

Embodied Normality and Embodying Socialism: Sex Education for Girls in East and West Germany in the 1970s

“Sex education is in the first instance the duty of parents.”
Standing Conference of Culture Ministers (West Germany, 1968)¹

In the “development of a socialist sexual morality and sexual pedagogy... Family and schools bear joint responsibility, [but] schools—the centre of education—must guide parents.”
Kurt Bach, *Geschlechtserziehung in der sozialistischen Oberschule* (East Germany, 1970)²

Introduction

People learn and adapt to their culture's norms of gender and sexuality throughout their lives and in a variety of ways, but particularly during childhood and adolescence. Institutionalized sex education, though only one of many forums for childhood learning of such norms, is important to the transmission of dominant discourses of gender and sexuality.³ Given the importance of gender and sexuality to both social order and personal subjectivity,⁴ sex education can be of particular importance when shaping or reshaping them is seen as important to dealing with the past or the future. Thus, it should hardly be surprising that sex education in East and West Germany would differ, reflecting their divergent ways of dealing with their past of Nazism and the destruction of war, and of (re)constructing a more legitimate German state and society in opposition not only to the Third Reich but also to each other. The West, on the one hand, remembered the sexually

¹ Quoted in Decision No. 2 of 21.12.77, 1 BvL 1/75, 1 BvR 147/75, in Mitgliedern des Bundesverfassungsgerichts, eds., *Entscheidungen des Bundesverfassungsgerichts*, Bd 47/1 (Tübingen: J. C. B. Mohr (Paul Siebeck), 1978), 49. (hereafter cited as BVerfG, 21.12.1977 Decision)

² Kurt Richard Bach, *Geschlechtserziehung in der sozialistischen Oberschule: Entwicklung und Realisierung eines Programms zur systematischen Geschlechtserziehung in den Klassen 1 bis 10 der Oberschule der DDR; ein Beitrag zur Vorbereitung der Heranwachsenden auf Ehe und Familie*, (Berlin, 1973), 33.

³ David T. Evans, *Sexual Citizenship: The Material Construction of Sexualities*, (London, 1993), 216-7

⁴ For my understanding of the place of sexuality in subjectivity I draw on Michel Foucault, *The Use of Pleasure*, vol. 2, in *The History of Sexuality* (New York, 1985). See also Michel Foucault, *An Introduction*, Robert Hurley trans., vol. 1, in *The History of Sexuality* (New York, 1978).

project of “normalization” of gender relations after the “hour of the woman” and the demasculinization caused by death, absence, or incapacity of so many German men.⁵ The East, however, facing a much more serious “surplus of women,” focused on the creation of a socialist society ostensibly including gender equality.⁶ By the 1970s, what was once one culture had become two, and I am interested in the differences between the two Germanys after twenty to thirty years as separate countries.

In this paper, I examine several East and West German sex education books, interrogating their understandings of femininity, sexuality, and body and trying to draw out their understandings of embodiment and subjectivity. I argue that the West German sources, through a focus on the biological body, understood women as being defined—both individually and socially—by reproduction, motherhood, passivity, and *Hausfräulichkeit* (housewifeliness). Moreover, they conceived of sexuality as coital and centred on the satisfaction of male desire and on reproduction within heterosexual marriage. The East

⁵ For West German memory of Nazism and sexuality, see Dagmar Herzog, *Sex after Fascism: Memory and Morality in Twentieth-Century Germany*, (Princeton, 2005). 101-140; For “normalization” see Hanna Schissler, “‘Normalization’ as Project: Some Thoughts on Gender Relations in West Germany during the 1950s,” in *The Miracle Years: A Cultural History of West Germany, 1949-1968*, ed. Hanna Schissler (Princeton, 2001).; For the “hour of the woman”, see Elizabeth D. Heineman, *What Difference Does a Husband Make?: Women and Marital Status in Nazi and Postwar Germany*, (Berkeley, 1999).; for “remasculinization” see Frank Biess, “Männer des Wiederaufbaus — Wiederaufbaus der Männer: Kriegsheimkehrer in Ost- und Westdeutschland, 1945-1955,” in *Heimat—Front: Militär und Geschlechterverhältnisse im Zeitalter der Weltkriege*, ed. Karen Hagemann and Stefanie Schüler-Springorum (Frankfurt, 2002), Frank Biess, “Survivors of Totalitarianism: Returning POWs and the Reconstruction of Masculine Citizenship in West Germany, 1945-1955,” in *The Miracle Years: A Cultural History of West Germany, 1949-1968*, ed. Hanna Schissler (Princeton, 2001), Heide Fehrenbach, “Rehabilitating Fatherland: Race and German Remasculinization,” *Signs: Journal of Women in Culture and Society* 24 (1998), Susan Jeffords, “The ‘Remasculinization’ of German in the 1950s: Discussion,” *Signs: Journal of Women in Culture and Society* 24 (1998), Thomas. Kühne, “...aus diesem Krieg werden nicht nur harte Männer heimkehren?: Kriegskameradschaft und Männlichkeit im 20. Jahrhundert.,” in *Männergeschichte — Geschlechtergeschichte: Männlichkeit im Wandel der Moderne*, ed. Thomas. Kühne (Frankfurt, 1996), Robert G. Moeller, “Heimkehr ins Vaterland: Die Remaskulinisierung Westdeutschlands in den fünfziger Jahren,” *Militärgeschichtliche Zeitschrift* 60 (2001), Robert G. Moeller, “‘The Last Soldiers of the Great War’ and Tales of Family Reunions in the Federal Republic of Germany.,” *Signs: Journal of Women in Culture and Society* 24 (1998), Robert G. Moeller, “The ‘Remasculinization’ of Germany in the 1950s: Introduction,” *Signs: Journal of Women in Culture and Society* 24 (1998), Uta G. Poiger, “A New, ‘Western’ Hero?: Reconstructing German Masculinity in the 1950s,” in *The Miracle Years: A Cultural History of West Germany, 1949-1968*, ed. Hanna Schissler (Princeton, 2001).

⁶ Herzog, *Sex after Fascism*. 184-219. Heineman, *What Difference Does a Husband Make?*; Uta G. Poiger, *Jazz, Rock, and Rebels: Cold War Politics and American Culture in a Divided Germany*, (Berkeley, 2000). Katherine Helena Pence, “From Rations to Fashions: The Gendered Politics of East and West German Consumption, 1945-1961” (Unpublished PhD dissertation, University of Michigan, 1999)..

German sources, on the other hand, treated gender and sexuality as fundamentally social and cultural issues, rejecting biological understandings as inadequate. This, combined with their Marxist ideology and the East German state emphasis on equality, led them to focus on sexual equality in all areas of life, from the workforce to the bedroom. They understood sexuality, furthermore, as something intrinsic to subjectivity, and focused on mutual sexual pleasure as central to happiness in partnership (not necessarily marriage) and life. Ultimately, they stressed that full personhood and especially pleasure were only truly possible within socialism and through an embodied socialist subjectivity.

Discipline and the Rhetorics and Strategies of Normalization

The most immediate difference between the East and West German sex education books is their entirely different conceptualizations of sexuality, particularly their starkly different disciplinary perspectives. The West German sources focus on biology, emphasizing puberty as the process of reaching reproductive maturity. For instance, the two editions of *Sexualkunde-Atlas*, published in 1969 and 1974 by the Federal Centre for Health Education, only discuss biological issues (such as reproduction, contraception, abortion, menstruation, and so on),⁷ as, ostensibly, does Adelina Husslein (a female Austrian gynaecologist) in her 1969 *ABC für junge Mädchen*.⁸ Similarly, the authors of *Junge, Mädchen, Mann und Frau* devote about 115 of 150 pages of their volume for twelve- to sixteen-year olds (henceforth *JMMF* 2) to biological concerns,⁹ and only in their volume for eight- to twelve-years olds (henceforth *JMMF* 1) does the space given to biology drop to as little as 58 of 95 pages.¹⁰ This overwhelming focus on biology belies any claim, such as those found in *JMMF* 1 and *ABC*

⁷ Bundeszentrale für gesundheitliche Aufklärung, *Sexualkunde-Atlas: Biologische Informationen zur Sexualität des Menschen*, 1. ed., (Opladen, 1969), and Bundeszentrale für gesundheitliche Aufklärung, *Sexualkunde-Atlas: Biologische Informationen zur Sexualität des Menschen*, 2., neugefaßte ed., (Opladen, 1974). I shall henceforth refer to these as SKA 1 and SKA 2.

⁸ Adelina Husslein, *ABC für junge Mädchen: Entwicklung, Reife, Liebe*, (Stuttgart, 1969).

⁹ Joachim Brauer et al., *Junge, Mädchen, Mann und Frau: für 12–16jährige*, 2. ed., 2 vols., vol. 2., (Gütersloh, 1974). I am counting their three pages on homosexuality, which they portray as a biological and specifically pathological issue. Cf. idem, 123-5. Henceforth, I shall to the two volumes of this work as *JMMF* 1 or *JMMF* 2.

¹⁰ Joachim Brauer, Gerhard Kapitzke, and Karl Horst Wrage, *Junge, Mädchen, Mann und Frau: für 8 bis 12jährige*, 9. ed., 2 vols., vol. 1., (Gütersloh, 1977).

takes the form of extensive examinations of anatomy, reproduction, hormones, and the bodily changes during adolescence.

Certainly, this biological focus is understandable given the medical backgrounds of several of the authors (Husslein; Karl Horst Wrage, one of the authors of *JMMF*; and, presumably, at least some of the unnamed authors of *SKA*). Moreover, each of these was approved for instructional use in various provinces' classrooms.¹² Further, as Lutz Sauerteig has shown, sex education in Germany from Weimar on tended to emphasize biology. Thus, they integrated sex education into biology classes and stressed the biological rather than social aspects of sexuality, which it left to parents.¹³ This was, indeed, codified in 1977 after the Federal Constitutional Court ruled that sex education is primarily the concern of parents, though the state had a right to offer sex education so long as it did not "indoctrinate" or impinge on parents' natural rights.¹⁴ While this focus on sex education as biology is consequently predictable, it permitted only a particular (and limiting) form of sex education on the assumption that parents will fill in the necessary blanks, something belied by the fact that well into the 1990s most children got the majority of their knowledge on sexual matters from friends or youth magazines such as *Bravo*.¹⁵

This focus on the biological aspects of puberty led to a focus on gender and sexuality as biologically determined, and that essential social differences exist between men and women. Thus Husslein, for instance, says that "estrogen is what makes a woman what she is" (despite acknowledging the presence of testosterone in women's bodies) and says that "female psyche... [and] disposition (*Gemüt*) [are] so completely different as [those] of the

¹¹ Cf. e.g. *Ibid.*, 95; or *SKA* 2, 6.

¹² Udo Herbst and Ignatz Kerscher, *Bibliographie zur Sexualpädagogik: Teilweise kommentierte Literaturauswahl zur Sexualpädagogik und angrenzender Gebiete aus der Sicht sozialwissenschaftlicher Sexualforschung*, (Weinheim; Basel, 1978). Herbst/Kerscher, *Biblio*, pp 126-9

¹³ Cf. Lutz D. H. Sauerteig, "Sex Education in Germany from the Eighteenth to the Twentieth Century," in *Sexual Cultures in Europe: Themes in Sexuality*, ed. Franz Eder, Catherine Hall, and Gert Hekma (Manchester, 1999), 24-26.

¹⁴ BVerfG, 21.12.1977 Decision.

¹⁵ Sauerteig, "Sex Education in Germany," 24

male. Similarly, the authors of *Junge Mädchen, Mann und Frau* stressed that homosexuality was pathological and caused in most cases by genetics or neurological problems, as does Husslein.¹⁷

In the East German sources, in contrast, such biological and anatomical details—which one might expect in sex education literature—are almost totally absent; indeed, they say that biological understandings of gender and sexuality are simply inadequate.¹⁸ Thus, for instance, *Junge Frauen heute* spends just two paragraphs of its 90 pages discussing developmental and sexual biology, and *Junge Ehe heute* gives biology no space at all, save mentioning its inadequacy.¹⁹ On the other hand, *Adam und Eva heute* spends about fifteen pages discussing biological differences (almost exclusively those relating to different body size), and insists that these imply no differences on a social level, besides situating this discussion in a larger chapter focused on the primacy of social and cultural conditions to gender.²⁰ Instead, they emphasize the primacy of social and cultural elements in the formation of gender and sexuality, partly by reference to Marxist theory, and partly through empirical and historical observations about the historically contingent and culturally specific nature of such ideas.²¹ The authors of *Junge Frauen heute*, for instance, say that “the importance of a person’s gender to their development and social position is no *biological* question, rather, society establishes what it *means* to be female or male.”²² Concomitantly, these books focus not on puberty per se, but on various aspects of being a person (implicitly an adult), such as love, family, or working. This is in keeping with Kurt Starke’s argument

¹⁶ She fails to mention that testosterone is in fact a chemical precursor to estrogen, and estrogen’s crucial role in male biology, reproductive and otherwise. Cf. Husslein, *ABC für junge Mädchen*. 17-18.

¹⁷ Brauer et al., *JMMF* 2. 123-125; Husslein, *ABC für junge Mädchen*. 72-75.

¹⁸ Cf. e.g. Uta Bruhm-Schlegel et al., *Junge Frauen heute - wie sie sind, was sie wollen*, 2. erg. Aufl. ed., (Leipzig, 1981). 8, 13-16, 81.

¹⁹ Ibid. 68. JFh 68; Arnold Pinther et al., *Junge Ehe heute*, (Leipzig, 1977). 74-5.

²⁰ Barbara Bertram, Otmar Kabat vel Job, and Walter Friedrich, *Adam und Eva heute*, 1. ed., (Leipzig, 1988). Pp 36-51.

²¹ Interestingly, the theoretical arguments for the fluid and constructed nature of gender and sexuality are remarkably similar to what one could find in current gender scholarship, pace the heavier dependence on citing Marx, Engels, and August Bebel. E.g. Bruhm-Schlegel et al., *Junge Frauen heute*. 15-16, or Bertram, Kabat vel Job, and Friedrich, *Adam und Eva heute*. 15-18.

²² Bruhm-Schlegel et al., *Junge Frauen heute*. 91.

of sexual drive (*plötzliche Triebeinbruch*),” as it appears in traditional scientific and literary descriptions—did not exist in, and was consequently an analytically useless category for East Germany.²³

This East German abnegation of biological understandings is doubtless related to the authors’ work in a social-scientific research centre on youth, the Zentralinstitut für Jugendforschung (ZIJ).²⁴ As far as sex education goes, they drew on the disciplinary methods and outlooks of sociology, psychology, and sexology. Moreover, the authors’ work in the ZIJ gave them access to considerable amounts of quantitative and qualitative research (much of which they had personally helped to conduct), as well as privileged access to pertinent western scientific literature. Their disciplinary outlook doubtless influenced their belief in inadequacy of biological understandings of gender and sexuality and education thereto, as would the Marxism inherent to East German research and the SED’s emphasis on equality.

Accompanying these different disciplinary conceptualizations of gender and sexuality were different normalization strategies and rhetorical devices. The biological focus of the West German sex education books allowed the authors to implicitly normalize certain behaviours, passing culturally determined beliefs off as natural and ergo inviolable. Specifically, it led to a focus on models of the norm. Thus, they cast certain behaviours and patterns of development as the biologically determined route, and suggested, furthermore, that any deviations from the norm are biologically problematic, indeed *ipso facto* pathological. Thus, for instance, the authors of *JMMF 2* argued against such things as sadism, masochism, transvestitism, zoophilia, necrophilia, exhibitionism, fetishism, masturbation (if practiced too

²³ Kurt Starke and Konrad Weller, "Partner- und Sexualforschung," in *Das Zentralinstitut für Jugendforschung Leipzig 1966-1990: Geschichte, Methoden, Erkenntnisse*, ed. Walter Friedrich, Peter Förster, and Kurt Starke (Berlin, 1999). 404.

²⁴ For further information on the ZIJ, see Walter Friedrich, Peter Förster, and Kurt Starke, eds., *Das Zentralinstitut für Jugendforschung Leipzig 1966-1990: Geschichte, Methoden, Erkenntnisse*, (Berlin, 1999), especially Walter Friedrich, "Geschichte des Zentralinstituts für Jugendforschung," in *ibid*, 13-69.

often), and homosexuality. Moreover, the West German sources defined the norms of sexuality and gender by reference to what they considered abnormal—for instance the unnaturalness of mothers working, the emotional shallowness of group sex, the impropriety of men caring for children or doing housework, or the perverted nature of homosexuality.²⁶ (Interestingly, this seems to conform fairly precisely to Foucault's suggestion that sexual norms in the late nineteenth century were established through an "incitement to discourse" and "perverse implantation," whereby the norm was established through frequent reference to various deviations from it.²⁷)

By referencing biology and thereby casting their pronouncements as natural, the West German sources could veil the fact they were normalizing specific behaviours, something supported through frequent references to morality. Indeed, the not infrequent references to various social institutions such as law, state, society, churches, and morality—which might suggest the social nature of such norms and moralities—typically came with comments about how these institutions were simply reflecting the natural, biological order or securing it from social dangers. Thus, for instance, Husslein references religion as supporting biological laws, with the two being useful in finding a "middle way" between the "false prudery" and "total prohibition (*Verbot*) of yesterday" and protecting against the "assault (*Überfall*) of the sexual" in "our hectic times" (i.e. the sexual revolution).²⁸

The East German sources were more open and explicit about their normalization of specific practices of gender and sexuality. This should hardly surprise; after all, they strongly emphasize the primacy of society in determining such things. Thus, they stress that norms of gender and sexuality are social and fluid, arguing that every society has norms, even East Germany.²⁹ Yet they insisted that socialist norms were flexible, that everyone has a right to experience desire, pleasure, romance, and so on as an individual and in their own. Combined

²⁵ JMMF 2, 38, 123-131.

²⁶ Cf. e.g. JMMF 1, 8 & 39; JMMF 2, 80 & 123-7; Husslein, 72-5.

²⁷ See "The Repressive Hypothesis," Part Two of Foucault, *History of Sexuality*. 15-50.

²⁸ Cf. e.g. Husslein, Vorwort, 53, and 56-7.

²⁹ Bruhm-Schlegel et al., *Junge Frauen heute*. 67.

(except for inequality and therefore capitalism), they end up—perhaps counter intuitively—stressing a greater degree of individuality vis-à-vis gender and sexuality than do the West German sources, though their silence about homosexuality constructs it as abnormal. Moreover, they stress the importance of socialism, the state, and society in setting progressive norms of sexuality and gender, and in educating people to these norms.³⁰ This occurs with frequent denigrations of earlier or other systems (implicitly or explicitly capitalism), with occasional references to how much better off women are in East Germany than elsewhere.³¹

The importance of socialism also appears as the justification for leaving sex education primarily to schools. While acknowledging that parents provide their children with initial and crucial modelling of and information about gender and sexuality (and that parents should take care to raise their children correctly, not least because gender and sexuality are relatively fixed after childhood), they emphasize that proper (i.e. socialist) sex education is a pedagogical problem for schools.³² In *Junge Ehe heute*, for instance, the authors say that “the leading role in sex education belongs to schools,” though schools, doctors, parents, and youth groups (meaning the “Free German Youth” of FDJ, the East German youth group, membership in which was effectively mandatory) all have important roles in teaching children good socialist gender norms.³³ Thus, the East German schools seem to have integrated sex education into a wide variety of classes, not just biology, but also German and foreign languages, history and geography, civics (“*Staatsbürgerkunde*”) and polytechnics, art and music, dance and sewing, and even math and physical sciences, as well as

³⁰ E.g. Pinther et al., *Junge Ehe heute*. 74-5.

³¹ Cf. e.g. Bruhm-Schlegel et al., *Junge Frauen heute*, 10-13. Note that the West German sources never mention East Germany at all. Moreover, the East German sources will reference West German academic and scientific works, unlike the West Germans, and they will do so not just to find something to lord over West Germany, but also as just another scientific source to be used.

³² Pinther et al., *Junge Ehe heute*. 75., and Ibid. 82-3, 89.

³³ Pinther et al., *Junge Ehe heute*, 75. Membership in the FDJ was not strictly required, but those who did not join could face considerable disadvantages, for instance having a more difficult time getting into higher education.

extracurricularly, such as in the FDJ. On the other hand, East German sex education primarily concerned itself with sexual ethics rather than biology, and on the primary of schools rather than parents in educating children about sexuality.

Femininity: Or, the Meaning of Equality and Difference

The femininity constructed in each country's sex education literature was markedly different. The femininity implied in the East German books was that of a *gleichberechtigt* worker and mother who should be equal in work, home, bedroom, and politics, but happened nonetheless to carry the bulk of household duties. Thus, these sources largely reified what Elizabeth Heineman has identified as East German women's "quadruple burden of political engagement, paid work, childcare, and housework."³⁵ Ultimately they reproduce what Schlegel calls the SED's "quasi-patriarchal idea of *Gleichberechtigung*," which was focused on bringing women up to men's standard of living without seriously challenging male gender roles or the gendered division of labour within the family.³⁶ Nevertheless, women appeared as subjects with full legal equality and the expectation (if yet unfulfilled) of full social and cultural equality.

The West German sources, in contrast, presented a picture of womanhood dominated by marriage, maternity and *Hausfraulichkeit*, an 'equal but different' femininity. A woman's anatomical ability to bear children was understood to indicate her place in the home rather than the workforce, particularly if she had children (despite female rates of employment that were, in reality, fairly high, if not so high as in the GDR). Moreover, this idea led to a treatment of femininity and specifically motherhood as emotional bordering on mystical, and an emphasis on woman as passive objects rather than active subjects. This passive, maternalist idea of femininity dictated a variety of legal measures to assist or coerce women

³⁴ For these examples and explanations of how sex education can be integrated into each of these, see Bach, *Geschlechterverziehung in der sozialistischen Oberschule*. 183-200.

³⁵ Heineman, *What Difference Does a Husband Make?* 240.

³⁶ Uta Schlegel, "Geschlechter- und Frauenforschung," ed. Walter Friedrich, Peter Förster, and Kurt Starke (Berlin, 1999), 376.

to stay at home. In the first instance, they suggest an essential difference between an active,

public, paterfamilial masculinity and a passive, private, domestic, maternal femininity defined by reproduction. In the first instance, they suggest an essential difference between an active, public, paterfamilial masculinity and a passive, private, domestic, maternal femininity defined by reproduction.

The femininity presented in the East German sources was centred on *Gleichberechtigung*, socialism, and the worker-mother. Key to East German notions of socialist gender norms was an insistence on men and women's "*Gleichberechtigung*." The conspicuous absence of biology from East German discussions of gender was a central part of this emphasis, as it removed most grounds for claiming the existence of essential social differences between the sexes. They asserted that the biological and anatomical differences were not significant on a social level and had no bearing on intelligence, competence, or ability, and that the similarities between the sexes were more than the differences.³⁷ Thus, the East German sources argue against biological determinism and essential gender differences, in favour of equality in all areas of life. Nevertheless, despite comments about *Gleichberechtigung* of both sexes, they emphasized women's equality with men rather than the equality of men and women. This is, to be sure, a subtle difference, but one that still established men as the baseline, the standard; moreover, it confirms with Uta Schlegel's observation that East German women's attitudes and behaviours moved towards men's but not the other way round.³⁸

This is not to say that mention of differences was absent—in fact, *Junge Frauen heute* mentions that men have greater sexual desire and cannot know what it feels like to have a baby kicking inside them, while women cannot understand the frustration of un-reciprocated

³⁷ Bruhm-Schlegel et al., *Junge Frauen heute*. 81-91; Bertram, Kabat vel Job, and Friedrich, *Adam und Eva heute*. 30-79

³⁸ Schlegel, "Geschlechter- und Frauenforschung." 390

women existed were said to stem not from biology but from culture. One of the reasons this idea came up so frequently was that women still were the primary housekeepers in East Germany, a practice they argued against as archaic, unequal, and non-socialist practice.⁴⁰ The sources ascribe the slowness of this change despite supposedly complete economic equality of men and women (that is, the removal of what, under Marxist theory, causes sexual division of labour) to the greater difficulty of changing gender ideas in ‘subjective’ areas (e.g. family and personal relationships) than ‘objective’ ones (such as work and politics).⁴¹

What exactly did *Gleichberechtigung* mean in East German sex education literature? In the first instance, the emphasis was not on the equality of women, but on the equality of the sexes (“*Gleichberechtigung der Geschlechter*”).⁴² Thus, these sources stressed that men and women should have equal rights and responsibilities as regards such things as education and training, marriage law, labour rights, legal status, professional life, political activism and so on, and that neither should be legally inferior in any way. Consequently, each of these East German books gave much attention to the equal and active role women should play in the work world (every source wove such issues into the whole, but *Junge Frauen heute* devoted 30 of its 83 pages devoted to issues of female employment).⁴³ Another common point was that men and women should share household and childrearing duties equally, despite the longstanding pattern of women being more heavily burdened in this regard due to old stereotypes and expectations.⁴⁴ Thus, *Gleichberechtigung* was also about changing perceptions, not just getting women working.

These sources also stressed that there were several things *Gleichberechtigung* was not. For instance, one source suggested that it did not mean identity between men and women—such

³⁹ Bruhm-Schlegel et al., *Junge Frauen heute*. 25

⁴⁰ Cf. e.g. Pinther et al., *Junge Ehe heute*. 42-7, 114, 128, 149, 153

⁴¹ Cf. e.g. Bruhm-Schlegel et al., *Junge Frauen heute*. 15, 22-3

⁴² Ibid. 24

⁴³ Cf. “Arbeiten, um zu leben oder leben, um zu arbeiten?,” in Ibid. 33-61.

⁴⁴ Cf. e.g. Ibid. 82, 24.

renunciations thereof notwithstanding) or men bearing children—, nor was it meant to eliminate the positive tension (“*Spannungsfeld*”) between the sexes.⁴⁵ Interestingly, *Junge Frauen heute* says that *Gleichberechtigung* does not include gender parity in all professions or areas of the economy, but does not explain this comment further despite its insistence on equal participation in life and the economy notwithstanding.⁴⁶

These sources mention several reasons why *Gleichberechtigung* is important. In the first instance, they all cite the importance of equality to socialist ideology, variously mentioning Karl Marx, Friedrich Engels, Vladimir Lenin, August Bebel, Erich Honecker, Mikhail Gorbachev, and the programme of the SED (the Socialist Unity Party, the East German communist party). Second, they all stress the lack of essential difference between men and women, and thus the unjustifiableness of social inequality, consequently presenting *Gleichberechtigung* as something that goes without saying. Third, comparing socialist and capitalist gender relations in a way the West German sources never do, they argue that the socialist, *gleichberechtigte*⁴⁷ gender system is clearly superior to the paterfamilias-*Hausfrau* gender model. Specifically, they contend that the latter limits what men and women can be and how they can act, and prevents both from being truly happy, full human beings.⁴⁸ Moreover, they argue, *Gleichberechtigung*—including acceptance of women’s place in the workforce, equal participation in housework, and treating marriage as a partnership between equals—is a *sine qua non* of sexual happiness in marriage for both men and women.⁴⁹ Of course, the sources do not mention that *Gleichberechtigung* was one of the SED’s “sacred cows,” or the fact that to reconstruct the East German economy, the SED had to focus on labour equality due to the gender imbalance and worker shortage caused by the deaths of millions more men than

⁴⁵ Ibid. 23-4.

⁴⁶ Ibid. 25.

⁴⁷ This is the adjectival form of *gleichberechtigen*, the verb meaning ‘to make equal’ or ‘to give/have equal rights.’

⁴⁸ E.g. Bruhm-Schlegel et al., *Junge Frauen heute*. 12, 33

⁴⁹ Ibid. 77; Pinther et al., *Junge Ehe heute*. 71-3.

women during the war.⁵⁰ Likewise, the sources do not mention the propaganda value

(foreign and domestic) East Germany got out of sexual equality.⁵¹

The West German sources had a different idea of equality. That is, they argue that men and women have different roles in family and society, but are not *ipso facto* unequal; indeed, they echo the longstanding idea in Germany that women are 'equal but different'.⁵² For instance, the authors of *JMMF* 1 say that while women's work in supporting the family is different from men's it is no less important and neither men nor women were "disadvantaged (*benachteiligt*)," and insists that women should have the right to participate in decisions ("*mitentscheiden*") of how many children to have.⁵³

The most obvious difference posited between men and women is that women appear as oriented to or even solely defined by the ability to become mothers ("*Mutter-werden-Können*"), unlike men, whose are mentioned in connexion with reproduction primarily as sperm donors and breadwinners.⁵⁴ Thus, *JMMF* 2 suggests that "*Mutter-werden-Können*" defines at least pre-menopausal womanhood,⁵⁵ and Husslein says that "reproduction is woman's most important biological function," that it is "a woman's primary purpose (*ursprüngliche Einstellung*)," and emphasizes that "all of a woman's biological functions, not just those of the genital tract, largely stand in the service of reproduction and are partly

⁵⁰ Schlegel, "Geschlechter- und Frauenforschung." 374.

⁵¹ Ibid.

⁵² For the continued influence of 'equal but different' in West German, see Erica Carter, *How German Is She?: Postwar West German Reconstruction and the Consuming Woman*, in *Social History, Popular Culture, and Politics in Germany*, ed. Geoff Eley (Ann Arbor, 1997), 7 & 31-4; Hanna Schissler, "Women in West Germany from 1945 to the Present," in Michael G. Huelshoff, Andrei S. Markovits, and Simon Reich, *From Bundesrepublik to Deutschland: German Politics after Unification*, in *Social History, Popular Culture, and Politics in Germany*, ed. Geoff Eley (Ann Arbor, 1993), 121; and Schissler, "'Normalization' as Project", 361-3. For the place of this idea in late nineteenth-century German feminist, see Nancy Ruth Reagin, *A German Women's Movement: Class and Gender in Hanover, 1880-1933*, (Chapel Hill, 1995), 1ff; and Ann Taylor Allen, *Feminism and Motherhood in Germany, 1800-1914*, (New Brunswick, 1991), 1-3, 233. For an overview of the place of 'equality in difference' in modern German history, see Konrad Hugo Jarausch and Michael Geyer, *Shattered Past: Reconstructing German Histories*, (Princeton, N.J., 2003), 24-6, 245-68.

⁵³ Brauer, Kapitzke, and Wrage, *JMMF* 1., 8, 26, 39-40.

⁵⁴ Brauer et al., *JMMF* 2., 48.

⁵⁵ This comment occurs only in a discussion of menopause, with everything else suggesting the centrality of motherhood to womanhood. Ibid. 48-9.

dominated by it. Indeed, motherhood comes across in most of these sources as

something mystical and even euphoric, with Husslein, for instance, saying that “pregnancy is an event that brings the woman fulfilment.”⁵⁷ Furthermore, every source visually depicts pregnant and birth with the woman in cross-section but the embryo, fetus, or baby as whole and undivided, which seems to suggest that the woman is less important—indeed less individual in a literal sense—than the baby she carries.⁵⁸

Strengthening the portrayal of reproduction as the telos of femininity associations of the female reproductive cycle with waste and failure. Emily Martin has shown that descriptions of reproductive biology tend to suggest that the female reproductive cycle is wasteful, first because women are born with all of their eggs rather than producing them like men do; second because so few of women’s ovarian follicles reach maturity (ignoring that for every egg ‘wasted,’ there are perhaps three to five billion sperm); and third because so few mature eggs are inseminated. She shows, moreover, how most scientific literature portrays menstruation as a sign of waste, of failure to reproduce, with illustrations of the uterine lining during menstruation showing a shedding of “debris,” a “chaotic disintegration of form.”⁵⁹ These observations certainly hold true for these West German sources. Not only do some mention how few eggs mature, several show diagrams of menstruation suggesting the “chaotic disintegration of form” or showing it as a state of collapse.⁶⁰

The association of women with reproduction—and of failure to reproduce with waste—also comes through in discussions of contraception and abortion. This is perhaps understandable, given that almost all contraceptive technologies are for women’s bodies, as of course is abortion. While contraception does not appear as explicitly wasteful, it is

⁵⁶ Husslein, *ABC für junge Mädchen*. 11-12, 69.

⁵⁷ Ibid. 28, 27-37 passim, 48-69 passim.

⁵⁸ Cf. e.g. Bundeszentrale für gesundheitliche Aufklärung, *SKA 1*. 23, 27; Bundeszentrale für gesundheitliche Aufklärung, *SKA 2*., 20-1 & 26-7; Brauer, Kapitzke, and Wrage, *JMMF 1*. 44 & 50-1; Brauer et al., *JMMF 2*. 62; or Husslein, *ABC für junge Mädchen*., 33.

⁵⁹ Emily Martin, "The Egg and the Sperm: How Science Has Constructed a Romance Based on Stereotypical Male-Female Roles," *Signs: Journal of Women in Culture and Society* 16 (1991). 486-9.

⁶⁰ E.g. Bundeszentrale für gesundheitliche Aufklärung, *SKA 1*., 15; Bundeszentrale für gesundheitliche Aufklärung, *SKA 2*., 12-13; Brauer, Kapitzke, and Wrage, *JMMF 1*., 87; Brauer et al., *JMMF 2*., 31-2, Husslein, *ABC für junge Mädchen*., 33.

portrayed as a purely female issue. That is, these West German sources describe various methods of contraception in terms of female choice and responsibility, even in the context of family planning. Moreover, the overwhelming attention paid to reproductive technologies for women gives an impression that contraception is for women alone, particularly when reproduction appears as almost exclusively a female concern. Discussion of condoms presents the only exception to the female-oriented discussions of contraception, but only partly. While each source (save *JMMF* 1) mentions condoms, they do not suggest that men take responsibility for protection against pregnancy or venereal disease. Thus, the sources largely ignore men's role in reproduction, and do not take encourage any understanding of reproductive issues as something other than a purely female issue, and they fail to encourage boys and young men to take more responsibility.⁶¹

Discussions of abortion also focus on reproduction as the telos of womanhood.⁶² Every source (save the one directed at eight- to eleven-year-olds, in which it does not appear) condemns abortion—often quite harshly—as an immoral and criminal act, for instance the comment in *JMMF* 2 that “every abortion is the killing of a growing (*werdende*) human life,... (something that) cannot be subordinated to the whim and pleasure (*Belieben und Willkür*) of the individual.”⁶³ Moreover, they say that abortion is highly dangerous to women, with *SKA* 1, for instance, showing in large font the following list of possible consequences: “injury, inflammation, infection, circulatory damage, exsanguination, embolism, infertility, and death”⁶⁴ While none of these sources directly mention waste in connexion with abortion, in the context of the otherwise ubiquitous portrayals of not reproducing as waste, the deliberate termination of a successful conception—that is a non-wasteful coital act and menstrual

⁶¹ I acknowledge, however, that this is a political and anachronistic point.

⁶² Abortion was illegal in West Germany when each of these sources was written, except for *JMMF* 1, of which I have the ninth edition, from 1977. It was originally published in 1970 when abortion was still illegal, and between 1974 and 1976 abortion had been legalized, re-criminalized, and then slightly liberalized again, so abortion was still, ultimately, against at least the spirit of the law, and the book was conceived when abortion was entirely illegal. Cf. the epilogue of Atina Grossman, *Reforming Sex: The German Movement for Birth Control & Abortion Reform, 1920-1950* (Oxford, 1995). 213-216; and Herzog, *Sex after Fascism*. 141-183.

⁶³ Brauer et al., *JMMF* 2., 109.

⁶⁴ Bundeszentrale für gesundheitliche Aufklärung, *SKA* 1. 40.

cycle—can only appear as ultimate, criminal waste, another instance of science used to support morality. Moreover, although abortion is obviously something affecting women more directly than men, the absence of men from discussions of abortion continues to relieve men of all sexual and reproductive responsibility.

The authors of these West German sources essentialize women's reproductivity into social difference. In the first instance, they portray women as passive. Thus, almost all of the sources discuss coitus in terms of active male penetration and movement, and all depictions of how it works show the man on top.⁶⁵ Moreover, these sources describe more social aspects of sexuality in similarly gendered ways. For instance, *JMMF* 2 suggests that the process of men and women getting to know each other (“*Kennenlernen*”) is typically male-driven, and Husslein states outright that men's role in love, marriage, and sexuality is “active” and women's “passive.”⁶⁶ This understanding of femininity as passive finds reiteration in the emphasis on beauty for women. Combined with comments that from childhood on “boys and girls should choose their clothing so that it suits their sex and age,” the emphasis on beauty as part of femininity in most of these sources reinforces the idea that women are passive sex objects.⁶⁷ Thus we see the assertion that a bra “should fit [comfortably], but also look pretty;” a conspicuous, uncaptioned, and randomly placed picture of a young woman applying makeup; or a comment about the importance of “gymnastic exercises [to the] recovery of a slim figure” after pregnancy.⁶⁸ Ultimately, women are portrayed more as passive objects than as active subject.

Similarly, the reproductive understanding of femininity gives rise to an emphasis on female *Hausfräulichkeit* (housewifeliness). Thus, for instance, several sources mention that fathers work to support the family materially while mothers stay at home to take care of the

⁶⁵ Cf. e.g. Bundeszentrale für gesundheitliche Aufklärung, *SKA* 2., 14-15; or Brauer et al., *JMMF* 2., 56 (though this latter one—in the only mention across all of my sources of positions other than missionary—does mention that women can be on top; cf. *idem* p. 57).

⁶⁶ Brauer et al., *JMMF* 2., 51-53; and Husslein, *ABC für junge Mädchen*. 52.

⁶⁷ Brauer, Kapitzke, and Wrage, *JMMF* 1., 30.

⁶⁸ *Ibid.*, 85; Husslein, *ABC für junge Mädchen*. facing p 16.; and Bundeszentrale für gesundheitliche Aufklärung, *SKA* 2., 26-7.

house and to emotionally devote themselves to the family.⁶⁹ *JMMF* even says that although “the main burden (*Hauptlast*) of housework and work with the baby rests with the woman,” if finances lead a mother to “decide” to work rather than “support her baby’s development in the most important first two years of its life,” then the father’s participation in housework is “not out of the question.”⁷⁰ This idea of an equal but different *Hausfraulichkeit* carried with it suggestions and enjoinders that mothers should not work and should be prevented from doing so, due to the dangers to their children should they do so. This, the various West German sources say that a mother must, at the least, remain at home shortly before and for a significant time after giving birth, but suggests that a few years is ideal, and the authors of *JMMF* 2 even suggest a three-phase model (i.e. working until marriage, then not abandoning her children to work, then perhaps working once she has reached menopause and her kids have grown up).⁷¹ This idea that mothers should avoid working fits in with a broader pattern in West Germany of encouraging the *Hausfrau* (housewife) as the natural female role complementing the male breadwinner, something effected through legal measures (for example in the tax system and family law) and social condemnation of working mothers (evidenced, for instance, in the word *Rabenmutter*—literally ‘raven mother,’ based on the false idea that ravens abandon their young).⁷²

Beyond being portrayed as wasteful, the female reproductive cycle shown as disruptive and deviant, justifying medical observation and intervention. Thus one finds comments that new mothers may not breastfeed their babies on the first day—when babies get only a “tea with grape sugar (*Tee mit Traubenzucker*)”—, that pregnancy can be endanger a woman’s health, or that doctors should decide whether a young woman uses tampons or menstrual pads (not least because of the apparently calamitous risk of breaking a virgin’s hymen, as if it

⁶⁹ Cf. e.g. Brauer, Kapitzke, and Wrage, *JMMF* 1., 8, 39, 47-8; Brauer et al., *JMMF* 2., 80-2, 141-2

⁷⁰ Brauer et al., *JMMF* 2. 39, 80.

⁷¹ *Ibid.*, 48-9.

⁷² Cf. e.g. Robert G. Moeller, *Protecting Motherhood: Women and the Family in the Politics of Postwar West Germany*, (Berkeley, 1993), Schissler, "Normalization' as Project.", Hanna Schissler, "Women in West Germany from 1945 to the Present," in *From Bundesrepublik to Deutschland: German Politics after Unification*, ed. Michael G. Huelshoff, Andrei S. Markovits, and Simon Reich (Ann Arbor, 1993).

had some crucial biological function).⁷³ Moreover, the general portrayal of the menstrual

cycle suggests that both menstruation and ovulation are somehow abnormal and troublesome, and indicate special and aberrant hygiene and behaviour.⁷⁴ Pregnancy also comes across as disruptive and abnormal, despite its naturalness and status as the ideal state, the completion of a woman's body, though the authors never resolve this conflict. Husslein gives perhaps the best example of this, describing corporeal and psychological disruptions in the first and third trimesters while extolling pregnancy as "an even that brings the woman fulfilment."⁷⁵

The East German emphasis on *Gleichberechtigung* carried with it certain forms of intervention. Thus, the sources mention the help given by the state to help women stay in the workforce (e.g. extensive childcare and legal protection of employment during the comparatively generous guaranteed maternity leave) as well as the DDR's various pro-natalist policies, such as neonatal care, childcare facilities, maternity leave, and financial incentives.⁷⁶ Similarly, the pre-eminent place overtly given to schools in educating to socialist norms of gender and sexuality represents an intervention for the sake of *Gleichberechtigung*. Behind the scenes, moreover, another set of state interventions occurred. Although researched and written autonomously (if in a state-supported research institute), these books were subject to state sanction. Ute Schlegel (a.k.a. Bruhm-Schlegel), one of the authors of *Junge Frauen heute*, later mentioned how difficult it was to have *Junge Frauen heute* published, due to official interference.⁷⁷

⁷³ Brauer, Kapitzke, and Wrage, *JMMF* 1., 56-7; Brauer et al., *JMMF* 2., 89; Bundeszentrale für gesundheitliche Aufklärung, *SKA* 1., 44. Interestingly, SKA 2 says that girls themselves could choose. Bundeszentrale für gesundheitliche Aufklärung, *SKA* 2., 44.

⁷⁴ Cf. e.g. Brauer et al., *JMMF* 2., 40-49

⁷⁵ Husslein, *ABC für junge Mädchen*. 28.

⁷⁶ E.g. Bruhm-Schlegel et al., *Junge Frauen heute*. 79-80

⁷⁷ Schlegel, "Geschlechter- und Frauenforschung." 374

Sexuality: A Biological Need or a Personal Pleasure?

East and West German sex education books also had different ideas about the telos of sexuality and its role in subjectivity. The Western sources sexuality as stemming from the body, centred on the genitalia, focused on reproduction, and located within marriage. Thus, they emphasized the biological nature of the sexual drive and of satisfaction, normalized coitus as the real form of sexuality, and discussed everything in reference to marriage and family. Moreover, their emphasis on reproduction and coitus helped to focus sex on male desires and pleasures, largely ignoring women's. But this purely biological sexuality was not something divorced from personhood; by being part of the body, it was part of one's experiences and thus indirectly one's selfhood. Ultimately though, sex appears as something done out of need and natural drive than pleasure, desire, or love, especially for women.

The East German sex education books, however, portrayed a markedly different sexuality. While still basing sexuality in the heterosexual couple, they placed it at the centre of personhood and relationships, and emphasized pleasure and equality in the bedroom. In keeping with their de-emphasizing of biology and anatomy, they did not discuss sex as something primarily genital, and stressed that sexuality was primarily about pleasure rather than reproduction. Moreover, they insisted on the equal rights of women and men to pleasure in the bedroom, and emphasized that the clitoris rather than the vagina was the "orgasm-triggering (*orgasmusauslösend*)" organ for most women.⁷⁸ This had the effect of implicitly normalizing non-coital practices such as oral and manual genital stimulation. Moreover, it helped encourage couples—and, combined with the insistence that male lack of skill was a major cause of female anorgasmia, particularly men—to take responsibility for ensuring female orgasm, and was coincident with increased female orgasm rates.⁷⁹ Finally,

⁷⁸ Bruhm-Schlegel et al., *Junge Frauen heute*, 73

⁷⁹ At the risk of confusing coincidence with consequence (*cum hoc ergo propter hoc*), it would be improper to say that the one caused the other. Nonetheless, there is considerable evidence that East German women had higher orgasm rates (and higher levels of general sexual satisfaction) than West German women, and that they were increasing during the 1970s and 1980s, something for which these sources (and others) provide considerable empirical evidence. Cf. e.g. Ingrid Sharp, "The Sexual Unification of Germany," *Journal of the History of Sexuality* 13 (2004). 353-4.

here comes across as something directly central to individuality, to personhood, and to relationships. Thus, the East German sources emphasize that everyone has a somewhat different experience of sexuality and pleasure, and the importance of sexuality not only to establishing a couple (and family), but also to personal happiness.⁸⁰

In the West German sources, biology and reproduction dominate discussions of sexuality. That is, in keeping with the authors' disciplinary backgrounds, sex is discussed in almost exclusively anatomical and reproductive terms. They portrayed women's sexuality, furthermore, as passive and centred on procreation. Thus Husslein, for instance, says that "for the emotionally (*seelisch*) mature young woman, love culminates in the wish to symbolize the union in a child,... [a] wish most strongly felt during sex," and that "a woman deceives herself when she seeks only sexual satisfaction from the bodily union and bans from her world of feeling everything that has to do with motherhood and love of child (*Liebe zum Kind*)."⁸¹

The anatomical and reproductive focus of these West German books leads to the presentation of sex as something primarily centred on coitus, the genitals, and pleasure (narrowly understood as orgasm). Thus, their discussions of sex are restricted to explanations of genital reactions and coitus. Similarly, they denigrate masturbation as, at best, a "first rehearsal (*erstes Einüben*)" for the coitus and describe it as immature and dangerous if persistent.⁸² Similarly, the few brief mentions of such things as kissing, touching, and "Petting" (which in German includes almost anything short of coitus) all focus on them leading up to coitus, that is, they are nothing more than foreplay.⁸³ Ultimately, by focusing primarily on the "*Sache selbst*," (that is, coitus)⁸⁴ they largely ignore the emotional and relations sides of sexuality. Interestingly, several of these sources say that sex is not just

⁸⁰ Cf. e.g. Bruhm-Schlegel et al., *Junge Frauen heute.*, 67-78.

⁸¹ Husslein, *ABC für junge Mädchen.*, 48, 53.

⁸² Brauer et al., *JMMF* 2., 38

⁸³ Ibid., 54-56; Husslein, *ABC für junge Mädchen.*, 60-64

⁸⁴ I'm borrowing this phrase from one of my East German sources: Bruhm-Schlegel et al., *Junge Frauen heute.* 76.

genital (or even physical), but they usually do so in a single sentence or paragraph following dozens of pages of genitally focused biological explanations of sex.⁸⁵

The East German authors, in contrast, ignore biology and barely discuss reproduction in their discussions of sexuality. Instead, they stress that sexuality is, indeed, primarily about partnership and individual happiness (“*Glück*”) in relationships.⁸⁶ Thus, instead of reproduction, they emphasize love, desire, romance, contentment, partnership, companionship, sexual rapport, emotions, and so on in relationships, and specifically the equal right thereto of both women and men.⁸⁷ Thus, such comments as *Junge Frauen heute*’s “sexuality cannot be reduced to pure corporeal pleasure (*Lustgewinn*) that scarcely outlasts the moment,” do not, unlike their West German counterparts, ring hollow.⁸⁸ Moreover, they all argue against prudery, insisting that sex is an absolutely normal part of life, not something “base or dirty”.⁸⁹ Yet they stress that it should not be mistaken for the most important thing in life, leading to condemnations of the “overemphasis and one-sided-ness (*Vereinseitigung*) of sexuality” seen in the West, and the statement that “we do not live for the sake of sexuality, but without it existence is poorer in joy and happiness.”⁹⁰ All of this helps to focus sexuality on the individual and emphasize it as a personal experience and right, rather than a biological urge.

Moreover, the East German authors proffer a sexuality not at all focused on coitus and the genitals. Thus, for instance, they all insist that sexual encounters should, wherever possible, include orgasm for the woman, and that rushing to the “*Sache selbst*” (i.e. coitus) often leaves women dissatisfied.⁹¹ Moreover, all say that the clitoris is the primary site of

⁸⁵ E.g. Brauer, Kapitzke, and Wrage, *JMMF* 1., 95; Brauer et al., *JMMF* 2., 58; or Husslein, *ABC für junge Mädchen*, *passim*.

⁸⁶ E.g. Bruhm-Schlegel et al., *Junge Frauen heute*. 73.

⁸⁷ E.g. Bertram, Kabat vel Job, and Friedrich, *Adam und Eva heute*. 130-139.

⁸⁸ Bruhm-Schlegel et al., *Junge Frauen heute*. 71.

⁸⁹ Bertram, Kabat vel Job, and Friedrich, *Adam und Eva heute*. 137.; Pinther et al., *Junge Ehe heute*. 67

⁹⁰ Pinther et al., *Junge Ehe heute*, 67.

⁹¹ Cf. e.g. Bruhm-Schlegel et al., *Junge Frauen heute*. 72-3; Bertram, Kabat vel Job, and Friedrich, *Adam und Eva heute*. 132-139.

possible non-coital activities, one can reasonably construe this as an endorsement of manual and oral stimulation at the very least, something explicitly discussed in the very popular East German sex advice literature (such as Siegfried Schnabl's immensely popular *Mann und Frau intim*).⁹³ Moreover, they stressed men's responsibility in ensuring women orgasm as often as possible in sex, highlighting male lack of skill, patience, or tenderness as some of the chief reasons for women not reaching orgasm.⁹⁴

Heterosexuality

The West German authors' focus on coitus, biology, and reproduction suggest that sexuality is something naturally circumscribed by heterosexual marriages, or at least romantic relations heading thither. The emphasis on marriage as the proper site for marriage is variously supported, for instance through denigrations of pre-marital sexuality, condemnations of extra-marital and group sexuality, and the simple fact that marital sexuality is only kind not mentioned as abnormal.⁹⁵ Interestingly, the biological focus of these sources also colours their descriptions of heterosexual relations: the absence of social context and sexual ethics—let alone the complete silence over desire⁹⁶—make heterosexuality appear almost automatic and animalistic, excluding love, romance, desire, or passion.

Central to this West Germany heteronormativity is the portrayal of other forms of sexuality as abnormal and unnatural. Thus, despite mentioning alternate sexualities, the authors denigrate them—especially homosexuality—as tantamount to illnesses, particularly

⁹² Cf. e.g. Bertram, Kabat vel Job, and Friedrich, *Adam und Eva heute*. 132ff; Bruhm-Schlegel et al., *Junge Frauen heute*. 72ff

⁹³ Siegfried Schnabl, *Mann und Frau intim: Fragen des gesunden und des gestörten Geschlechtslebens*, 5., unveränderte Aufl. ed., (Berlin, 1972). *Mann und Frau intim* was—with the gardening advice book *Einen Rat für jeden Gartentag*—easily the most popular (“auflagenstärkste”) book in East Germany, published at least 15 times between 1969 and 1989. Cf. Uta Kolano, *Nackter Osten*, 1. Aufl. ed., in Sammlung Zeitzeugen (Frankfurt (Oder), 1995), 92; and Herzog, *Sex after Fascism*. 203

⁹⁴ E.g. Pinther et al., *Junge Ehe heute*. AEh 138

⁹⁵ Husslein, *ABC für junge Mädchen*, 64-66; Brauer et al., *JMMF* 2., 126-7.

⁹⁶ Husslein is the only author to mention it, but—characteristically—her discussion restricts itself to the biological aspects, as evinced even by her focus on the “Geschlechtstrieb” (sexual drive, urge, or instinct), rather than desire. Husslein, *ABC für junge Mädchen*. 44-66.

homosexuality. Of particular importance here are, on the one hand, the silence and, on the other hand, the not so subtly deprecatory comments about homosexuality (though two sources say that puberty can naturally include a homoerotic phase).⁹⁷ Husslein, for instance, labels homosexuality an “a change,... a reversal,... an aberration from the natural, a perversion, a deviation.”⁹⁸ Consequently, discussions of homosexuality focus on its causes—including failure to overcome a homoerotic stage of puberty or an insecurity with the other sex, developmental problems, brain damage, genetics (“*Erbfaktor*”), and “seduction”—and treatment options—generally psychotherapy, but also drugs and surgery in the case of brain damage.⁹⁹ Arguing that homosexuals (being ill) cannot help themselves, the sources that mention homosexuality advocate tolerance of homosexuals, but this pity does not, of course, constitute acceptance of homosexuality or anything other than a fundamental perception of it as a problem.¹⁰⁰ Moreover, they argue that youth must be protected from the great danger of “seduction” to homosexuality, and thus condemn any open display of homosexuality.¹⁰¹ In a similar vein, they make no mention of what homosexuals might actually do when having sex.

The East German authors, too, identify the heterosexual couple as sexuality’s natural locus, but—not surprisingly—with different justifications and implications. Thus, masturbation finds a few paragraphs’ mention in *Adam und Eva heute*, but only as something preparatory); all other mentions of sexuality locate it the couple.¹⁰² Moreover, *Junge Frauen heute* warns against a “thoughtless, frequent change of partners (*bedenkenloser häufiger Wechsel des Partners*)” as something removing the emotional depths necessary to happiness, thus centring sexuality on a monogamous couple.¹⁰³ Moreover, homosexuality does not appear in

⁹⁷ Brauer et al., *JMMF* 2. 124; Husslein, *ABC für junge Mädchen*. 73..

⁹⁸ “eine Änderung[...] eine Umkehr[...] eine Abirrung vom Natürlichen, eine Perversion[...] eine Abweichung.” Husslein, *ABC für junge Mädchen*. 72-4.

⁹⁹ Ibid. 72-4; and Brauer et al., *JMMF* 2. 124-5.

¹⁰⁰ Brauer et al., *JMMF* 2. 124-5., and Husslein, *ABC für junge Mädchen*. 72-4.

¹⁰¹ Brauer et al., *JMMF* 2. 124-5., and Husslein, *ABC für junge Mädchen*. 72-4. Interestingly, the idea of that “seduction” was one of chief causes of homosexuality was quite popular during the Third Reich. Cf. Herzog, *Sex after Fascism*.

¹⁰² Bertram, Kabat vel Job, and Friedrich, *Adam und Eva heute*. 124.

¹⁰³ Bruhm-Schlegel et al., *Junge Frauen heute*. 77

an intimate embrace.¹⁰⁴

Nonetheless, the East German authors do not restrict sexuality specifically to marriage or the family, or even suggest these as the necessary direction. Thus, *Junge Frauen heute* encouragingly mentions that “for almost all of our youth—boys as well as girls—premarital sex has become a matter of course (*ist zu etwas Selbstverständlichem geworden*).”¹⁰⁵ Indeed, they all suggest that it is entirely normal and acceptable to have sex outside and even children outside of marriage, with both *Junge Ehe heute* and *Junge Frauen heute*, for instance, referencing a proverb (“*drum prüfe, wer sich ewig bindet*”) to encourage people to take their time to ensure their chosen partner is the right one before deciding to get married.¹⁰⁶ Thus, the authors of *Junge Ehe heute*, while encouraging people to try to solve marital problems rather than divorcing, clearly indicates divorce as an acceptable option if the marriage is not longer pleasurable or functional.¹⁰⁷ Not emphasizing marriage as the sole locus of sexuality is in keeping with the East German emphasis on happiness in marriage and the importance of not prolonging marriage past a point where it becomes difficult or unhappy for one or both partners.¹⁰⁸ That said, they do tend to imply the desirability of marriage following children, but only, so long as the union is a happy one and not one propelled by a sense of necessity.¹⁰⁹ Similarly, and despite the focus on the individual over the reproductive aspects of sexuality, they do emphasize children as part of sexuality, and mention the pronatalist policies of the East German state.¹¹⁰ But reflecting the focus on individual rather than biological aspects of sexuality, the East German authors emphasize the personal desire for children rather than the biological drive to have them. Thus, for instance, the comment in

¹⁰⁴ Bertram, Kabat vel Job, and Friedrich, *Adam und Eva heute*, facing p 129. Incidentally, *Adam und Eva heute* does give passing mention of homosexuality, saying that “some authors even link later homosexual fixations to prenatal hormone imbalances.” Bertram, Kabat vel Job, and Friedrich, *Adam und Eva heute*, 37. This is certainly suggestive, but I think it improper to draw any conclusions from this one isolated example, however provocative it might be.

¹⁰⁵ Bruhm-Schlegel et al., *Junge Frauen heute*, 69.

¹⁰⁶ Pinther et al., *Junge Ehe heute*, 69; Bruhm-Schlegel et al., *Junge Frauen heute*, 78..

¹⁰⁷ Pinther et al., *Junge Ehe heute*, 139-142.

¹⁰⁸ Cf. e.g. Herzog, *Sex after Fascism*, 69.

¹⁰⁹ Pinther et al., *Junge Ehe heute*, 35-6.

¹¹⁰ Bruhm-Schlegel et al., *Junge Frauen heute*, 79-80

for children, in contrast to the West German authors' locating reproduction as the function and biological drive of sexuality.¹¹¹

But the proper locus of sexuality according to these books is not just the heterosexual couple; it is the socialist heterosexual couple. To that end, one finds constant references to *Gleichberechtigung* within the heterosexual couple, including equal sharing of housework duties, equal rights to pleasure, and acceptance of women working. They emphasize, likewise, the greater freedom and sexual pleasure women and men have in socialism than in capitalism, with its three Ks¹¹² and "mercenary love (*käufliche Liebe*)."¹¹³ Similarly, *Adam & Eva heute* devotes two pages to the "characteristics of the socialist family," which include (among others) *Gleichberechtigung*, equal employment of both partners, partnership and comradeship, love, independence, and joint political and industrial activism.¹¹⁴ Moreover, both *Junge Ehe heute* and *Junge Frauen heute* mention the DDR's various pronatalist policies that make it easier for families to have multiple children.¹¹⁵ This focus on the socialist family is an interesting example of the shift from earlier SED (Socialist Unity Party, East Germany's ruling party) views of the family as a bulwark of bourgeois values and thus as a threat to the construction of a socialist society, to a growing acceptance through the 1960s and 1970s of the socialist family.¹¹⁶

This emphasis on the socialist couple was accompanied by a sexual ethics of respectability that had certain similarities to the West German one, yet also marked and growing differences. For instance, the stress on marital fidelity, the desirability of avoiding divorce, and the objectionable nature of changing partners frequently, are all very similar to

¹¹¹ Ibid., 79-80

¹¹² *Kinder, Kirche, Küche*—children, church, kitchen—a phrase frequently used to describe (if problematically) Nazi and West German ideas of women's place in society.

¹¹³ Bruhm-Schlegel et al., *Junge Frauen heute*. 71.

¹¹⁴ Bertram, Kabat vel Job, and Friedrich, *Adam und Eva heute*. 144-6.

¹¹⁵ Pinther et al., *Junge Ehe heute*. 109-113; Bruhm-Schlegel et al., *Junge Frauen heute*. 79-80. This is one instance where the overlapping authorship is clear. Indeed, several sentences and paragraphs are identical, having been written by Otmar Kabat vel Job. Pinther et al., *Junge Ehe heute*. 175; Bruhm-Schlegel et al., *Junge Frauen heute*. 95.

¹¹⁶ Eric D. Weitz, *Creating German Communism, 1890-1990: From Popular Protests to Socialist State*, (Princeton, 1997), 378-9; Starke and Weller, "Partner- und Sexualforschung", 398.

the conservative, bourgeois, capitalist, or Christian (whichever term one prefers) morality in West Germany.¹¹⁷ This doubtless rested on the two Germanys' common cultural roots, but it was in keeping with East Germany's longstanding focus on respectability.¹¹⁸ Yet the differences made clear above reflect the divergence of the two Germanys. Particularly important here is what Dagmar Herzog has called East Germany's "Sexual Evolution," whereby ideas of gender and sexuality were more gradually relaxed than in West Germany, with its Sexual Revolution.¹¹⁹

Pleasure

These different understandings of sexuality included divergent views on sexual pleasure, although both understand sexual pleasure and orgasm as synonymous. The West German emphasis on coitus informed their understanding of pleasure. With coitus the only sexual act described in detail, pleasure is automatically centred thereon, and they also stressed the mutual pleasurable for both partners. Thus, several sources emphasize the general simultaneity of male and female orgasm in coitus, while acknowledging that women do not always orgasm.¹²⁰ (Interestingly, several authors discuss the ability of women to orgasm several times without a refractory period, which stands in contradiction with the idea that orgasms are simultaneous, given the refractory period for men).¹²¹ Furthermore, Husslein repeats the Freudian thesis that the vagina is the proper and mature centre of orgasm while the clitoral orgasm is immature, and I would suggest that other sources' stress on coital orgasm for women and their silence about the clitoral orgasm suggests they would agree with the thesis of the immature clitoral orgasm.¹²² These sources, however, emphasize the male

¹¹⁷ Pinther et al., *Junge Ebe heute*. 139-142; Bruhm-Schlegel et al., *Junge Frauen heute*. 67

¹¹⁸ Weitz, *Creating German Communism, 1890-1990: From Popular Protests to Socialist State*. 371ff.

¹¹⁹ For instance homosexuality was legalized in 1968 (after being quietly decriminalized in 1957), abortion in 1972, and nudism (*Freikörperkultur*) gradually from the 1960s through 1980s. Cf. Herzog, *Sex after Fascism*. 192-205; and Josie McLellan, "State Socialist Bodies: East German Nudism from Ban to Boom," *Journal of Modern History* 79 (March, 2007).

¹²⁰ E.g. Bundeszentrale für gesundheitliche Aufklärung, *SKA 1*. 18; Brauer, Kapitzke, and Wrage, *JMMF 1*, 40; Brauer et al., *JMMF 2*, 57.

¹²¹ Cf. e.g. Bundeszentrale für gesundheitliche Aufklärung, *SKA 2*, 14

¹²² Husslein, *ABC für junge Mädchen*, 62, 68.

female orgasm only in passing (they do not encourage men to do anything about women's lower orgasm rate).

Discussing sexuality in biological terms also affects the West German authors' understanding of pleasure. Each of them portrays the purpose of sex as, first, reproduction, and second, satisfaction ("*Befriedigung*") of the sexual drive. This very emphasis on *Befriedigung*—which carries connotations of satisfying or fulfilling a drive or need such as hunger or thirst—rather than desire (e.g. *Verlangen* or *Begierde*) or pleasure (e.g. *Vergnügen* or *Freude*) is, I think, significant. Phrased as it is in biological terms, it reinforces the biological and genital understanding of sexuality, divorced from love and eroticism, casting sexuality as something objective and almost mechanistic rather than subjective and personal. For instance, one source describes orgasm in terms of release, feelings of "wellbeing (*Wohlbehagen*)," and lack of awareness of the outside world.¹²³ Of course, the downplaying of pleasure is understandable given that West Germans of the 1950s and 1960s (a group to which these authors certainly belong) remembered Nazism as sexually inciting, thus leading them to de-emphasize pleasure in their attempts at "moral rearmament."¹²⁴ Nevertheless, one ultimately gets the impression from each of these sources that they do so only because there is a biological drive thereto, that it is almost a chore necessary to making babies and letting women fulfil their biologically defined destiny, rather than also being a pleasurable part of life and romantic relationships.¹²⁵ Indeed, after reading one of these sources (*JMMF* 1) I found myself wanting to ask the authors why people have sex at all.

The East German insistence on equality in (heterosexual) relationships and their de-emphasis of coitus influenced their ideas of pleasure. In line with their focus on the primary

¹²³ Brauer et al., *JMMF* 2. 16, 34-8. This source does mention in this list and its long anatomical explications the word "*Lustgefühlen*," (feelings of pleasure) but it is the only one, and it occurs in passing, almost as an insignificant afterthought. Idem.

¹²⁴ Herzog, *Sex after Fascism*. 101-140, and Maria Höhn, *GIs and Fräuleins: The German-American Encounter in 1950s West Germany*, (Chapel Hill, 2002). 11

¹²⁵ In discussing family planning, one source does say that people experience their sex organs first as "pleasure and joy" ("*Lust und Freude*") and only second in terms of reproduction. Cf Brauer et al., *JMMF* 2., 88. But again, I would argue that one such comment does little to mitigate the overall focus on reproduction and *Befriedigung*, and of course the above statement continues to focus on sexuality as genital.

centre of sexuality. Thus, they describe sexual pleasure (identified, as in the West German sources, with orgasm) with such words as “happiness (*Glück*),” “pleasure (*Lust*),” “fulfilment,” “satisfaction (*Befriedigung*),” “contentment,” “arousal,” “relaxation,” “melting (*Verschmelzung*),” and “joy (*Freude*).”¹²⁶ The East German sources give particular attention to the rights of women to equal sexual pleasure, including orgasm, to which *Junge Frauen heute* and *Adam & Eva heute* each devote seven pages (*Adam & Eva heute*, by comparison, spends but two pages discussing male sexual response).¹²⁷ Accompanying the insistence on sexual equality vis-à-vis pleasure are discussions of the different sexual response among men and women, such as the acknowledgement that women tend to take longer to reach orgasm than men, and do not primarily do so vaginally (i.e. coitally).¹²⁸ Moreover, they mention that the female orgasm is more complex than the male, and is not “just a biological process,” but one dependent on a host of social, psychological, personal, professional, relational, and external factors, and consequently more susceptible to disruption than the male.¹²⁹ Crucially, they encourage men to take responsibility for female pleasure, primarily through the frequent references to the importance of both partners’ sexual happiness to marriage, but also through the frequent insistence that a primary cause for female anorgasmia is an “unskilled (*ungeschickt*)” or thoughtless male.¹³⁰ Interestingly, they suggest that, in contrast with men, a woman must learn to orgasm (it’s a “*Lernergebnis*”), a process generally taking three years from her first intercourse.¹³¹ Similarly, *Junge Frauen heute* even suggests that women initially view sex as something necessary to relationships, only developing the “taste” for it after

¹²⁶ Bruhm-Schlegel et al., *Junge Frauen heute*. 67, 72-76; Bertram, Kabat vel Job, and Friedrich, *Adam und Eva heute*. 129-135

¹²⁷ Bruhm-Schlegel et al., *Junge Frauen heute*. 72-9; Bertram, Kabat vel Job, and Friedrich, *Adam und Eva heute*. 129-139

¹²⁸ E.g. Bruhm-Schlegel et al., *Junge Frauen heute*, 73

¹²⁹ Bertram, Kabat vel Job, and Friedrich, *Adam und Eva heute*. 137-8

¹³⁰ Ibid. 138

¹³¹ Pinther et al., *Junge Ehe heute*. 66, Bruhm-Schlegel et al., *Junge Frauen heute*. 72

some experience, something that would seem to contradict the insistence that sexuality is a normal part of life for everyone.¹³²

Bodies, Embodiment, and Subjectivity

With different concepts of femininity, sexuality, and pleasure come different understandings of the body. The West German sex education books, through their biological focus, constructed a view of the body as something distinct from—if attached to—one's personhood; thus, sexuality was, in the first instance, a biological urge coming from the body. Nevertheless, because one's body was part of one's experience, sexuality was, indirectly, a part of subjectivity. Moreover, they understood the body as defining essential gender roles, thus directing sexual subjectivity in specific directions (i.e. passivity, *Hausfräulichkeit*, and maternity for women. Despite the understanding of these roles as defined by “natural law,” the West German sources insisted that regulation and tutelage of was required to uphold them, for instance through *Mutterschutz*.¹³³ Ultimately, these sources attempt to educate control of sexual drives, normalizing specific bodily sexual practices, specifically coitus. Thus, these sources viewed the individual body as something requiring regulation, placing it—especially the female body—in the broader social body. Thus, they participated in the embodiment of what had been “normalization,” but had, by the early 1970s, become a normality fighting less against the supposed libertinism of the Nazis than against the “bombardment of sexuality (*Überfall der Geschlechtlichkeit*)” and “Hippy mentality” of the “champions of ‘free love’”, which were so prevalent in “our hectic times.”¹³⁴

The focus on biology and the deviance and inadequacy of women's bodies and reproductive cycles suggests that these sources viewed women's bodies as biological objects,

¹³² Bruhm-Schlegel et al., *Junge Frauen heute*. 72.

¹³³ For “natural law” and similar comments, cf. Husslein, *ABC für junge Mädchen*. passim (e.g. 49)

¹³⁴ Ibid., 56-7, 63, 65. For further information on 1950s West German “normalization” of gender roles, see Schissler, “'Normalization' as Project.”, Schissler, “Women in West Germany.”. For postwar West German memory of Nazism as sexually libertine, and the role of this memory in West German gender and sexual norms, see Herzog, *Sex after Fascism*. 101-140.

bodies also appear as parts of the broader social body requiring tutelage.¹³⁶ Thus, the sources all prescribe, normalize, and discipline how women are supposed to behave with their bodies, which are seen to biologically determine one's place in society. Moreover, they support various forms of state, social, and medical intervention to ensure that women fulfil their proper roles in the social body, i.e. as mothers, as housekeepers. Thus one finds mention of the importance of women not working, of the danger that women's bodies and choices pose to children and the unborn, or of the role of population control in decisions about contraception.¹³⁷ Moreover, these sources understood the body as something distinct from personhood, insofar as sexual needs were said to be of the body and not of the mind. Thus, they emphasize a mind-body divide, but because one experiences the body and sexuality, this divide is not absolutely sharp. Nevertheless, they also emphasized that one's gendered body defines one's social position—that is, how ideas of the reproductive and passive nature of the female body define women's place in society. While it might seem paradoxical that they both aver that mind and body are different, and simultaneously abjure that claim, I think they are both part of a larger whole. Specifically, I think these two work together to suggest that while one's sexed body circumscribes one's subjectivity by limiting it to certain gender expectations, it does not fully determine personality; that is, they give room (if silently) to individuality within this gender system. Moreover, this would seem to support the belief in equality and difference, that is, that both men and women are individual and not entirely defined bodily, while being bifurcated into two distinct paths and patterns. Thus, they embody equality in difference.

The East German sources, on the other hand, viewed the body quite differently. On the one hand, they approached the body not from the standpoint of biology but empirical

¹³⁵ For "weibliche Organismus" cf. e.g. Husslein, *ABC für junge Mädchen*. passim (e.g. 12, 18).

¹³⁶ For further exploration of these and other historiographical understandings of 'the body', see Kathleen Canning, "The Body as Method?: Reflections on the Place of the Body in Gender History," in *Gender History in Practice: Historical Perspectives on Bodies, Class, and Citizenship* (Ithaca, 2005), 168-180.

¹³⁷ Bundeszentrale für gesundheitliche Aufklärung, *SKA* 2. 21; Brauer et al., *JMMF* 2. 90-1.

social sciences. This doubtless played a role in their understanding of the body in terms of social and individual experience. Moreover, they viewed bodily pleasure and experience—and consequently the body itself—as part of one's subjectivity, rather than upholding a sharp divide between mind and body. This focus on the body as part of the person combined with their emphasis on socialist morality to form a picture of embodied socialist subjectivity; that is, they portrayed *gleichberechtigte* bodily behaviour as part of a socialist subjectivity to which pleasure was central.

These East German sex education books understand the female body partly as an integral (and reproductive) part of the social body, and partly as a site of tutelage to socialist personhood, but primarily as something personal and experiential.¹³⁸ By focusing on the romance, pleasure, emotional depth, relational aspects, and personal nature, and largely ignoring its biological and reproductive facets, they emphasize the centrality of bodies to individuals, the integration of mind and body. Even references to reproduction are cast more in light of individual and familial experience than in terms of a social or racial body. Concomitant with this is the emphasis on educating to socialist gender and sexuality, but here too the focus is on creating socialist *individuals* in society.

What do all of these differences—in understandings of femininity, of sexuality, of body—mean to ideas of subjectivity and the meaning of personhood in East and West Germany? Ultimately, they suggest different conceptions of the relationship between body, sexuality, and subjectivity. The West German sources suggest that the body defines one's place in society and directs one's subjectivity, but does not restrict one from being an individual within those limits. Within this framework, they embodied their understanding of a “normal” (à la Schissler), natural sexual subjectivity, defined for women by *Hausfraulichkeit* and reproduction. Yet this embodiment is implicit, hidden behind the authority of science

¹³⁸ As in my discussion of West German bodies, in my ideas of different understandings of ‘the body,’ I am drawing heavily from Canning, “The Body as Method?,” 168-189.

these specific gender norms are always already embodied *a priori* anything.¹³⁹

The East Germans, in contrast, ultimately present an embodied socialist subjectivity for the worker-mother. That is, they portray a femininity and sexual subjectivity incorporating and incorporated in *Gleichberechtigung* of men and women in (ostensibly) all aspects of life, from the workplace to the family, from the political world to the bedroom, especially work, pleasure, activism and political participation, and (silently) women's "quadruple burden."¹⁴⁰ Furthermore, they do not forgo the opportunity to praise socialism as increasing pleasure, in keeping with Dagmar Herzog's observation that "no sex advice text in the East was complete without reference to the idea that only socialism provided the context for the most loving and satisfying marriages or to the notion that a couple's commitment to and struggle on behalf of socialism would enhance their romantic relationship."¹⁴¹ Thus, they suggest the importance to both partners' sexual satisfaction of *Gleichberechtigung*—particularly as regards men accepting housework duties and women's work—, and of "socialist socialization and education (*Bildung und Erziehung*) [and] socialist values and norms."¹⁴² They also mentioned the convergence of male and female behaviours and expectations of life and romance as a factor in increasing sexual satisfaction.¹⁴³ This was, of course, part of the 'subjective' changes *Gleichberechtigung* encompassed, but there was some circumspection in the phrasing (presumably for political reasons), insofar as they ignored the fact that this convergence was unidirectional, i.e. women's behaviours and especially attitudes were moving towards men's, but not the other way around.¹⁴⁴ Given their focus on educating to socialist norms, creating a socialist society, and, as Dagmar Herzog suggests, the focus on the

¹³⁹ Husslein, *ABC für junge Mädchen*. passim (e.g. 49)

¹⁴⁰ Heineman, *What Difference Does a Husband Make?* 240.

¹⁴¹ Herzog, *Sex after Fascism*. 194.

¹⁴² Pinther et al., *Junge Ehe heute*. 72, 74-5; Bruhm-Schlegel et al., *Junge Frauen heute*, 75-78

¹⁴³ Bruhm-Schlegel et al., *Junge Frauen heute*, 66-71.

¹⁴⁴ As Uta Schlegel puts it, "die Annäherung [in den Einstellungs- und Verhaltensbereichen] fast ausschließlich in der Richtung verlief, daß sich Einstellungen und Verhaltensmuster der weiblichen Jugendlichen denen der männlichen näherten, [während] demgegenüber die männlichen Verhaltensmuster weitgehend unbeeinflusst blieben; [obwohl] solche Annäherungen in den Einstellungsbereichen noch deutlich ausgeprägter waren als in den entsprechenden Verhaltensbereichen." Schlegel, "Geschlechter- und Frauenforschung." 390.

about the ongoing process of embodying socialism and sexuality in a way quite distinct from their West German counterparts.¹⁴⁵

Moreover, they explicitly construct this embodied socialist citizenship in opposition to an inferior, hierarchical capitalist gender system that allows neither men nor women full subjectivity, much less happiness. Thus, they condemn capitalist (i.e. West German) gender for its oppression of women through *Hausfraulichkeit*; for its mercenary sexuality (in terms of the economic basis of marriage law and the existence of both prostitution and the commercialized sex industry); its moral double standards in expecting virginity of brides but not grooms; for its “overemphasis and one-sided-ness of sexuality (*Überbetonung und Vereinseitigung des Sexuellen*)”; for its failure or refusal to grant women equal legal standing or educational or employment opportunities; and for its imposition of strictly limiting gender behaviours that allow neither men nor (especially) women to be truly emotionally or even sexually satisfied.¹⁴⁶ Dagmar Herzog would argue that this is part of a broader pattern in which East German discourse about sex emphasized that “socialism, in short, was not just about better love; it was about better sex.”¹⁴⁷ I would demur, however, and suggest that they were trying to stress that it was not just about better love or better sex, but a better personhood that included better love and better sex than that in West Germany.

Conclusion

The West German sources focused on biology, reproduction, and morality, largely ignoring the personal maturation involved in growing up, which appears almost exclusively as the biological process of reaching reproductive maturity. They used this focus on biology to normalize a housewifely and reproductive femininity, a marital and reproductive sexuality, and an idea of sexual satisfaction centred on the male and circumscribed by the body,

¹⁴⁵ Herzog, *Sex after Fascism*. 194.

¹⁴⁶ Cf. e.g. Bruhm-Schlegel et al., *Junge Frauen heute*. 8, 63, 67, 69; Pinther et al., *Junge Ehe heute*. 67; Bertram, Kabat vel Job, and Friedrich, *Adam und Eva heute*. 11-29.

¹⁴⁷ Herzog, *Sex after Fascism*. 21 1

separated from subjectivity. Moreover, they understood the female body as, on the one hand, something physical and not integrated into one's subjectivity, and, on the other hand, as a reproductive part of the social body requiring intervention and tutelage to their reproductive nature, something understood as the main or even sole purpose of the female body. They also stressed the heterosexual married couple as the natural locus of sexuality. While acknowledging the existence of and urging tolerance for homosexuality, and discussing some "further forms of sexuality" other than reproductive heterosexuality, they still focused attention on reproduction and paterfamilial marriages. Ultimately, the West German sources stressed the normality and satisfaction of an essentialized, hierarchal gender system, and one that is automatically embodied prior to anything social or personal.

On the other hand, the East German sources insisted on the social and cultural nature of gender, on the importance of *Gleichberechtigung* in all aspects of life, on the primacy in sexuality of pleasure over reproduction, and on embodying socialist subjectivity. Moreover, despite allowing greater individual freedom within heterosexuality, they ignored homosexuality completely. Their understanding of sexuality focused on its personal and relational aspects, and on pleasure. Simultaneously, the authors stressed the pleasure of a *gleichberechtigte* socialist subjectivity and its superiority to capitalist gender norms (the West German sources, remember, were entirely silent about East Germany). Moreover, the East German authors understood the body as being an essential and experiential part of the person. By suggesting the importance of socialism in facilitating the comfortable and pleasurable integration of mind and body, they focused on embodying a pleasurable socialist subjectivity.

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