"I feel that I belong to you": Subculture, *Die Freundin* and Lesbian Identities in Weimar Germany

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Before World War I, Berlin was known for its large male homosexual subculture. After the war, however, the sudden emergence of a visible lesbian subculture was unprecedented and remarkable because, previously, lesbianism had been thought to be rare. The development of modern mass culture coincided with the rise of homosexual subculture, facilitating the formation of lesbian identities. However, as will be suggested first, these identities also had their roots in medical discourse and the homosexual emancipation movement, which looked to medical research to support its demands for homosexual rights. Also, lesbian clubs and nightclubs, as well as lesbian magazines, were closely linked to the homosexual emancipation movement, and they were the sites which brought women together and which facilitated lesbian identification. Therefore, this paper will explore the production of these identities by examining the subcultural network and, in particular, the lesbian magazine Die Freundin, as a mass cultural publication in which science, mass culture, and subculture intersected. This will highlight the constructed, unstable and ambiguous nature of Weimar lesbian identities, which were varied and overlapping.

Scholars of sexual cultures and gender relations in Germany have tended to overlook Weimar lesbian identities, confining their interest to the subculture itself, rather than to the role it played in the development and elaboration of homosexual identities more generally. For example, in relation to lesbians, the works of Lillian Faderman and Brigitte Eriksson, Ilse Kokula, Adele Meyer and Claudia Schoppmann have provided valuable documentation of the Imperial, Weimar and Nazi periods.[1] More specifically, both Richard Dyer and Ruby Rich have examined homosexual cinema in Weimar, [2] while Katharina Vogel and Petra Schlierkamp have documented the history of the lesbian magazines *Die Freundin* and *Garçonne* respectively. [3] One recent scholar, Christiane von Langerke, has investigated the numerous historical designations for lesbians in order to prevent these women from being subsumed under the male-identified label of 'homosexual.' [4] All of this work is invaluable as a foundation for further scholarship.

However, as Patrice Petro's study of female spectatorship and textual practice in Weimar Germany has powerfully illustrated, gender is of paramount importance to representation and ways of looking. That is, Petro has shown "the existence of a female spectator, and the function of representation for mobilizing her desires and unconscious fantasies."[5] Like the women's magazines in Petro's study, lesbian magazines such as *Die Freundin* made a direct address to women, articulating their desires and offering them 'modern' new conceptions – and choices – for gender roles, sexuality, relationships and, hence, possibilities for identification.

This suggests that a study which builds on the inroads made by Gudrun Schwarz and Geertje Mak, and specifically considers the nature and production of lesbian sexual identities, is needed.[6] Both von Lengerke and Faderman have illuminated the changes and continuities of woman-centred relationships across time, but such an approach has a tendency to imply an essential lesbian identity, which is constant and, despite the variations they discuss, well-defined.[7] For example, Faderman encapsulates lesbian behaviour under a single rubric of "romantic friendships" that spans countries and centuries.[8] In contrast, this paper will situate lesbianism within a specific historical and cultural context. In the same way that Denise Riley has disrupted the idea of 'woman' as a discrete category,[9] this paper will highlight the constructed and unstable nature of Weimar lesbian identities.

In the late nineteenth century, as scientists increasingly turned their attention to sexuality, a growing body of medical literature was produced. In 1886, Richard Krafft-Ebing's book, *Psycopathia Sexualis,* asserted that homosexuality was an abnormal congenital manifestation.[10] The physicians Magnus Hirschfeld and Iwan Bloch both expanded on this discourse, arguing that true homosexuals were biologically predisposed to members of the same sex. Conversely, they believed that pseudohomosexuals – usually women – were the creation

of external circumstances, such as the absence of male sexual partners in prisons and schools.[11]

As European sexologists described and explained other sexual 'anomalies,' the list of medical identifications grew. As one Weimar transvestite explained, "when sexual science began to concern itself with the sexual orientation of humans, it searched for words with which to designate the different variations. That is how names like sadist, masochist, fetishist, exhibitionist, bisexual, transvestite, homosexual, and so on originated."[12] Similarly, the labels for lesbians expanded to include 'masculine lesbian,' 'feminine lesbian,' 'transvestite,' 'Mannweib' (literally, 'Man-Woman' but suggesting a masculine woman), 'Männin' ('Butch'), and 'gleichgeschlechtlichliebende *Frau*' ('same-sex loving woman'). The variety of names for women suggests the instability of lesbian identity and the expansion of the discourse.

Medical 'science' was integral to conceptions of sexuality and underpinned the homosexual emancipation movement. Hirschfeld in particular argued that since homosexuality was inborn, it was natural and should not be persecuted,**[13]** and in 1897 he founded Germany's first homosexual organization, the Scientific-Humanitarian Committee. After the First World War, Hirschfeld founded the Institute for Sexual Science in Berlin (1919) and, in 1923, the League for Human Rights, a group dedicated to homosexual emancipation.

At the same time, the manifold growth of mass culture, particularly in Berlin, brought homosexuals together and facilitated identification. There were mutually reinforcing relationships between the organized homosexual rights movement, the large number of public leisure and entertainment venues (like clubs and nightclubs), and the extensive publications of the homosexual press. Indeed, one reader of *Die Freundin*, a male transvestite, stated that after he read the books of Iwan Bloch and Otto Weininger, as well as others, he had the greatest longing to go to Berlin and spend time with people who were his like.**[14]**

A 1931 Berlin travel guide highlighting the city's sexual attractions claimed that there were at least 160 bars and clubs for male and female homosexuals.[15] With the (temporary) abolition of censorship, films dealing directly with male and female homosexuality were shown in Berlin's 300 cinemas.[16] A large quantity of lesbian popular fiction, newspapers, and magazines also appeared. The German Friendship

Association added community-building activities to this entertainment scene, and to the political activities of the Scientific-Humanitarian Committee, by holding dances and weekly meetings and publishing a weekly newspaper, *Die Freundschaft*.[17]

The first guide to the homosexual club scene, Ruth Roellig's *Berlins lesbische Frauen* (*Berlin's Lesbian Women*), was published in 1928 with a foreword by Magnus Hirschfeld. This guide purported to educate and enlighten homosexuals and the public, **[18]** but it also served to alert and connect women to the wider lesbian community. One woman recalled that Berlin's Toppkeller Club was "so exciting that women from all walks of life came, even actresses. It was always so crowded, and on Fridays you could hardly get in at all."**[19]**

One of the most popular ladies' clubs was the Damenklub Violetta, led by Lotte Hahm, a well-known figure in the homosexual rights movement (Figure 1). The Violetta hosted many dances, such as the "Calling-Card Ladies' Ball" (*Damenball mit Saalpost*) and the "Dance Roulette" (*Roulette-Tanz*), and also auto tours of the Spreewald[20] and fashion shows for masculine women and transvestites.[21] One of the most popular activities was the "Moonlight Steamship Party" (*Mondschein-Dampferpartie*), in which a ship carried passengers from Spittelmarkt to Mugelsee, where they disembarked at the Inselhotel, enjoyed orchestra, cabaret, and tombola, and danced until 5 or 6 a.m., after which they returned to the ship for a quick sunrise photograph before sailing back.[22]

Such clubs could also be found in other German-speaking cities, including Zurich, Hamburg, Cologne, Frankfurt, Leipzig and Breslau, and the League for Human Rights encouraged women across Germany, Switzerland and Austria to start and join clubs in their own towns and regions. This helped to expand the subculture and the homosexual rights movement itself.[23]

In creating a sense of community through common experience, clubs informally politicized lesbians, linking the social scene to the homosexual rights movement. For instance, at Violetta, women sang "*Das Lila-Lied*" (The Purple Song), which declared lesbians' difference and eventual liberation.[24] Lotte Hahm also reminded women that "Not only dance and social events can bring you equality, but rather struggle is also necessary."[25] Lesbian magazines, of which there were at least five, were available at newsstands or by subscription, and together they circulated to more than one million readers across the German-speaking countries.[26] The magazines' centrality in facilitating the growth of subculture and identification can be illustrated by examining the most popular publication, *Die Freundin (The Girlfriend)*, which appeared monthly, and later weekly, with some interruptions from 1924 to March 1933.[27]

Die Freundin was closely affiliated with the League for Human Rights through the group's chairman, Friedrich Radszuweit, who also published the magazine.**[28]** Given this overlap of the publisher's interests, it is not surprising that through its editorials, *Die Freundin* politicized homosexuals by highlighting the League's concerns, such as the repeal of Paragraph 175, the law criminalizing male homosexuality.**[29]** *Die Freundin* accepted only advertisements from members of the League for Human Rights, and it exhorted its readers to patronize only those clubs sanctioned by the publication.**[30]** The need for club owners to hold League memberships also undoubtedly benefited the homosexual rights movement by increasing the organization's size.**[31]**

Die Freundin also played a significant role in fostering the growth of the subculture by publicizing homosexual films, clubs, nightclubs and books available from the Berlin publishing house Radszuweit, which published both non-fiction, including medical books on sexuality,[32] and fictional works, such as Grete von Urbanitzki's *Der wilde Garten (The Wild Garden)*, Anne Elisabeth Weirauch's trilogy *Der Skorpion*, the German translation of Radclyffe Hall's *Well of Loneliness (Quell der Einsamkeit*) and even novels that presented a less flattering image of lesbians, such as Alfred Döblin's *Die beiden Freundinnen und ihr Giftmord* (*The Two Girlfriends and their Murder by Poisoning*). These kinds of publications facilitated lesbian self-identification. As one lonely and isolated woman living in a small town explained, she "had only one joy..., the book *The Scorpion*. I love it. With it, I feel that I belong to you, that no one can tear the innate feeling of happiness out of the heart."[33]

Clearly, physical and psychological isolation were major problems for both lesbians and transvestites. Personal advertisements helped overcome this, bringing together readers from as far away as Amsterdam.[34] "Nuremberg. Lonely woman seeks same, educated but modern thinking girlfriend."[35] In the impersonal city, *Die Freundin* could also be used to signal one's identity to others 'in the know.' Several articles in the magazine depicted scenarios in which women reading or purchasing the magazine met like-minded women who had noted their choice of reading material. For example, one story told how a transvestite reading *Die Freundin* in a café attracted the notice of another woman.[36] Another story began with two strangers meeting accidentally at the newspaper vendor where they had both just purchased *Die Freundin*.[37]

Through *Die Freundin* lesbians discovered other women who "yearned for a great love," but who, as the fictional character Lotte explained, "could not like any man."[**38**] Lesbians found both capable and career-minded women who reflected their own aspirations, as well as women who embodied the 'feminine' ideals to the extent that they were comfortable only in the company of other women. If women felt comfortable in men's clothing, or if they embraced the modern styles, they also found like-minded women in the magazine – and the magazine gave them a name. One lesbian, Charlotte Falk, explained, "Through my indifference, through the style of my clothes, which are sporty but completely normal, my shoes, I... became a *Mannweib*... I had absolutely no idea that so many women love as I do..."**[39]**

If the small advertisement section of *Die Freundin* provided a way for women (and men) in even the remotest German-speaking towns to find and make contact with one another and to psychologically, if not literally, expand their community, the readers of *Die Freundin* also developed a real sense of fellowship. A letter sent to *Die Freundin* about another reader's contribution on the issue of cross-dressing and marriage began warmly with "Dear sister Willina!" and closed with "It would be a great pleasure for me to hear more from you and also from your wife herself. Warmest greetings. Your Georgette."**[40]**

Yet it was not only a sense of fellowship that facilitated identification. *Die Freundin*'s representations and image were instrumental in the production of sexual identities. However, few articles in *Die Freundin* programmatically outlined female homosexual identities. Instead, they were elaborated implicitly through its fiction, non-fiction and/or medical articles.

In a classification scheme that invoked the heterosexual gender paradigm, lesbians were often differentiated as either 'virile' or 'feminine.' As with their heterosexual counterparts, these traits were thought to be manifested both physically and psychologically.[41] The feminine woman was "echt weiblich" ("genuinely feminine"). She was dependent and had a clingy character, but was also a very skilled "housewife," whereas the 'virile' woman had no affinity for housework, was independent and career-minded.[42] This kind of male-female complementarity was seen and reinforced at the Klub Monbijou in the Bell-Dance, in which only the 'young lads' or 'Bubis' would hold bells, which they used to ring for their 'gals' or 'Mädis.'[43]

However, in the magazine's fiction, the virile 'type' tended to be more common, probably owing to the notion that lesbianism was an inverted sexuality in which a woman was masculinized. For example, one novel serialized in *Die Freundin* described the lesbian Olga as a cigar-smoker and as having dreams in which she rode horses in the dark of night (Figure 2). In addition:

She felt herself to be a man and believed that she felt better in such surroundings. Even her rooms appeared to be furnished according to a rather masculine taste. She had a drawing room with an escritoire. She possessed a smoking room and a gaming room. Her bedroom gave the impression of being austere and cold. One found no vanity table or attractive Biedermeier armchair of the kind that women usually love. The walls were decorated with female figures, portraits, nude studies – the only objects to lend the rooms a certain warmth.[44]

Lesbian and transvestite "marriages" also reflected male-female role division, and most male transvestites seemed to accept and regard housework as a logical extension of their gender role.[45] Indeed, an affinity for either a masculine or a feminine profession seemed to validate what was believed to be one's "true" gender.[46]

Visible manifestations of lesbian sexual identities were also to be found on the covers of *Die Freundin*.[47] Most often, the images featured women as objects of sexual desire, which, indeed, they were. Very early on, readers expressed their sexual longings by requesting more nude photos (Figure 3 and 4).[48] Over time these depictions expanded to include exotic 'orientals' (Figure 5), 'natural' women (Figure 6), New Women (Figure 7), masculine women (who were usually celebrities), and transvestites (Figure 8).[49] Although photographs of bare-breasted women were the norm and many images were reused – not just once or twice, but many times over the years – the array of representations suggests that the lesbian community was comprised of a great variety of women and that over time lesbian identities became increasingly complex.

Other representations, particularly those associated with "modern" women, also interested *Die Freundin*'s readers. For instance, the incidence of smoking among women around the world was discussed in the article "*Rauchende Frauen*" ("Smoking Women").[50] There were also articles on a possible tax on the *Bubikopf* (pageboy hairstyle) and on the British Lords' opinions of short hair.[51] *Meinungsaustausch Fragen* ("Exchange-of-opinion Questions") even asked for readers' views on the Bubikopf.[52] In one response, Irene von Behlau came out strongly in support of the Bubikopf and urged all lesbian women to embrace the fashion.[53]

As this accounting suggests, readers actively participated in shaping their own identities. They sent *Die Freundin* literary contributions,[54] as well as their personal experiences, insights and opinions on "Questions of the Day" ("*Tagesfragen*") and "Fashion Questions" ("*Modefragen*"). Regarding the latter, a transvestite named Ellen van Derk complained that men who did not want to shave their beards should not wear women's clothing and that, moreover, too many transvestites wore jewellery with artificial pearls.[55]

I will return to the issue of transvestites, but what should be clear at this point is that lesbians were not part of a singular, discrete, uniform category, whose identity was the expression of a singular and innately fixed disposition. As will be shown below, their identities were varied, ambiguous and contested. Clearly, one reader was aware of the constructed nature of sexual identities when s/he asserted that "the norm is not something given by nature, but rather is determined by us, created from our own minds."[56]

Lesbians reappropriated and rearticulated their identities from medical and popular discourses and countered the dominant discourses that labelled them "sick" and "unnatural." For example, *Die Freundin*'s editors asserted homosexual morality by pointing to heterosexual depravity as the cause of the high incidence of children and youth infected with venereal disease by their fathers or through prostitution.[57] Lesbians also referred to the philosopher and theorist Otto Weininger's unfortunately but indicatively influential book *Sex and Character*[58] and invoked the existence of a sexual continuum to assert that their sexuality (which was linked to gender) was a natural variation, a transitional form ("*Übergangsform*") found between the masculine and feminine poles of gender. Contributors to *Die Freundin* argued that: "Nowhere in nature does a fixed and demarcated type exist… Just as there is no firmly delimited form in nature, a strict distinction between the sexes can be ruled out."[59] The concept of 'natural variation' confirmed lesbians' belief that their identity was an essential trait rather than an acquired vice. They refuted accusations of degeneracy by arguing that homosexuals had existed throughout history, from Sappho, to Leonardo da Vinci and Michelangelo.[60]

Die Freundin's inclusion of male and heterosexual transvestites, along with lesbian transvestites, who really combined two identities, complicates the question of lesbian identification. Pictures and regular articles about male transvestites reinforced the message that the community of "Girlfriends" was not limited to the female sex (Figure 9), but also included those with female "natures." Even after the Human Rights League created a special magazine for them, transvestites continued to read, write to, and advertise in *Die Freundin*, suggesting their identification with lesbians.

Geertje Mak has shown that within the discourse of sexual science elaborated by Magnus Hirschfeld in Die Transvestiten (Transvestites) (1910), a man's internal drive to wear female clothes was considered a natural sexual variation that did not automatically make him a homosexual. Mak argues that women were not included in this concept of transvestitism and, as a consequence, their sexuality remained linked to their gender, defining them as "inverted." [61] However, the editors of Die Freundin applied the concept of natural sexual variation broadly to both males and females. This explains why the line between transvestitism and lesbianism was so unclear. The magazine actually offered two competing discourses: the concept of the "inverted, masculine woman" (Figure 10) and the notion of "sexual variation in nature" (Figure 11). While much of the magazine's fiction and photographs offered up images of 'masculine' women such as "Charly and Boy," it did this alongside of articles that insisted that: "There are only bisexual variations."[62]

The ambiguity was compounded by the fact that the definition of a transvestite seems itself to have been in a state of flux. The term 'the third sex' was used by Hirschfeld until about 1910 to denote all homosexuals, but after the war, Radszuweit Publishing Company used it in the book Das 3. Geschlecht (The Third Sex) to refer specifically to transvestites. Still, men and women moved fluidly back and forth between the two identities of 'transvestite' and 'lesbian.'[63] The ambiguity - indeed, the overlap - of lesbian and transvestite identities is illustrated by one reader of Die Freundin, Hans Irmgard Markus, who wrote that where she lived she had few opportunities to meet a girlfriend and that she had been forced by her uncle to marry a man. Gradually, however, Markus achieved her husband's conversion into a woman, by inducing him to dress in women's clothing and perform housework. She, on the other hand, had assumed a male role, dressing as a man and becoming a city councillor. In this way, Markus testified, their relationship became "like one that usually occurs between girlfriends."[64] Yet this configuration, which was in effect a simple reversal of heterosexual gender roles, indicates the ambiguities in a system that tried to transcend the traditional gender paradigm (one that fixed sexuality and behaviour to gender), but which was nevertheless beholden to it.

In theory, what constituted a 'true' lesbian was a congenital disposition, but *Die Freundin* also implicitly made the distinction that, unlike pseudo-homosexuals, true lesbians were indifferent to, or had an aversion to, men.**[65]** One story, "How Hannelore Fell in Love with a Man," vigorously illustrates this belief. This short story describes a romantic tryst that occurred one afternoon between Hannelore and a 'man' whom she met by chance at a café. The author emphasizes the confusion felt by Hannelore, whose indifference and distaste for men was normally so great that even taking a seat near one was to be avoided. When eventually the new boyfriend removed 'his' male disguise to reveal that 'he' was, in fact, a woman,**[66]** the message was clear: true lesbians are only ever attracted to other women. Moreover, the story suggests that this attraction was such a strongly ingrained biological affinity that it transcended the deceptive outward appearance of male clothing.

Bisexuality, on the other hand, was another matter. Despite its characterization in *Die Freundin* as a variation of transvestitism, it was largely treated as a form of pseudo-homosexuality. Indeed, after a reader complained to the publication that one could not speak freely in it on the topic of bisexuality without encountering disapproval, another reader pointedly replied that a person could not serve two masters and that such women, i.e. bisexuals, were not true homosexuals.[67]

More delicately, Roellig labelled prostitutes "a special category" because she believed they only entered homosexual relationships to try to find happiness and salvage what remained of their humanity.[68] Although congenital homosexuality was in doubt in the case of prostitutes, as with bisexuality, having sexual relationships with men called the authenticity of a homosexual identity into question.[69]

The question of prostitution also reflects the mutability of lesbian identification. In 1924 considerable concern was expressed in *Die Freundin* over the problem of *Mädchenhandel* (white female slavery) (Figure 12).[70] Over time, however, this changed. Editorials defensively asserted the moral rectitude of homosexuals and distanced lesbians from prostitution,[71] thereby suggesting once again the shifting nature of sexual identities.

In conclusion, the homosexual cultural network, exemplified by *Die Freundin*, was the site at which science, subculture, and mass culture intersected to produce new and constantly shifting identities. The variety of often conflicting discourses present within the subculture also produced overlapping and sometimes contradictory identities. Nevertheless, if the behaviours and desires of women (and men) did not conform to gender norms (Figure 13), homosexual subculture linked them to a new community and new possibilities for identification. As one reader stated: "As so often [happens] in the world, it was through chance that I came into the possession of *Die Freundin* and *Das 3. Geschlecht*. It was through them that I received valuable enlightenment about my own nature and also learned that I am not, by any means, unique in the world."**[72]**

LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

 "Lotte Hahm Gründerin und Leiterin des Damenklubs 'Violetta'" ("Lotte Hahm, Founder and Leader of the Ladies' Club 'Violetta'," *Die Freundin*, 3 December 1930, 7.

2. Die Freundin, 30 April 1930.

3. Die Freundin, 14 November 1927.

- 4. Die Freundin, 9 January 1928.
- 5. "S'ent Marona, orientalische Tänzerin" ("S'ent Marona, oriental dancer"), Die Freundin, 5 March 1928.
- 6. Die Freundin, 28 October 1931.
- 7. Die Freundin, 31 July 1929.
- "Die Frau als Mann. Geschäftsleiterin Teddy der 'Geisha' Augsburgerstr.
 72. Illustration aus dem neuen Heft Das 3. Geschlecht" ("The Woman as a Man. Business Leader Teddy of the 'Geisha' at 72 Augsburger Street. Illustration from the new volume of 'The 3rd Sex'"), Die Freundin, 4 February 1931.
- 9. "Das ist ein männlicher Transvestit, unauffällig und gut gekleidet, von einer Frau nicht mehr zu unterscheiden. Die aufnahme entnahmen wir Heft 5 'Das 3. Geschlecht', das 30 solcher Bilder, auch von 'Frauen als Männer' bringt." ("This is a male transvestite, inconspicuous and well dressed – indistinguishable from a woman. The photograph is taken from volume 5 of 'The 3rd Sex', which is running 30 such pictures, also of 'Women as Men'"), Die Freundin, 8 June 1932.
- "Vilma West, die aus Liebe zu ihrer Freundin ihren Mann erschlug" (Vilma West, who killed her husband out of love for her friend), *Die Freundin*, 2 April 1928.
- 11. "Die Moderne Frau!" Die Freundin, 19 March 1930.
- 12. "In einem Jahre 3700 Frauen verschollen!" ("3700 Women disappeared in one Year!)
- 13. "La Garconne," Die Freundin, 28 May 1928.

ENDNOTES

[1] Lillian Faderman and Brigitte Eriksson, Lesbians in Germany: 1890s-1920s (Tallahassee, Fl.: Naiad Press, 1990); Ilse Kokula, Jahre des Glücks, Jahre des Leids: Gespraeche mit aelteren lesbischen Frauen (Kiel: Verlag Fruehlings Erwachen, 1990); Ilse Kokula, Weibliche Homosexualität um 1900 in zeitgenoessischen Dokumenten (Muenchen: Verlag Frauenoffensive, 1981); Adele Meyer, ed., Lila Nächte: Die Damenklubs im Berlin der Zwanziger Jahre (Berlin: Edition Lit. Europe, 1994); Claudia Schoppmann, Days of Masquerade: Life Stories of Lesbians during the Third Reich, trans. Allison Brown (New York: Columbia University Press, 1996). All translations are by the author unless otherwise stated.

- [2] Richard Dyer, "Less and More than Women and Men: Lesbian and Gay Cinema in Weimar Germany," New German Critique 51 (1990); Ruby Rich, "'Mädchen in Uniform.' From Repressive Tolerance to Erotic Liberation," in Gender and the German Cinema: Feminist Interventions, volume II: German Film History/German History on Film, Sandra Frieden, Richard W. McCormick, Vibeke R. Petersen, and Laurie Melissa Vogelsang, eds. (Providence, R. I. and Oxford: Berg, 1993).
- [3] Katharina Vogel, "Zum Selbstverständnis lesbischer Frauen in der Weimarer Republik. Eine Analyse der Zeitschrift 'Die Freundin'' 1924-1933," in Eldorado: Homosexuelle Frauen und Männer in Berlin 1850-1950, Geschichte, Alltag und Kultur, ed. Michael Bolle (Berlin: Froelich & Kaufmann, 1984); Petra Schlierkamp, "Die Garconne," in Eldorado: Homosexuelle Frauen und Männer in Berlin 1850-1950, Geschichte, Alltag und Kultur, ed. Michael Bolle (Berlin: Froelich & Kaufmann, 1984); For more examples, see the excellent collection of essays published in Eldorado, listed above.
- [4] Christiane von Langerke, "'Homosexuelle Frauen' Tribaden, Freundinnen, Urninden," in Eldorado: Homosexuelle Frauen und Männer in Berlin 1850-1950, Geschichte, Alltag und Kultur, ed. Michael Bolle (Berlin: Froelich & Kaufmann, 1984).
- [5] Patrice Petro. Joyless Streets: Women and Melodramatic Representation in Weimar Germany (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1989), xxii.
- [6] Geertje Mak, "'Passing Women' im Sprechzimmer von Magnus Hirschfeld. Warum der Begriff 'Transvestit' nicht für Frauen in Männerkleidern eingeführt wurde" (Österreichische Zeitschrift für Geschichtswissenschaften, 9:3 [1998]: 384-399) and Gudrun Schwarz, "'Viragos' in Male Theory in Nineteenth-Century Germany" (translated by Joan Reutershan in Women of Culture and Politics: A Century of Change, Judith Friedlander, Blanche Wiesen Cook, Alice Kessler-Harris, and Carroll Smith-Rosenberg, 128-43 (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1986).
- [7] These works and the critical position they adopt have nevertheless facilitated the discussions of further complexities in the history of lesbianism, including those in the present work. The historian Claudia Schoppmann's position is more difficult to ascertain because, although she fully acknowledges the difficulty of trying to define the term "lesbian," she has also suggested that for many lesbians, particularly those without access to lesbian subculture, the process of self-identification was protracted as a result of their

gender-specific socialization to be sexually passive and chaste prior to marriage, if not longer. I would argue that this reveals the influence of society and subculture upon the creation of lesbian identities rather than an innate and essential lesbian identity waiting to emerge (Schoppmann, 25, 116-17).

- [8] Lillian Faderman, Surpassing the Love of Men: Romantic Friendship and Love Between Women From the Renaissance to the Present (New York: William Morrow and Company, Inc., 1981).
- [9] Denise Riley, "Am I that Name?": Feminism and the Category of "Women" in History (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota, 1988).
- [10] R.V. Krafft-Ebing, Psychopathia Sexualis (New York: Medical Art Agency, 1931).
- [11] Magnus Hirschfeld, Sexual Anomalies and Perversions: Physical and Psychological Development, Diagnosis and Treatment (London: Encyclopaedic Press, 1962), 281.
- [12] F. Mara, "Transvestiten!," Die Freundin, 8 January 1930, 1.
- [13] However, Hirschfeld's logic was not completely accepted by everyone in the homosexual emancipation movement. Benedict Friedländer, a homosexual activist and proponent of "Greek Love" (boy-love and male friendship) and one of the founders of the Community of the Special, strongly disagreed. His group, which sought legal and social freedom in "the area of private love life," wanted to revive "Hellenic" pederasty combined with married family life (James Steakley, *The Homosexual Emancipation Movement in Germany* [New York: Arno Press, 1975], 43). Friedländer insisted that arguments like Hirschfeld's were self-defeating: "one can behave humanely to the sick and indeed try to 'heal' them; but at no time does one acknowledge presumed physical inferiors to have equal rights." (Friedländer cited in Faderman and Eriksson, xiv).
- [14] Emi M., "Die Welt der Transvestiten: Wie ich Abnehmer der 'Freundin' und des '3. Geschlechtes' wurde," Die Freundin, 22 April 1931, 4-5.
- [15] Curt Moreck, Führer durch das "lasterhafte" Berlin (Leipzig: Verlag moderner Stadtführer, 1996 [1931]), 134, 156.
- [16] Cornelie Usborne. *The Politics of the Body in Weimar Germany: Women's Reproductive Rights and Duties* (London: Macmillan, 1992), 76.
- [17] Steakley, 74-76.
- [18] Magnus Hirschfeld, foreword to *Berlins lesbische Frauen*, by Ruth Margarete Roellig (Lille: Editions G.K.C. 1992 [1928]), 10, 16.
- [19] Schoppmann, 32.
- [20] Die Freundin, 16 July 1930, 4.

- [21] Lotte Hahm, "Klubnachrichten: Das grosse Los," Die Freundin, 29 October, 1930, 5; 3 December 1930, 5.
- [22] Lotte Hahm, "Mondschein-Dampferpartei von 'Violetta'," Die Freundin, 2 July 1930, 5.
- [23] Die Freundin, 1 March 1933, 6; Die Freundin, 3 October 1927, 4; Die Freundin, 11 July 1928, 6; Die Freundin, 18 February 1931, 5; Die Freundin, 29 April 1931, 6.
- [24] Roellig, 110-11.
- [25] Lotte Hahm and Friedrich Radszuweit, "Aufruf an alle gleichgeschlechtlich liebenden Frauen," Die Freundin, 28 May 1930, 4.
- [26] Schoppmann, 4.
- [27] Note that issues from the year 1925 were unavailable to me and for unknown reasons *Die Freundin* was not published at all in 1926 (Vogel, 162). Publication was also suspended for 12 months between July 1928 and 1929, when the Protection of Youth from Obscene Publications Act (1926) placed the magazine on a list of objectionable material (Ibid.).
- [28] Schoppmann, 4.
- [29] "Aufruf an die gleichgeschlechtlichenliebenden Frauen Deutschlands!" Die Freundin, 20 February 1928, 3.
- [30] Die Freundin, 23 December 1931, 4.
- [31] In addition, it addressed the fears of lesbians that they might be exposed (or "outed") by heterosexuals (encouraging an 'us' versus 'them' identity) who visited nonexclusive clubs in order to participate in what they regarded as a fashionable or titillating trend that they could tell their friends about (P. W., "Schauobjekte," *Die Freundin*, 18 January 1933, cover). Eldorado was a particularly notorious locale that *Die Freundin* warned its readers about visiting (Friedrich Radszuweit, "Ihr Stammtisch wird lachen...," *Die Freundin*, 1). The magazine, then, provided its readers with some measure of security against involuntary exposure but also encouraged participation in, and the expansion of, the lesbian subculture. It also attempted to undercut the popular notion that homosexuals were abnormal "*Schauobjekte*" ("objects of display") rather than normal human beings arising from nature as the magazine frequently asserted.
- [32] Examples of the numerous titles authored by doctors or physicians include Dr. Ernst Schertel, Sitte und Moral (Vice and Morality), Dr. P. Adam, Hygiene des Liebeslebens (Lovelife Hygiene), Prof. C. Taruffi, Hermaphrodismus und Zeugungsunfähigkeit (Hermaphrodism and

Infertility) ("Buecher die die Freundin empfiehlt," Die Freundin, 16 April 1930, 5) and Dr. M. Hirschfeld, Die Homosexualität des Mannes und des Weibes (Homosexuality of Men and Women) (Die Freundin, 4 December 1929, 5).

- [33]. Charlotte Falk, "Briefe an die Freundin!" Die Freundin, 12 August 1931, 4.
- [34] Die Freundin, 3 September 1930, 5.
- [35] Die Freundin, 4 May 1932, 7.
- [36] Dolly Graefin Tosca, "Begegnungen," Die Freundin, 17 July 1929, 4-5.
- [37] Hansi, "Als Sonny Boy Modell stand." Die Freundin, 22 February 1933, 2.
- [38] Eva Guetthoff, "Die Geschichte von der Liebe zweier Freundinnen," *Die Freundin*, 8 April 1931, 1-2.
- [39] Charlotte Falk, "Briefe an die Freundin!" Die Freundin, 12 August 1931, 5.
- [40] Georgette, "Erwiderung auf den Artikel in Nr. 11 der 'Freundin," Die Freundin, 6 November 1929, 4.
- [41] I am not saying that lesbians simply mimicked heterosexuals, since their sexuality still disrupted the dominant gender paradigm. However, I am pointing out that their self-representation referenced the traditional framework.
- [42] Aenne Weber, "Die homosexuelle Frau," Die Freundin, 8 August 1924, 6.
- [43] Roellig, 134-6.
- [44] N. Lerman, "Die Freundin der Olga Diers," Die Frendin, 8 August 1924, 4.
- [45] Frau Holdi Gis, "Lebensbild eines Transvestiten," Die Freundin, 31 July 1929, 5; Anni H., "Transvestit und Häuslichkeit," Die Freundin, 21 August 1929, 4; Hans Irmgard Markus, "Briefe, die man an die 'Freundin' schreibt: Und wir Frauen in der Provinz?" Die Freundin, 10 July 1929, 5.
- [46] Grete, "Transvestit und Hausarbeit," Die Freundin, 10 July 1929 5.
- [47] The magazine always carried a cover photograph, with the exception of the first few issues and the last five months before the magazine's demise.
- [48] "Warum denn das?" *Die Freundin*, 15 October 1924, 1. Thanks to Marc Ries for bringing out this point at the Net Culture Science conference in Budapest, Hungary, December 10-13, 2003.
- [49] Figure 8 shows "Teddi," a female cross-dresser and leader of the Club Geisha.
- [50] "Was die Freundin plaudert: Rauchende Frauen," *Die Freundin*, 14 May 1928, 2.
- [51] "Was die Freundin plaudert," Die Freundin, 22 August 1927, 5; "Die Lords über kurzes und langes Haar," Die Freundin, 11 July 1928, 2.

- [52] Charlotte Paul, "Meinungsaustausch über Tagesfragen: Für oder gegen den Bubikopf," 19 March 1928, 6.
- [53] Irene von Behlau, "Meinungsaustausch über Tagesfragen: Für oder gegen den Bubikopf," *Die Freundin*, 5 March 1928, 5-6.
- [54] Die Freundin, "Zur Beachtung!" 15 September 1924, 2.
- [55] Ellen van Derk, "Meinungsaustausch über Modefragen: Zur Kleiderfrage des Transvestiten," Die Freundin, 22 August 1927, 5.
- **[56]** Mara, 1.
- [57] "Die Unmoralischen," Die Freundin, 3 September 1930, 1.
- [58] Otto Weininger, "Geschlecht und Charakter. Die emanzipierten Frau," Die Freundin, 14 January 1931, 1-2.
- [59] Elly R., "Die Transvestitenfrage," Die Freundin, 2 July 1929, 4; Johanna Elberskirchen, "Was ist Homosexualität?," Die Freundin, 17 July 1929, 1.
- [60] Johanna Elberskirchen, "Was ist Homosexualität?" *Die Freundin*, 10 July 1929, 1.
- [61] Geertje Mak, "'Passing Women' im Sprechzimmer von Magnus Hirschfeld. Warum der Begriff 'Transvestit' nicht für Frauen in Männerkleidern eingeführt wurde," Österreichische Zeitschrift für Geschichtswissenschaften, 9:3 (1998), 385.
- [62] "Charly and Boy, the two masculine women.... The long evening dresses hampered them. The two were used to stepping out with great strides." (Hansi, "Als Sonny Boy Modell stand." *Die Freundin*, 22 February 1933, 2; Johanna Elberskirchen, "Was ist Homosexualität?" *Die Freundin*, 24 July 1929, 1).
- [63] One is also reminded of the male transvestite who attended a Mondschein-Dampferpartie with apparently no objections from the women who took part.
- [64] Markus, 4.
- [65] Lesbians' biological predisposition was often discussed, but pseudohomosexuality was not directly referenced.
- [66] Ilse Schwarze, "Wie Hannelorle sich in einen Mann verliebte." *Die Freundin*, 19 March 1930, 1-2.
- [67] I.B., "Unsere Leser haben das Wort," Die Freundin, 8 January 1930, 5; Emilie S., "Unser Leser hat das Wort," Die Freundin, 26 February 1930, 3.
- [68] Roellig, 26.
- [69] Gudrun Schwarz, on the other hand, has shown that in nineteenthcentury medical discourse, the "true homosexual" was considered to be a "virago" or masculine lesbian. This classification assigned

the virago the role of the seducer or sexual aggressor in lesbian relationships, thus negating the possibility of a female-female couple (Schwarz, 132, 135, 137). Since I have suggested above that behaviour and sexuality were integrally linked to gender, I do not disagree with Schwarz's assertion. However, it appears that in *Die Freundin* this discourse may have undergone some additional modification which is consistent with the thesis of this paper that lesbian identification was in a state of flux.

- [70] As Figure 11 shows, the topic of Mädchenhandel was important enough to warrant the declaration "3700 women disappeared!" on the front page of Die Freundin. ("In einem Jahre 3700 Frauen verschollen!" Die Freundin, 1 October 1924, 1). For another example see "Geschlechtschmach," Die Freundin, 15 November 1924, 1.
- [71] For example, Friedrich Radszuweit argued that a distinction should be made between homosexual women and prostitution in the same way that heterosexual women are differentiated from it (Friedrich Radszuweit, "Noch einmal Justizminister a. D. Dr. Mueller-Meiningen," Die Freundin, 4 June 1930, 1). In addition, Lotte Hahm also gave a lecture entitled "Are Female Homosexuals Prostitutes?", which was apparently in response to a book on lesbian love by Franz Scheda, which asserted that a majority of homosexual women Meissner, were prostitutes (Else "Sind die Weiblichen Homosexuellen Prostituierte?" Die Freundin, March 1930, 5).
- [72] "Halb-transvestiten," Die Freundin, 16 September 1931, 5.



Figure 18. "Lotte Hahm" (Die Freundin, 3 December 1930, 7)

 "Lotte Hahm Gründerin und Leiterin des Damenklubs 'Violetta'" ("Lotte Hahm, Founder and Leader of the Ladies' Club 'Violetta'," *Die Freundin*, 3 December 1930, 7.



2. Die Freundin, 30 April 1930.



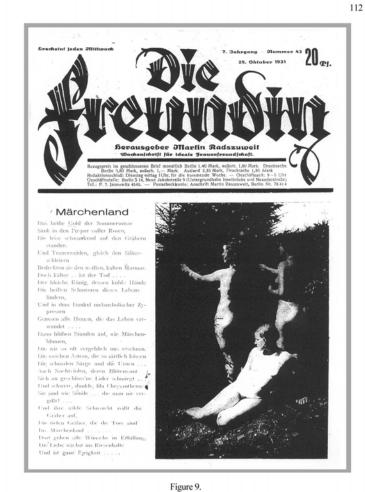
3. Die Freundin, 14 November 1927.



4. Die Freundin, 9 January 1928.



5. "S'ent Marona, orientalische Tänzerin" ("S'ent Marona, oriental dancer"), Die Freundin, 5 March 1928.



(Die Freundin, 28 October 1931)

6. Die Freundin, 28 October 1931.



Figure 12. (Die Freundin, 31 July 1929)

7. Die Freundin, 31 July 1929.



Figure 15. "Die Frau als Mann. Geschaftsleiterin Teddy der 'Geisha (Die Freundin, 4 February 1931)

"Die Frau als Mann. Geschäftsleiterin Teddy der 'Geisha' Augsburgerstr.
 72. Illustration aus dem neuen Heft Das 3. Geschlecht" ("The Woman as a Man. Business Leader Teddy of the 'Geisha' at 72 Augsburger Street. Illustration from the new volume of 'The 3rd Sex'"), Die Freundin, 4 February 1931.



9. "Das ist ein männlicher Transvestit, unauffällig und gut gekleidet, von einer Frau nicht mehr zu unterscheiden. Die aufnahme entnahmen wir Heft 5 'Das 3. Geschlecht', das 30 solcher Bilder, auch von 'Frauen als Männer' bringt." ("This is a male transvestite, inconspicuous and well dressed – indistinguishable from a woman. The photograph is taken from volume 5 of 'The 3rd Sex', which is running 30 such pictures, also of 'Women as Men'"), Die Freundin, 8 June 1932.



Figure 16. "Vilma West, die aus Liebe zu ihrer Freundin ihren Mann erschlug" (Die Freundin, 2 April 1928)

 "Vilma West, die aus Liebe zu ihrer Freundin ihren Mann erschlug" (Vilma West, who killed her husband out of love for her friend), *Die Freundin*, 2 April 1928.



Figure 14. "Die moderne Frau!" (Die Freundin, 19 March 1930)

11. "Die Moderne Frau!" Die Freundin, 19 March 1930.



12. "In einem Jahre 3700 Frauen verschollen!" ("3700 Women disappeared in one Year!)



Figure 13. "La Garconne" (Die Freundin, 28 May 1928)

13. "La Garconne," Die Freundin, 28 May 1928.