jüdischer Frauenbund, 1904-1938* (Greenwood Press: Westport, CT, 1979).

previous decade in German history, demonstrates through statistics and graphs that women and men could not afford to have children. The time missed from work for women, and the added costs of food, clothing, perhaps shelter, added far too great of a burden for most working class German families and thus tried to use the means available to avoid pregnancies.[35] Underground abortion clinics, as has been amply documented by Cornelie Usborne amongst others, saw a fair number of clients who needed such services due to the tenuous prophylactic devices available.[36] The primitive condoms available could not be relied to not break, thus men were encouraged to "test" the condoms before using them. It was not until vulcanization of rubber came to Germany, and Julius Fromm figured out the application of that process to condoms that Germany and Europe began to have more reliable access to such materials.[37]

Helene Stöcker came to be one of the biggest advocates of the mass availability of contraception through her endorsement of "free love." She felt that women have an inherent right to control their body sexually. They, and only they, should determine who they have sex with and for what purposes. That is, not all sex is seen as being for procreative measures; sex came to be understood as a means towards pleasure, as well as important bodily function that needs to happen.[38] With the Weimar Constitution explicitly stating that all, regardless of gender, are equals entitled to the same rights and obligations, one begins to see an incongruity between the rhetoric and actions. The practice of equality comes to be far more restrained, and the only truly free segment of the population seems to be middle class and higher males. The

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[35]Rosa Kempf, *Die Deutsche Frau: Nach der Volks-, Berufs-, und Betriebszählung von 1925* (J. Bensheimer Verlag: Mannheim, Ge, 1931.) Accessed via the New York Public Library.

[36] Cornelie Usborne, *Cultures of Abortion in Weimar Germany*.

[37] Götz Aly and Michael Sontheimer, *Fromms*, 43-57.

[38] Helene Stöcker, *Lebenserrinnerungen*, 298-307.

banning of abortions, the limitations placed upon contraceptive materials, and general focus on pronatalism took emancipation from women and confined their bodies to the regulatory powers of the government.[39]

Helene Stöcker, Magnus Hirschfeld, and Gendered Politics

The espousal and belief in "free love," or the concept that one can have multiple sexual partners fulfilling different needs, in the United States has come to be accepted as rooted in the various grassroots movements of the 1960s. However, the "Hippie movement," and its participants, were not the pioneers of this idea. In Germany more than 40 years prior to the "Summer of Love" and all that accompanied it, Helene Stöcker and the famed sexologist Magnus Hirschfeld discussed similar radical ideas. Stöcker believed that women had a right to choose their sexual partners, and not all sex needed to be procreative or even based in love. This idea and call stood in stark contrast to the proscriptive procreative sex that came from above. This seems to be one answer to the attempts to emancipate women from the paternalistic culture surrounding them, it is an extraction of sorts and an attempt to regain true freedom over their bodies.

However, the lack of legal reforms made it very difficult to truly allow women to protect themselves. Without mass accessibility to contraception or reliable abortion clinics, women had to be in fear of venereal disease and unwanted pregnancy. It is for this reason that as early as 1913, before the beginning of World War I, that Stöcker already began her ardent calls for reforms. These early reforms focused on changes in natal care, with much of it focusing on the role and place of the fathers; she wanted to see men taking on (even if forced) a greater role in

[39] Cornelie Usborne, *The Politics of the Body in Weimar Germany*, 156-201.

the whole process of having and raising children. The goal for equality of genders and recognition of equal rights seems to the cause that united Stöcker and Hirschfeld, ultimately leading to any relative strength and size that the *Bund für Mutterschutz* (though it would remain a relative weak organization compared to the behemoth *Bund Deutscher Frauenvereine,* BdF*)*.[40]

The means that the two great intellectuals came up with for attempting to make changes in society is reflective of both their backgrounds. Hirschfeld had founded and ran the *Institut für Sexualwissenschaft* and Stöcker had long been involved in grassroots women's campaigns, so they combined the two methods and opened *BfM* run clinics. In these clinics, women and men could visit to receive education on all varieties of natal care- pregnancy planning through healthcare checkups for mothers and babies. These clinics were first opened in 1924, with the original locations coming in Frankfurt, Mannheim, and the most popular location in Hamburg. These three vastly differing geographic locations within Germany, perhaps began as a test of the viability of clinics in various regions. Rather than opening clinics at once, the *BfM* started slowly and came up with a model for the clinics that could be spread across the rest of Germany over time.[41]

The year 1924, as the beginning of the clinics, is important because of what is comes before, that is Stöcker and Hirschfeld were already beginning their attempts to shape and change society before the passage of the 1927 *Reichsgesestz zur Bekämpfung*

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[40]Helene Stöcker, *Lebenserinnerungen,* 302-308, 323-325. Anton Kaes, Martin Jay and Edward Dimendberg *Weimar Republic Sourcebook* (University of California Press: Berkley, CA, 1995), 195-197. Cornelie Usborne, *The Politics of the Body,* 8.

[41] James Woycke, *Birth Control in Germany*, 55-57, 121, 123. Atina Grossman, *Reforming Sex: The German Movement for Birth Control & Abortion Reform 1920-1950* (Oxford University Press: New York, 1995), 48, 56, 73, 90, 129-130.

Geschlechtskrankheiten. The efficacy of these clinics greatly increased when many necessary prophylactic and protective materials could be widely disseminated.[42] These clinics took away from the "militarization of reproduction," and personalized or individualized the biological sciences; the *BfM* brought a personal touch to what had become a very public issue.[43] The opening of clinics is a continuation of the efforts leading to the 1927 law, that is as soon as World War I was over (and even before) the left called for vast sexual and political reforms focusing on women. They wanted to see anti-homosexuality laws abolished (Paragraph 175, criminalizing homosexuality, would not be taken off the German Criminal Code till 1994), abolition of anti-abortion laws…a general opening and balancing of society. However, as has been amply documented, in the face of declining birth and population rates, the conservatives and traditionalists in Germany saw these ideas by the left as being against the nation; there was some compromise by both sides though, which finally led to the passage of anti-VD law in 1927 after almost a decade of attempts at such reform. The first of the *BfM* clinics opened in the face of negotiations toward such reforms, one long path eventually leading to compromised, somewhat watered-down legislation.

Even as the *BfM* seemed to try to remain apolitical, whereas the larger *BdF* held explicitly politically motivated goals and ideas, as politics, sex and gender came to be entangled it became inevitable that Stöcker and the *BfM* would come across and take stands on political ideas. Rhetorically, it seems, Stöcker in many ways did her best to remain a politically neutral figure (though she was clearly allied with the far left), it is more than she focused on the issues

[42] Robert Jütte, *Contraception: A History*, (Polity Press: Cambridke, UK, 2008), 171. James Woycke, *Birth Control in Germany*, 113.

[43] Anthony McElligott, eds., *Weimar Germany* (Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press, 2009), 148.

of gender empowerment and pacifism often connecting to the international struggle and movement. They sought equality for women on their terms, that is for the individuals by the individuals (rather than from above), and made it come to fruition even as the legal climate remained somewhat hostile to the ideas. That is not to say that Stöcker always stood in stark contrast to the government and the official stances, the pre- and post-natal care offered at the clinics met the rhetoric from above. The trained workers at the clinics knew the necessary steps to help women through the process of child-birth and frequently working class women and those without means for other care made use of this. The influence of the clinics is perhaps the greatest legacy, with Stöcker, Hirschfeld and the *BfM* being early adopters of this model, which later spread to other groups and organizations like the *Liga für Mutterschutz und Soziale Familienhygiene* opened hundreds of clinics Westphalia and Prussia in the late 1920s and early 30s.[44]

The goals laid for women by the *BfM,* mostly coming from the leaders and figureheads of Stöcker and Hirschfeld, involved many facets. First, but not most importantly, they focused on trying to get abortions legalized; protecting women from having to visit the illegal, underground clinics that existed in Germany and opening up a legally regulated means for helping women to not have burdensome pregnancies when unwanted. An increase in education for society about their bodies, its functions and hygiene; knowledge came to be seen as a crucial tool by Stöcker and Hirschfeld in the fight against paternalistic traditionalism in

[44] Michelle Mouton, *From Nurturing the Nation to Purifying the Volk: Weimar and Nazi Family Policy, 1918-1945* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2007), 45. "Historical Introduction" *The Women's International League for Peace and Freedom Paper, 1915-1978*. Swarthmore University Peace Collection. DG 35, 2.

Weimar Germany.[45] The clinics provided a grounds for truly educating, in opposition to other organization clinics for women which were motivated by sponsorships by products or brands and the government "marriage clinics" teaching and preparing women to be mothers and wives only.[46] There is little agency or choice allotted to women by other organizations and clinics, the *BfM* allowed women ownership over their bodies partly through choice. Hirschfeld institutes motto reflected this goals of education and a scientific understanding of the body and world, without the joining of Stöcker and Hirschfeld it would seem the clinics would not have held the same position and targeted the lofty but worthy objectives that they came to fight for.[47]

The clinics, as Michelle Mouton shows through contextualization in her work, were part of a greater process and effort to educate and reshape society. This seems to have, perhaps, made its greatest mark on general German society through the passage of the *Reichsgesestz* in 1927. The law, focused on attempts to institute greater hygienic awareness in society to get rid of the venereal crisis plaguing German society since World War I. The passage of this law allowed places like the *BfM* to disseminate prophylactic materials. There were still ample restrictions placed on what could and could not be done, and because of these restrictions many were initially very hesitant to embrace the supposed allowance of advertising and dissemination of condoms, as one example, in public. Thus, in the initial period after the law passed, companies producing these newly allowed products confined their marketing to trade

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[45] Susan G. Bell and Karen M. Offen, *Women, the Family and Freedom: 1880-1950* (Palo Alto, CA: Stanford University Press, 1983), 102-104.

[46] Atina Grossman, "'Satisfaction is Domestic Happiness': Mass Working-Class Sex Reform Organizations in the Weimar Republic" 265-266, chapter 15 in: Michael N. Dobkowski and Isidor Wallimann, *Towards the Holocaust: The Social and Economic Collpase of the Weimar Republic* (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1983).

[47] *"Darauf Wissenschaft zur Gerechtifkeit"*- motto for the Institut.

journals and other areas with more confined, highly homogenous readerships or viewers.[48] An example of this can be seen in Fromms Act, the highly respected and used condom company founded by Julius Fromm. Fromm doubted the new legalization and due to his lack of confidence in the government to maintain this new law, he kept information about his new condoms confined to areas where only read and seen by small segments of the population.[49]

The battle to pass the 1927 law is an important debate and history to reconstruct as a means for understanding how sexual politics came to exist in the tenuous state they were in by the end of the Weimar Republic. This shows the importance of clinics like those run by the *BfM*. In the years before Fromm, and other, began testing more general markets (culminating in the creation of condom vending machines in public spaces like bars), the clinics could have been the first interactions many had with such protective and hygienic devices. The government still tried to stress the role of men as rebuilders of society, and women as being the means to achieve that goal; that is the government, still, in the face of mass availability of condoms and other prophylactic devices outlawed any materials or devices that were contraceptive. That is, devices that prevented pregnancies, as an ancillary "benefit", could be marketed and allowed only on the ground that they be used for prophylactic purposes. Condoms were intended and advertised as protection from disease, in order to abide by the wording of the 1927 law. If anything, such as condoms or diaphragms, were to be advertised and modelled under the premise that they would stop pregnancy then the manufacturer and advertiser would be

[48] Michelle Mouton, *From Nurturing the Nation to Purifying the Volk,* 107-153.
[49] Götz Aly and Michael Sontheimer, *Fromms*, 69-77.

breaking the law; however, if it advertised as protection and for hygiene then that very same item and the marketing for it would be wholly legal.[50]

Advertising

The early 20th century in Germany, and the world, marked a shift in the economic structure of society. Mass consumer society saw its first heyday, as all sorts of people began to be seduced and enthralled by material items. Thus, questions arose as how to appeal to this new society of consumers. How could the individual's brands and products entice consumers in the face of vast competition? There were multiple brands producing the same items, those manufacturers had to force the customer to choose a specific product or brand over another. Marketing and advertising became the key tool for this to be done. This period marked the beginning of a new "science of advertising," that worked on a mass-scale appealing to the individual. Immediately, there is a dichotomy set-up; how to appeal to the masses, while still making the individual feel important.[51]

One important way to do so, and one way to group consumers together for marketing purposes, came through demographics. With the rise of new forms of advertising, society needed people who studied the successes and failures of the campaigns to devise the best strategies going forward. Part of strategizing involved coming up with a target audience, then finding what appeals to that audience. These ideas have become so engrained in modern

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[50] Ibid.; Cornelie Usborne, *Politics of the Body,* 112. Elizabeth D. Heneiman, "Sexuality and Nazism: The Doubly Unspeakable", 46, chapter 2 in: Dagmar Herzog, eds., *Sexuality and German Fascism*, (New York: Berghahn Books, 2005). Julia Roos, *Weimar Through the Lense of Gender: Prositution Reform, Woman's Emancipation, and German Democracy, 1919-33,* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2010), 113-114. Jam Woycke, *Birth Control in Germany*, 113.

[51] Janet Ward Lungstrum, "The Display Window: Designs and Desires of Weimar Consumerism," *New German Critique* No. 76 (Winter, 1999), 115-160.

society, advertising is everywhere, but yet it still relies and works on the same principles as over 100 years ago. The goal is to appeal to an audience, and seduce them into buying a specific good or service.

Mass consumer society, a society that revolves around the purchasing of goods and services, is very much tied to the rise of advertising culture. Without a shift away from an agrarian society towards an urban, industrialized society there would be no use for these new advertisers and marketers. Each segment works together to from a mass society, or the "mass ornament" (as coined by Kracauer).[52] Kracauer's writings on this period and idea are very clear insights into how the new society is structured and how it works. He tells of the different positions and places for various members of society, and informs readers of the lifestyles of these people in his various writings on Weimar Germany. However, as much as Germany came to be at the forefront of changing society, with its increasing scientific premises and backing, the United States is where much of these ideas originated and were perfected.[53]

At this time, with the increasing speed of communication and faster modes of transportation over long distances, more information came to be disseminated across territorial and continental boundaries. As the United States, in the 1900s, came to embody mass consumer society with its highly strategic use of marketing, these ideas were being passed along to other nations. Amy Sarch in her excellent study on advertising in the United States clarifies an intercontinental transference of ideas; many of the compelling strategies having

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[52] Siegfried Kracauer, *The Mass Ornament: Weimar Essays* (Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University Press, 1995).

[53] Siegfried Kracauer, *The Salaried Masses: Duty and Distraction in Weimar Germany* (London: Verso, 1998), 57-53.

been "shipped" from the United States across the Atlantic to Western Europe. The ideas of appealing to the individual created a gender split, that is there arose different paradigms and methods for appealing to men and women.[54]

The gendered advertising in Germany came to take on a special role, perhaps, compared to the United States and other "western" nations, because of the place allotted to women. Women were seen as the new key to consumer society, they were to be the shoppers for the family. Women not only took care of the grocery shopping, and other household shopping duties, but from what can be gathered it appears much of the discretionary spending for households went through women. They did the shopping for the family for almost all their items, and thus dictated where money would be allocated. Some of this, as has been discussed, was done as a means of distraction from above--the government wanted women to focus on spending money and smaller decisions, rather than having an active political voice. There was a replacement of political voice with an economic role that suited the Weimar Government; although women had the right to take part, if they were too enthralled and distracted by the consumer options all around them, they would not have the time or energy or care to voice their opinions and take active roles.[55]

This idea of consumerism as a distraction seems to have its roots in the beginnings of industrial society in the 19th century. As work shifted away from the home towards factories, and the ideas of the workplace sciences began to see implementation (8 hour workday, various breaks, etc…) people sought other distractions in their time off from work. Discretionary

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[54]Amy Sarch, "Dirty Discourse". Pamela E. Sweet, *Selling Modernity*, 52-77.

[55] Julia Sneeringer, *Winning Women's Votes*, 269-282. Julia Sneeringer, "The Shopper as Voter: Women, Advertising, and Politcs in Post-Inflation Germany," *German Studies Review* 27/3 (2004), 475-501.

spending, that is spending on non-essential goods, came to be a means for distracting overworked, exhausted individuals and allowed them to relive stress. Consumerism, or pleasure shopping (today what is called "retail therapy") became an outlet for many middle and working class individuals. They worked for the purpose of being able to buy whatever it is that fancied them, and would offer distraction from the monotony of the workweek. Women, in Weimar Germany, came to focus on decisions amongst competing goods and products. They were not concerned with the paternalism, or inadequacies in the promises of emancipation from the government, instead many women found solace and tranquility in shopping.

The advertisements focused on these women told them of the ways that various products would ease the burdens of taking care of the house, increase efficiency and in general make theirs and their families lives better. The very same promises advertisers lure individuals with in modern society. The 1900s marked the beginning of a changing culture, one that came to be dominated by major corporations through intensely focused marketing campaigns.[56]

Prophylactic Advertising

Until 1927, the focus on protection from venereal disease (VD) came from the medical field only. There was no mass-availability of products, people knew about such devices as condoms and diaphragms, but they were difficult to gain access too. Especially for the masses, who perhaps needed such devices and materials most. The burden from venereal disease and unwanted pregnancy very much took a regressive path along class lines, that it affected the working and middle classes far more than the upper classes. In 1927, finally with a law passed allowing for the protection of the population from VD, people had increased abilities to

[56] Pamela Swett, *Selling Modernity,* 27-77.

embrace hygienic sexual practices. Finally, as long as protection from disease was emphasized, people could learn how to practice safe sex. They could protect their bodies, and as an ancillary (perhaps unwanted benefit) protect themselves from burdensome pregnancies. The law also, critically, allowed for limited advertising of products such as condoms. Though, condoms specifically, existed in a tenuous state at this point; producers and advertisers had to emphasize the prophylactic not contraceptive role of condoms. The highly-regulated advertising slowly spread in German society.

The advertisements, as has been stressed, had to highlight and focus on the value of the item as a mean for protection from venereal disease. Again, going back to World War I, Germany as a general nation had been heavily afflicted by various forms of venereal disease. Condoms, the easiest and most available product, while accessible on the front lines was not always used (evidence has been found that in the officer brothels, which were more expensive, fewer men used contraceptive devices made available to them). Unfortunately, many of the diseases soldiers came back with would afflict them for life or were easily communicable. Thus, the spread of disease became rampant and there was a need for protecting society. As had been shown, the schism between progressives and conservatives in the Weimar government and in social places, led to a bitter fight for the *Reichgesestz zur Bekämpfung Geschlechtskrankheitein* to be worded properly so as to make the widest impact. Part of the wording of the law, left very vague position for how to advertise such products that would help to prevent disease.[57]

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[57] Helen Boak, *Women in the Weimar Republic,* 99, 209, 215-218. James Woycke, *Birth Control in Germany,* 113. Atina Grossman, *Reforming Sex*, 11, 37. Swarthmore Peace Collection, "Helene Stöcker Collection," Box 5 "*Gessellschaft zur Bekampfung der Gescleckskrankheiten."*

One of the wordings of the law stated, paraphrased, that the advertisements for prophylactics could not be deemed offensive. By whom is seemingly left open. However, one could interpret the audience, that is the general public, as those who determine the character of the advertisements and whether they are to be labelled as smut or allowed to be disseminated and shown.[58] This led to many producers of condoms, for one example, since condoms were the largest of the prophylactic industries and the one that saw the greatest rise in production and sales as a result of the shifting legal status of the products, to be unsure of how to advertise their products and whom to target.

In the initial period, that is 1927 to the early part of 1928, many of the advertisements were confined to specially focused trade journals and other non-publically disseminated magazines.[59] These journals and magazines were mostly confined to various parts of the medical industry and field, seeing as the products were sold in pharmacies by pharmacists. They were appealing not specifically to the mass user of the device, and not showing the general public the devices and informing them of its uses. These trade journals and magazines had no broad appeal, and the advertisers and companies producing the items knew this and wanted to test the new law. They were unsure of what exactly would be considered smut, and what would be allowed to be shown and written. This is also a part of the traditional, pro-natal values held by many in society.

[58] Ambroseus Barth, *Zeitschrift für Bekampfung der Geschlechtskrankheiten* (Leipzig: Verlag Von Johnson), Heft 12. Felix Pinkus, *Die Normaly Anatomie Der Haut*, 1927. In this work, Pinkus defines what a normative understanding of VD protection was; in a small section.

[59] Götz Aly and Michael Sontheimer, *Fromms*, 16-17.

As women and men were expected, still, to get married and have children, certain producers of condoms were unsure of whether their advertisements would be seen as being "against society". However, there was also knowledge that the people wanted to have greater availability to contraception. As can be seen from the rising sales figures for Fromms (or other condoms) peopled needed condoms, they yearned for protection from childbirth and from disease (Fromm saw rising success in the 1920s and early 30s domestically and internationally). Again though, as has been documented with much of the sexual politics, men were the focus.

Felix Pinkus, in *Die Normale Anatomie der Haut*, focuses on men and their sexual anatomies and needs with little to no regard for women. This work goes into great, for the time, scientific detail about the body and the way it functions, with sections devoted to discussing sexuality.[60] As is mentioned, it is only the male sexuality and the male body that is discussed; no mention of female sexuality is found in this work. Even women writing in the period sublimated themselves to men, Barbara von Treskow in her pseudo dictionary for housewife's from 1932 writes in the section on Venereal Disease about women's role in ensuring that proper protection is taken. She emphasizes that is it us up to the women to ensure that hygienic practices are followed for the protection and safety of the men of society (something she emphasized in this short entry). It became engrained, it seems, in the heads of women that they must ensure that men are safe and hygienic. Again there is a continuity between genders in the paternalistic paradigm that is seen throughout Weimar, women were vanguards for hygiene—they had to protect men from venereal disease, or ensure men's

[60] Felix Pinkus, *Die Normale Anatomie der Haut*.

protection. There was a clearly conservative rhetoric about protection from disease during sexual encounters, which seemed to fall upon women to guarantee.[61]

Specifically, the early ads from Fromms Act, had little to no imagery. There was great uncertainty as to be what could be shown, and what would hold the greatest sway. Perhaps using text to describe the products and what they did for people would be power enough to persuade, initially the pharmacists to carry the products then, the people to buy the condoms and make use of the new legalization of forms of hygiene. The text used specifically invoked a certain gothic feeling, done purposely to invoke a certain Germanic or Teutonic sense. That is, these producers tried to show through the text itself (not the words chosen) that these were part of "classic" German society, "classic" Gothic culture. The words chosen by Julius Fromm specifically in his early ads were very much scientific. He stressed the vulcanization product that led to the production of a more comfortable latex product, as opposed to the older far more cumbersome condoms that were produced during World War I and earlier. Fromm seemed to feel that by discussing the product on a scientific level, breaking down its production to the sciences that enabled such devices to be produced on a mass-scale at affordable prices (approximately 15-50 *Reichspfennig*), he would not come close to offending the government and the public and would distance himself from any potential sanctions and/or fines.

In 1928, as people got more conformable with the changing face of society and sex (this was a period of further progressivism in Weimar, just before a conservative backlash would arise), Fromm felt comfortable enough to enable the mass-availability of condoms in a form:

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[61] Barbara von Treskow and Johannes Weyl, *Das Lexikon der Hausfrau: ein Praktischer Ratgeber für Heim und Familie* (Berlin: Ullstein A.G., 1932), 124.

the vending machine. He opens the first vending machines in Germany in 1928, which seems to mark a new openness in Weimar society. Instead of being fearful of the laws, and testing them very slowly, Fromm seems to take a very big step forward for men and women by putting prophylactics in public. Although condoms, as has been repeatedly stressed, were a prophylactic product (of course they function as a contraceptive, but again that had to be deemphasized in favor of the protection and hygiene offered). By making condoms more available, women, as someone like Barbara von Treskow stated, could take a more active role in ensuring the use those devices and there type. No longer were women reliant on primitive methods like douching and *coitus interruptus*, they could to go to a local vending machine and purchase a pack of three Fromms condoms to ensure that they would be disease-free and hygienic. Again, Weimar culture shows itself repeatedly to trend toward paternalism with much of the emphasis and focus of sexual safety falling to men, and women as ancillary beneficiaries with roles as aids to men's safety. This is exemplary of the double standard, and schism, between men and women.

Conclusion

The topic, and idea this paper sought to delve into and explain, may come across to some as rather esoteric; however, it is very indicative of certain trends and ideals from Weimar Germany. While there were other organizations led by and for the benefit of women, some of which were much larger than the BfM and had far greater political voice and participation, Stöcker didn't change her message. There was little to pressure that the BfM succumbed to. Privately, Stöcker did express views that, at times, contradicted the public message disseminated in her leadership; however, publically, she always fought for progressive female

rights over their lives and bodies. [62] The *Bund Deutcher Frauenbund* was far more of a populist representation of feminist culture, while Stöckers' *Bund für Mütterschutz* (BfM) expressed far more liberal and idealistic views; ones that, in many cases, spawned itself again in the Sexual Revolution that swept the United States and the world in the 1960s. The clinics that Stöcker operated and opened across Germany express a tangible example of the practices of disseminating and educating women on contraceptive devices and use, as a means of protecting their bodies.[63] To tie Stöcker and Magnus Hirschfeld together, as this paper (and many other scholarly works have done, and will continue to do), shows the greater struggle for sexuality and liberation that occurred in Weimar Germany; and is part of an alliance that is still continued today between homosexual rights and female emancipation. Both are still struggling to gain the proper foothold in society that is deserved.[64]

The influence of Cross-Atlantic advertising, that is the rise of mass advertising that took place in the United States, to Germany is a very interesting topic unto itself. It has been explored in a rather sufficient manner by a variety of academics, and one that could have easily taken over this paper. German companies, in their use of advertising and marketing materials, looked to and borrowed from US successes in making a science out of advertising. They studied the way that various US businesses were able to grow and attract a variety of new and different groups of consumers through highly specific, targeted ads.[65] This included, the use of

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[62] A view that she never wavered on due to her undying support, and belief that women were due rights that were not always passed on to them; even if, at times, these rights were legally codified

[63] Even as this was frowned upon, and outlawed legally. See the 1927 law, as well as the clinics that Stöcker and the BfM, as well as other organizations, opened and operated throughout Germany in the 1920s. These clinics were shutdown with the rise of Adolf Hitler and the NSDAP.

[64] More to be discussed later

[65] Amy Sarch, "Dirty Discourse." Pamela Swett, *Selling Modernity*. Julia Sneeringer, *Winning Women's Votes*. Janet Ward Lungstrum, "The Display Window." Kathleen Canning, "The Politics of Symbols, Semantics and

demographics to their advantage by finding out as much as possible about a targeted group and incorporating that material into campaigns. There was a suggestive use of imagery, that is they hinted at the way these products would change one's life.[66] And lastly, there was a use of strong language to describe the positive results the product or service would bring. Advertising is a key part of the spreading of a paternalistic culture in Weimar Germany.[67]

From an abstract perspective, this topic presented itself in a multitude of interesting dilemmas that came to mind will reading into history from a deeper perspective. It became wholly apparent, that rhetoric and laws did not, and still do not, always bring about a change or equality. Perspective becomes the most important tool to use when exploring questions, such as ones involving gender studies; one sometimes needs to take a different approach, or methodology, to see the truth behind the actions of individuals in a society. Laws may dictate a certain norm, that on the ground, or in reality, is not met. From a much more tangible, less theoretical perspective, this topic took interest at a time when debates about women's' rights over their bodies once again became a salient topic. This project aims to show how women, in 1920s Germany, were left out of political discussions and debates over their own bodies.

Without ending on too political of a note, it is sad to see the way that there is still a struggle for rights over bodies in this country and world. As we get deeper into the 21st century,

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Sentiments in the Weimar Republic," *Central European History* 43 (2010), 567-580. Just to name a few works which tackled this subject…there are countless others, that for brevity sake, will be cited in the bibliography below.

[66] Something still very much alive in our modern consumer world, where highly provocative imagery is used to describe mundane products

[67] One need only to look at the different sorts of products being advertised to women and men at this. See Julia Sneeringer, "The Shopper as Voter," where Sneeringer discusses the different products advertised to women as a means of distracting them from the real political issues of the era. Also, see some of the works cited in above footnote number 65 for further examples of this.

a time of ultra-modernization in a technological sense, there a reversion, in a cultural and political sense, over individuals' rights to make decisions about their bodies and their sexuality. Still, there are countless assaults on Planned Parenthood, and the mission to help women have or not have children in the healthiest way possible. Education about sexuality is still seen as a hot-bed issue in schools. LGBTQ rights are not at all secured, and in fact as we enter deeper into 2017, there are more protests against gay marriage and equality for any and all people, regardless of sexual orientation or gender. The political culture, or *zeitgeist,* has shifted, and made it much different than the world of Helene Stöcker and Magnus Hirschfeld; but the fight(s) that women, men, all people, undertake would strike a certain resonant chord within them. One that this author would have hoped we would have accepted and moved past by the writing of this work. Stöcker would be out on the front lines of Iowa, North Carolina, and other states that are embracing a paternalistic culture, favoring heterosexual males, to try to shift the tide and embrace change and equality for all.[68] There is still much work to be done, in the long struggle for equality; and Stöcker, Hirschfeld and their cohort, could be looked to as influences in how to fight this all too important battle.

[68] To reference a few specific instances, one can look at North Carolina HB2: "An Act to Provide for Single-sex Multiple Occupancy Bathroom and Changing Facilities in Schools and Public Agencies and to Create Statewide Consistency in Regulation of Employment and Public Accommodation;" or Iowa Senate File 359, which, if passed, would not permit abortions beyond 6 weeks (a time when many women are not even aware they are pregnant yet). Six weeks comes from the basic, and rather uncreative, idea that that is when a fetus's heartbeat begins.

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